



MONK'S WALK
SCHOOL

Learning Support Assistant

January 2024

Candidate Information Pack



'Excellence for All'

This post

We are seeking to appoint a Learning Support Assistant to join our SEN Department from January 2024.

The candidate will be required to work with teaching staff to support a range of students in their learning up to and including 'A' Level.

Closing date for applications: **noon on Monday 16 October 2023.**

Key facts about Monk's Walk School

All Ability

For students aged 11-18 of all abilities. Over 1400 students

Popular and oversubscribed

690 applications (246 first preference) for 236 places in Y7. 92% of parents say they would recommend the school (Parent survey June 2022)

Strong ethos

Inclusive ethos with focus on mutual respect and good behaviour. We aim for our students to be co-operative, courteous and kind.

Academically successful

Record outcomes at both GCSE and A Level in 2022

Broad Curriculum

24 courses delivered at GCSE and 26 at A Level, including all three sciences

Broad extra-curricular programme

A wide programme of activities, trips and visits and enrichment activities

Popular and growing sixth form

260 in the sixth form and a member of the Welwyn Hatfield consortium.

Strong focus on wellbeing

For both staff and students. 99% of staff say they enjoy working at MWS (Staff Survey July 2022)

Strong focus on staff development

We are committed to staff development including Initial Teacher and Early Career Framework training.

Our school

We are a mixed school of about 1,400 11-18 year old students in Welwyn Garden City, a Hertfordshire new town on the outskirts of London. Transport links are superb – direct rail links to London in less than 30 minutes; M1, A1(M), M11 and M25 all minutes away. WGC is a pleasant place to live – it even has John Lewis! The school is situated in a greenbelt area in the prosperous northwest corner of the city. Our grounds are magnificent and the view from the school is lovely. In September 2020 we opened a new teaching block to replace one of the more rundown ones. The DfE have just agreed funding for a new sports hall for the school.

Monk's Walk is a genuinely all-ability school. The number of students with learning challenges is just below the national average, with 15% supported at SEN support or with an Education and Healthcare Plan (EHCP). Our support for students with SEND is a real strength of the school.



Parental confidence in the school is high; there were 690 applications for 236 places in Year 7 for September 2022, with 246 of those as first preference. Each year we hear appeals for students wishing to join the school.

The school has an extremely effective behaviour policy and in general behaviour is very good indeed. Our students want to learn and our parents are, on the whole, extremely supportive. Attendance is high, although in common with most schools affected by COVID. Our aim is for our students to be co-operative, courteous, and kind.

There is a genuine 'buzz' around the school and we have a very strong reputation in the city. In February 2018, the school was judged by Ofsted to be 'good' - please read the inspection letter which can be found on our website (or on Ofsted's) should you wish to apply. We were really pleased with the comments made by inspectors. We are currently 'in the window' for our next inspection although I believe Ofsted are running about 4 terms behind (would make us due in Summer 2023).

GCSE exam results in 2022 were the school's best ever results. 61% of students gained the strong basics (grade 5+ in both English and Maths) and 80% standard basics (grade 4+ in English and maths). Our attainment 8 was 55.7 and progress 8 +0.47. All well above national. Students of all abilities did better than would have been expected, given their starting points. Disadvantaged students made the progress that would have been expected given their starting points – unlike in most other schools in Hertfordshire where it is often well below. Students with SEND did phenomenally well. To look at the school's provisional results in the league tables google 'school performance tables 2022'.

In terms of progress, disadvantaged and SEND students do better in the school than they do nationally. BAME students attain very well and have good progress, as do each of the ability groups. We pride ourselves on the fact that Monk's Walk is an inclusive school.

The school has about 260 in the sixth form and this is the largest sixth form the school has ever had. We are also a member of a consortium with four other schools which provides a wide range of opportunities for students. Monk's Walk has the largest sixth form of the five schools and currently we have 74 guest students in Year 12 and 65 in Year 13. At Monk's Walk we concentrate on providing A Level only (with the exception of iMedia), with decent numbers of students studying the facilitating subjects. Vocational programmes can be taken at Oaklands College or in other consortium schools.

A Level results in 2022 were also the school's best ever, with average point score per grade at 42.17 equivalent to B+. This is even higher than national in 2021 when grades were inflated due to lack of exams. Ignore the information about A Level in the provisional league tables – they only give you the 2019 results. We are very proud of the destinations of our sixth form students. In 2022 almost all students who applied made it to their first or second choice university, high quality apprenticeship or employment. Students access a range of universities, with over 40% accessing Russell Group in 2022. We currently have 11 former students at Cambridge University.



We do not pursue academic achievement at the expense of the wider development of the individual, however. Form tutors, heads of year and heads of house all have important roles in the social, personal and academic support of individuals. Our house system is strong, providing a range of all-ability competitions and activities for mixed age groups. Recently we have become the first school in the country to have a recycling machine with the credit going as house points. All members of staff are allocated a house, except me who has to try to stay impartial of course.

Unfortunately, some schools are making cuts in creative subjects such as Art, Music, Drama and PE and even some DT specialisms. At Monk's Walk, these subjects are strong as we see these areas providing important learning opportunities for our students. All of these subjects are running at GCSE and A Level. Science subjects are among the most popular subjects at A Level.

We have a full orchestra (as well as other musical groups), thriving Art, Music, PE and Sport and an outstanding Drama department. Members of other departments involve themselves in extra-curricular activities in Music, Sport and Drama.

Knightsfield School (a special school for deaf children) is co-located with Monk's Walk School. We have an outstanding partnership arrangement; at key stage 3 Knightsfield students join classes in Art. A few students are also integrated into GCSE groups. Knightsfield students join ours for lunch every day in our canteen in B Block. One of our music teachers teaches at the school.

The school became an academy in September 2012. The decision to convert was purely pragmatic and trustees have no intention to make changes to teachers' pay and conditions beyond those made as part of national agreements.

Induction, training and continuing professional development have a very high priority in the school. All staff have an induction programme on joining the school.

Safeguarding at Monk's Walk

Safeguarding at Monk's Walk takes precedence over any other activity in the school. It's vitally important to us that students feel safe in school so they can learn and thrive. As part of the recruitment process, we will ask about safeguarding students and obviously questions about candidates' suitability to act as tutor. References will be sought, and an enhanced criminal records check will be undertaken for this position.

The SEN Department

The Learning Support Department is an enthusiastic, hardworking team; each member of the team brings with them different qualifications, expertise, skills and experience, always looking for ways to improve the teaching and support to raise students' levels of achievement.

The Student Support Centre is the base for the Learning Support Team and holds a bank of specialist resources available to all staff on request. The Student Support Centre is open every day providing a safe caring environment for vulnerable students as well as specialised interventions for small groups and individual students. A daily lunchtime and after school prep club is offered which focuses on supporting students away from the hustle and bustle of everyday school life.

Support is mostly within the classroom. Students are supported in most subjects with a focus on the core subjects. Where an Education Health and Care plan specifies otherwise, or it is judged that alternative arrangements are needed, more individualised support is provided in the form of individual tuition and small group withdrawal.

Job description

Post Title: Learning Support Assistant
Job Grade: H2
Responsible to: Learning Support Manager

Job Purpose

- To provide a high level of support to teachers in the management of students' learning.
- To aid the students to learn as effectively as possible both in group situations and one-to-one
- To assist students with physical/mobility difficulties around the school environment.

Key Processes and Responsibilities

- To support students in overcoming barriers to learning
- To assist with the development and implementation of student profiles
- To provide clerical and administrative support to the Learning Support department
- To liaise with other support staff, Learning Support Manager, SENCo

This job description sets out the duties of the above post at the time it was drawn up. The Headteacher may vary the duties from time to time without changing their general character or the level of responsibility entailed.

The law requires this position to have an enhanced criminal background check. This is to protect children and vulnerable adults and to safeguard positions of trust. The position is therefore exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. If your application is taken further you will be asked to declare details of any criminal record, even convictions that are 'spent' according to the act. If you are offered the post this information will be checked against Disclosure and Barring Service files. You will be provided with full information at each stage.

Person specification

1. Educational Qualifications

- Good standard of literacy and numeracy (GCSE grade C or equivalent)

2. Professional Experience

- Experience of working in a school or similar organisation
- Experience of working as part of a team
- Experience of working with young people (D)

3. Professional Knowledge and Understanding

The successful candidate will need to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- How to develop effective relationships with young people to aid their learning
- Effective practices and approaches to learning support (D)
- Use of ICT to aid learning
- Effective oral and written communication

4. Personal Qualities and Skills

Ideally, we are looking for someone who:

- Is enthusiastic
- Is reliable, well organised and committed to high standards
- Is co-operative, flexible and responsible
- Is sympathetic to the needs of the school community
- Is patient, optimistic and with a fantastic sense of humour
- Is able to maintain confidentiality
- Is able to empathise with young people and has a genuine interest in their success in education.

(D) = desirable, all other attributes are essential

Your role in our future

Monk's Walk School is a thriving, vibrant, learning community where our aim is to bring the best out of everyone. It is a very good school with the ambition and plans to be even better.

We are not complacent though – we know all schools have room for improvement! We set ourselves high standards and ambitious targets to enable us to reach our goal.

I hope this information has given you a flavour of our school. Please read the Ofsted report and visit our website and Facebook page – Monk's Walk School Official - for more information. If you feel you can contribute to the SEN department for the school and would like to join us, then please apply.

If you would like to talk about the post in a bit more detail before applying, please contact Sian Boatwright; SENCo. Her e-mail address is: Sboatwright@monkswalk.herts.sch.uk

How to apply

I really hope the information we have provided makes you want to apply to join us.

Please apply, via the My New Term website. The link is on the school's website under the vacancies tab. You should also write a letter of application. In your letter of application, please can you explain how you demonstrate that you fulfil the requirements of points 2, 3 and 4 on the person specification (page 6 in this pack).

The deadline for us to receive your application is **noon on Monday 16 October 2023.**

We look forward to hearing from you.

Matt Grinyer
Headteacher
October 2023