

CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK



Welcome from the Headteacher

The school opened its doors for the first time in September 2016, creating The Beacon from a previous federation of two smaller Ofsted-judged 'Outstanding' special schools that had outgrown their site and needed to expand.

The Folkestone site was specifically designed to meet the needs of the pupils at the two schools, catering for over 350 pupils aged 3-19 years with Profound, Severe and Complex Needs (PSCN).

In 2019 The Beacon received its second 'Outstanding' judgement. The Ofsted report was glowing with praise about what we are achieving collectively. In June 2024 the school remained 'Outstanding' after an Ofsted monitoring visit. The reports provide evidence and confirm The Beacon continues to create a centre of excellence for "Learning, Support and Development".

Nine years on and with a rising demand for special school places across the county, we engaged in an ambitious plan alongside the Local Authority to develop an additional Beacon school in Walmer. With a joint desire to build upon our best practice, we have extended our outstanding provision to further support the Dover and Deal districts. With phased opening in full swing, we are half way to full occupancy at our Walmer site and when we are at capacity we will educate a total of 240 pupils.

We have navigated turbulent times for Local Authority commissioned services, we have chosen to continue to provide training and support for mainstream schools through our Outreach service, providing a community-based service to support inclusion and exceptional education provision across our district. This team offers support, training, outreach advice and guidance to our mainstream colleagues. In addition, The Beacon has both conference and meeting facilities and regularly hosts nationally renowned speakers on its courses.

The Beacon Folkestone site also hosts a Multi Agency Support Hub (MASH). This is one of four centres across the County that brings NHS colleagues, paediatricians, speech and language therapists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and nursing services, alongside children's social services and portage colleagues into one cohesive centre. We are proud of the strong partnerships this brings to benefit the children and families of Folkestone and Hythe.

In addition to the general teaching rooms, both sites will provide specialist teaching spaces (such as art, science, music and drama), a sports hall, medical/therapy spaces and sensory rooms. In addition, the Folkestone site has a hydrotherapy pool and a fully functioning detached house for the delivery of Life Skills programmes.

The school provides 5-tiered learning pathways, all of which follow our 5 strand curriculum – Communication, Number, Digital Technology, Healthy Lifestyles and Understanding the World. This informs all pathways of learning from Early Years to Year 14 and is hugely influential in supporting our pupils to thrive in school and most importantly, in the world after their time at the Beacon. All pupils access and sustain positive onwards routes into employment, education or training and have done so for the last 3 years.

We hope you enjoy finding out about our amazing pupils' and our vibrant learning community!

Ady Young
Headteacher

"Pupils achieve exceptionally well because the school ensures that all staff are expert in how to best support them to learn and thrive."
Ofsted 2024



About the School

The Beacon has learning Zones. Zone 1 is for Primary. Zone 2 is for Secondary and Zone 3 for Sixth Form. Within each Zone pupils are in classes which suit their need type.

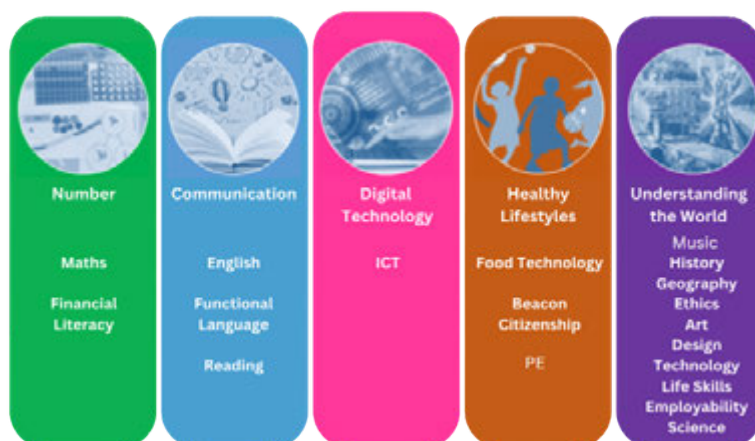
In each phase of The Beacon, learners have access to a rich and engaging curriculum with an emphasis on being needs-led. The curriculum promotes the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural, as well as the mental and physical development of children, to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

We are able to offer a variety of teaching and learning styles in response to individual learning with an aim of delivering the curriculum to develop independence to the best of each learner's ability. Small learning steps underpin the curriculum and these are planned along with repetition, reinforcement and positive, developmental feedback. We cater for pupils who have specific learning styles: for example, visual learners have a preference to seeing things, so we use a wide range of resources and methods to aid their learning, including symbols and signing.

For our pupils who are profoundly developmentally young, we use a sensory teaching approach. Pupil understanding and learning are promoted through speech and where required through signing and symbols. We offer an integrated, personalised and collaborative approach to care and support, functional mobility and independence and positively enhancing the lives of children and young people with complex needs.

“To enable our pupils to be as independent as they possibly can be, make a positive contribution to society and reach their maximum potential.”

All pupils' learning experiences in each Tier Pathway are driven by the same intent provided across our 5 strands. We strongly believe this rounded diet and provision of learning experiences enables all of our pupils the best chance to be as independent as they possible can be, make a positive contribution to society and reach their maximum potential – this is irrespective of levels of need and challenges. Pupils can move between pathways as required, ensuring they have the best opportunities to thrive, and stretching and challenging their progress at every point.



Pupil targets are centred around the EHCPs and are clear, achievable and frequently revised, and reflect the needs of pupils, parents/carers and agencies. Through analysing the data we are able to demonstrate pupil progress and this, in turn, informs the EHCP outcomes and possible intervention requirements.

There is a high level of pastoral support and guidance and a continuous building of self-esteem through the recognition of pupils' achievements. Care and compassion are at the forefront for all pupils in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect.

More about the School

We believe that good behaviour is an integral part of the learning process. Students have the right to work and develop in an atmosphere of respect, trust, security, honesty and openness, where positive relationships are valued within the school and the wider community.

Restorative Approaches are a fundamental component in helping our school community achieve this aim. Restorative Approaches promote the truth, taking responsibility and accountability and are based on four key principles:

RESPECT: for everyone by listening to other opinions and learning to value them

RESPONSIBILITY: taking responsibility for your own actions

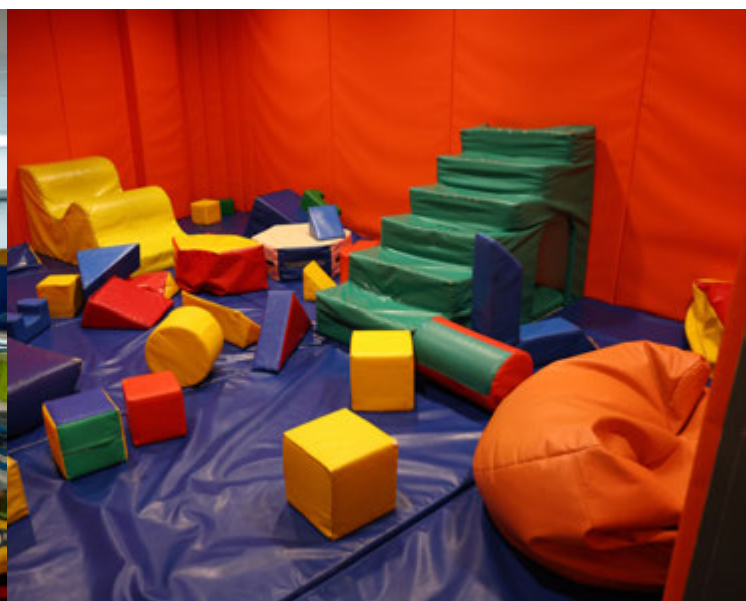
REPAIR: developing the skills within our school community so that individual members have the necessary skills to identify solutions to repair harm and ensure behaviours are not repeated.

REINTEGRATION: working through a structured, supportive process with the aim of solving problems and allowing young people to return to learning.

In addition to this, we believe in rewarding and celebrating achievement for both learning and behaviour. Celebrations are held weekly throughout The Beacon.

We believe this is the most effective method of achieving a democratic community in which every voice is valued and everyone is empowered to be the best that he or she can be.

All staff at The Beacon recognise the importance of working in partnership with pupils, parents/carers and agencies to provide for the special educational needs of all our children and young people.



Benefits for all Staff

We understand what an important role our staff play in the creation and development of our learning environment. All staff at The Beacon are eligible for a range of financial and personal benefits, designed to enhance your day to day working life.

Benefits include:

- a comprehensive induction programme for all staff
- an established mentoring and coaching system throughout the school
- great Local Government Pension/Teachers Pension Scheme
- opportunities to gain qualifications
- wellbeing days
- Kent Rewards, which provides a range of discounts and cash-back for many well known brands
- Our Employee Assistance Programme, provided through Validium, which offers free and confidential support for employees (by telephone or online). It includes counselling support, support with conflict and relationships, health and wellbeing, legal information, child and elder information, money and debt support and signposting to specialist agencies.
- adult and student Mental Health First Aiders
- annual flu vaccinations
- in house cafe
- use of the gym (after induction)
- on-site parking



Application Guidance

Applications will only be accepted from candidates completing the appropriate application form on the Kent-Teach website.

The application form will form the basis for shortlisting. It is important, therefore, that all information relating to your application must be included on the application form.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview by email. We would strongly recommend that you check you junk/spam email folders in the week following the closing date for the advert.

For reasons of consistency and fairness in selecting shortlisted candidates, CVs will not be considered. A brief covering letter is acceptable, but this will not be considered as part of your application, so it should not be used to provide further detail of your experience.

Please complete all sections of the application form using the job description and person specification as your guide. The person specification describes, for example, the skills, qualities and knowledge that we require from the successful application and will be used as a basis for shortlisting. Please also use this person specification as the basis of your personal statement.

We value diversity in our workforce – fair treatment for all is vital to the quality of services to the public. Kent County Council has an equality policy to ensure that all groups and individuals within the community are given full opportunity to benefit from the services and jobs we provide.

Present and Previous Employment

As part of the school's safer recruitment procedures, we will need to see a full employment history. All relevant work experience, including part-time work, temporary jobs or voluntary work, should be included. Please provide a short explanation of any career breaks that you may have had. Ensure that the information is provided in chronological order with the most recent first.

Continuing Professional Development

Please give details of significant aspects of your continuing professional development over the last three years.

Personal Statement (Reason for Application Section)

Please note that more successful applicants will use this section to:

- use the person specification and job description to explain how your own skills, personal qualities and experience are relevant to the post;
- provide clear evidence of your relevant skills, personal qualities and experience by describing specific examples from your past practice and experience when you have demonstrated these attributes.
- clearly link your examples to the person specification criteria - this will assist the recruitment panel when shortlisting applications;
- articulate your vision and values in relation to the school's context.

This section should not exceed 2 pages of A4.

If you have any difficulties uploading your application form please contact Kent-Teach on 03000 410203 or email kent.teach@kent.gov.uk. Please note that applications should not be sent directly to the school.

Guidance on Providing Suitable Referees

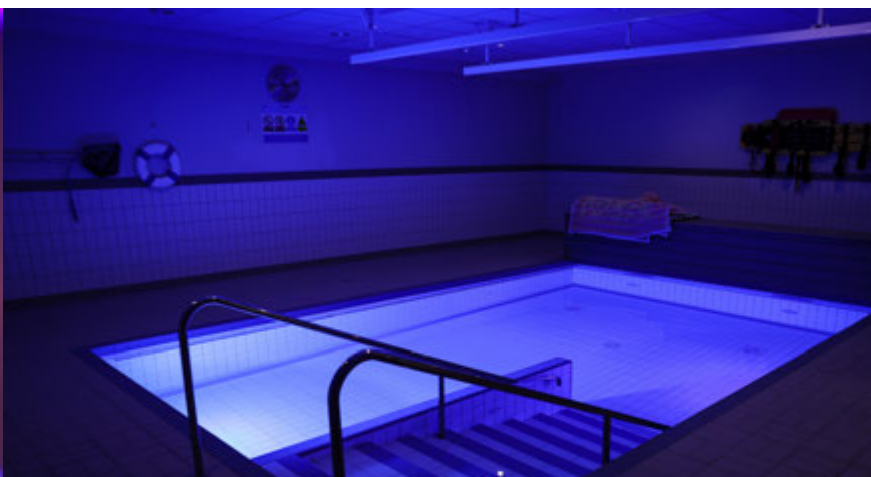
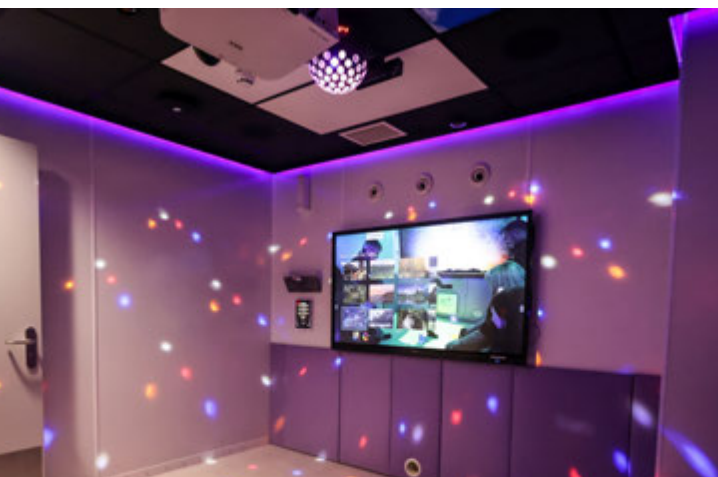
As part of the school's safer recruitment procedures, it is important that references are sought from specific individuals within your current (or most recent) and previous employer's organisation.

All offers of employment from The Beacon are subject to receipt of two satisfactory references. References will be requested after shortlisting and before interview; you can request that references are sought only after an offer is made by ticking the appropriate box on the application form.

- your first referee must be your current or most recent employer
- for school posts, we will always seek a reference from the Headteacher
- if your current or most recent employment does not involve working with children, and you have worked with children before, then you must provide a reference from your most recent children's workforce employer
- both references provided should be professional references: i.e. the referee is someone that you have worked for, or a school or university tutor; not a colleague, peer or a friend. Exceptions may be made only if you have not yet been in employment, or if you have had only one previous employer
- where possible, both references should be provided by a senior manager who is able to comment meaningfully on your suitability for the post
- you should provide details of the referee's professional email address, not a personal email (e.g. Hotmail, Gmail, Outlook). References from personal email accounts will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances
- references will only be obtained directly from the referee: testimonials or open references (those addressed 'To whom it may concern') will not be considered. Referees will be provided with a copy of the job description and person specification to assist them

We will request references on our standard school proforma and will usually expect all sections to be completed. As a minimum, all references must confirm:

- your job role with the organisation;
- your start and leaving dates;
- whether you have been subject to any formal disciplinary or capability procedures within the last two years, including any details, outcomes or 'live' sanctions which are in place;
- where there have been disciplinary concerns which involved children or safeguarding, details of the allegations and concerns, whether an investigation took place, what conclusions were reached and any outcomes;
- whether there are any concerns about your suitability to work with children and, if so, the reasons.



Shortlisting and Interview

After the closing date for this post a panel will conduct the shortlisting process. All candidates will be notified of the result of their application after the shortlisting stage.

Whether or not you are selected for interview will be determined solely on the information provided in your application form.

If you apply for this post and are shortlisted, any discrepancies or anomalies in the information you provide, and any relevant issues arising from your references will be taken up at interview.

If you are shortlisted we will write to your referees (unless otherwise stated), and references will be considered at the interview stage. An online search may be carried out as part of our due diligence at this stage.

DBS, Documents and Certificates

Our school and all its personnel are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children. At interview your suitability for the post will be explored including your motivation to work with children and young people and your understanding of appropriate boundaries.

We are required to verify that a potential employee is permitted to work within the UK and meets the required qualifications: therefore would you please bring to the interview with you for inspection:

original passport / birth certificate or work permit / documentation demonstrating entitlement to work in the United Kingdom. For details of the documentation which demonstrates eligibility to work in the UK please refer to <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-work-checklist>;
proof of address for DBS application (bank statement, council tax or utility bill) original examination certificates

Please note, copies of teaching certificates or any further professional qualifications will need to be provided at interview stage. In addition, teaching roles are subject to a check against the Teacher Service Register for any teaching prohibition or restriction orders.

All posts are subject to a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service Check, satisfactory pre-employment health clearance, receipt of two satisfactory references and verification of your entitlement to work within the UK.



Contact us



<https://thebeacon.kent.sch.uk/>



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“Pupils are polite and consistently well mannered. Pupils greet visitors with enthusiasm. They are proud of their school and want to share their positive experiences.”

Ofsted Report 2024