

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in joining our team at Peterhouse School. We are an all-age Non-Maintained Specialist School for children and young people on the Autism Spectrum.

In this application pack you will find:

- Autism Initiatives Application Form
- Job Description & Person Specification
- Recruitment Process Outline incl information on criminal background checks
- Safeguarding, Equality & Diversity, Disability Confident, Time to Change
- Guidelines re References
- Autism Initiatives Code of Conduct
- Data Protection Information

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with school if you have any queries about the recruitment & selection process, or about the position you are applying for.

Yours faithfully,

Conny Brandt

Conny Brandt
Education Business Manager

“Staff, parents and pupils are clearly proud of their school and feel well supported in their wellbeing. All stakeholders talk positively about how they have been both individually and collectively supported by the school.”

(Wellbeing Award for Schools, 2022)

WORKING AT PETERHOUSE

Who do we look for?

Our staff are dedicated professionals who work effectively as part of a team. We have a culture of continuous development and our staff are keen to learn new skills and reflect upon and further develop their practice.

Communication is central to all that we do and our staff are able to adapt their communication to the needs of pupils as well as communicating effectively with each other, with families and with professionals.

The working environment at Peterhouse can be challenging and our staff are expected to be reflective practitioners, have a calm manner and a high level of resilience.

What do we offer?

We have high expectations of our staff. In return, our staff can expect:

- An extensive package of basic training, along with opportunities for further continuous professional development that are tailored to addressing your individual needs and develop your strengths and interests.
- A highly supportive working environment that considers your wellbeing and mental health and offers a range of systems to foster this.
- Work that is both challenging and rewarding, where you can make a real difference to the lives of our young people and their families, and help them to become successful autistic adults.
- A range of Employee Benefits, e.g. Employee Assistance Programme, Medicash scheme, Long Term Service Award, free tea and coffee, staff prize draws (benefits can vary depending on role and length of service)



RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Our Recruitment process follows the requirements set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021. We also adhere to the Equality Act 2010, the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020) and the General Data Protection Regulation.

- Advert
- Application form: Please return your completed form to Peterhouse School by the closing date given in the advert. We cannot accept CVs. We will accept applications sent by post, email, ETeach or using the Autism Initiatives online form.
- Shortlisting: Shortlisting will be based on your application, with reference to the Job Description and Person Specification. We are a Disability Confident Employer and will interview all applicants who have a disability and meet the essential criteria set out in our Person Specification.
- References: If you are shortlisted for interview, we will contact your referees. We may also contact your previous employers for additional references.
- Online check: In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022, we will carry out an online check. This will only access information that is publically available e.g. via Google.
- Self Declaration form: If you are shortlisted for interview, we will send you a self-declaration form to give you the opportunity to let us know about any information that may be contained in your DBS check. This form must be returned to us prior to your interview.
- Interview: For the majority of posts, you will be interviewed by a panel of two staff. Depending on the nature of the post, the interview may also include a practical task and/or the opportunity to spend time in a class. You will be informed of any tasks in the letter inviting you for interview. During the interview, we may raise any queries that have arisen from your application form, your references or your self-declaration. You will also have the opportunity to ask any questions you may have. Should you wish to visit school prior to your interview, you are welcome to do so – please contact the school office to arrange an appointment.
- Offer: We will offer the post to the applicant who scored highest at interview. If you accept the offer, we will send you a medical questionnaire to verify your physical and mental fitness to carry out your work responsibilities. You will receive an Offer Letter and Starter Pack from our Head Office.

- Background checks: Your job offer will be conditional upon satisfactory completion of all background checks:
 - o Verification of your identity and address
 - o Satisfactory references (at least two; we may seek additional references)
 - o Enhanced DBS check and Children’s Barred List check. Depending on the role, we may also request an Adult Barred List check.
 - o Overseas checks, if you have lived outside of the UK for 6 months or more during the last 5 years.
 - o Eligibility to work in the UK
 - o Evidence of any relevant qualifications
 - o Online check
 - o (Teachers only) Prohibition check

- Commencement: Once all background checks have been completed, we will be delighted to welcome you to our team at Peterhouse! You will be offered an in-depth induction and training to help you settle into your new role.

Disclosing Criminal Convictions

The amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020) provides that when applying for certain jobs and activities, certain convictions and cautions are considered ‘protected’. This means that they do not need to be disclosed to employers, and if they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account.

Guidance about whether a conviction or caution should be disclosed can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/tell-employer-or-college-about-criminal-record/check-your-conviction-caution>



SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children and young people are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children and young people receive effective support, protection and justice. Whilst working in our school we expect you to take care of our pupils and follow our procedures.

“There are high aspirations of all the staff at Peterhouse.”

(Challenge Partners, 2023)

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

We welcome applications from all sections of the community. We welcome diversity in our workforce and see having a wide variety of staff as a strength.

DISABILITY CONFIDENT

Autism Initiatives participates in the Disability Confident scheme. As a Disability Confident employer, we ensure that our recruitment process is inclusive and accessible. The standard question about disability on our online application helps to ensure that we always offer an interview to any disabled candidate who meets the minimum criteria for the post. This question also enables us to make any necessary adjustments to our interview arrangements and to the way in which the role is performed, should an applicant with a disability be successful.

Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you wish to discuss possible adjustments to any part of the application process or to the role you wish to apply for.

TIME TO CHANGE

We have made a ‘Time to Change’ Employer’s Pledge to promote an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect, where mental health is supported and addressed openly amongst all our staff, our pupils and their families.

GUIDELINES FOR REFERENCES

Your references form a key part of our background checks. Prior to naming referees, please ensure that:

- You obtain their consent to share their contact details
- They have agreed to provide a reference for you
- You have the correct contact details

We will always request a reference from your current employer (please let us know if you wish us to delay contacting your current employer until after you have been successful at interview). We require at least one more reference – this can be a character reference. We may ask you to provide additional referees.

We reserve the right to contact any of your previous employers for an additional reference if we consider this to be appropriate.

“I am proud to work at such a fantastic school, with a fabulous team. I feel supported and I feel an equal even though I am new to the school..”

(Staff School Development Survey, 2022)



Working Well: A Code of Conduct

The Autism Initiatives Code of Conduct describes the standards of behaviour and attitudes expected of everyone working within the organisation at any time as they carry out their day to day activities. It is each individual's **personal responsibility** to meet these standards, so that the people we support, colleagues and all who come into contact with Autism Initiatives, can be assured of an appropriate and professional approach at all times. The Code of Conduct will complement other professional Codes to which employees subscribe.

The Code of Conduct has the status of a Policy document and all employees are expected to adhere to the standards described; failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. The Code has eight key areas:

1. **Respect**
2. **Honesty and openness**
3. **Behaviours and appearance**
4. **Confidentiality**
5. **Professional boundaries**
6. **Managing risk**
7. **Personal responsibility, effectiveness and competence**
8. **Organisational reputation**

1. **Respect**

- Respect will first and foremost mean that we listen to and consult with people supported about their lives, establishing and maintaining a 'power with' relationship.
- We will respect the home of the person supported and recognise them as ultimate 'employer' and the reason we work.
- We will be 'present' at work with the people we support and be **alert** and **proactive** with regard to their needs.
- We will not talk over a person supported.
- We will not talk about a person supported, unless it is in line with the work we are undertaking with and for them and in adherence to confidentiality and GDPR.
- We will not use personal mobiles and messaging systems when we are working. Mobiles and messaging systems must only be used with the supported person where this is part of the work you are undertaking with them, for example, checking bus time tables, what's on at the cinema etc.
- We will always be courteous and professional in any face to face meetings and discussions, as well as in written communications, including email and text.
- We will recognise diversity as a positive strength and will not behave in any discriminatory way towards others. This means in relation to ability, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

2. Honesty and Openness

- Open and honest relationships are to be the norm, contributing to a climate where opinions can be aired in appropriate forums and where feedback is given constructively and received positively. In this way, we will continuously improve what we do in support of people with autism.

“Parents are positive about the school and appreciate the support they receive. They feel that staff are approachable and feel included in their child’s education.”

(Leading Parent Partnership Award, 2021)

3. Behaviours and Appearance

- We will always present ourselves in a clean and tidy manner, dressing appropriately according to the Positive Intervention dress guidelines and the day’s activities, as required by our Dress Code.
- We will be aware that some people with autism may have hypersensitivity to certain smells, for example, perfume etc., and respond appropriately.
- We will not argue, shout or swear whilst at work whether in the home of a person supported or in the community or when we are working.

4. Confidentiality

- We will always maintain professional standards of confidentiality in our work with people supported, and also with colleagues and other organisations as appropriate.
- We will never make adverse or personal comments about people supported, colleagues, or the organisation by text, social networking or any other inappropriate media. Please refer to 5.2 of the Acceptable Use of I.T. Resources Policy.
- We will ensure that services and people are not identifiable on social media.
- We will ensure files, records and other information is always appropriately held and stored in order to protect the privacy and safety of others and the reputation of the organisation.

5. Professional Boundaries

- Our relationship with the people we support, families and colleagues is professional, not personal. We will establish and maintain clear personal/sexual boundaries at all time with people supported, and their families/carers.
- Staff will not have personal or sexual relationships with any person supported nor family members.
- Staff will not take the people we support to their own homes or the homes of relatives or friends.

- Staff will not invite relatives or friends into the home of any person supported without the permission of a Senior Manager, Social Worker and/or an agreed best interests decision.
- Staff will not meet with their own friends or relatives whilst supporting people.
- We will always declare any information which might create a conflict of interest, or which might be seen to influence decision making.
- Any gifts, favours or hospitality offered to any employee or group of employees will be declared, as these might be interpreted as influencing actions and decisions. Any monetary gift or donation will always be declared to the Area Manager/Senior Manager and any gift other than flowers/chocolates will be similarly declared.
- Staff should conduct any business on behalf of the organisation honestly and with integrity. Staff must not facilitate any form of tax evasion (please refer to the Corporate Finance Act Policy).
- We will work within our own professional boundaries, recognising when advice or guidance from a specialist or more senior person is needed and seeking this.

6. Managing Risk

- We will act *without delay* if we believe the physical environment, or any action or behaviour is putting anyone at risk. This means we will take direct action or report the matter to others, as appropriate.
- We will not be risk averse in ways which restrict the development of individuals we support, but will use our knowledge of the person and personalise risk assessments to support their development.

7. Personal Responsibility, Effectiveness and Competence

- We will work to a high standard following Autism Initiatives' systems, policies and processes.
- We will be committed to an active approach to maintaining our professional knowledge and competence through updating our knowledge and skills as required through training and other development activity.
- We will attend and be on time and prepared for all meetings and other appointments.
- We will attend all training specified, being on time, and well equipped and prepared for the sessions.

8. Organisational Reputation

- We will always act in the best interests of Autism Initiatives, in order to achieve its objectives and maintain its reputation.
- We will at all times, as an employee of Autism Initiatives, consider the effect of our behaviours and attitudes on the reputation of the organisation and the impact on people we support.

DATA PROTECTION

All data you provide as part of your application will be kept strictly confidential and will only be shared with staff directly involved in the recruitment process. The Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form will not be used during the recruitment process but may be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the Autism Initiatives Equality & Diversity Policy.

If you are a successful applicant, your application information will be transferred onto our electronic data management system and we may also keep a hardcopy for our staff files. Information will be kept up to date and all data will be kept secure.

Information will be held at school and at the Autism Initiatives Human Resources Department. Your personal information will not be shared with any third parties unless there is a lawful basis for processing in line with GDPR.

If your application is not successful, your application documentation will be kept on file (electronically and/or as hardcopy) for 6 months in case any further appropriate employment opportunities arise. It will then be destroyed. It will not be shared with any third parties.

“Pupils at Peterhouse School enjoy learning and playing with their friends. They benefit from the supportive relationships that they form with staff.”

(Ofsted 2023)

“I feel like the staff are caring and helpful and truly care about the students here.”

(Student Wellbeing Survey, 2022)

“I just want to say how proud I am of my little son after his review today but mostly I just want to say the biggest thank you ever to everyone at Peterhouse who has worked so hard with him through the toughest of times to get him to where he is now”

(Parent feedback, 2023)