



# Drumbeat

School & ASD Service

**Head of School**

Candidate Pack

Location: Brockley SE4

Start Date: September 2026

# Welcome letter from our Chair of Governors

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Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in applying for the post of Head of School at Drumbeat School and ASD Service.

Drumbeat was established in 2012, and the vacancy has arisen as one of our founding Senior Leadership Team members is retiring.

We pride ourselves on providing personalised learning for our students that meets their needs and sets up them up for life after Drumbeat. Our team has developed a bespoke curriculum that can be tailored to different learners, and we have a strong focus on careers. As a combined school and ASD service, our mission is to serve autistic children across Lewisham. We have a highly rated outreach service and are growing our school provision to meet the needs of more children in the borough. This year we've successfully opened a new hub in addition to our two existing school sites and look forward to further expansion over the next few years.

We are outward looking and regularly work with other schools, academics and the wider community to share ideas and expertise, carry out research and continually improve our practice. Our highly skilled SLT are sought out for their expertise, and we're committed to helping staff at all levels to develop. We're proud to see staff progress and take on new responsibilities.

The Head of School at Downham is a key role, leading our largest site. We're looking for someone who cares deeply about the students, who can lead a highly skilled staff team and can think strategically about how to develop the school in future. We have a very collaborative culture within the school, with parents and with external partners and are looking for someone who can form strong and productive relationships with all our stakeholders. You'll need significant experience.

Madeleine Gabriel

Chair of Governors

# About Drumbeat School

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Drumbeat is Lewisham's community special school for children and young people between the ages of 5 and 19 years who have a diagnosis of autism. We cater for young people with different levels of learning difficulty through our pathways approach which specifies their learning and provision pathway.

Drumbeat is a centre of excellence with a strong mission and purpose to transform CYP's lives, and the lives of their families, for the better. With a 21st century pedagogy that puts the CYP's needs at the heart of everything it does.

Drumbeat's work draws from the latest research in Autism to build upon 'tried & tested' practice and shape teaching approaches closely to children's learning styles.

Teaching is personalised and a high priority is given to developing effective communication approaches. Through proper interpretation, understanding and meeting needs, and enabling children to communicate their needs and desires effectively, it is possible to reduce challenging behaviours.

Visits to Drumbeat are encouraged for those interested in the position. If you would like to arrange a visit, please contact the school office on 020 8698 9738.

At Drumbeat, our primary aim and main priority achievement. Consequently, we aim:

- To promote opportunities for the whole school community to enjoy and achieve.
- All achievement should be recognised and celebrated  
To develop a creative, stimulating and relevant curriculum tailored to the individual needs of the learner and that motivates every member of the school community to do their best
- To work in partnership with students, families, the multi-disciplinary team and the wider community to meet individual needs. Together as a team we can achieve the best outcomes for our young people
- To provide a secure, safe and supportive environment to promote maximum equality of opportunity, independence, confidence and education

# About Drumbeat School

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## **Ethos**

The school works to foster a spirit of respect, mutual co-operation and self-motivation. We are a learning community in which all can progress and develop together, and in which students can contribute to decisions about their own learning. The school is committed to continuously improving its performance. We promote equality of opportunity for all members of our school community and actively promote and celebrate diversity.

The shared values which the school aims to develop include;

- Respect for each other, students, staff and parents or carers
- Consideration and support
- Equality and diversity in all aspects of school life
- Enrichment and fun so that all can learn together

All of the above is incorporated into a learning environment which is first and foremost educational but is also caring and supportive and aims to make learning an enjoyable experience.

With this in place we are in the best position to ensure that Drumbeat will prepare our students for adult life beyond school and enable them to achieve their full potential

When students leave Drumbeat they should be; Independent, caring, ambitious, confident, safe, courageous, respectful, resilient and successful.

## **Outline of Role**

- Drumbeat operates across three sites
- This role has direct responsibility for the Brockley site
- Works closely with other Heads of School and central leadership
- Opportunity to contribute to future growth and development
- Pay scale – L22 – L26

# Head of School

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## Head of School – Role Overview

- Overall leadership of the Brockley site within Drumbeat School and ASD Service
- Responsibility for educational quality, culture, safeguarding and operational performance
- Strategic leadership aligned to Drumbeat’s values and growth plans
- Accountability to the Executive Headteacher and Governing Body

## What You Will Lead

- Educational standards and pupil outcomes across the site
- Staff leadership, professional culture and performance
- Behaviour, wellbeing and inclusion for all pupils
- Delivery of school priorities and improvement plans
- Effective and responsible use of delegated resources

## Culture, Behaviour and SEND

- Creation of a calm, safe and ambitious learning environment
- Leadership of positive behaviour approaches for complex needs
- Oversight of statutory SEND duties and EHCP implementation
- Strong partnership with families, professionals and the Local Authority
- High expectations for all pupils, regardless of need or pathway

## Teaching, Curriculum and Learning

- Leadership of high-quality, personalised teaching across pathways
- Oversight of an ambitious, relevant and engaging curriculum
- Strong focus on communication, independence and life outcomes
- Use of assessment to inform teaching and school improvement

## People, Safeguarding and Operations

- Safeguarding leadership and statutory compliance
- Line management and development of staff
- Promotion of staff wellbeing, professionalism and accountability
- Safer recruitment and workforce management
- Oversight of site safety, risk and premises arrangements

## Governance and Partnership

- Effective working relationships with governors
- Contribution to school accountability and reporting
- Collaboration across Drumbeat sites and leadership team
- Strong external partnerships to support pupils and families
- Contribution to Drumbeat’s wider development and reputation

# Head of School – Person Specification

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## **Qualifications and Professional Status**

### Essential

- Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) or Qualified Teaching and Learning Status
- Evidence of ongoing professional development relevant to senior leadership

### Desirable

- National Professional Qualification for Headship or equivalent leadership qualification

## **Leadership Experience**

### Essential

- Successful leadership experience within a SEND or specialist education setting
- Experience of leading teams and securing positive outcomes for pupils with complex needs
- Experience of line management, performance management and staff development
- Involvement in school self-evaluation, improvement planning and delivery
- Experience of managing change and leading improvement
- Experience of financial and resource management at senior level
- Experience of working effectively with governors, the Local Authority and external partners

### Desirable

- Experience as a Deputy Headteacher, Head of School or equivalent senior role

# Head of School – Person Specification

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## **Knowledge and Understanding**

### Essential

- Strong understanding of SEND, including statutory duties and inclusive practice
- Clear understanding of high-quality teaching and personalised learning for autistic pupils
- Knowledge of safeguarding and child protection responsibilities within an education setting
- Understanding of school operations, including staffing, finance and risk management
- Awareness of the wider education context, including current policy and accountability

## **Leadership Skills**

### Essential

- Ability to provide clear strategic direction while maintaining effective day-to-day leadership
- Ability to analyse information and use evidence to inform decisions and improvement
- Confident decision-making, including in complex or high-pressure situations
- Strong organisational skills, with the ability to prioritise, delegate and manage workload
- Ability to communicate clearly and effectively with a wide range of stakeholders

## **Personal Qualities**

### Essential

- Strong moral purpose and commitment to achieving the best outcomes for all pupils
- Commitment to inclusive leadership and high expectations for pupils and staff
- Calm, resilient and professional approach to challenge and complexity
- Ability to build positive, respectful and effective working relationships
- Integrity, professionalism and commitment to safeguarding and pupil welfare

## **Additional Information**

- Drumbeat School and ASD Service operates across three sites
- This role has direct responsibility for the Brockley site
- The post holder will work collaboratively with other Heads of School and central leadership
- The role provides opportunities to contribute to the future growth and development of Drumbeat