

SENCO

Strood Academy



More than just a job. More than just an employer.

Leigh Academies Trust is a dynamic, vibrant multi-academy trust, founded in 2008. Today we encompass 31 academies across Kent, Medway and South-East London.



LEIGH
Academies Trust

Simon Beamish

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Chief Executive
Leigh Academies Trust



Welcome

Through a model of education that creates a network of inspirational and inclusive academies that share the same values, the Trust provides the drive for educational improvement and dynamic transformation. All of the academies work closely and collaboratively together, along with our partners, seeking to exploit the key educational philosophy of human scale education. To maximise the levels of achievement across each of our learning communities, all activities are focused on improving the life chances of the young people in our care.

As of 1st September 2023, our Trust comprises 31 geographically organised academies (15 secondaries, 14 primaries and 2 special) educating over 20,000 students, and employing 3,000 talented staff. Nearly 40% of our academies are judged outstanding overall by Ofsted, versus 15% nationally. The Trust is establishing four 'clusters' of academies: North Kent; Central Kent; South East London; Medway. In addition, the Trust is responsible for one of the region's biggest initial teaching training organisations, a large teaching school hub and is an accredited apprenticeship provider. Our future plans are found in our [Vision 2030](#) document available on our website.

We are now recruiting to appoint a suitably experienced and qualified SENCO at Strood Academy. The role of SENCO is a pivotal role in the school's future journey as our appointed leader will continue to build and evolve our unique and inspirational place of learning at Strood Academy. The successful candidate will work closely with the Senior Leadership Team and other senior leaders across the academy and wider Trust.

Our ideal candidate will be an existing SENCO with considerable experience and you will need a strong commitment to raising educational attainment for children and young people with SEN and have a willingness and ability to develop specialist knowledge and keep up to date with local and national developments.

Our successful candidate will receive encouragement, support and guidance to develop your own career within the Trust. This is a career defining opportunity and we look forward to hearing from senior leaders who are ready for the next step.

Strood Academy

At Strood Academy we are relentless in our mission to ensure that all pupils receive an excellent education that leads to real choice in life. We are committed to our pupils, supporting them to flourish as individuals ready for the 21st century. We offer our pupils a commitment to excellence based on high-quality teaching and a wide range of experiences beyond the classroom.

Our collective mission through our small school model ensures our pupils receive a world class IB education which allows them to become highly ambitious, successful citizens who are well positioned to create a better world. We set unapologetically high expectations, challenging our pupils to believe in their ability and have the choice in life they truly deserve. We ensure our pupils are at the forefront of tomorrow.

- Our pupils believe in the value of their learning journey and are proud of their education.
- Our parents believe in our mission and work in partnership to achieve excellence.
- Our staff believe in the transformative power of education.

We explicitly teach our values which are embedded within the heart of our academy. They are central in everything we do. Our academy values provide our framework to enable our journey to excellence.

At Strood Academy we are working to achieve [Vision 2028](#) which is underpinned by 10 foundations. These foundations are at the cornerstone of all that we say, we think and we do. Whilst we set upon our journey to excellence, our foundations will remain the key ingredients for success; they will remain constant and enable us to achieve Vision 2028. Vision 2028 has been developed in collaboration with LAT [Vision 2030](#) to ensure a Trust approach to continuous academy improvement.

- We hold the highest expectations and embed positive engagement as part of our curriculum;
- We teach an ambitious and knowledge rich curriculum;
- We inspire every individual to become an active global citizen;

Jon Richardson

BSc (Hons) PGCE MA NPQH

Principal
Strood Academy



- We are relentless in creating a better world;
- We develop strong, collaborative community relations;
- We take pride in our safe, nurturing and inclusive learning environment;
- We lead with expertise;
- We care about our staff;
- We harness the power of technology
- We promote social justice through excellent outcomes for all.

This is a happy, warm and welcoming school and we pride ourselves on the relationships that we have with our pupils, caring for them throughout their education at Strood Academy. We also work closely with families to ensure that all of our pupils are committed to learning and develop the character necessary to take advantage of all the opportunities in which we provide.

We deliver innovative teaching and learning through our broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum allowing our pupils to experience a rich variety of subjects. Our curriculum and lessons are sequenced to enable our pupils to build on their prior knowledge and further develop their understanding in order for them to achieve the highest outcomes regardless of their starting point.

Our staff are dedicated to providing an exceptional learning environment where pupils are challenged and stretched to achieve their personal best. Our enrichment programme and curriculum are designed to support the development of our pupils into well rounded individuals who engage as positive citizens within their communities as well as becoming lifelong learners.

Pupils are encouraged and supported to flourish through a culture of high-expectations, aspirations and traditional values. We have a warm but strict approach and expect our pupils to uphold the highest standards in terms of attitude to learning, behaviour, attendance and appearance. We have a small school structure within our academy where pupils are placed into one of three colleges. This allows our highly

Strood Academy

skilled staff to provide excellent pastoral support, nurturing them academically, socially and spiritually in a much smaller environment. We look forward to welcoming you into our community as we journey towards excellence together.

Our collective ambition is exceptionally high, we will not make excuses for failing to deliver on our commitment to excellence.

At Strood Academy we pride ourselves on providing excellent pastoral care for our pupils. We are able to do this by having a small school structure. All pupils are assigned to one of our colleges which are:

- Victory College
- Hercules College
- Trafalgar College

Our colleges are each named after a ship built in Chatham Dockyard, thereby maintaining a link to the heritage of our area. Each college represents just over 400 pupils and is led by a Vice Principal and two Assistant Principals. Each college is supported by an extensive team to provide excellent pastoral care for our pupils which includes a Head of Pastoral, Deputy Head of Pastoral, Senior student Support Manager, two student Support Managers, a Safeguarding Officer and College Admin. This college team is available throughout the academy day to support all pupils to ensure we fulfil our ambition of providing excellent pastoral care for all.

Our curriculum at Strood Academy is a 7 year curriculum, where pupils commence in Year 7 and follow their studies through until Year 13. Our curriculum is carefully designed to support long term memory which builds on prior knowledge. In Years 7, 8 and 9 pupils will have access to an ambitious and rigorous curriculum which is delivered through the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (IB MYP). The MYP places great emphasis on international-mindedness, interdisciplinary learning and service to others. It covers expected national curriculum areas but also offers opportunities to be actively involved in the community and promotes environmental responsibility, as well as the knowledge

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and skills to be effective in an ever-changing world. In addition to this, pupils will develop 10 key character traits where the IB learner profile will be embedded within the taught curriculum and all other aspects of pupil's development, including pastoral, social times, enrichment and extracurricular activities to support their holistic learning and development. In Year 10 and Year 11, pupils select a number of options which enables them to personalise their curriculum. Our options are broad to enable pupils to fulfil their interests and continue their love for learning. Our curriculum is focused to enable pupils the choice in life they truly deserve. As part of this pupils study a broad curriculum throughout their studies which is inclusive of pupils studying the EBacc in Key Stage 4. We place high emphasis on ensuring that pupils are fully prepared for their stage and achieve exceptional examination outcomes. Within the Sixth Form at Strood Academy we provide a number of courses and pathways for our pupils. Our International Baccalaureate courses are extremely popular as well as A-Level and a range of vocational options. Many of our pupils complete a range of qualifications enabling them to achieve the International Baccalaureate Career Pathway (IBCP). We are launching T-Levels at Strood Academy which enables pupils both academic study as well as career based experiences and employment. All pupils within the Sixth Form also complete the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). Our Sixth Form continues to grow due to the academic successes of our pupils with record numbers of pupils progressing to university study. This is supported by the extensive and well developed careers programme and advice that all pupils receive within the academy.

Our teaching pedagogy at Strood Academy is supported by extensive educational research, ensuring that no time is wasted and pupils maximise their studies to achieve the very best outcomes. Our teachers use assessment regularly. This supports further intervention and teaching to enable our pupils to be successful. We issue reports to parents indicating progress, attitude and homework three times a year as well as providing a parents evening to support the key relationships between the academy and home. We have unrivalled facilities and equipment that enhance

the learning experience and engage pupils across the curriculum. We encourage innovation through our teaching and learning with the use of Chromebooks and each pupil is given their own one for their entire time at the academy, aiding learning to continue beyond the school day.

Our variety of teaching and learning activities reflect the balance of traditional and innovative approaches that are used in the classroom. Pupils have the opportunity to develop their core knowledge through regular retrieval practice and through our homework strategy using knowledge organisers. Homework is an essential ingredient for personal success and forms an important partnership with each family. Learning continues beyond the end of the school day, at weekends and holiday periods. All pupils have the opportunity to be involved with a vast range of activities and interests that improve learning, self-esteem and well-being, and help build lifelong friendships.

We believe that all pupils should be equally valued in our academy regardless of their needs or approach to learning. We strive to eliminate prejudice and discrimination, and to develop an environment where all pupils can flourish and feel safe. High quality teaching and differentiating for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEND. The academy regularly and carefully reviews the quality of teaching for all pupils through a robust system of quality assurance which enables our teachers to continually improve and ensure they are meeting the needs of every pupil. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils.

The Endeavour Centre Strood Academy continues to work especially closely with Medway Local Authority and in spring 2023 work commenced on the Endeavour Centre, which is due to open in October 2023. The Endeavour Centre is a Specialist Resource Provision (SRP) which provides pupils with an Education Health Care Plan and diagnosis of autism access to an exceptional education. The Endeavour Centre can support up to 25 pupils, who receive a bespoke curriculum to support their learning as well as access mainstream lessons and subject specialists. Our academy is one, where the Endeavour Centre is truly part of Strood Academy and enables our pupils to feel part of our school community.

OFSTED last visited Strood Academy in December 2021 and confirmed that the academy continues to be judged 'Good' and is very strong in many areas. To read the full report please [click here](#).

Strood Academy is part of Leigh Academies Trust and together with our skilled governing body we are committed to providing educational experiences that enable our pupils to reach their full potential. We know that pupils achieve their best in a supportive, caring environment and a strong home/school partnership being essential in helping to develop our pupils into successful individuals.

We look forward to welcoming you to our academy.

Mr Jon Richardson, BSc (Hons) PGCE MA NPQH

Principal

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Vacancy

Due to an increase in SEN numbers we are seeking to appoint another experienced and qualified SENCO who, with the support of the Principal, Academy Leadership Team and the SEN department will take responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the SEN policy, SEN information report and provision made by the school for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. The successful candidate will also work closely with staff, parents/carers and other agencies.

A flexible approach with a can-do ethos is necessary, as is drive, grit and boundless enthusiasm, as nearly everyday we experience something new for the first time. It is essential that our SENCO has a positive outlook, is supportive of others and openly shares best practice, modelling this constantly to the growing staff body. Our SENCO will need to embrace a forward thinking approach to raising standards in teaching for SEND, implementing a high quality intervention programme and working with SE London and Kent teams to ensure we are doing the absolute best for our most vulnerable students at all times.

The role of SENCO can be highly rewarding, as you will have the opportunity to directly contribute to pupils receiving the support they need to achieve their full potential. It is desirable that our successful candidate has experience of Special Resource Provision (SRP). As a community we believe in working collaboratively and sharing good practice. If you want to be part of a team which embraces innovation and creativity then we are interested to hear from you.

What we are offering:

- A competitive salary commensurate with the profile of the post
- Bespoke CPD with mentoring and coaching opportunities
- The opportunity to work laterally across a number of Leigh Academies Trust schools to benchmark best practice and to be involved in teaching and learning innovation

We'd like to hear from candidates who are:

- An excellent leader who is passionate about learning and has strong SEN knowledge
- Collaborative, able to build strong professional relationships
- Able to motivate and inspire students and staff to achieve their full potential
- Energetic and have a can-do attitude
- Confident and has strong career aspirations
- Committed to safeguarding and the happiness and wellbeing of everyone at the Academy

For our successful candidate, being a member of staff at Strood Academy and the wider Trust means you'll receive access to a great range of employment benefits from day one. [Click here to view the current benefits package](#), and be mindful that the list is always growing.

Position	SENCO
Location	Strood Academy
Responsible to	Principal
Basis	Permanent, Full-Time
Commencement	September 2024
Salary	Leadership scale commensurate with experience

Application Process

Naturally, we are seeking to appoint the best possible candidate and therefore the application process will reflect our desire to undertake all necessary measures to achieve this.

On the basis that interested candidates may be keen to visit the academy before making a formal application, you can arrange this by contacting Claire Mexter (PA to Principal) - claire.mexter@stroodacademy.org. Visits will be offered and will be hosted by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Please ensure you offer Linda a range of dates when you are available in your initial email to ensure we can coordinate a visit that works for both you and the academy.

Candidates wishing to have an initial conversation with the SLT about this role can also arrange for a telephone call. Those wishing to do so should also contact Claire (as above) in the first instance.

When ready to apply, suitable and interested candidates are invited to complete an online application detailing why they are suitable for the role. This can be submitted on Jobtrain via the following link;

[SENCO at Strood Academy - Application Form](#)

If you have any queries on any aspect of the application process or need additional information, please contact Rachel Cribben (LAT Talent Team) on rachel.cribben@latrust.org.uk

The academy is committed to safeguarding children and successful candidates will be subject to an Enhanced DBS check. Our commitment to safeguarding is underpinned by robust processes and checks which are in place across the Trust.

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Job Profile

Role: SENCO - Strood Academy
Reporting to: Principal

provide maximum support and ensure continuity of provision

The Leigh Academies Trust is a highly successful multi-academy trust. Our model of education enables students to reach their full potential, transforming their lives and ultimately the communities in which they live.

Job Purpose

To work closely with the Assistant Principal for SEND/ Inclusion, Senior Leadership Team and colleagues in the strategic development of the Academy's Special Educational Needs (SEN) policy and oversee the day-to-day operation of that policy with the aim of raising SEN student achievement.

Areas of Responsibility and Key Tasks

a) Strategic Direction and Development of SEN Provision in the Academy (with the support of, and under the direction of the leadership team)

- exercise a key role in assisting the senior leadership team and governors with the strategic development of SEN policy / provision
- support all staff in understanding the needs of SEN student and ensure the objectives to develop SEN are reflected in the school development plan
- monitor progress of objectives and targets for students with SEN from teachers' plans, evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning by work analysis and use these analyses to guide future improvements
- analyse and interpret relevant school, local and national data and advise the senior leadership team on the level of resources required to maximise achievement
- liaise with staff, parents, external agencies and other schools to coordinate their contribution,

b) Teaching & Learning

- support the identification of and disseminate the most effective teaching approaches for students with SEN
- work with the senior leadership team and staff to develop effective ways of bridging barriers to learning through:
 1. assessment of needs
 2. monitoring of teaching quality and student achievement
 3. target setting, including IEPs
 4. developing a recording system for progress
- collect and interpret specialist assessment data to inform practice
- undertake day-to-day co-ordination of SEN students' provisions through close liaison with staff, parents and external agencies
- work with the senior leadership team, teachers, key stage co-ordinators and pastoral staff to ensure all students learning is of equal importance and that there are realistic expectations of students
- consider the range of teaching strategies / equipment that could be utilised for students at School Action Plus.

c) Leading and Managing

- provide professional guidance to staff to secure good teaching for SEN students, through both written guidance and meetings
- advise on and contribute to the professional development of staff, including whole Academy INSET provision
- provide regular information to the senior

leadership team and governing body on the evaluation of SEN provision

d) Effective deployment of staff and resources

- advise the senior leadership team and governing body of priorities for expenditure and deployment of staff, and utilise resources with maximum efficiency
- maintain and develop resources, coordinate their deployment and monitor their effectiveness in meeting the objectives of Academy and SEN policies
- lead the SEN team, including LSAs, and the HI and SLCN specialists, overall responsibility for the HI and SLCN SRPs

e) Other professional requirements

- Coordinate all Annual Reviews and attend / chair when necessary

Safeguarding of students and Duty of care

All staff, regardless of role, level of seniority and location, have a responsibility to ensure the highest levels of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our pupils, and we expect all our staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We must collectively create an environment where children feel safe to learn, play, and grow. Children should feel comfortable in their surroundings and know that they can approach any responsible adult with any problems or concerns.

All staff must be able to identify any children who are at risk of harm, and know the characteristics of abuse or neglect. If you suspect or confirm harm then it's essential you know what actions to take.

Annual safeguarding training is offered to all staff at Leigh Academies Trust, and it is the staff member's responsibility to be aware of the most up to date guidance documented in the [Keeping Children Safe in Education document \(Department of Education\)](#).

Notes

The job description allocates duties and responsibilities but does not direct the particular amount of time to be spent on carrying them out and no part of it may be so construed. This job description is not necessarily a comprehensive definition of the post. It will be reviewed at least once a year and may be subject to modification or amendment at any time after consultation with the holder of the post.

The duties may be varied to meet the changing demands of the academy/business unit at the reasonable discretion of the Principal/Director. This job description does not form part of the contract of employment. It describes the way the post-holder is expected and required to perform and complete the particular duties as set out in the foregoing.

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Person Specification

As a Trust we seek to recruit talented individuals who can not only help to build the success of our academies but also people who are engaging and passionate about everything they do.

(e) = essential (d) = desirable

Training and Qualifications

- A graduate in a relevant discipline (e)
- To hold a teaching qualification that is recognised by the DfE (e)
- To have evidence of continuing and recent professional development relevant to the post (e)
- National SENCO Award (e)
- Evidence of other qualification/s eg BSL, SLCN (d)

Experience

- As SENCO/supporting children with special educational needs (e)
- Effective working with a variety of stakeholders (e)
- Monitoring and identifying areas for improvement (e)
- Leading, motivating and developing practice (e)
- Effective use of assessment and analysis of SEND children's progress in raising standards (e)
- Teaching experience across the primary range having taught at all levels of ability to at least a good standard (e)
- Working effectively with students with ASD (d)

Professional Knowledge, Skills and Understanding


- Previous experience of effective SEND development and pupils based learning (e)
- Thorough and up to date knowledge of SEND code of practice and SEND issues (e)
- Proven Management and SENCO skills to support inclusion teaching and learning (e)
- Ability to produce accurate work to tight deadlines under pressure (e)
- Ability to communicate clearly in writing and orally a variety of audiences (e)
- Ability to be able to deal sensitively with pastoral issues relating to staff and students (e)
- Extensive ICT skills that reflect the impact of technology on today's classrooms (e)
- Experience of managing successful change (d)

Personal Qualities and Abilities

- An enthusiastic, confident and able communicator with excellent interpersonal skills (e)
- An effective organiser who can get the most from all types of resources through their development and deployment (e)
- A positive and resilient individual with drive, initiative, vision and commitment to improve standards in the school (e)
- Can lead, motivate and inspire others including teachers, parents and governors (e)
- Commitment to inclusion and raising standards for all (e)
- Able to demonstrate strong leadership and management skills (d)

Management

- Ability to analyse and evaluate data on students (e)
- Ensure appropriate curriculum provision for all students across the Department (e)
- Ability to establish credibility with colleagues, students and parents (e)



We build strong partnerships with parents and carers, working closely together to ensure all students enjoy a fulfilling and rewarding education.

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Benefits at Leigh Academies Trust

At Leigh Academies Trust, we want to provide you with a rewarding and enriching career and to help you to reach your full potential, both professionally and personally. As an employee of Leigh Academies Trust, here is a taster of the great benefits you can receive from day one;

- An open and collaborative working environment, not just within your academy but also across the Trust where innovation is encouraged
- A career in an organisation that values individuality and diversity
- Dedicated focus groups to ensure we have the optimal working environment in all aspects.

Professional development opportunities

- Regular training and access to a range of internal and external programmes tailored to your learning needs throughout your career
- Educational sponsorship (application required)
- Opportunities for career progression as we are willing and able to support moves from one academy to another.

Financial

- A competitive salary for both teaching and non-teaching staff whereby pay progression is possible on an annual basis, following successful performance
- Access to a highly attractive pension plan
- Neyber platform – support provided to build your financial confidence and support when needed with Neyber loans
- Access to a range of benefits and discounts that are sourced specifically for our staff.

Well-being

- Full-time associate staff receive 25 days annual leave plus bank holidays which increases to reflect your length of service
- The chance to work with a company who received a 'Gold' Workplace Wellbeing Award for the last two years
- Wellbeing champions and access to Mental Health First Aiders
- 24/7 access to a free Employee Assistance Programme to provide confidential advice and guidance
- Student Wellbeing support from our Educational Psychologist team
- Personal resilience and Wellbeing courses
- Access to our Wellbeing platform with a range of ever evolving benefits
- Wellbeing campaigns.

Facilities

- Great school buildings with many state-of-the-art facilities across our academies, providing positive working environments
- Free/discounted gym access
- Free car parking at every site
- On-site catering with great food, all reasonably priced for staff (with the option to buy evening meals so you don't have to cook!)
- Social networking opportunities across the trust to create new relationships both inside and outside of the work setting.

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An overview of the Trust you'd be joining

Leigh Academies Trust is a non-profit making charitable company limited by guarantee, based in Strood, Rochester, Medway. The Trust exists to support and assist schools to build upon their existing strengths and to help them achieve educational transformation. It has significant experience in running schools, and today includes both sponsored academies and schools which have chosen to convert to academy status.

The Trust was formed in 2008 with the linking of The Leigh Technology Academy and Longfield Academy under one governing body. It now encompasses over 20,000 students, between the ages of 3 and 19, in 31 primary, secondary and special academies, across Kent, Medway, Bexley and Greenwich.

Leigh Academies Trust – Our Values:

- We care – about our pupils through our human scale approach to education, our staff and their well-being and the communities that we serve, driven by our high ideals and strong moral values.
- We have boundless ambition – to achieve excellence for all and create confident young adults with high levels of resilience and integrity.
- We work together – as one team in the belief that we are greater than the sum of our parts. We foster an enterprising culture through collaboration and in close partnership with industry and other educators.
- We keep getting better – using our 'can-do' attitude towards continuous improvement and innovation.

Trust Advantages:

- Expert central services for finance, HR, IT, facilities and business functions.
- Innovative approaches to teacher recruitment and retention.
- Fast track development of leaders for internal promotion opportunities.
- Central reserves protect individual school budgets.
- Substantial investment in cross-Trust initiatives to improve teaching and learning.
- Close collaboration between senior leaders across the Trust.
- Integration of primary and secondary approaches into all-through education.
- Adequate scale to design and test new ideas.
- High quality strategic governance with wide business and professional experience.
- Robust delivery models as government policies, rules and measures change.

**Our Mission:
Education for a better world**

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