



**Longcause Community  
Special School**

**HEADTEACHER – ESSENTIAL & DESIRABLE CRITERIA**

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

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

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