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**BRIEFING FOR APPLICANTS**

Head of department for computer science & ICT

From September 2025

MPS/UPS plus TLR 2.2 - £5,655

**An introduction to our school**

Our school is an 11-16 mixed, community, comprehensive school of around 950 students. We are lucky to be based in a relatively new building, with great facilities, on a beautiful site at the edge of the Peak District market town of Chapel-en-le-Frith. The Peak District National Park is quite literally on the school’s doorstep and provides endless opportunities for walkers, cyclists, mountain bikers, climbers, cavers and other outdoor enthusiasts.

The nearest big towns to the school are Buxton and Stockport but good transport links mean that the school’s staff travel from a wide area with many commuting from Manchester, Sheffield, Chesterfield and the towns of East Cheshire. A sizable contingent of staff live in the villages of the Peak District. For anyone considering relocating it is a wonderful area in which to live, with a good mix of housing, decent schools, easy commutes and a good quality of life.

Chapel-en-le-Frith is a rural Peak District market town. The biggest employers in the area are however industrial, mainly manufacturing and quarrying. The school takes students from a wide rural area beyond the town with some students travelling for up to an hour by bus to reach school. There is considerable socio-economic variation across the school’s catchment.

We believe that our school is unusual in several ways; perhaps the most obvious of these is structural. The current school was formed by merging, in a new building, the local area special school with the existing high school. The special school became the current 50 place enhanced resourced SEND provision, always referred to simply as ‘Learning Support’ in school. To meet the moderate to severe special educational needs of its cohort, Learning Support operates as a ‘school within a school’ with a full independent curriculum with significant dedicated SEND trained staffing, including 7 teachers of SEND. Students based in Learning Support study an independent curriculum appropriate to their needs. The curriculum is highly adapted to the social and academic needs of the individual, with a strong focus on independent living, interpersonal and employability skills. The aim is always that a student’s school life should be as ‘normal’ as possible. Almost all students based in Learning Support attend mainstream tutor groups and assemblies. All can integrate at breaks and lunchtimes and share social and eating facilities. Many students attend at least one mainstream subject and some will progress to take several mainstream subjects including GCSEs. These arrangements make for a wonderfully inclusive school with young people who are very accepting of difference.

Our inclusive approach spreads more widely too and we often buck local and national trends by being positive about accepting students with difficult and complex backgrounds. We have, for example, an unusually high number of looked after children in school, and we often take students who have been permanently excluded from other schools.

Raising aspirations is of critical importance to us, as many students in this isolated rural area are not naturally exposed to the wider opportunities that an urban area might offer. Significant resources are devoted to bridging this gap, we have good links with further education providers and, despite being an 11 to 16 school engage with a number of universities including Oxford and Cambridge. As a result of this work, and despite being in an area with few local post 16 provisions, the school maintains superb progression rates to successful post-16 education. Students in a typical year may transition to over 20 different post-16 institutions.

We think that we are different in other ways too. Our governors value the arts and creative subjects, and we retain high uptake in these areas. We aren’t a top-down organisation; we are a team, and we work together to do the best we can for the young people in our care. Perhaps most importantly, we recognise that happy, committed staff make for a successful school. We work really hard to look after and develop our staff.

Visitors to our school notice these differences. People frequently comment on the sense of community, the calm atmosphere, and the fact that our staff smile, joke and enjoy what they do. At the start of one of our Ofsted inspections the lead inspector commented, after meeting the staff in briefing, that he had never met such a welcoming, smiley and relaxed staff team at the start of an inspection. Perhaps it is not a coincidence that we are always fully staffed and are often ‘cold called’ by people wanting to work here.

We are in the minority of secondary schools that remain local authority run. This is by choice after careful research and consideration and is regularly reviewed by governors. We are not however an isolated school, we benefit from support from Derbyshire County Council, we’re a member of the Peak Edge Group of schools (PEGS) a local grouping of rural primary and secondary schools, and we have good links with local employers, universities and teaching schools.

Like most schools, we have our strengths and weaknesses. We are proud of the work we have done recently on curriculum development, on teaching and learning and on behaviour. We believe in research-based practice and many staff are now engaged with research and further professional qualifications. Our 2024 results are very strong, with a progress 8 score of + 0.34 and impressive consistency across subjects.

Our challenges remain those of many rural schools; further improving our results requires that we better engage disadvantaged students, the increasingly complex SEN needs that face us require constant adaptations to practice in Learning Support, and while we’ve always set balanced budgets, and are proud that we’ve never had to make staff redundant, finances remain tight. Running one of Derbyshire’s largest SEND provisions means that we’re at the sharp end of the current national issues around SEND education.

Despite these challenges, this is a brilliant place to work. The school is in a good position: strong Ofsted inspection in October 2024, progress 8 of + 0.34, oversubscribed for the last 13 years, and consistently above average progression figures.

**The computer science and ICT department**

The computer science and ICT department is one of the strongest performing departments in the school. The

subject is popular and well respected. The department comprises the head of department and one other full‐time specialist member of staff. Other staff occasionally contribute to teaching in years 7 and 8.

The team work in the school’s four computer suites and have an office base in this area.

All students in years 7 to 9 study computer science and ICT for 2 lessons a fortnight, with project rotations that focus

on using a range of software, understanding computer systems, programming and using the internet productively

and safely.

In years 10 and 11, the department offers two options, allowing students to choose both if desired, GCSE Computer

Science and Cambridge National Creative iMedia.

Both courses are very popular subjects in school and typically, across the two options, the department would have

four or five groups in years 10 and 11. The school also offers entry‐level qualifications to students in the learning

support cohort.

Feedback from students and parents is very positive about the subject in all years and we would like to build on this

success.

**Job Description: Head of computer science and ICT**

This document has been drawn up based on the Teachers’ Pay and Conditions Document and other statutory provisions.

**Reporting** **to:** senior leadership group line manager.

**Main responsibilities**

Heads of department are expected to carry out the duties required of all classroom teachers with the following additional responsibilities:

**Leading curriculum development**

* Create a clear curriculum vision and intent for computer science and ICT and translate this vision into everyday work and practice.
* Ensure the provision of an appropriately broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum, in line with the aims and ethos of the school and school policies.
* To keep up to date with national developments in the teaching of computer science and ICT, in terms of curriculum content, teaching methodology and innovative practice and ensure that curriculum development reflects these.
* Ensure that curriculum development reflects and responds to the needs of students in both the local and national context.
* Maintain clear curriculum maps and schemes of work, in line with school policy and ensure that teaching resources are available for teachers to use.
* Celebrate and promote the importance of computer science and ICT across the school community and with parents.

**Leading teaching and learning**

* Actively promote the school’s approaches to teaching and learning within the department; support staff in adopting them.
* Be accountable for the quality of teaching and learning in the department.
* Monitor and ensure the consistent implementation of the school’s teaching and learning policies and expectations.
* Develop rigorous assessment procedures within the department in line with school policy in order to provide regular and accurate attainment data.
* Ensure the shared and clear understanding of the relevant examination board’s specification and assessment criteria amongst subject staff.
* Ensure that all subject staff understand and make effective use of data to track student performance in order to raise their attainment.
* Rigorously monitor student progress within the department and establish effective intervention strategies to challenge underperformance.
* Develop and enhance the teaching practice of others.
* Challenge the underperformance of staff where necessary and develop strategies to support improvement.

**Behaviour and attitudes**

* Be responsible for maintaining a positive learning ethos within the department.
* Support staff in managing behaviour within the department in line with school procedures, including the use of departmental behaviour plans and by liaising with parents and pastoral staff as required.

**Leadership and management**

* Lead by example and promote an effective team.
* Ensure that all staff in the department share in the development of and support the vision and aims of the department.
* Be responsible for the line management and performance management of identified staff within the department.
* Contribute to the selection and recruitment of teachers and support staff, including the induction and assessment of new teachers and initial teacher trainees, where appropriate.
* Provide professional advice and support and identify training needs.
* Liaise with the Examinations Officer to maintain accreditation with the appropriate examination bodies and to manage exam entries.
* Manage the resources of the department within the limits of the delegated budget and in accordance with the school’s financial procedures.
* Effectively manage and deploy teaching and support staff to best meet the needs of students and the department.
* Manage the learning environment in the department and enforce school expectations for the presentation and maintenance of the classroom environment and resources.
* Ensure that Health and Safety policies and practices in the department comply with statutory and school requirements.
* Contribute to and support the implementation of school policies.
* Ensure that appropriate work has been set in the case of staff absence and liaise with the learning supervisor team during the period of absence.
* Ensure that assessment data recorded on school systems is reliable and accurate and that staff understand and adhere to whole school procedures.
* Contribute to and participate in the school’s monitoring and evaluation programme.
* Provide accurate reports to the Headteacher, governors and the LA when required.
* Represent the department at whole school events such as Open Evening.
* Lead the development of effective subject links with other schools and the community, including attendance at appropriate events.
* Promote Computer Science GCSE and Creative iMedia as an option choices.
* Lead the department’s extracurricular programme.

Whilst every effort has been made to explain the main duties and responsibilities of the post, each individual task may not be identified. You will be expected to comply with any reasonable request from the Headteacher to undertake work of a similar level that is not specified in this job description.

**Person Specification**

**Head of Department – Computer Science and ICT**

**Essential:**

* Qualified teacher status.
* Successfully completed induction period (ECT years).
* Experience of teaching Computer Science/ICT to students aged 11 to 16.
* Knowledge and experience of curriculum development.
* A strong personal background in Computer Science/ICT.
* A good understanding of the use of data to identify underachievement and areas for improvement.
* A good knowledge of teaching and learning strategies in Computer Science/ICT and the ability to communicate them to others.
* Detailed knowledge of the GCSE specifications for Computer Science
* An absolute commitment to inclusive education. The ability to relate positively to **all** students and show a fundamental commitment to them and their development.
* Commitment to achieving high standards.
* A team player who is an effective manager of people. The ability to work constructively with teachers, teaching assistants, technicians and non-specialist staff.

**Desirable:**

* Experience in a leadership role.
* A leadership qualification e.g. NPQML.
* Experience of working with other schools.
* Experience of working with governors.
* Recent CPD or experience that supports the development of the Computer Science and ICT curriculum.
* Experience of delivering Cambridge National Creative iMedia.

**Safer recruitment and our values**

The school uses robust safer recruitment procedures that meet the requirements of [Keeping children safe in education](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2) . These processes are designed to deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for or securing employment or volunteering opportunities in the school.

Our safer recruitment processes form a vital part of our whole school approach to safeguarding and are an essential part of creating a safe environment for our learners. Further details on the safer recruitment of staff in school can be found in our Child Protection and Safeguarding policy which is on the school’s website.

When you apply for a job in our school you will be asked to disclose any previous criminal convictions. You will be asked to provide a full employment history and the names of two referees. One of these referees must be your most recent employer and, if the employer is a school, must be the head teacher. We will follow up on any issues raised by your references at interview and we may contact your referees to verify their identity or for further information.

Everyone who works in the school, including volunteers will have appropriate Disclosure and Barring (DBS) checks.

For teachers, qualified teacher status will be checked. Appointment to a post will be subject to satisfactory references, satisfactory DBS checks, the checking of qualified teacher status (for teachers), checking of the right to work in the UK, and health clearance.

Chapel-en-le-Frith High School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Chapel-en-le-Frith High School is committed to creating an inclusive workplace which promotes and values diversity in age, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability and ethnicity. We expect our staff and volunteers to share these values

**Notes on Applying**

Applying for any job is time consuming, these notes aim to make it easier.

**We do not use either the Derbyshire County Council or the TES online application process. You need to complete an application and post it or e-mail it to us. The application should consist of a completed application form and a letter of application.**

**The Application Form**

Please complete the application form neatly, fully and accurately, including exact dates. Indicate clearly on the front page the post you are applying for. **We do not use Job Reference numbers, simply leave this box blank.**

Safeguarding guidance requires us to ensure that there are no unaccounted-for gaps in your employment or educational history. Please explain any gaps that do appear; notes like “gap year” or “bringing up children” are very helpful.

The Derbyshire application form includes a large box headed “supporting statement”, since we have asked you to submit a separate letter you can leave this box blank. There is little point in repeating information.

**Referees**

Please use referees who have direct, recent experience of your work and who are in responsible positions. We may need to contact them at short notice so please be specific about addresses and contact details, we will normally contact them by e-mail. One referee must be your current or most recent employer; if you are working in a school, it should normally be your head teacher. References will not be accepted from relatives or from people writing solely in the capacity of friends.

**Letter of Application**

The letter of application is probably the most important part of your application. You should make statements which demonstrate how your qualifications, personal qualities and experience match the post. Please focus on the impact of any work you have done. You should take particular care to demonstrate how you meet the person specification included with this pack.

**CVs**

In line with current safeguarding guidance, we do not accept CVs.

**Arrangements for Interview**

Shortlisted applicants will be contacted as soon as possible after the closing date. For teaching posts referees are contacted **prior** to the interview stage. If you are shortlisted, any relevant issues arising from your references will be taken up at interview.

**Appointments**

Appointments are made conditional upon the successful candidate meeting requirements for satisfactory references; satisfactory DBS checks; qualification checks and (for teachers) checking of Qualified Teacher Status. We are also required to check that you have the right to work in the UK.

**Submitting your application**

When you have completed your application, the completed form and covering letter should be e-mailed to Diane Hibbert, HR Officer (recruitment@chapelhigh.org.uk), or applications can be posted to the school, addressed to the head teacher, to arrive before the closing date.