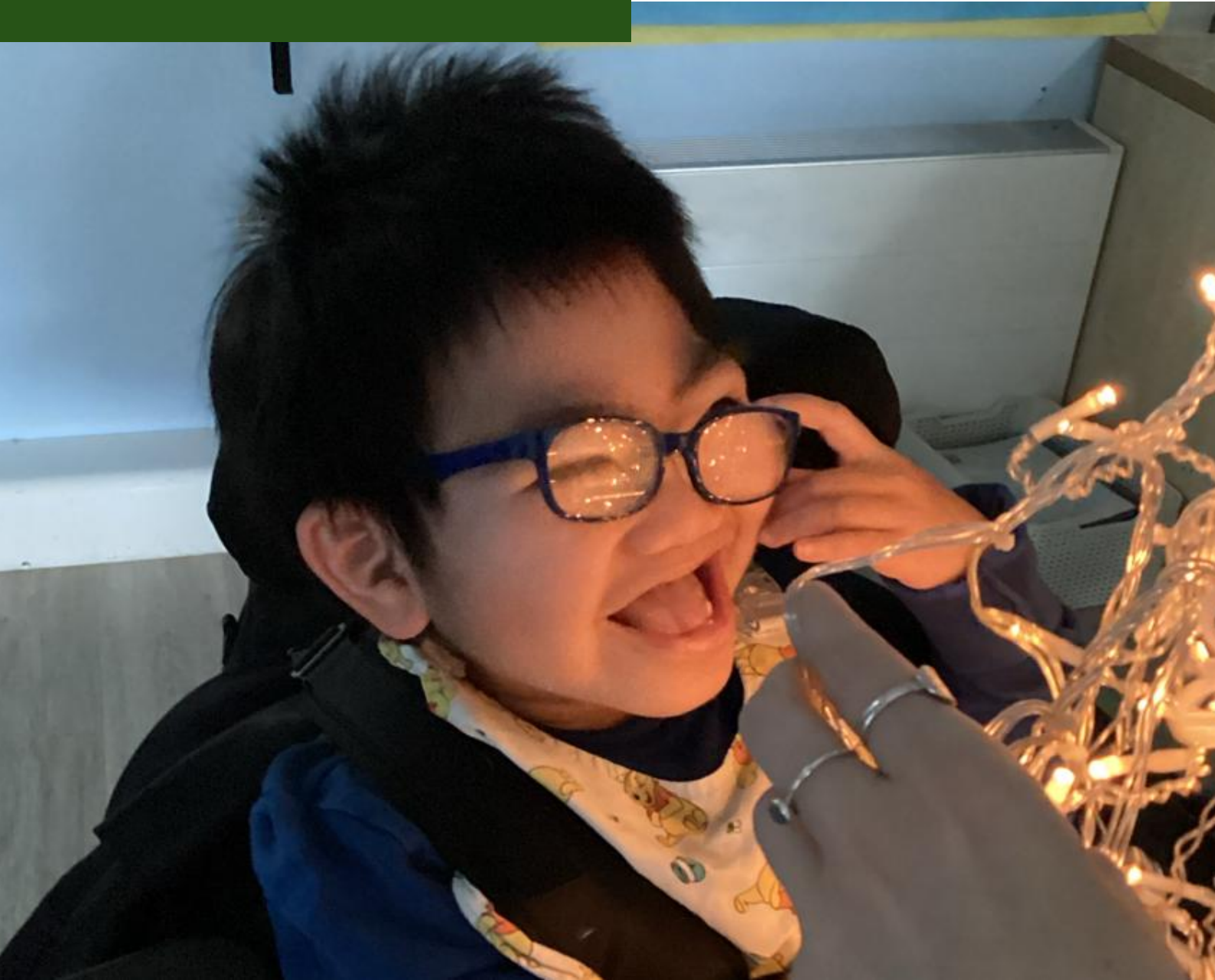


Candidate Pack



Castle School - Deputy Headteacher

Candidate Pack- Welcome



Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in the role of Deputy Headteacher at Castle School.

Castle School is a well-regarded maintained area special school, recognised for its strong values, inclusive ethos and commitment to improving outcomes for children and young people with complex needs. At a time of significant national change within the SEND system, we are operating within an increasingly complex and demanding landscape, but one that presents real opportunity for the right leader to make a meaningful and lasting impact.

Over recent years, we have made strong progress in establishing clear systems, strengthening provision and building a positive, relational culture for both pupils and staff. This provides a solid foundation for the next phase of our development, where the focus is on embedding consistency, deepening practice and ensuring long-term sustainability.

We are now seeking an exceptional leader to join our senior team at this important stage. This is a role that offers both challenge and opportunity. We are looking for someone who can build on what is already strong, bringing clarity, energy and strategic thinking to further develop teaching, learning and inclusive practice across the school. The successful candidate will be someone who can inspire confidence, support and develop colleagues at all levels, and remain resolute in ensuring that every pupil receives the highest quality education.

Castle School is a place where relationships, expertise and values sit at the heart of everything we do. We are proud of the culture we have built and are ambitious about what comes next. This role will play a key part in shaping that future.

As Deputy Headteacher, you will join a collaborative and values-driven leadership team, working together to ensure the school continues to grow and respond effectively to both local and national priorities. The role also offers opportunities to contribute to wider system leadership, reflecting the increasingly important role of specialist settings in supporting inclusive practice across education.

We are committed to building a diverse and inclusive workforce and welcome applications from individuals of all backgrounds. We will always appoint on merit and are open to discussing flexible working arrangements where possible.

Visits to the school are warmly encouraged, providing an opportunity to experience first-hand the welcoming, inclusive and purposeful environment that Castle School is proud to offer.

If you share our ambition for this role and believe you have the skills, experience and commitment required, I look forward to receiving your application.

With best wishes,

Charlotte Whysall Headteacher - Castle School, Cambridge

About Castle School

Castle School is a maintained area special school for pupils aged 2–19 with a wide range of complex needs, including autism, speech, language and communication needs and learning difficulties. We operate across two sites and currently support approximately 236 pupils, with numbers continuing to grow in response to local need.

Our provision is structured through our clearly defined curriculum pathways — pre-formal, semi-formal and formal. Each pathway is carefully designed to ensure that pupils experience a curriculum that is appropriately ambitious, personalised and focused on meaningful progress, independence and long-term outcomes. There is a strong focus on preparation for adulthood throughout the school

At the heart of our approach is a strong commitment to inclusion, not only within our own setting but as part of the wider education system. We recognise the increasingly important role of specialist schools in supporting mainstream provision and contributing to the development of inclusive practice across local partnerships.



Our Approach and looking ahead...

Castle School is built on a relational and values-driven culture, where pupils are known as individuals and supported to achieve their full potential. Our work is underpinned by a clear focus on:

- High expectations for all pupils
- Strong relationships between staff, pupils and families
- Personalised learning that reflects individual need
- Preparation for life beyond school

Our curriculum and provision are aligned to our core values:



These values are not simply aspirational; they are embedded in daily practice and shape how we support pupils to develop independence, resilience and a sense of belonging.

Looking ahead Castle School is well positioned to respond to both local demand and national developments within SEND, including the direction set out in the current reform agenda.

We are ambitious for our pupils, our staff and our role within the wider system. This includes:

- Continuing to strengthen inclusive practice within the school
- Supporting wider system collaboration and partnership working
- Developing leadership at all levels
- Ensuring that provision remains responsive, high-quality and sustainable

The Deputy Headteacher will play a key role in this next phase, helping to translate strategic direction into consistent, high-quality practice across the school.

Deputy Headteacher | Castle School

The Deputy Headteacher will play a central role in the leadership of Castle School, working closely with the Headteacher and senior leadership team to drive improvement, strengthen provision and ensure high-quality outcomes for all pupils.



This opportunity arises following the retirement of the current Deputy Headteacher after over 20 years of dedicated service to the school. This provides a strong and stable foundation, alongside a genuine opportunity for a new leader to shape the next phase of the school's development.

This is a strategic and operational role, requiring the ability to translate vision into practice, support and develop colleagues, and maintain a clear focus on improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

The successful candidate will build on the significant work already in place, ensuring greater consistency, depth and impact across all aspects of provision.

The Nature of the Role

This is a visible and influential leadership role requiring:

- Clarity of vision and strategic thinking
- Strong interpersonal and relational leadership
- The ability to balance operational demands with long-term priorities
- A commitment to continuous improvement and professional growth

The Deputy Headteacher will work across the school to ensure that all pupils experience a consistent, high-quality education and are supported to achieve meaningful outcomes.



Impact of the Role

Through this role, the successful candidate will:

- Build on an established and stable leadership foundation
- Strengthen consistency and quality of provision across the school
- Support and develop staff at all levels
- Improve outcomes and experiences for pupils
- Contribute to the school's wider role within the SEND system



JOB DESCRIPTION

Deputy Headteacher

Castle School, Cambridge

Job Purpose

The Deputy Headteacher will support the Headteacher in providing strategic leadership and operational management of the school, ensuring high-quality education and outcomes for all pupils.

The role includes leading key aspects of school improvement, strengthening teaching and learning, developing leadership capacity, and ensuring that provision meets the needs of pupils with a wide range of complex needs.

The post arises following the retirement of the current Deputy Headteacher after over 20 years of service, providing a strong foundation alongside an opportunity to contribute to the next phase of the school's development.

Accountable To

Headteacher

Responsible For

- Identified areas of whole-school improvement
- Middle and senior leaders (as directed by the Headteacher)
- Teaching, learning and curriculum development (as allocated)

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

- Contribute to the development and implementation of the School Development Plan
- Lead on identified strategic priorities
- Support the effective implementation of school policies and systems
- Ensure alignment between strategic direction and operational practice

Teaching, Learning and Curriculum

- Lead and monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school
- Ensure the curriculum is ambitious, well-sequenced and meets pupil need
- Support consistent implementation of curriculum intent across all pathways
- Use data and evaluation to inform improvement and measure impact



Leadership and Management

- Line manage and support identified middle and senior leaders
- Develop leadership capacity across the school
- Provide coaching, mentoring and professional challenge
- Contribute to staff performance management and development

Inclusion and SEND

- Ensure provision meets the needs of pupils with SEND across all pathways
- Promote inclusive practice and high expectations for all pupils
- Support consistent use of the graduated response
- Contribute to wider system collaboration where appropriate

Safeguarding and Pastoral Care

- Act as a Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (as required)
- Ensure safeguarding procedures are robust, effective and consistently applied
- Promote a culture of safeguarding, staff and pupil wellbeing
- Support behaviour, attendance and pastoral systems

Operational Leadership

- Support the day-to-day running of the school
- Contribute to staffing, deployment and organisation
- Ensure effective communication across sites and teams
- Maintain high standards of organisation and compliance
- School communication including, media presence, School Website
- IT infrastructure, management and compliance

General Duties

- Uphold and promote the school's ethos and values
- Contribute to the wider life of the school
- Engage with parents, carers and external partners
- Comply with all relevant statutory and regulatory requirements
- Undertake any other duties commensurate with the role as directed by the Headteacher



Person Specification

Qualifications and Professional Development

Essential

- Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)
- Good honours degree (or equivalent)
- Evidence of ongoing professional development
- Commitment to continued professional learning

Desirable

- National Professional Qualification (e.g. NPQSL / NPQH or equivalent)
- Postgraduate qualification in education, leadership or SEND
- Accredited safeguarding training (e.g. DSL training)

Leadership Experience

Essential

- Successful leadership experience at a senior level
- Evidence of leading and managing change effectively
- Experience of improving teaching and learning
- Experience of developing and supporting staff
- Ability to work as part of a senior leadership team

Desirable

- Experience of whole-school leadership
- Experience of working across multiple sites or phases
- Experience of leading in a specialist or SEND setting

Teaching and Learning

Essential

- Strong understanding of high-quality teaching and learning
- Ability to improve classroom practice across a range of settings
- Experience of curriculum development and implementation
- Understanding of how to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning

Desirable

- Experience of leading curriculum design in a specialist setting
- Understanding of different curriculum pathways (pre-formal, semi-formal, formal)



SEND and Inclusion

Essential

- Strong understanding of SEND needs, particularly complex needs
- Experience of supporting pupils with a range of needs including ASD, SLCN and learning difficulties
- Commitment to inclusive practice and high expectations for all pupils
- Understanding of the graduated response and provision planning

Desirable

- Experience of working within a special school setting
- Understanding of EHCP processes, annual reviews and statutory requirements
- Knowledge of current SEND reforms and national developments

Strategic Thinking and School Improvement

Essential

- Ability to contribute to and implement strategic plans
- Strong analytical skills, including use of data to inform improvement
- Experience of monitoring, evaluating and improving provision
- Ability to translate strategy into effective practice

Desirable

- Experience of leading whole-school improvement priorities
- Experience of contributing to system-wide or partnership work

Leadership of People

Essential

- Strong interpersonal and communication skills
- Ability to motivate, inspire and challenge others
- Experience of coaching and developing staff
- Ability to build positive, professional relationships

Desirable

- Experience of leading distributed leadership models
- Experience of supporting leadership development programmes



Safeguarding, Behaviour and Pastoral Care

Essential

- Strong commitment to safeguarding and pupil wellbeing
- Understanding of safeguarding responsibilities and statutory guidance (KCSIE)
- Experience of supporting behaviour and pastoral systems
- Ability to promote a positive, relational school culture

Desirable

- Experience as a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL
- Experience of leading safeguarding systems or reviews

Operational and Organisational Skills

Essential

- Ability to manage competing priorities effectively
- Strong organisational and time management skills
- Experience of contributing to the day-to-day running of a school
- Attention to detail and ability to ensure consistency

Desirable

- Experience of working with school systems (e.g. MIS, safeguarding systems)
- Experience of contributing to staffing or timetable planning

Personal Qualities

Essential

- Strong moral purpose and commitment to improving outcomes for pupils with SEND
- Resilience, adaptability and a solution-focused approach
- High expectations of self and others
- Integrity, professionalism and sound judgement
- Commitment to collaboration and teamwork

Desirable

- Ability to contribute to wider system leadership
- Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion

Terms and Conditions

- Salary: Leadership Scale (L19-L23)
- Contract: Full-time, permanent
- Start date: September 2026

