

Assistant Principal - SENCO

Longfield Academy



More than just a job. More than just an employer.

Leigh Academies Trust is a dynamic, vibrant multi-academy trust, founded in 2008. Today we encompass 33 academies across Kent, Medway and South-East London.



LEIGH
Academies Trust

Simon Beamish

BA (Hons) MSc PGCE NPQH NLE FCCT

Chief Executive
Leigh Academies Trust



Welcome

Leigh Academies Trust (LAT) is one of the largest and most successful school groups in England. Starting in 2008 in Dartford, the Trust is now responsible for 33 academies of all types, educating over 24,000 pupils, employing almost 4,000 talented staff and with access to an annual income of over £200m. Our Ofsted track record is impressive. Currently, 16 of our academies are considered to be “Outstanding” which is 53% of those which have been inspected whilst part of the Trust.

LAT has remained local with all of its academies located in the South East (Kent, Medway, Bexley and Greenwich), within a one hour drive across the South Thames Corridor. This helps us to share resources and expertise much more easily and offer abundant training and progression opportunities to staff. We invest heavily in our workforce and enjoy strong retention across all job roles. The Trust has embedded various advantages which mean that LAT is an excellent place to develop a career in education. This includes being a highly inclusive employer which celebrates the diversity of its workforce.

Our scale and experience means we have been able to develop several well-chosen approaches to running schools which we know work well. These include:

- A small school approach to education where larger academies are organised into colleges. This ensures high quality pastoral care for pupils.
- A world class digital strategy where all staff and pupils have their own device making teaching, learning and operations efficient and highly impactful.
- Disruption free learning and a “warm strict” approach to behaviour management so that teachers can teach and pupils can learn.
- An all-through International Baccalaureate curriculum equivalent in quality to some of the best fee-paying schools and grammar schools in the UK and further afield.

In addition, The Leigh Institute - which is part of LAT - is responsible for Kent and Medway Training, one of the region’s biggest initial teacher training organisations, a large teaching school hub called Thames Gateway and an accredited apprenticeship provider. This powerful organisation trains, develops and supports 1,000s of teachers, support staff and leadership teams across the region each year. Our future plans are found in our [Vision 2030](#), available on our website.

We are now recruiting for an exceptional Assistant Principal - SENCO to join Longfield Academy.

Felix Donkor
Principal
Longfield Academy



Longfield Academy

"This inclusive school has high expectations of all pupils' achievement and behaviour" Ofsted (2023).

At Longfield Academy we pride ourselves on everyone in our community showing respect, care, and achievement. We have high expectations and expect our students to do their best at all times. Throughout the academy, staff are hardworking and committed to ensuring that our students thrive, feel safe and make good progress. We have a strong focus on students developing personal skills and being prepared for life in addition to achieving well in public examinations. Thus, every student at Longfield Academy is given the support and opportunity to 'Achieve Beyond Expectations'.

Ofsted recognises our academy as Good with an Outstanding sixth-form. Our last inspection, in September 2023, noted that our curriculum enables students to pursue their interests and prepares them well for their next steps. Students are prepared well for life in modern Britain. They have a clear understanding of fundamental British values through lessons, assemblies and tutor-time activities. The academy is well supported by the Leigh Academies Trust (LAT). As a result, we benefit from several opportunities to develop and retain high quality leaders and teachers.

We are now looking to strengthen our provision as the academy grows into being outstanding

throughout. This is a fantastic opportunity for an experienced and highly effective SENCo who wants to be part of a department described by Challenge Partners as a National Area of Excellence. Our specialist provision, the Spectrum Centre, is led well and provides many outreach opportunities. As a result, the centre is able to support other schools both within the trust and beyond. This opportunity to work at Longfield Academy will suit someone who is passionate about SEND and who can help us to further enhance our SEN provision so that all our students have excellent opportunities to maximise their potential. It is also an excellent opportunity for someone who is ambitious and wants to grow their leadership skills. The successful candidate will play a major part in our senior leadership team, as an Assistant Principal.

Additionally, working as part of a trust means that the successful candidate will have excellent opportunities for working collaboratively with other schools within the Leigh Academies Trust.

I look forward to receiving your application in the hope that you will join us in our quest towards 'Achieving Beyond Expectations'.

Vacancy

From April 2025, we are seeking to appoint an experienced and qualified Assistant Principal - SENCO who, with the support of the Principal, Academy Leadership Team and the SEN department will take responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the SEN policy, SEN information report and provision made by the school for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. The successful candidate will also work closely with staff, parents/carers and other agencies. The successful candidate will play a vital role as an Assistant Principal of the academy by guiding the strategic direction of our SEND provision. They will also work closely with staff, parents/carers and other agencies.

Longfield Academy has a high proportion of students with SEND. The number of students with Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties (SEMH) is more than three times the national average. Our Specialist provision, The Spectrum Centre, is recognised as a National Area of Excellence. The role of our Assistant Principal - SENCO is therefore crucial in ensuring that our inclusive values are upheld and all our students are making excellent academic progress whilst developing the skills required to contribute effectively in a democratic society. The successful candidate must have a legitimate passion for SEND and must have the motivation to take our excellent SEND provision to the next level.

We understand that each student has different learning needs and experiences, but they must always have the same opportunities. Longfield Academy's goal is to always act quickly to identify undiagnosed needs and always support students with SEND needs. Our digital curriculum, which includes Chromebooks for students and an incredible team of teaching assistants, has removed barriers for children, laying the groundwork for this successful approach. We make every effort to ensure students with SEND thrive and grow in confidence alongside the rest of our community. A flexible approach with a can-do ethos is necessary, as is drive, grit and boundless enthusiasm, as nearly everyday we experience something new for the first time.

It is essential that our Assistant Principal - SENCO has a positive outlook, is supportive of others and openly shares best practice, modelling this constantly to the growing staff body. They will need to embrace a forward thinking approach to raising standards in teaching for SEND, implementing a high quality intervention programme and working with SE London and Kent teams to ensure we are doing the absolute best for our most vulnerable students at all times.

The role of Assistant Principal - SENCO can be highly rewarding, as you will have the opportunity to directly contribute to pupils receiving the support they need to achieve their full potential.

For our successful candidate, being a member of staff at Longfield Academy and the wider Trust means you'll receive access to a great range of employment benefits from day one. [Click here](#) to view the current benefits package, and be mindful that the list is always growing.

We wish to hear from you if you are committed to changing our education world and are:

- an enthusiastic, energetic and ambitious school leader with a track record of success at secondary level;
- a motivational and inspirational leader with high expectations of staff;
- confident and able to communicate a clear vision for the school;
- able to develop children to reach their full potential regardless of background or circumstance;
- approachable and keen to work with staff across the Trust to ensure wide success;
- able to establish and develop excellent relationships with the community and other stakeholders.

Position	Assistant Principal - SENCO
Location	Longfield Academy
Responsible to	Principal
Basis	Permanent, Full-Time
Commencement	April 2025
Salary	Leadership scale based on experience

Application Process

Naturally, we are seeking to appoint the best possible candidate and therefore the application process will reflect our desire to undertake all necessary measures to achieve this.

On the basis that interested candidates may be keen to visit the academy before making a formal application, you can arrange this by contacting Christine Goodwin (PA to Principal) - christine.goodwin@longfieldacademy.org. Visits will be offered and hosted by the Principal, Dr Felix Donkor. Please ensure you offer Christine a range of dates when you are available in your initial email to ensure we can coordinate a visit that works for both you and the academy.

Candidates wishing to have an initial conversation with the Principal about this role can also arrange for a telephone call. Those wishing to do so should also contact Christine Goodwin (as above) in the first instance.

To submit an application in full, please do so online via the following link;

[Assistant Principal - SENCO | Longfield Academy | Online Application Form](#)

If you have any queries on any aspect of the application process or need additional information please contact Charlotte Herberts (Recruitment Advisor) on **01634 412 245** or charlotte.herberts@latrust.org.uk.

The academy is committed to safeguarding children and successful candidates will be subject to an Enhanced DBS check. Our commitment to safeguarding is underpinned by robust processes and checks which are in place across the Trust.

Closing date for applications	Friday 21st February 2025
Shortlisting date	Monday 24th February 2025
Interviews and assessment activities	Wednesday 26th February 2025



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Job Profile

Role: Assistant Principal - SENCO - Longfield Academy
Reporting to: Principal

To work closely with the Principal, Senior Leadership Team and colleagues in the strategic development of the Academy's Special Educational Needs (SEN) policy and oversee the day-to-day operation of that policy with the aim of raising SEN student achievement.

Areas of Responsibility and Key Tasks

a) Strategic Direction and Development of SEN Provision in the Academy (with the support of, and under the direction of the Principal)

- exercise a key role in assisting the senior leadership team and governors with the strategic development of SEN policy / provision
- support the Head of Spectrum Centre in ensuring that students within the centre continue to make excellent progress and that their families are appropriately supported
- support all staff in understanding the needs of SEN student and ensure the objectives to develop SEN are reflected in the school development plan
- monitor progress of objectives and targets for students with SEN from teachers' plans, evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning by work analysis and use these analyses to guide future improvements
- analyse and interpret relevant school, local and national data and advise the senior leadership team on the level of resources required to maximise achievement
- liaise with staff, parents, external agencies and other schools to coordinate their contribution, provide maximum support and ensure continuity of provision

b) Teaching & Learning

- support the identification of and disseminate the most effective teaching approaches for students with SEN
- work with the senior leadership team and staff to develop effective ways of bridging barriers to learning through:
 - assessment of needs
 - monitoring of teaching quality and student achievement
 - target setting, including IEPs
 - developing a recording system for progress
- collect and interpret specialist assessment data to inform practice
- undertake day-to-day co-ordination of SEN students' provisions through close liaison with staff, parents and external agencies
- work with the senior leadership team, teachers, key stage co-ordinators and pastoral staff to ensure all students learning is of equal importance and that there are realistic expectations of students
- consider the range of teaching strategies / equipment that could be utilised for students at School Action Plus.

c) Leading and Managing

- provide professional guidance to staff to secure good teaching for SEN students, through both written guidance and meetings
- advise on and contribute to the professional development of staff, including whole Academy INSET provision
- provide regular information to the senior leadership team and governing body on the evaluation of SEN provision



d) Effective deployment of staff and resources

- advise the senior leadership team and governing body of priorities for expenditure and deployment of staff, and utilise resources with maximum efficiency
- maintain and develop resources, coordinate their deployment and monitor their effectiveness in meeting the objectives of Academy and SEN policies
- lead the SEN team, including LSAs, and have overall responsibility for the SRP.

e) Other professional requirements

- Coordinate all Annual Reviews and attend / chair when necessary

The post holder will also be expected to undertake any other tasks as reasonably required by the Principal or Governors to ensure the efficient and effective operation of the academy.

Safeguarding of students and Duty of care

All staff, regardless of role, level of seniority and location, have a responsibility to ensure the highest levels of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our pupils, and we expect all our staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We must collectively create an environment where children feel safe to learn, play, and grow. Children should feel comfortable in their surroundings and know that they can approach any responsible adult with any problems or concerns.

All staff must be able to identify any children who are at risk of harm, and know the characteristics of abuse or neglect. If you suspect or confirm harm then it's essential you know what actions to take.

Annual safeguarding training is offered to all staff at Leigh Academies Trust, and it is the staff member's responsibility to be aware of the most up to date guidance documented in the Keeping Children Safe in Education document (Department of Education).

Notes

The job description allocates duties and responsibilities but does not direct the particular amount of time to be spent on carrying them out and no part of it may be so construed. This job description is not necessarily a comprehensive definition of the post. It will be reviewed at least once a year and may be subject to modification or amendment at any time after consultation with the holder of the post.

The duties may be varied to meet the changing demands of the academy/business unit at the reasonable discretion of the Principal/Director. This job description does not form part of the contract of employment. It describes the way the post-holder is expected and required to perform and complete the particular duties as set out in the foregoing.

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Person Specification

We seek to recruit talented individuals who can not only help to build the success of our academies but also people who are engaging and passionate about everything they do. The person specification is related to the requirements of the post as determined by the job description. You should refer to these requirements when completing the application.

Essential

Desirable

Training & Qualifications

- A graduate in a relevant discipline
- To hold a teaching qualification that is recognised by the DfE
- To have evidence of continuing and recent professional development relevant to the post
- National SENCO award
- National SENCO Award or willing to complete the new NPQ SENCO course
- Evidence of other qualification/s eg BSL, SLCN

Experience

- As SENCO/supporting children with special educational needs
- Experience as SENCO in more than one school
- Effective working with a variety of stakeholders
- Monitoring and identifying areas for improvement
- Leading, motivating and developing practice
- Effective use of assessment and analysis of SEND children's progress in raising standards
- Teaching experience across the Key Stage 3 and 4 having taught at all levels of ability to at least a good standard

Management

- Ability to analyse and evaluate data on students
- Ensure appropriate curriculum provision for all students across the Department
- Ability to establish credibility with colleagues, students and parents

Essential


Desirable

Professional knowledge, skills and understanding

- Previous experience of effective SEND development and pupils based learning
 - Thorough and up to date knowledge of SEND code of practice and SEND issues
 - Proven Management and SENCO skills to support inclusion teaching and learning
 - Ability to produce accurate work to tight deadlines under pressure
 - Ability to communicate clearly in writing and orally a variety of audiences
 - Ability to be able to deal sensitively with pastoral issues relating to staff and students
 - Extensive ICT skills that reflect the impact of technology on today's classrooms
- Experience of managing successful change

Personal Qualities & Abilities

- An enthusiastic, confident and able communicator with excellent interpersonal skills
 - An effective organiser who can get the most from all types of resources through their development and deployment
 - A positive and resilient individual with drive, initiative, vision and commitment to improve standards in the school
 - Can lead, motivate and inspire others including teachers, parents and governors
 - Commitment to inclusion and raising standards for all
- Able to demonstrate strong leadership and management skills

The background is a solid blue color. A thick yellow line starts from the left edge, goes down, then right, then up, then right again, ending at the top edge. A thick white line starts from the bottom edge, goes left, then up, then right, then up again, ending at the top edge. Another thick yellow line starts from the left edge, goes right, then up, then right, ending at the bottom edge.

All of our academies
work closely and
collaboratively together,
along with our partners,
seeking to exploit the key
educational philosophy of
human scale education.

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Benefits at Leigh Academies Trust

At Leigh Academies Trust, we want to provide you with a rewarding and enriching career and to help you to reach your full potential, both professionally and personally. As an employee of Leigh Academies Trust, here is a taster of the great benefits you can receive from day one;

- An open and collaborative working environment, not just within your academy but also across the Trust where innovation is encouraged
- A career in an organisation that values individuality and diversity
- Dedicated focus groups to ensure we have the optimal working environment in all aspects.

Professional development opportunities

- Regular training and access to a range of internal and external programmes tailored to your learning needs throughout your career
- Educational sponsorship (application required)
- Opportunities for career progression as we are willing and able to support moves from one academy to another.

Financial

- A competitive salary for both teaching and non-teaching staff whereby pay progression is possible on an annual basis, following successful performance
- Access to a highly attractive pension plan
- Neyber platform – support provided to build your financial confidence and support when needed with Neyber loans
- Access to a range of benefits and discounts that are sourced specifically for our staff.

Well-being

- Full-time associate staff receive 25 days annual leave plus bank holidays which increases to reflect your length of service
- The chance to work with a company who received a 'Platinum' Workplace Wellbeing Award for the last two years
- Wellbeing champions and access to Mental Health First Aiders
- 24/7 access to a free Employee Assistance Programme to provide confidential advice and guidance
- Student Wellbeing support from our Educational Psychologist team
- Personal resilience and Wellbeing courses
- Access to our Wellbeing platform with a range of ever evolving benefits
- Wellbeing campaigns.

Facilities

- Great school buildings with many state-of-the-art facilities across our academies, providing positive working environments
- Free gym access on selected academy sites
- Free car parking at every site
- On-site catering with great food, all reasonably priced for staff (with the option to buy evening meals so you don't have to cook!)
- Social networking opportunities across the trust to create new relationships both inside and outside of the work setting.

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An overview of the Trust you'd be joining

Leigh Academies Trust is a non-profit making charitable company limited by guarantee, based in Strood, Rochester, Medway. The Trust exists to support and assist schools to build upon their existing strengths and to help them achieve educational transformation. It has significant experience in running schools, and today includes both sponsored academies and schools which have chosen to convert to academy status.

The Trust was formed in 2008 with the linking of The Leigh Technology Academy and Longfield Academy under one governing body. It now encompasses over 24,000 students, between the ages of 2 and 19, in 33 primary, secondary and special academies, across Kent, Medway, Bexley and Greenwich. Currently, 16 of our academies are considered to be "Outstanding" which is 53% of those which have been inspected whilst part of the Trust.

Leigh Academies Trust – Our Values:

- We care – about our pupils through our human scale approach to education, our staff and their well-being and the communities that we serve, driven by our high ideals and strong moral values.
- We have boundless ambition – to achieve excellence for all and create confident young adults with high levels of resilience and integrity.
- We work together – as one team in the belief that we are greater than the sum of our parts. We foster an enterprising culture through collaboration and in close partnership with industry and other educators.
- We keep getting better – using our 'can-do' attitude towards continuous improvement and

innovation.

Trust Advantages:

- Expert central services for finance, HR, IT, facilities and business functions.
- Innovative approaches to teacher recruitment and retention.
- Fast track development of leaders for internal promotion opportunities.
- Central reserves protect individual school budgets.
- Substantial investment in cross-Trust initiatives to improve teaching and learning.
- Close collaboration between senior leaders across the Trust.
- Integration of primary and secondary approaches into all-through education.
- Adequate scale to design and test new ideas.
- High quality strategic governance with wide business and professional experience.
- Robust delivery models as government policies, rules and measures change.

**Our Mission:
Education for a better world**

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