



Headteacher Candidate Pack

"Pupils flourish in this nurturing school"

Ofsted 2022

Welcome to the application process from our Chair of Governors



Dear Applicant,

Thank you for taking the time to consider applying for the headship of Spen Valley High School. As Chair of the Governing Body, I would like to take this opportunity to tell you a little bit about our school and the type of Headteacher that we are looking to appoint.

Our highly respected Headteacher is retiring at the end of the summer term and we wish to continue to develop as an attachment secure school, with our trauma-informed relational approach where we focus on the whole student and their experience in school. We have high aspirations for our students and understand that outcomes are important, however, we also understand that for some, academic study can be challenging and we aim to ensure that our students can learn in a variety of ways, by supporting them and removing barriers.

We are proud to have been recognised by external stakeholders nationally, both by the Attachment Research Community (ARC) when in 2021 we won the national ARC award for our trauma informed work, and, in 2022 Ofsted judged the school as 'Good' acknowledging our nurturing approach to education in their report. Our Headteacher has continued to drive the school forward following these successes and as a result, we are well-placed to face the challenges presented by the ever-changing education environment.

We are looking to appoint an inspirational Headteacher who recognises that the overarching aim of everything we do is to improve the lives of young people, raising attainment, building confidence and enabling our students to stand shoulder to shoulder with any other person from any background. We do this as a fully inclusive school.

We are a proud member of the Spenborough Cooperative Trust and look forward to ever closer collaboration within the Trust. We are also a member of the Red Kite Alliance and as a governing body, we recognise the benefits of strengthening partnerships with a wider network of schools and other organisations. Our new Headteacher will be pivotal in continuing to build these relationships and develop new ones.

Our committed governors and senior leaders, teaching and support staff have high expectations. The Governing Body will challenge our Headteacher in an open, honest, and constructive way. We also expect that our Headteacher will challenge us, and bring with them new ideas.

I strongly recommend that you visit our school, as you will find that our students and staff are the best advert we have. This can be arranged by contacting our HR Lead, Tracey Bland, via email tbland@spenvalleyhighschool.co.uk.

To apply for this Headteacher position, please access and fully complete the application form via MyNewTerm and submit it together with your covering letter, which can be uploaded to the messages section of the portal, by the closing date of **12 noon on Monday 20th January 2025**. For any queries, please contact Tracey Bland via the email above or by calling 01924 405451.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maxine Dunn', written in a cursive style.

Maxine Dunn
Chair of Governors

An introduction to Spen Valley High School

Spen Valley High School is really quite different to other secondary schools because of the courageous decision we made in March 2019, to work towards becoming a Trauma Informed and Attachment Aware school. Our approach is based on building strong relationships and supporting our students to understand their emotional triggers and learn how to self-regulate. This approach pervades all aspects of our school; including the way we teach, our curriculum, our staff CPD programmes, our behaviour procedures and our recruitment strategy. We have high expectations of all our students but a flexible approach in helping them to achieve these.

This approach takes time to embed; it is not a 'quick fix' but is essential if we are to develop our students into adults who can have positive and meaningful relationships in their lives. Alongside high-quality teaching we also use a variety of strategies and interventions with our students, including our Personalised Learning Provision (PLP) which provides areas where students can take part in a range of therapies, academic catch up, emotion coaching, gardening (in our allotment), or additional specific interventions. We have an on-site provision where our most dysregulated students are able to work in smaller groups and attend intensive interventions with experienced staff. The work with these students is crucial to keeping them in school and learning. We also have a wellbeing centre where students can access our student counsellor, and a sensory room which is a safe space for students where they can re-regulate.

We are proud that our work was nationally recognised in March 2021 when we were awarded the Attachment Research Community (ARC) Alex Timpson award. Since then, we have become an ARC Learning Hub and presented to other schools and local authorities around the country; we were even invited to Downing Street to a reception of Education Champions. The Governors are committed to continuing and further developing this work into the future.

Context

Spen Valley High School is a co-educational school, which caters for students between the ages of 11 to 16. Being situated in North Kirklees we draw students directly from the local community around the Liversedge, Heckmondwike and Cleckheaton area. The vast majority of our students live within walking distance of the school, coming from the local area which is made up of established social housing, private rental accommodation and owner-occupied housing.

Most intake comes from our eight main feeder primary schools; however, this is skewed to students with lower than national APS on entry. This is partly due to some families choosing to send their children to the local, selective grammar school. The school has a strong reputation within the local community and is oversubscribed with the majority of our intake being our students first preference school. Our PAN is currently 960; there are 190 students in all year groups with the exception of the current Year 9 into which we took an additional 10 students to support the 'bulge' in numbers within the local authority.

Almost 32% of our students are entitled to support through the Pupil Premium funding (this is higher in the current years 7 and 8 where it is 40% and 34% respectively). 31% of students are currently eligible for free school meals and 23% of students are on the SEND register, of whom 31 have an EHCP. Almost 20% of the student intake is from minority ethnic groups (around 11% are from families originating from Pakistan).

We have 7 students who are in the care of the Local Authority and 14 students who are previously looked after, are in kinship care or live with someone outside of their immediate family.

Partnerships

The school is an outward facing school and has developed many strong partnerships to help drive forward its priorities. We are part of The Spenborough Cooperative Trust along with six primary schools and a special school; this has been successful in developing a wider community ethos and promoting parental engagement. For the past 6 years it has been a member of the Red Kite Alliance which has been instrumental in supporting curriculum leaders to develop their curriculum, provided CPD opportunities and supported our self-valuation processes through Peer Reviews. Following our membership with the Red Kite, we also attend the Leeds Learning Alliance. The school is also a member of the Attachment Research Community and has strong connections with other schools and organisations who support this approach.

Staffing

Spenn Valley High School staffing comprises 55 teaching colleagues (54.2 FTE), and 76 support staff. Staffing is relatively stable, with last year seeing the fewest number of staff leaving for the past 10 years. There is a mixture of experienced colleagues and those who have more recently joined the profession, and we have a healthy ITT programme with student teachers joining us from a range of providers. All areas of the curriculum are appropriately staffed with specialist staff where possible, however like other schools nationally Spenn Valley has found it difficult to recruit to some subjects in recent years.

Coaching

Instead of form tutors, most of the staff in our school (teaching and support) are a coach to a group of students, meeting their coaching group (a maximum of 15 students) every morning for 20 minutes, Monday to Thursday. They spend this time, 'checking in' with their coachees, going through regulation techniques, responding to any issues their students may be facing and getting them ready for the day. A coaching booklet of interesting topics and quizzes is available each week, but this is very much an opportunity to develop a strong relationship between the coaches and their group. On Fridays, the coach meets with their group for the last 20 minutes of the day to 'check out' and reflect on their week.

Curriculum and timetable

Spenn Valley High School is organised into 5-year groups over the two key stages and operates a 50-period timetable over a two-week cycle.

Each period is around 1 hour in duration (periods 2 and 3 Monday – Thursday last 1 hour 5 minutes). The school day is truncated by a morning break of 20 minutes and lunch of 40 minutes (30 minutes for staff). All staff are required to do a duty either the first or last 10 minutes of each lunchtime to support the smooth running of this session. Year groups are divided into two populations and are largely homogeneous regarding ability.

We offer our students a broad and balanced curriculum which is available to view on our website:

<https://www.spennvalleyhighschool.co.uk/Curriculum/>

An introduction to Spen Valley High School Continued

School Improvement Priorities 2024/25

The following diagram details the school's improvement priorities for this academic year:



Headteacher Job Description

SALARY GRADE:	L29 - L35
SALARY:	£99,067 - £113,624
RESPONSIBLE TO:	Governing Body
RESPONSIBLE FOR:	Direct line management of Senior Leadership Team and responsible for the whole staff body

PURPOSE

To be responsible for all aspects of the internal organisation, professional leadership, management and control of the school and for exercising supervision over the teaching and support staff.

CONSULTATION

In carrying out these duties, to consult, where this is appropriate, with the appropriate authority, the Governing Body, the staff of the school and the parents of its pupils and members of the Trust.

OVERRIDING REQUIREMENTS

A Headteacher's professional duties must be carried out in accordance with and subject to:

- a. the provisions of all applicable legislation and any orders and regulations having effect under the applicable legislation. This appointment will be made subject to statutory authority in force at the time of the appointment;
- b. the instrument of government of the Headteacher's school;
- c. any rules, regulations or policies made either by the governing body on matters for which it is responsible, by the authority with respect to matters for which the governing body is not responsible or by the Headteacher's employers;
- d. where the school is a voluntary, foundation or foundation special school, any trust deed that applies to the school;
- e. the terms of their appointment.

DELEGATION

Subject to paragraph 1, a Headteacher's responsibilities may be delegated to a deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher or other member of the staff in a manner consistent with their conditions of employment, having regard to the nature and extent of their management responsibilities, and maintaining a reasonable balance between work and other commitments for each teacher.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

A Headteacher is required to undertake the following duties:

1. Whole school organisation, strategy and development

- Provide overall strategic leadership and, with others, lead, develop and support the strategic direction, vision, values and priorities of the school.
- Develop, implement and evaluate the school's policies, practices and procedures.

2. Teaching

- Lead and manage teaching and learning throughout the school, including ensuring, save in exceptional circumstances, that a teacher is assigned in the school timetable to every class or group of pupils in the third and fourth key stages, for foundation and other core subjects and religious education.
- Teach.

3. Health, safety and discipline

- Promote the safety and well-being of pupils and staff.
- Ensure good order and discipline amongst pupils and staff.

4. Management of staff and resources

- Lead, manage and develop the staff, including appraising and managing performance.
- Develop clear arrangements for linking appraisal to pay progression and advise the relevant body on pay recommendations for teachers, including on whether a teacher at the school who applied to be paid on the upper pay range should be paid on that range.
- Organise and deploy resources within the school.
- Promote harmonious working relationships within the school.
- Maintain relationships with organisations representing teachers and other members of the staff.
- Lead and manage the staff with a proper regard for their well-being and legitimate expectations, including the expectation of a healthy balance between work and other commitments.

5. Professional development

- Promote the participation of staff in relevant continuing professional development.
- Participate in arrangements for the appraisal and review of their own performance and, where appropriate, that of other teachers and support staff.
- Participate in arrangements for their own further training and professional development and, where appropriate, that of other teachers and support staff including induction.

6. Communication

- Consult and communicate with the governing body, staff, students, parents and carers.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES (continued)

7. Work with colleagues and other relevant professionals

- Collaborate and work with colleagues and other relevant professionals within and beyond the school including relevant external agencies and bodies.

8. Dedicated Headship time

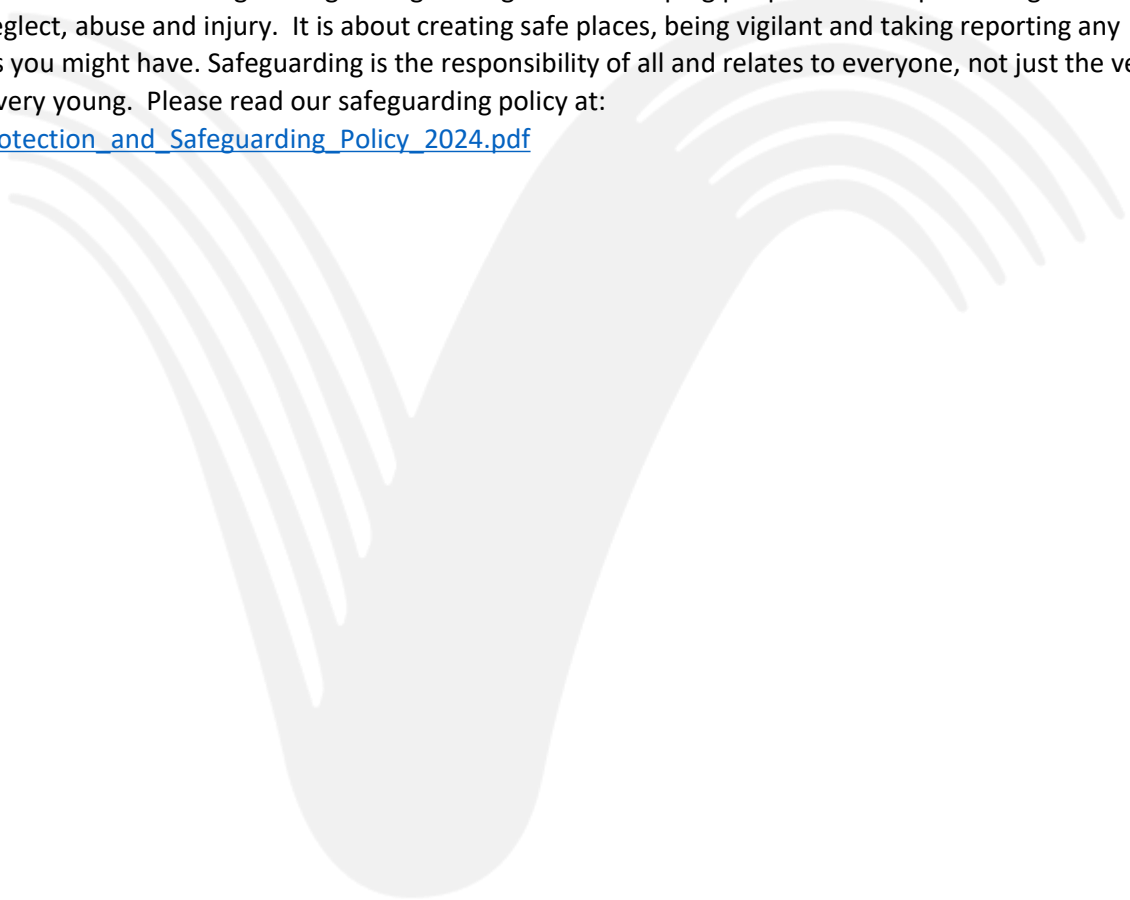
- A Headteacher is entitled to a reasonable amount of time during school sessions, having regard to their teaching responsibilities, for the purpose of discharging their leadership and management responsibilities.

9. Daily break

- A Headteacher is entitled to a break of reasonable length in the course of each school day, and must arrange for a suitable person to assume responsibility for the discharge of their functions as Headteacher during that break.

As part of your wider duties and responsibilities you are required to promote and actively support the School's responsibilities towards safeguarding. Safeguarding is about keeping people safe and protecting them from harm, neglect, abuse and injury. It is about creating safe places, being vigilant and taking reporting any concerns you might have. Safeguarding is the responsibility of all and relates to everyone, not just the very old and the very young. Please read our safeguarding policy at:

[Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2024.pdf](#)



Person Specification

Relevant Experience			
Description	Essential	Desirable	Identified by?
Experience of successful leadership as a serving Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher in a Secondary School	Y		A/S
Experience of working effectively in partnership with Governors, staff, parents and the wider community	Y		A/S
Experience of working with a relational approach to behaviour and a commitment to working with students using a trauma informed relational approach		Y	A/S
Experience of performance management & competency processes	Y		A
Thorough understanding of the Ofsted inspection framework	Y		A/S
Experience in leading or contributing to the self-evaluation and school improvement processes	Y		A/S
Experience of financial management and the management of budgets		Y	A/S
Experience of implementing current educational developments		Y	A
Experience of safeguarding responsibilities and ability to demonstrate relevant procedures and protocol	Y		
Education and training			
Description	Essential	Desirable	Identified by?
Degree	Y		A
Qualified Teacher Status	Y		A
National Professional Qualification for Headteachers Certificate or working towards this	Y		A
Evidence of up to date safeguarding training and understanding of the Keeping Children Safe in Education document	Y		A
Evidence of commitment to continual professional development	Y		A
General and special knowledge and skills			
Description	Essential	Desirable	Identified by?
Demonstrate an understanding of the school's restorative approach and a commitment to working with students using a trauma informed relational approach		Y	A
An understanding of inclusive practice	Y		A/S/I
Excellent knowledge of barriers to learning and experience of working to remove these	Y		A
Ability to analyse data and write high quality reports to be presented to Governors and other stakeholders	Y		A

Key: **A** = Application **S** = Selection Process **I** = Interview

General and special knowledge and skills (continued)

Description	Essential	Desirable	Identified by?
Ability and knowledge of how to evaluate and enhance student progress	Y		A
An understanding of the importance of personal development of young people	Y		A
Knowledge and understanding of the potential benefits and challenges of changes to Curriculum & Examination systems	Y		A
Development planning, finance and resource management	Y		A/S/I
Able to secure adequate resources so the school can meet its objectives & oversees the formulation of the annual budget to achieve this		Y	A/S/I
Monitors and evaluates value for money		Y	A/S/I
Demonstrates insight and anticipates trends	Y		S/I

Personal Qualities

Description	Essential	Desirable	Identified by?
Ability to model effective leadership and manage people to work towards common goals	Y		A/S
Energy and ability to deal with a significant workload and delegated responsibility	Y		A/S
Calm under pressure and able to self-regulate in stressful situations	Y		A/S
Ability to analyse information, draw conclusions and make decisions	Y		A/S
Excellent oral and written communication skills with a high level of literacy	Y		A/S/I
High level of emotional intelligence	Y		A/S
Adaptable to changing circumstances and new ideas	Y		A/S
Approachable, reliable, has presence and enjoys being highly visible to students and parents	Y		S/I
Drive, initiative, enthusiasm and commitment to learning	Y		S/I
Be able to provide appropriate levels of support and challenge	Y		S/I
Ability to create a learning culture which is recognised by staff, parents and students for the long-term future of the school	Y		S/I
Self-motivated with good organisational skills and the ability to prioritise workload effectively	Y		S/I
Inquisitive and able to think creatively, solve problems and make decisions based on sound judgment	Y		S/I
Demonstrates professional loyalty and integrity	Y		S/I

Vision

Description	Essential	Desirable	Identified by?
A clear and coherent educational vision which supports the ethos of Spen Valley High School	Y		A/S/I
Values diversity and the unique contribution that every individual makes to the learning community	Y		A/S/I
Able to inspire, challenge, motivate and empower others to carry the vision forward	Y		A/I
A commitment to collaborative working in the Trust and a range of other networks	Y		S/I

Safeguarding

As per the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education and, our Safer Recruitment Policy, any successful candidate is subject to an Enhanced DBS check and previous or pending convictions must be declared at the application stage.

Staff Benefits

At Spen Valley High School we pride ourselves on offering a wide range of benefits to our staff including:

- A salary that is aligned to school teachers pay scales and NJC pay scales and awards
- Generous pension benefits with the Teachers Pension or West Yorkshire Pension Fund
- Regular bespoke CPD provided alongside whole school training
- September & January Inset days to provide CPD and departmental time for staff
- Collaborative work with Red Kite Alliance
- Free access to onsite counselling
- Free access to 24 hour GP service as well as; physio, health checks, menopause support, men's mental health support, nutrition and diet, smoking cessation support and financial advice
- Viv-up lifestyle savings scheme
- Cycle to work scheme
- Childcare vouchers
- A variety of wellbeing activities including, book club, couch to 5k group, fun run
- Free flu vaccinations and eyecare vouchers
- Free use of the school's fitness suite

Recruitment Process

Vacancies

- All vacancies are advertised on the school's website
- All vacancies are also advertised on national and local recruitment sites including; MyNewTerm, DfE, Indeed, Kirklees Job Page, Red Kite Alliance Careers Page

Applicants

- A Job Description and Person Specification is provided
- All applicants are required to complete the standard application form
- Applicants are informed of the week interviews will be held with specific dates if available

Shortlisting

- Candidates are shortlisted based on the criteria of the person specification and advert requirements
- Shortlisted candidates will be contacted and invited to interview, any information required for preparation will be provided

Interview

- Includes a tour of the school (unless separately scheduled)
- Applicants are required to complete tasks consistent with the requirements of the role
- For Headteacher appointments, a second shortlisting will take place at the end of day 1 with successful candidates being invited back to formal interview on day 2.
- To meet safer recruitment guidelines, candidates will be required to bring relevant documentation confirming their identity and qualifications to interview
- References will be requested prior to interview day
- All candidates will be advised of the interview decisions within 24 hours; feedback will be provided if requested

Any offer of employment will be conditional, subject to mandatory safeguarding checks (DBS, Right to work, fitness to work, satisfactory references etc).