



**MONK'S WALK**  
**SCHOOL**

---

**Sixth Form Student Support Officer**

**Candidate Information Pack**

---



**'Excellence for All'**

## This post

We are seeking an enthusiastic colleague to join us as a Sixth Form Student Support Officer on a temporary fixed term contract up until July 2024 to cover long term sickness absence.

Closing date for applications: **noon on Monday 9 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 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

#### 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 below the national average, with 11.6% supported at school action plus or with an Education and Healthcare Plan (EHCP). Our support for students with SEND is a real strength of the school.

We have a small number of blind or partially sighted students who receive specialist support. We also work very closely with Knightsfield School, a special school for deaf children on our campus.



Parental confidence in the school is high; there were 690 applications for 236 places in Year 7 for September 2023. 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 currently 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. We have a full orchestra (as well as other musical groups), as well as the 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 a counsellor in a school. References will be sought and an enhanced criminal records check will be undertaken for this position.

## **The sixth form**

We work with the Welwyn Hatfield consortium of secondary schools. The other schools within the consortium are Bishop's Hatfield, Onslow St Audrey, Ridgeway and Stanborough. Staff from the consortium schools have a very close working relationship and meet regularly. As headteachers we meet fortnightly.

The school has about 250 in the sixth form, and this is the largest sixth form the school has ever had. About 55% of our Year 11 progress into our sixth form; obviously we would like to grow this number. Having said that, Monk's Walk has the largest sixth form of the five schools and currently guest students take 45 courses in Year 13 and 68 in Year 12. Currently 25 Year 12 and 48 Year 13 students from Monk's Walk take courses at the other schools. At Monk's Walk we concentrate on providing mainly A Level, with decent numbers of students studying the facilitating subjects. Vocational programmes can be taken in other consortium schools and Digital Media is offered at Monk's Walk. We currently deliver 26 subjects at A Level.

Sixth form outcomes have improved significantly in recent years and in 2022 were much higher than national. Retention between Years 12 and 13 is excellent as a result of our commitment to ensure all students are on the right study programme. We are very proud of the destinations of our sixth form students, with, for the first time, all students who applied making it to their first or second choice university. Students access a range of universities, including 44% to Russell Group and two to Cambridge University in 2022. Students also access high quality apprenticeship or employment.

The sixth form centre is situated in our new teaching block. The centre is supervised from 8.00am to 5.00pm per day by two sixth form support officers. This temporary role is to cover the long-term absence of one of our current post holders.

Students are organised into form groups, with some grouped by ability. Students sign in and out using their thumb print; there is a degree of flexibility as long as students attend all lessons and complete the minimum number of hours. This system is designed to add to the independence that we wish to inculcate in our sixth form students and encourages them to use their free time as fruitfully as possible. It's not unusual to see students in the centre early in the morning and up to 5pm. Our students do not have a particular dress code, although of course we have guidelines on decency etc. I believe this is a rite of passage and we have no intention of introducing a formal dress code.

An important part of this role is to support the Head and Deputies of Sixth Form.

## Job description

<b>Post Title:</b>	<b>Sixth Form Student Support Officer</b>
<b>Job Grade:</b>	<b>H5</b>
<b>Responsible to:</b>	<b>Head of Sixth Form</b>

### Job Purpose

- To provide support for Head and Deputy Head of 6th in their role of managing the progress, learning and well-being of students
- To ensure that the school aims are put into practice
- To contribute to ensuring that the school is a disciplined, well-ordered place for purposeful learning to take place.

### Key Processes

- Contributing to the monitoring and evaluating of student progress
- Communicating with parents, students and staff on behalf of the 6<sup>th</sup> form
- Liaising with external agencies under the direction of the 6<sup>th</sup> form
- Collecting and processing information about students
- Working with students to promote learning and good behaviour
- Maintaining and updating student records
- Celebrating success through the use of displays, newsletters and the VLE
- Administration/Coordination
- Promoting the school
- Attending appropriate meetings
- Mentoring students in their organization and learning techniques
- Providing guidance and support for students in future studies and careers.

## Key Areas of Responsibility

- Undertaking administrative and support tasks for the Head and Deputy Head of 6<sup>th</sup>.
- Liaising with students, staff and parents under the direction of the Head and Deputy Head of 6<sup>th</sup> form.
- Maintaining and updating student records

This job description sets out the duties of the 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

- Minimum GCSE grade A-C in English and Maths
- Relevant CPD Training Courses

### 2. Professional Experience

- Working in a school or similar organisation
- Working with young people (preferably of secondary school age)
- Working as part of a team
- 

### 3. Professional Knowledge and Understanding

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

- Supporting young people (preferably of secondary school age)
- Understanding of post 16 and higher education.
- Competent ICT skills in the use of spreadsheets, word processing, graphics packages, etc
- General office-based administrative tasks
- Effective communication with a variety of audiences, both orally and in writing

- How to organize and manage time effectively, and how to prioritise and delegate
- Effective customer service and PR skills
- How to administrate and manage the workload of young people

#### **4. Personal Qualities and Skills**

Ideally, we are looking for someone who:

- Has a calm, patient and reflective temperament
- Is positive and enthusiastic
- Is reliable, well organized and consistent
- Is flexible and able to think creatively
- Has passion and believes that every student can succeed at Monk's Walk School
- Is sympathetic to the needs of all young people
- Is able to maintain confidentiality
- Has a life outside school
- Has a sense of humour

## **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 and like most good schools, we know we need to keep on improving to provide the best for our students.

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 high standards of teaching and learning and would like to join us, then please apply.

## **How to apply**

I really hope the information we have provided makes you want to apply to join us. If you would like to discuss the position in more detail or would like to visit the school before applying, please contact Victoria Lyall, HR Manager. Her e-mail is [vlyall@monkswalk.herts.sch.uk](mailto:vlyall@monkswalk.herts.sch.uk).

Please apply via the My New Term link on the school's website. 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 1, 2 and 3 on the person specification (page 7 in this pack).

The deadline for us to receive your application is **noon on Monday 9 October 2023**.

We look forward to hearing from you.

## What happens next

We will shortlist for this post and then we will contact shortlisted candidates by telephone or e-mail to invite them for interview. We will ask referees of shortlisted candidates to complete our reference form, a copy of which can be found on our website for your reference.

Matt Grinyer  
Headteacher  
September 2023