



**Longcause Community
Special School**

HEADTEACHER – ESSENTIAL & DESIRABLE CRITERIA

Criteria Area	Essential	Desirable
Professional Status & Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)• National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH), or currently undertaking NPQH with a clear commitment to completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional qualifications relevant to SEND leadership
Special School Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Substantial and successful teaching experience in a special school or specialist SEND provision• Significant senior leadership experience in a special school or equivalent high-needs setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experience across more than one special school or phase• Experience of outreach or advisory SEND services

SEND Expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive understanding of communication and interaction needs, including autism and social communication differences • Proven experience meeting the needs of pre-verbal and minimally verbal pupils • Experience of embedding AAC approaches effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist training in autism, speech and language, sensory integration or attachment-informed practice
Emotional and Therapeutic Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant experience of leading emotional support within a therapeutic, trauma-informed framework • Strong alignment with relational, restorative and person-centred approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal training in trauma-informed practice, PACE, CPI or similar frameworks • Experience of embedding whole-school therapeutic cultures
Curriculum, Teaching & Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of leading and developing a bespoke special school curriculum • Strong understanding of adaptive teaching and assessment for pupils working below age-related expectations • Proven ability to lead and improve high-quality teaching and learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience across a wide range of key stages, including Early Years
Leadership & School Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven experience of leading whole-school improvement priorities • Ability to plan, implement and evaluate impact effectively • Experience of leading through challenge or organisational change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of supporting schools in difficulty or improvement

People Leadership & Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrable experience of leading, managing and developing multidisciplinary teams • Strong people-management skills including coaching, performance management and staff development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal coaching or mentoring qualification
Safeguarding & Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong knowledge and experience of safeguarding in SEND contexts • Clear commitment to pupil wellbeing and inclusive practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
Partnership & Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working effectively with parents/carers, local authorities and external professionals • Experience of working with and reporting to governors or a trust board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of budget management and financial planning
Personal Qualities & Ethos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong moral purpose and commitment to SEND education • High emotional intelligence, resilience and reflective leadership style • Commitment to inclusive leadership and staff wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience contributing to local or national SEND networks