



A Specialist in Business & Enterprise  
*Making dreams a reality*

## Recruitment Information Pack

### Learning Support Assistant (ASD Autism Specialist)

**Fir Vale School Academy Trust**

**Owler Lane**

**Sheffield S4 8GB**

Telephone: 0114 243 9391

Fax: 0114 261 1640

***www.firvale.com***

# Contents

1. **Letter from the Headteacher**
2. **General information for applicants**
3. **Further Information about the Finance Team**
3. **Method of Application**
4. **Job Description**
6. **Personal Specification**



A Specialist in Business & Enterprise  
*Making dreams a reality*

Owler Lane, Sheffield S4 8GB

Tel: (0114) 243 9391

Fax: (0114) 261 1640

Email: [enquiries@firvale.com](mailto:enquiries@firvale.com)

Website: [www.firvale.com](http://www.firvale.com)

Headteacher: Breffni Martin

Dear Applicant

Thank you for showing an interest in this post here at Fir Vale School.

I trust that the information pack will give you a sense of what Fir Vale School is about. We are passionate about learning, achievement, attainment and progress for all of our students. We want all staff and students to aspire to be the best they can be. This is a very successful school with opportunities for professional and personal fulfilment.

Fir Vale School provides an exciting and fulfilling challenge to dedicated, well-qualified professionals who believe in the philosophies of school improvement and school effectiveness.

Our success is achieved through quality provision, incorporating innovation and creating every possible opportunity for the young people.

I hope you feel inspired to want to join us. I look forward to receiving your application.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Martin'.

**Breffni Martin**  
Headteacher



# General Information for Applicants

## ***Our Vision:***

*Inspiring learners to be aspirational independent citizens  
who have the skills to contribute positively  
to, and succeed in, an ever-changing world*

Fir Vale School was opened in September 1998 and has been on a journey of school improvement to provide high quality education for the local community. A 300 place extension was completed in 2011 providing a total of 1050 places to help meet local demand. On 1<sup>st</sup> November 2012, the school opened as an Academy – Fir Vale School Academy Trust. In 2013, students achieved the best ever results for the school with 53% of the Year 11 cohort achieving 5 A\*-C including English and Maths at GCSE. In addition, the school won a national progress award in 2015 placing it in the top 10% of schools nationally.

## **School Population**

Fir Vale is a popular school, which is full and oversubscribed. The majority of our cohort are from Pakistani heritage followed by Yemeni, Somali and Roma Slovak students, the multi ethnic intake reflects our diverse local community.

Our catchment area; Page Hall in particular, is home to one of the largest refugee and Roma migrant populations in the country. The rather unique nature of our surrounding area has caught attention on both a national and international level and is frequently the focus of news and documentary features in mainstream media. These pieces, the recent Channel 4 documentary 'Keeping Up with the Khans' as an example, often opens discourse on the issues that arise from such diverse populations. Fir Vale School has a large intake of Roma children, the majority of whom are new to English. Our cohort of Roma students has doubled every year for the past 6 years and currently stands at 187 students, 18.55% of our school. In addition, as a city of refuge, Fir Vale School regularly welcomes refugee children in to our family and we have recently started receiving Syrian child refugees escaping the conflict at home.

Whilst the school serves a deprived social-economic community with 37% of the students qualifying for a free school meal, the area is gradually being regenerated and our parents and carers have high levels of aspirations and expectations for their children and the school. Most of our students go on to 6<sup>th</sup> Form and academic study.

## **School Establishment**

There are currently 120 staff in school. Teaching and Support staff alike are dedicated in supporting high quality learning outcomes for all. New staff must have the expertise and talent to play their part in this exciting school where there is a belief that education can make a fundamental difference to the life chances of young people.

The Senior Leadership Team have corporate responsibility and provide link line management for Directors and Leaders of Learning. In addition to the Headteacher, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) has an Associate Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, four Assistant Headteachers and a School Business Manager. The SLT also has 2 Associate Assistant Headteachers who are senior middle leaders developing their skills for senior management. Strong emphasis is placed on further individual professional development and all middle leaders are expected to contribute to policy formation and implementation in specific curriculum areas and on whole school issues and developments. Teaching and learning which promotes high level student achievement is the core business.

Staff within the school are encouraged to take the initiative and to develop individual ideas and are expected to contribute to the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer for students, before school, after school, weekends and during school holidays.

## **Premises**

In September 2001 the school began the academic year in a new £15 million purpose built flagship school building which is a design, build and maintain concept under a Private Finance Initiative with Sheffield LA. An additional 300 place extension was completed in 2011 to accommodate an increase in the places available for Year 7 from 150 to 210 per year. This is an inspiring and stimulating building in which to work.

The curriculum is delivered in specialist suites of rooms; each teaching room being equipped with an interactive whiteboard. The state of the art premises has full ICT network access with over 200 desktop PC's and class sets of laptops and iPads, utilising wireless connectivity. ICT resources are further enhanced following investment through the BSF ICT programme.

The Fir Vale Enterprise Centre officially opened in December 2007 and provides 'state of the art' facilities for student and community learning.

## **School Organisation**

The school operates a five period (60 minutes) day and all students follow the National Curriculum. The school timetable comprises of 50 one hour lessons over a two-week timetable. Students are set from year 7 and the school places a high priority on tracking student progress and ensuring the fulfilling of individuals' potential. A guidance programme is in place and complements an extended core provision for Key Stage 4 students. An indication of our determination and commitment to raising standards and the attainment of our students.

The school encourages a positive ethos, raising students' self-esteem and confidence. There are a number of systems of rewards and incentives which acknowledge attendance, punctuality, good social and academic behaviour.

Governors and parents play an active role within the school community and this is reflected in the interest and supportive attitude of parents. This support and belief in the school's future is also reflected in the number of students applying for entry to the school in year 7. Projected numbers (477 for 2017-18) continue to give encouragement and a great emphasis is placed on building strong, mutually beneficial curriculum links with the main partner primary schools.

### **14-19 Provision**

The school has worked closely with other schools in the North East of the city in developing the 14-19 year old education provision, which involves us in the cluster along with representatives from the FE/HE Sectors and the Local Authority. We see the transition from 14+ as a seamless progression suited to the needs of the individual student. The opportunities that will continue to arise from this close co-operation are boundless. Longley Park Sixth Form College opened in September 2004 and Hillsborough College opened in 2005 providing a high quality local post 16 provision for students.

### **Strategic Development**

The school is continually seeking to raise standards and develop further within the context of innovation and diversity. As Sheffield's first specialist school for Business and Enterprise the school played a pivotal role in regeneration and lifelong learning. Although this status is no longer in place the school chose to continue the skills and links generated by the original specialism. In 2013, the school became a Microsoft IT Academy to enhance the provision for individuals and the local business community.

The school works in close collaboration with its 'Family of Schools' comprising of six primary schools as well as positive working partnerships and projects with other secondary schools in Sheffield.

### **Fir Vale Community and Parent Partnership**

The vital contribution by parents and carers to the education of the young people is acknowledged as a key aspect toward achieving success. There is fantastic support for the school from parents and the local community. A newly formed group – Fir Vale Community and Parents Partnership aims to develop links and provide opportunities for parents and carers to be involved in the life of the school on an informal basis.

### **Consideration of employment at Fir Vale School**

We are fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and safety of young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment. An enhanced DBS check is required for all posts.

Governors appreciate the commitment and support for students by all staff and gives consideration to work/life balance to maintain a happy school with a very calm and cohesive environment. In addition to access to a range of professional development opportunities, a package of benefits for all employees has been established and currently includes:

- Salary sacrifice car scheme
- Childcare vouchers
- Cycle to work scheme
- Computer scheme
- Mobile phone scheme

Our expectations are high, at the heart of the school are the students and our mission is to provide them all with the highest standards of teaching and the very best learning opportunities, in order to enable each and every one of them to “make their dreams a reality”.

**Breffní Martin**  
**Headteacher**

## Method of Application

1. We will only accept applications on a Fir Vale School application form. Curriculum Vitae are not accepted.
2. The statement in your application should focus on:
  - Candidate's previous experience which will help in successfully undertaking the role of Learning Support Assistant – **ASD (Autism) Specialist**
  - Personal skills to benefit the learning by students at Fir Vale School.
3. Telephone enquiries to Mrs Paula Barker, Admin & HR Manager on (0114) 243 9391.
4. Completed application forms to be returned to:  
  
Mrs Paula Barker  
Admin & HR Manager  
Fir Vale School  
Owler Lane  
Sheffield  
S4 8GB  
  
Or by email to: [recruitment@firvale.com](mailto:recruitment@firvale.com)
5. Closing date: Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2017
6. The school operates a NO SMOKING policy on site.
7. Interviews - Candidates invited to interview will:
  - (a) Have the opportunity to visit the school, meeting students and staff.
  - (b) Engage in a learning activity with students / complete an in-tray exercise (dependant on the actual position)
  - (c) Have a formal individual session with a selection panel.



# Fir Vale School

## JOB DESCRIPTION

**Post Title:** Learning Support Assistant

**Hours of work:** 37 hours per week, Term time (39 weeks)

**Salary:** Grade 4 £17, 772 - £20, 661 Pro-rata for 39 weeks

**Responsible to:** Director of Learning for SEND

**Responsible for:** To work, under the direction of the teacher and other appropriate staff, in assisting in and contributing to the planning, delivery and evaluation of the learning process. The post holder will work in classes, or other appropriate locations as part of a professional team to support teaching and learning for pupils with a range of needs including: moderate, severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties, behavioural, social, mental, emotional, communication, sensory or physical difficulties.

To assist in the induction and development of classroom support staff as required.

### The key areas of work are:

- |                               |                           |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| A. Supporting Students        | B. Supporting Teachers    |
| C. Support for the Curriculum | D. Support for the School |
| E. Other                      |                           |

#### A. Supporting Students

- Supervise and provide particular support for students, including those with special needs, ensuring their safety and access to learning activities.
- Assist with the development of students' personal needs, and implement related personal programmes, including social, health, physical, hygiene, first aid and welfare matters.
- Interact with students in ways that support the development of their ability to think and learn, including the use of careful questioning,
- Support children with disabilities or special educational needs through the provision of care and encouragement to the student.
- Assist in moving and handling individuals using specialist equipment as required.
- Establish good relationships with students, acting as a role model and being aware of and responding appropriately to individual needs.
- Promote the inclusion and acceptance of all students.
- Encourage students to interact with others and engage in activities led by the teacher.
- Encourage students to act independently as appropriate.
- Set challenging and demanding expectations and promote self-esteem and independence.
- Provide feedback to students in relation to progress and achievement under guidance of the teacher.

#### B. Supporting Teachers

- Prepare the classroom as directed for lessons, clear afterwards and assist with the display of students work.
- Use strategies, in liaison with the teacher to support students to achieve learning goals.
- Assist with the planning of learning activities.
- Monitor students' responses to learning activities and accurately record achievement/progress as directed.
- Provide detailed and regular feedback to teachers on students achievement, progress, problems etc.
- Promote good student behaviour, dealing promptly with conflict and incidents in line with established policy and encourage students to take responsibility for their own behaviour.
- Establish constructive relationships with parents/carers.
- Administer routine tests and invigilate exams and undertake routine marking of students' work.
- Be aware of student problems / progress / achievements and report to the teacher as agreed.

- Undertake student record keeping as requested.
- Support the Teacher in managing student behaviour, reporting difficulties as appropriate.
- Gather / report information from / to parents / carers as directed.
- Provide clerical administrative support e.g. photocopying, typing, filing, collecting money, administer coursework etc.

**C. Support for the Curriculum**

- Undertake structured and agreed learning activities/teaching programmes, adjusting activities according to student responses.
- Undertake programmes linked to local and national learning strategies, eg literacy, numeracy, KS3, recording achievement and progress and feeding back to the teacher.
- Support the use of ICT in learning activities and develop students' competence and independence in its use.
- Prepare and maintain equipment / resources as directed by the Teachers and assist students in their use.

**D. Support for the School**

- Be aware of and comply with policies and procedures relating to child protection, health, safety and security, confidentiality and data protection, reporting all concerns to an appropriate person.
- Be aware of and support differentiation and ensure all students have equal access to opportunities to learn and develop.
- Contribute to the overall ethos / work / aims of the school.
- Appreciate and support the role of other professionals.
- Attend and participate in relevant meetings as required.
- Participate in training and other learning activities and performance development as required.
- Assist with the supervision of students out of lesson times, including before, after school and at lunchtimes.
- Accompany teaching staff and students on visits, trips, and out of school activities as required and take responsibility for a group under the supervision of the teacher.

**E. Other**

- As may be reasonably in agreement with the Headteacher

# FIR VALE SCHOOL

## Learning Support Assistant (ASD Autism Specialist)

### Person Specification

Factors	Essential	Desirable	How Identified
<b>Skills/knowledge/ experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An understanding of complex associated needs e.g. behaviour, medical, physical, sensory, autism</li> <li>• An understanding of child/young people's development and learning processes</li> <li>• An understanding that children/young people have differing needs and knowledge of inclusive practice</li> <li>• Organisational skills</li> <li>• High level inter-personal and communications skills</li> <li>• Ability to relate well to children and adults</li> <li>• Work constructively as part of a team</li> <li>• A caring, positive attitude towards student welfare</li> <li>• Able to maintain trust and confidentiality where appropriate.</li> <li>• Assist the school in forming a partnership with parents.</li> <li>• Competent in the use of ICT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of working within a school.</li> <li>• Understanding of equal opportunities</li> <li>• Understanding of the challenges of an 11-16 inner city school.</li> <li>• An awareness of students with special educational needs.</li> <li>• Knowledge of behaviour management techniques</li> <li>• Experience of working with children and young people with moderate, severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties in an educational setting.</li> </ul>	<p>Application form Supporting statement Interview References</p>
<b>Qualifications/ Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NVQ level 3 qualification in supporting teaching and learning or equivalent or achievement within a reasonable timescale.</li> <li>• Willingness to undertake training to meet the requirements of the role e.g. manual handling, first aid training</li> <li>• Good level of literacy and numeracy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Aid qualification</li> <li>• Level 3 qualifications or equivalents to evidence good numeracy and literacy skills</li> <li>• Knowledge of relevant strategies e.g. literacy/numeracy.</li> <li>• Willing to undertake further professional development.</li> </ul>	<p>Application Form Supporting statement Interview</p>
<b>Work related Circumstances</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible and prepared to work outside of school hours in response to the needs of the school and its users.</li> </ul>		<p>Application Form Supporting statement Interview</p>

<p><b>Personal Qualities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be committed to the school's policies and ethos</li> <li>• To be committed to Continuing Professional Development</li> <li>• Motivation to work with children and young people</li> <li>• Ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children and young people</li> <li>• Emotional resilience in working with challenging and injurious behaviours and attitudes</li> <li>• Ability to use authority and maintaining discipline</li> <li>• An empathy for equality &amp; diversity</li> <li>• Ability to adapt to changing work loads and work under pressure.</li> <li>• Self motivated and ability to motivate others.</li> <li>• Maintain personal presentation that sets a high standard for students.</li> </ul>		<p>Application Form Supporting statement Interview References</p>
----------------------------------	---	--	---