

The Blue School

Information for Candidates



Details about the school

The Blue School caters for approximately 1500 students aged 11 to 18 drawn from the City of Wells and its surrounding communities. The Blue School is a state maintained, coeducational, fully inclusive Church of England School academy. The successful postholder will be employed by The Blue School. Although as an academy The Blue School is independent, we maintain strong links with Somerset Local Authority as well as partner schools and other representative groups in the county.

The school staff

There are over 250 people employed at The Blue School, within a range of full-time or part-time, permanent, fixed term or casual contracts. Teaching or support, all roles are deemed equally vital for the smooth and effective running of the school.

The school operates two conditions of service, teaching and support. This vacancy is a support post. Although an independent employer, the school continues to closely follow the terms and conditions of Somerset Local Authority and other national agreements, including pay scales. All support staff are automatically enrolled into the Somerset Local Government Pension Scheme (SLGPS) on appointment, (with an opt-out option). An employee's contribution to the SLGPS is enhanced by an additional contribution from The Blue. Other benefits include the payment of sick pay from the first day of absence and the provision of uniform and other protective clothing if/as appropriate to the role. Many of our staff are parents/carers of children attending The Blue or at other local schools and we endeavour to follow family friendly policies for our staff whilst balancing the need to fulfil the role in school.

Covid-19 Secure Precautions

The school has procedures in place to mitigate against the risk of Covid-19 virus transmission amongst staff and students. However, even with these measures, inevitably given the number of individuals on the school site there is an increased risk of virus transmission. Although we have taken steps to separate staff from suspected Covid-19 symptomatic individuals, please be fully aware that you may at times come into contact with someone who subsequently tests positive for the virus.

The SEND Department

The Blue School is an inclusive school and offers a range of provision to support students from Y7 to Y13, who experience difficulties with Communication and Interaction, Cognition and Learning, Social, Mental and Emotional problems or Sensory and/or Physical needs. There are approximately 200 students with differing needs who are all well supported by a specialist team of committed individuals.

Job Details – Teaching Assistant

35 hours per week, Monday to Friday excluding 30 minutes for an unpaid lunch break. This role will include 45 minutes of lunchtime supervision from 1.15pm until 2.00pm.

Term time only, 38 working weeks per year plus 21 additional hours (3 days equivalent) for training and meetings. Equates to 44.0006 paid weeks per year, paid over 12 months. The post holder is not expected to take time off during term-time other than for exceptional circumstances.

Annual salary based on grade 14, point 4, currently £15,112 per annum.

Job Purpose

The postholder provides support to students from Y7 to Y13 with a range of learning needs both in and outside of the classroom, during the school day at school. The postholder will be an active and valued member of the SEND Team, who work together to ensure SEND students make excellent progress.

Duties

The postholder will:

1. Support the learning of students with educational, physical, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, based in our Student Support Centre, and/or students, either in class or out of lessons, in the Learning Support Centre. Support is both on a one to one basis and in small groups, helping students to improve reading and numeracy skills.
2. Have high expectations of all students.
3. Build and maintain successful relationships with students, treating them consistently, with respect and consideration, and showing concern for their development as learners.
4. Demonstrate and promote the positive values, attitudes and behaviour they expect from the students with whom they work.
5. Work collaboratively with colleagues, knowing when to seek help and advice.
6. When supporting students in class, work under the direction of the class teacher but apply the knowledge and understanding of individual students' learning difficulties to provide support at an appropriate level.
7. Demonstrate an informed and efficient approach to teaching and learning by adopting relevant strategies to support the work of the teacher and increase achievement of all students including those with special educational needs and disabilities.
8. Promote, support and facilitate inclusion by encouraging participation of all students in learning and, where appropriate, extracurricular activities.
9. Use effective behaviour management strategies consistently in line with the school's policy and procedures.
10. Contribute to effective assessment and planning by supporting the monitoring, recording and reporting of student progress as appropriate to the level of the role.
11. Communicate effectively and sensitively with students to adapt to their needs and support their learning.
12. Recognise and respect the role and contribution of other professionals, parents and carers by liaising effectively and working in partnership with them.
13. With the class teacher, keep colleagues and other professionals accurately informed of progress or concerns they may have about the students they work with.
14. Understand their responsibility to share knowledge to inform planning and decision making, working collaboratively with classroom teachers and other colleagues, including specialist advisory teachers.
15. Communicate their knowledge and understanding of students to other school staff and education, health and social care professionals, so that informed decision making can take place on intervention and provision.
16. Have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they work as professional members of staff.
17. Have regard for the need to safeguard students' well-being by following relevant statutory guidance along with school policies and practice.

18. Uphold values consistent with those required from teachers by respecting individual differences and cultural diversity.
19. Share responsibility for ensuring that their own knowledge and understanding is relevant and up to date by reflecting on their own practice, liaising with school leaders and accessing relevant professional development to improve personal effectiveness.
20. Act as a Lunchtime Supervisor each day in various areas of the school, indoors and outside, wherever directed involving interaction with students.

Other responsibilities include:

21. Undertake personal care of students, if needed.
22. Promoting and reinforcing students' self-esteem.
23. Developing students' social skills through informal approaches.
24. Observing and assessing students in class.
25. Assisting in the organisation of rooms in the SEND department, including helping with displays, mounting and displaying students' work and preparing any materials or visual aids needed.
26. Responding to any student in distress and supporting him or her by listening.
27. Attending meetings to support students during the meeting.
28. Supporting students in activities out of school.
29. Supporting students during examinations, in the roles of scribe or reader.
30. Becoming a key worker for a student when required.

Safeguarding

As with all staff at The Blue, the postholder will conduct themselves and undertake their day to day activities in line with the school's child safeguarding policy, ensuring that any concerns are reported promptly following the specified communication route.

Health and Safety

As with all staff at The Blue, the postholder will conduct themselves and undertake their day to day activities in line with the school's health and safety policy and procedures, ensuring due care for themselves and those around them.

Supervision Received

The post holder is a member of the SEND Team, line managed by the SENCO overall. However, for significant periods of time the postholder will be expected to work unsupervised, under their own initiative.

Supervision Given

The postholder will not supervise other staff.

Person Specification

Skills, experience and qualities required include:

- A minimum of 2 A Levels or equivalent or other relevant experience.
- 5 GCSEs or equivalent including English and Maths.
- Effective communication skills with the ability to communicate effectively with students and staff.
- Good organisational and problem solving skills.
- Energy and enthusiasm.
- Patience.
- Initiative, resourcefulness and the ability to work independently.

- The ability to motivate students using innovative approaches.
- An interest in working in a school environment and a commitment to supporting and working with young people, and empathy with students who have special educational needs.
- A desire to be part of a team and be a loyal and hardworking team member, working cohesively with colleagues as part of the SEND team.
- Be willing to undertake personal care of students.
- A good level of IT skills.
- Good track record of attendance, with excellent time keeping and punctuality.

Safeguarding

The Blue School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. **The offer of this post to the successful applicant will be subject to a satisfactory Enhanced DBS Check and two satisfactory references**, one of whom must be the applicant's current or most recent employer, trainer or education establishment as appropriate.

The application process

If you are interested in applying for this post, please complete the application form fully and accurately and return it with a letter (no more than one side of A4) outlining why you believe that your experience, interests and skills would make you suitable for the post. Please ensure that there are no unexplained gaps in your training and/or employment history. No CVs accepted.

Closing date for applications: Monday 19th April 2021, Noon.

Interviews: TBC

Please return the completed application form to Miss Julie Biggadike at the school:

The Blue School
Kennion Road
Wells
Somerset BA5 2NR

Telephone: 01749 678799. Email: jobswiththeblue@educ.somerset.gov.uk