

Gibside School

Headteacher Recruitment Pack

An Introduction from our Governing Body

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the post of Head Teacher at Gibside School. We are very pleased that you are considering applying to lead our special and wonderful school. The vacancy has arisen as a result of the current Head, Judith Donovan, deciding to retire and spend more time with her family. Judith has successfully led the school for the last six years, maintaining our Ofsted judgement of "Outstanding" and overseeing the significant growth in numbers which resulted in our opening a second site for Early Years provision. The local demand for places has continued and this has resulted in Gateshead Council allocating the funding to build a new school for 170 children on a single site in the centre of the Borough. We expect to move into our new building in February 2021. The post is available from September 2021. Our experienced Deputy Head Teacher also retires in summer and the new Head Teacher will have the opportunity to be involved in the appointment of her successor.

Our new Head Teacher should be a strong, approachable, compassionate and supportive leader who is passionate and knowledgeable about the pursuit of teaching and learning in schools and has a love of working with special children. Someone who will develop our multidisciplinary, therapeutic and partnership work, using our amazing new building, to extend our outreach and training offer to the wider community. The person specification provides a more comprehensive list of the qualities we are looking for, but in essence we wish to appoint somebody with the wisdom, experience and confidence to take the school forward; someone who will build on what is currently excellent and ensure we continue to improve by embracing the opportunities and challenges that are offered in the future.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Thank you

The Governors of Gibside School



Advertisement - Headteacher

Gibside Special School, Gateshead

Salary; Group 6 L21-L35a (£69,031- £96,310) – negotiable, depending on experience

Due to the retirement of our talented and successful Head teacher, an exciting vacancy has arisen at Gibside School. This role is an opportunity to build on the outstanding achievement and legacy of recent years, while also developing a clear future-focused vision.

Gibside is rated an Outstanding school by Ofsted. Staff, parents and governors all work in partnership to ensure pupils blossom and thrive personally, socially, emotionally and educationally during their time with us. We work with around 170 children, aged 3 to 11 from across the whole borough of Gateshead. The children have a wide range of needs including autistic spectrum condition (ASC), profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) and severe learning difficulties (SLD). Our aim is to inspire, motivate and challenge all our children and to build confident, cooperative, independent learners. We will be moving into a brand new, state-of-the-art school building early in 2021 which will provide the learning facilities our children so deserve.

We are seeking a school leader with significant Head teacher or Deputy Head teacher experience, a background of teaching excellence and a clear and demonstrable commitment to special education. You will have the vision and the strategic leadership to enhance the quality of all areas of provision and ensure outcomes for children are at the heart of everything that is done. You will be expected to lead a dedicated and high-performing team whilst motivating and supporting a positive culture of improvement. Governors wish to appoint an inspirational leader who will use the opportunities offered by our new building to innovate and develop the school into a flagship provider and community resource.

Visit www.gibsidesschool.org to find out more, or contact the current Head Teacher, Judith Donovan on 0191 4410123. Ann Muxworthy, the local authority Link Inspector for the school, is also available for a confidential discussion on 0777 6205385.

The application pack and information for applying can be found on the school website (<https://www.gibsidesschool.org/our-school/vacancies/>).

The closing date is Wednesday 20th January 2021

Shortlisting to take place w/c 25th January

Interviews will be held w/c 1st March (after the school move to the new site)

The post is available from September 2021. Relocation expenses available if required. Please also contact the School Business Manager on 0191 441 0123 (or via sarahjohnson@gateshead.gov.uk) to discuss a possible visit to Gibside.



Job Description

Job Title:	Head Teacher
Post No:	P512603
Responsible to:	School Governing Body and Strategic Director Care, Well-being & Learning
Salary/Grade:	L21 to L35a (negotiable, depending on experience)

Overall Purpose

To be responsible to the Governing Body for the conduct, management and administration of the School and meet the requirements of a Head Teacher as set out in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document and in accordance with the policies of Gateshead Council.

Duties of the Post

Strategic Leadership

- To provide strategic leadership, in collaboration with the governing body, to develop and deliver our shared vision for the next phase of Gibside School's development.
- In consultation with staff, parents and governors to foster and develop the ethos, values and aims of the school.
- To have high expectations and lead by example
- To ensure a secure, caring, welcoming, happy, stimulating and challenging learning environment for all
- In consultation with Staff and Governors to draw up, implement and lead the School Development Plan.
- To ensure implementation of key statutory policies and report on these to the governing body.
- Provide strategic direction for the school, to achieve the highest quality educational provision and high standards.
- Ensure that the school benefits from a rigorous self- evaluation framework which substantially contributes to raising standards.
- Ensure that current educational initiatives are incorporated effectively within the whole school drive for improvement.
- Attendance at and participation in meetings relating to the curricular, administrative, organisational, safeguarding, pastoral and managerial arrangements for the School.

Finance and Resources

- To have overall responsibility for the management of the school's budget, working with the School Business Manager and reporting regularly to the governing body
- To plan, manage and monitor the use of finances and resources effectively to achieve the aims of the school
- To facilitate and support income generation across school and drive fundraising initiatives.
- To lead on the promotion of the school within the local community and across local and regional networks

Curriculum and Learning

- To lead the educational development of the school and ensure that each pupil's educational programme meets their individual needs

- To keep under review the work and organisation of the school to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum in the light of pupil needs, national and local priorities.
- Provide guidance and support to pupils from different backgrounds on educational health, social, spiritual, moral and cultural matters, and on their future education, differentiated according to their needs and culture.
- To monitor and evaluate the standards of teaching and learning and pupil progress across the school.
- To work with other senior leaders to coach staff to develop their teaching skills based on areas of development identified in monitoring activities, including observations.
- To provide for the physical, emotional, social and personal development of pupils to complement academic development.

Staffing

- To take the lead and advise the Governing Body in the recruitment and appointment of staff and to take the initial decision in the dismissal of staff.
- To manage and motivate all staff to ensure the educational programme is delivered effectively.
- To provide opportunities for continuing professional development for all staff.
- To lead and support the leadership team individually and collectively.
- To ensure the operation of an effective Appraisal system for all staff.
- To manage the performance of all staff in line with statutory requirements, delegate responsibilities where appropriate ensuring the highest quality of performance
- To have regard for the health and well-being of the staff

Relationships

- To work closely with the Governing Body to ensure the school operates effectively and efficiently, leading to high standards across the school.
- To develop positive relationships with parents and carers, the LA and the local community.
- Arrange for parents and carers to be given regular information about the curriculum, progress of their children and other matters affecting the school.
- To work effectively with other professionals to ensure the best possible skills and resources are available for all pupils in order to maximise their potential.
- Provide reports to the Governing Body and Strategic Director Care, Well-being and Learning on the exercise of your responsibilities.
- Provide opportunities for developing inclusive practice for both pupils and staff with other schools in partnership

Buildings & Premises

- To create a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment in which children, staff and visitors feel comfortable and which is conducive to learning.
- To maximise the potential of the new school building to the benefit of the pupils and staff.
- To work with the School Business Manager and Site Manager to develop community provision and a plan to extended use of school facilities

Personal Development

- To engage actively in Performance Management and Continuing Professional Development to ensure professional skills are kept up to date and developed.

Whilst every effort has been made to detail the main duties and responsibilities of the post, each individual task and duty to be undertaken has not been identified. The Head Teacher will be expected to comply with any reasonable request from the Governors to undertake work of a similar level that is not specified within this job description. This job description may be amended at any time following consultation with Governors.

Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified Teacher Status • Degree level qualifications or equivalent • Evidence of further relevant professional development in leadership and management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPQH or other accredited leadership qualification
Knowledge and experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant experience as a Head Teacher or Deputy Head teacher with experience of special education • Knowledge and understanding of a wide range of special educational needs • A background of teaching excellence with up to date knowledge of outstanding classroom practice • A sound understanding of the curriculum required for children with significant learning difficulties 	
Specific Skill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to provide strategic leadership • Good communication skills, both written and verbal • Ability to ensure the highest quality of performance from all staff • Strong financial planning skills with ability to make effective use of resources • Clear understanding of and commitment to the safeguarding of pupils and staff • Able to work with the governing body and demonstrate accountability to governors • Proven experience of working collaboratively or in partnership with the extended and wider community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the role of the local authority and the school's position as a maintained school
Personal Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective interpersonal skills • Ability to motivate and enthuse all members of the school community • Demonstrate genuine empathy for our children and their families • Ability to develop and maintain positive relationships with parents and carers • Be a good listener and demonstrate sensitivity in making judgements • Have a demonstrable commitment to inclusion and equality of opportunity • Understand, identify with and develop the ethos of Gibside School – a happy, caring dynamic environment where children and staff love to be 	

General School & New Site Information

Gibside is an outstanding Special Needs School where pupils, parents, Governors and staff are all working in partnership to ensure pupils reach their full potential. We currently work with around 160 children across the whole borough of Gateshead. The children have a wide range of disabilities including autistic spectrum condition (ASC), profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) and severe learning difficulties (SLD). Our aim is to inspire, motivate and challenge all of our children and to build confident, cooperative, independent learners. Gibside has a large number of teaching and non-teaching staff who work alongside professionals from the Health, Social and Psychological Services.

In October 2019, work began on building our new school with a planned completion date of February 2021. We were delighted that funding was secured for a flagship state of the art special needs school to be constructed on Shipcote Lane in central Gateshead. This build will not only bring all of our children together onto one site, but the facilities will also enhance the learning experiences for our current and future children and staff.

The bespoke one-story building has been designed around the needs of our children and will feature the below:

- 21 classrooms (3 of which will cater for our PMLD children) and all open out onto external play areas
- a hydrotherapy pool with hoists that can take pupils directly from changing beds to the water
- 2 halls (a Sports hall, including a climbing wall, and a dining/assembly hall)
- A outside multi-use games area with accessible gym equipment and separate play areas for key stage 1 and 2 and early years children
- Sensory and soft playrooms
- I-Muse & immersive room
- Specialist changing facilities
- Offices for all therapies

The construction company (Wates) have performed fantastically well during extremely difficult and unprecedented times and we are still planning to move into the new school early next year.



Vision & Ethos

- Gibside is an inclusive, happy and nurturing environment with education, equality and understanding at the heart of everything we do.
- Our aim is to provide the highest quality learning opportunities through available resources including hydrotherapy pool, food technology, sensory, I-muse and soft playrooms. These spaces will provide extended provision for our children, families and our local community.
- It is a school where everyone is respected and valued for their contribution – pupils, staff, parents/carers and multidisciplinary teams alike.
- As most of our pupils experience communication difficulties, we have an ethos where all forms of communication are valued equally e.g. objects of reference, signing, use of symbols and photographs etc.

We aim to:

- Inspire, motivate and challenge all children
- Build confident, cooperative, independent learners who have high self-esteem
- Develop citizens who have a strong sense of right and wrong
- Develop partnerships working locally, nationally and internationally for the benefit of all our pupils
- Share our expertise and experience.

In an environment which is:

- Welcoming and happy
- Safe, secure and stimulating
- Fun, exciting and purposeful
- Fully inclusive
- Well-resourced with up to date, high quality equipment ensuring all our pupil needs are met.

We will achieve this by:

- Having high expectations in both learning and behaviour and providing excellent learning opportunities through effective teaching
- Using a variety of teaching strategies where pupils are encouraged and motivated and using robust assessment systems to ensure all our pupils meet their full potential
- Ensuring our staff are given opportunities to develop their own skills and knowledge to the highest levels.
- Promoting British values through social, moral, spiritual and cultural development
- Working in close partnership with parents and carers
- Continuing to work to ensure we can fundraise and generate income to sustain the highest quality resources for our pupils

Staffing

Gibside currently has around 110 staff in total. Our Senior Leadership team comprises of the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, 3 x Assistant Headteachers and the School Business Manager. We then have a further 19 Teachers of which 5 are our Middle Leadership team. The 75 Teaching Assistants employed by school are a mixture of Apprentice's, Support Assistants (Level 1), Level 2 and Level 3. The final part of our team is made up of our Site Manager, Caretaker and 3 Office/Admin roles.

Accessing the community

Gibside School is well known in the local community. Classes use the school minibuses each week for curriculum linked visits to parks, museums, local shops and places of interest. Our new building is located close to many excellent facilities such as the Central Library, Shipley Art Gallery, Leisure Centre, Civic Centre and Saltwell Park.

An inclusive ethos encourages mainstream and special schools to come together to support each other and pupils with special educational needs. We have developed strong inclusive links with a number of mainstream schools both in the immediate location and further afield across Gateshead.

Gibside is used as a placement to facilitate teacher training at local Universities including Newcastle University, Northumbria University and Sunderland as well as the Gateshead SCITT course. We are keen to develop these relationships further to enhance educational opportunities for pupils by offering them a wider range of learning experiences and development opportunities for staff.



The School Curriculum

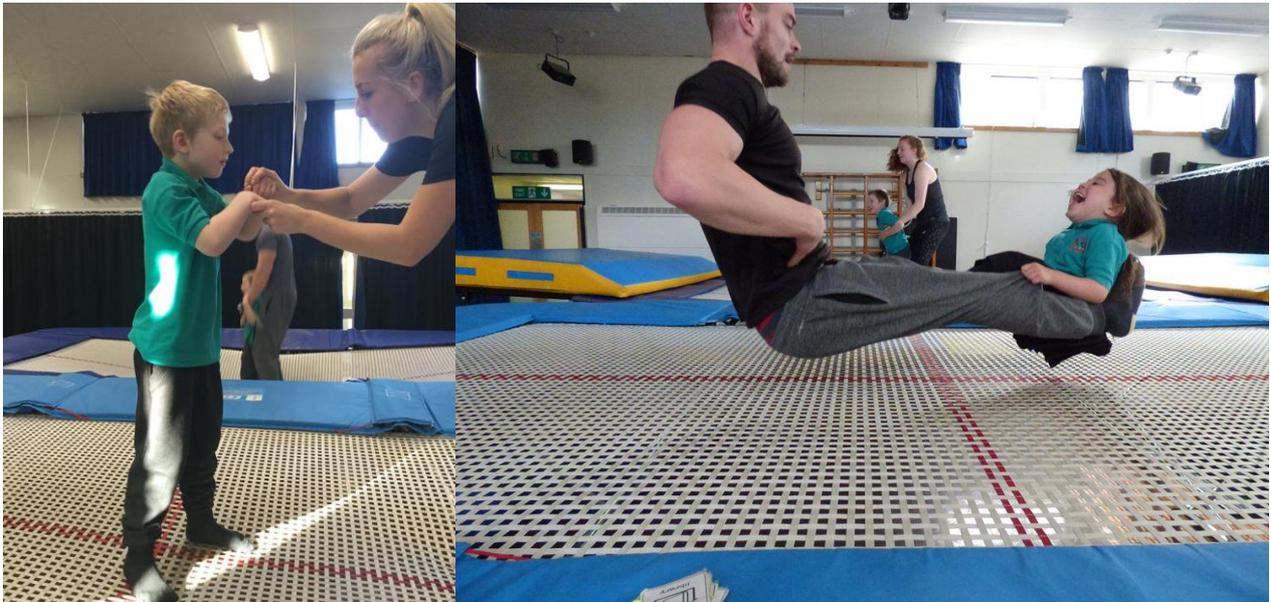
Our curriculum reflects the wide range of needs and abilities of our pupils. We aim to maximise the learning potential of each child through a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum within a total communication ethos using signs, symbols, gesture and speech. The curriculum is delivered through the use of individual/small group/whole class teaching as appropriate. Teachers ensure they set suitable learning challenges, respond to pupils' diverse learning needs and help overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

The different curriculum and social/communication needs of pupils are met through differentiated planning and the use of enriched and alternative curriculums.

The Early Years classes follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, leading to the National Curriculum from Year 1, which includes Maths, Language & Literacy, Personal Social, Health Education and Citizenship Science, Art & Design, Music, Design & Technology, Information & Communication Technology, Physical Education, Humanities (History/Geography) and R.E.



Rebound Therapy - is offered as part of the curriculum according to individual pupil needs. It provides a highly motivating sensory experience, which supports the development of balance, co-ordination and body awareness. In addition, pupils are challenged to communicate and co-operate in a fun social experience.



Outdoor and Adventurous play – Children from all classes are given opportunities to learn new skills, to explore and challenge themselves and to take risks often within an outdoor environment.





Swimming – We use a local swimming pools and our own hydro pool. Children have access to these facilities according to their individual needs, some children will receive hydrotherapy delivered by the Physiotherapists.

Residential

Every year during the Summer Term our Year 6 children have the opportunity to attend a residential ‘holiday’ supported by school staff. These are valuable activities which foster independence, self-confidence and problem-solving skills as well as being lots of fun!



Therapies

We work closely with Occupational Health Therapists, Physiotherapists and Speech Therapists from the Health Service and we also employ our own Speech Therapist. Rachel is our Speech Therapist, she works alongside classroom staff to develop speech, language and communication skills. She provides support in a range of ways including assessment and therapy directly with children in the therapy room where appropriate, support for individuals or groups within the classroom and working collaboratively with the teaching staff.

Family Support Team

Lynsey Lockey (Welfare & Inclusion Worker) and Christine Wood (Healthcare Worker) are our Family Support team in school. We understand our pupils benefit most from parents/ carers and school staff working in partnership to help them achieve the very best they can. The Family Support team can provide parents with information about services and agencies available to help them, they monitor attendance levels to ensure pupils attend school regularly, offer assistance and support for parents when their child joins Gibside School for the first time.

Provision for children with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC)

Gibside uses an eclectic approach to working with children with an Autistic Spectrum Condition because their needs and abilities vary widely. In our Early Years classes, the focus is on the introduction of symbols, learning the routines of the school day, how to function socially in a group environment and developing skills for learning. Older pupils access the National Curriculum using Gibside School's schemes of work as a basis for planning. We have a number of autism specific bases, however many of our children with Autism are taught within our main school classes.

We use approaches from SPELL, TEACHH and non-directed approaches such as Intensive Interaction which have proved to be effective in developing skills that are pre-requisite for learning.

The importance of developing effective functional communication skills is given a high priority. Staff understand the communication difficulties that are inherent in an ASC diagnosis and support understanding using visual cues and simplified language. A total communication approach is used which may include the use of Makaton signing, objects of reference, photographs, symbols, and printed words. Staff work closely with speech and language therapists by sharing observations, setting joint targets and supporting sessions within the classroom where appropriate. Parent observations of their child's use of functional communication in the context of the family/home is highly valued and following discussion, alternative communication methods e.g. PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System) may be introduced to support expressive communication.

In addition to these approaches, a SCERTS (Social Communication Emotional Regulation Transactional Support) framework is used to identify and develop skills in the areas that our children with ASC have particular difficulties with. This multi-disciplinary approach involving Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy, ensures that strategies to support Social Communication and Emotional Regulation benefit the children throughout the school day, as well as at home.



Provision for children with Profound and Complex needs

We will have 3 specialist classes for children with Profound and Complex needs. The majority of our children with very complex needs have places in these classes.

We use a range of strategies to teach children with complex needs but all are centered around a Sensory Curriculum. Each class is equipped with a range of specialist equipment including UV lights, sensory room resources, Eye Gaze, overhead hoisting etc.

The staff in the Complex Needs classes work very closely with Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Speech Therapists and the Children's Community Nursing team. Children who have suction machines, tracheostomy, require gastrostomy feeds, oxygen etc. have all their individual needs met by fully trained staff and our Health Support Worker



Behaviour

Behaviour management underpins the whole curriculum and is essential to effective teaching and learning. Children need to learn to work, play and co-operate with others; they need to be able to establish effective relationships with other children and adults beyond their family. All staff have a duty and a responsibility to promote appropriate behaviour at all times. We believe that well motivated, secure, confident pupils encouraged by praise and reward will generally demonstrate acceptable behaviour. We also believe that staff, pupils and parents work together in the best interests of the child to establish and maintain good behaviour.

All staff are 'Team Teach' trained. Team Teach is a whole school holistic approach that places an emphasis on calm communication and defusing skills, tailored to the individual needs of each pupil.

We use a range of rewards to ensure that pupils know that what they are doing or the way they are behaving pleases us and these are celebrated.



Attendance & Home School Links

It is the policy of this school to maintain the optimum attendance of all our pupils in partnership with parents/carers so that they can gain the greatest benefit from the education on offer.

Parents and carers have an essential contribution to make to school life. The school focus for both home and school environments is the child and we share a common goal in encouraging children to reach their full potential. Parents/Carers are welcome to come into school at any time.

We aim to have workshops and meetings for parents which have a focus area of mutual interest e.g. communication, autism, intensive interaction, Makaton, curriculum and we may work with other agencies to organise them. Staff maintain communication with parents on a regular basis through telephone, text messages, emails or letter as necessary. Teachers meet with parents during the school year to discuss pupil progress.

We have a very successful Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/GibsideSchool>) & Twitter account (@GibsideSchool) where we share the exciting activities that our children have been taking part in. Our school website has a range of information for parents/carers and visitors to the school (<http://www.gibside.school.org/>).



Friends of Gibside School (FOGS)

We have established a 'Friends of Gibside School' organisation whose members include parents, staff, governors and other friends of the school, all of whom are committed to enhancing educational opportunities for Gibside pupils. They plan and organise regular fund-raising events which enable the school to buy many resources this i.e. specialised equipment, state of the art technology and other activities that help our children achieve their very best!

