



INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATES FOR THE POST OF HEAD TEACHER

INTRODUCTION

Hexham Priory School is designated for pupils with severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties. School currently has 99 pupils aged from 2 to 19 years on roll. In addition to a learning difficulty, many pupils have a secondary disability, which may be an Autistic Spectrum Condition, a sensory impairment or a physical disability. In 2012 School was rated by OFSTED as Outstanding.

School is supported by the contribution of a multidisciplinary team, with a range of professionals including: Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists, School Nurse, Social Workers, Paediatricians, Dietician and Community Nurses all working collaboratively with Teachers, Teaching Assistants, Parents and Carers to meet the needs of individual pupils. The Governing Body are integral to the success of the School and their work was recognised in the Ofsted publication "*School governance: Learning from the best*".

School's motto is "*Never underestimate a child's ability*" and this pervades all aspects of our work. We are aspirational in our aims for our pupils and they regularly reward us by their achievements. All Sixth Formers leave School with externally accredited awards and qualifications.

Several of the pupils at school enjoy shared placements at mainstream schools accessing relevant learning opportunities alongside children from their local community. Our staff are involved in supporting these placements through outreach support into the mainstream school and through receiving staff from mainstream schools into their classroom. Our pupils act as excellent ambassadors for our School during the time that they spend in their local mainstream school.

LOCATION AND CATCHMENT AREA

The catchment area of the school covers the whole of West Northumberland and at over 1,000 square miles is one of the largest in the country. Transport is provided for most students, although a small number that live within Hexham are able to walk to school.

Hexham enjoys good transport links with Tyneside, regular train and bus services operate to Newcastle upon Tyne 20 miles to the east, which can be reached by car in half an hour. Tynedale offers a wide range of semi-urban and rural communities. The school is relatively close to the Lake District and to the Scottish Borders.



SCHOOL BUILDING

Following a steady rise in pupil numbers over many years, Northumberland County Council commissioned a new school building which opened in September 2009.

The new 80 place school building includes 10 classrooms, a common room for Sixth Form pupils together with two workrooms and three quiet rooms which are used for one to one work. School also has a fully equipped Cookery Room, Library, a Sensory Room, a Movement Room for pupils to work on their Occupational Therapy programmes, a Soft Play room and an IMEX (Interactive Multi-Sensory Experience) Studio. We are also fortunate to have a large gym and a separate multi-purpose hall. Externally the school has a Sensory Garden, two large playgrounds, enclosed play area with extensive outdoor play equipment and a Forest School area.

Due to the continued demand for places at School, Northumberland County Council have committed to a £1.17 million building project to be completed by autumn 2018. This will see the capacity of the School rise to 112 places.



SCHOOL ORGANISATION

School operates a departmental system with Primary aged children currently based on the ground floor and Secondary aged pupils educated on the first floor. This allows for a sense of transition between departments with each having their own age-appropriate facilities, colour schemes and pupil uniforms. Each Department benefits from the strong leadership of an Assistant Head. In addition to the Class Teacher each class has a minimum of two Teaching Assistants.

School starts to pupils at 9.00am and their day ends at 3.15pm. Lunch is served to Primary Department pupils from 12noon to 12.30pm and to Secondary Department pupils from 12:30pm to 1:00pm. Lunch time is considered as teaching time, where social skills can be taught and practised.

An after-school Sports Club is open to all pupils on a Monday with Secondary age pupils invited to attend a ten pin bowling session also on a Monday. Other clubs that take place each week include Gardening, Karate and Music. Staff are very committed and hard-working and this has allowed us to offer six residential visits to pupils throughout the school for each of the last two years.

SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

There is a detailed School Development Plan which is evaluated regularly by the School Leadership Team and the Governing Body. The School Development Plan is on public display within the School and is also available on the School website. All stakeholders are valued and seen as important in the school improvement and consultation process.



School utilises Teaching and Learning Responsibility (TLR) 3 posts to allow skilled teachers the opportunity to play a lead role in aspects of school development. These posts are currently allocated for:

- Digital Literacy
- Qualifications and Accreditation
- Relationships Education
- Transition into Adulthood

The Governing Body explore all developments that could be in the best interests of pupils and their families and are currently in discussion with the Regional Schools Commissioner's Office and other local special schools regarding the potential benefits of academy status.

Please browse our website and read (and comment if you like!) on our blog. This will inform you more about school and the activities that our pupils take part in

Thank you for your interest.

Helen Milner, Chair of Governors