

# **Recruitment pack**

**Helen Allison School**

**Principal**



Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in this post.

The National Autistic Society has been running schools for autistic children for over 50 years. Our knowledge is grounded in our experience working every day with a diverse range of children who each have their own challenges, passions and aspirations. We find the best way for each child to learn and develop, using a range of approaches that we have assessed and tested so that we can be confident of their effectiveness.

Helen Allison School is an independent National Autistic Society day and residential school opened in 1968. Currently the school have 77 pupils aged between 5 -19.

A school is nothing, however, without a skilled and dedicated staff, led by an inspirational and visionary senior team of professionals. I hope very much that you will feel that this team could include – should involve – you! If this is the case, I look forward to receiving your application.

You will find elsewhere in this pack a brief history of the National Autistic Society and of its mission and vision, together with an organogram showing how our schools are structured.

To apply for this role, please visit our job vacancy at [here](#) and complete the online application form. Please let us know if there are any dates during the recruitment timetable (see below) when you will not be available.

Once again, thank you for your interest and I hope to hear from you shortly.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Lever". Below the signature is a horizontal line.

Mark Lever  
**CEO**  
**The National Autistic Society**

# Recruitment timetable for this role

|   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Closing date for applications                     | Monday, 4 <sup>th</sup> March 2019  |
| Interviews/tests                                  | Monday, 11 <sup>th</sup> March 2019 |
| Anticipated start date (subject to notice period) | September 2019                      |

Should you wish to arrange an informal visit to the school prior to application, please contact Amelia Branch on [amelia.branch@nas.org.uk](mailto:amelia.branch@nas.org.uk) and we will be happy to welcome you.

If you have any queries, please contact Kirstie Fulthorpe, Director of Education on [Kirstie.fulthorpe@nas.org.uk](mailto:Kirstie.fulthorpe@nas.org.uk) or Dr Khursh Khan – Head of Education Improvement and Operations (UK) on [Khursh.khan@nas.org.uk](mailto:Khursh.khan@nas.org.uk)

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

**Recruitment Team**

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# About the National Autistic Society

**The National Autistic Society is here to transform lives, change attitudes and create a society that works for autistic people.**

**We transform lives** by providing support, information and practical advice for the 700,000 autistic adults and children in the UK, as well as their three million family members and carers. Since 1962, autistic people have turned to us at key moments or challenging times in their lives, be it getting a diagnosis, going to school or finding work.

**We change attitudes** by improving public understanding of autism and the difficulties many autistic people face. We also work closely with businesses, local authorities and government to help them provide more autism-friendly spaces, deliver better services and improve laws.

We have come a long way, but it is not good enough. There is still so much to do to increase opportunities, reduce social isolation and build a brighter future for people on the spectrum. With your help, we can make it happen.

You'll find more information about us on our website: [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk).



## Our values

### We learn from real experience

We've spent over 50 years working together with people on the autism spectrum. But we move with the times and we understand that there's always more to learn.

### We tell it like it is

We share what we have learned about autism, so that more people can make informed decisions and lead the best lives possible.



## **We inspire**

We celebrate progress, open up new possibilities, spur people into action and motivate change.

## **We are courageous**

We won't accept ignorance or inequality and we'll never stop pushing for more understanding, greater support and a better world for people on the autism spectrum

# **What we do**

We're the UK's leading charity for autistic people active in every nation. Our free helpline, online community, 116 volunteer-run branches, 80 social care services and eight schools provide information, support and advice to hundreds of autistic people and their families. We train over 11,000 teachers, health workers and other professionals every year to help ensure schools, health services and workplaces meet the needs of autistic people. And our campaigning to improve public understanding, business and professional practice and policy benefits hundreds of thousands of autistic people and their families.

## **Vision**

A society that works for autistic people

## **Mission**

To transform lives by providing support, information and practical advice for the 700,000 autistic adults and children in the UK, as well as their three million family members and carers.

To change attitudes by improving public understanding of autism and helping businesses, local authorities and government to provide more autism-friendly spaces, deliver better services and improve laws.

## **Proposition**

With your support, we can do even more to transform lives, change attitudes and create a society that works for autistic people and their families.

# Our story

**We started in 1962 as a small group of friends who were frustrated at the lack of understanding and help available for us and our children. Since then, we have grown into the UK's leading autism charity.**

## 1962. First meeting of founding parents

A group of parents come together to start what will later be called The National Autistic Society.

## 1963. First National Autistic Society logo developed

The first logo is designed by a parent member of the Executive Committee, Gerald Gasson, and uses the symbol of a puzzle piece.

## 1965. Sybil Elgar School opens

Sybil Elgar is asked by some of the founding parents of the National Autistic Society to teach their children. Since it opened, over 400 students have attended the Sybil Elgar School in Ealing, London.

## 1967. First issue of *Communication* magazine

The first issue of our members' magazine was published - now called 'Your autism magazine' it won the 2014 Charity magazine of the year award.

## 1968. Helen Allison School opens

Due to the popularity of our first school, Sybil Elgar suggests the society opens a second school in Gravesend; it is named after the first General Secretary, Helen Allison, upon her retirement.

## 1974. Somerset Court opens

The residential community in Brent Knoll, Somerset opens to provide continued support and care for students leaving Sybil Elgar School, and others.

## 1974. Radlett Lodge School opens

The school is in Radlett in rural Hertfordshire and supports autistic children and young people aged four to 19. Since it opened, over 300 students have attended the school.

## 1976. Robert Ogden School opens

The school, originally situated in Wath upon Dearne, Rotherham and called Storm House, is in Thurnscoe, near Rotherham in South Yorkshire. The school supports autistic children and young people aged seven to 19. Since it opened, over 500 students have attended the schools.



### **1982. Renamed National Autistic Society**

In 1982 the charity changes its name from The National Society for Autistic Children to The National Autistic Society.

### **1992. Autism Accreditation launched**

The National Autistic Society and a network of affiliated local societies launched the quality assurance programme.

### **1994. National Autistic Society Cymru office opens**

The Cymru office opens in Cardiff.

### **1995. National Autistic Society EarlyBird starts**

The EarlyBird programme is for parents whose pre-school child receives a diagnosis of autism.

### **1995. National Autistic Society Scotland office opens**

The Scotland office opens in Glasgow.

### **1997. Autism Helpline opens**

The helpline is established started in order to answer the increasing number of calls and enquiries the organisation receives.

### **1997. Jane Asher becomes National Autistic Society President**

Jane, having already been a Vice-President for some years, is made President of the National Autistic Society in recognition of all her hard work for autistic people.

### **1998. Daldorch House School opens**

The school is in Ayrshire, Scotland. The school supports students on the autism spectrum aged five to 18. In addition, continuing educational opportunities and supported living arrangements are available for young people from 16-25 years as well as an outreach service for those aged five to 25.

### **2003. Countess of Wessex becomes National Autistic Society Royal Patron**

Her Royal Highness, The Countess of Wessex takes over this role from Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal.

### **2005. National Autistic Society Northern Ireland office opens**

The Northern Ireland office opens in Belfast.

### **2009. Autism Act passed following National Autistic Society campaigning**

The *Autism Act 2009* becomes the first ever disability-specific law in England, after campaigning by the National Autistic Society.

## **2012. National Autistic Society celebrates its 50th birthday**

We're proud to have been making a difference for 50 years.

## **2013. First free school opens.**

The National Autistic Society founds the National Autistic Society Academies Trust and opens its first free school, Thames Valley School.

## **2013. Ask autism is developed and launched.**

Ask autism is a training service that has been uniquely developed and delivered by people on the autism spectrum and includes a range of online modules. It provides an 'insider' perspective of autism to give a unique understanding of how people on the autism spectrum would like to be understood and supported.

## **2015. Church Lawton School opens in East Cheshire.**

This is our second free school and teaches children on the autism spectrum from the ages of four-19

## **2015. National Autistic Society holds its first ever World Autism Awareness Week**

## **2015. The first National Autistic Society Cullum Centre opens at Salesian School in Surrey.**

This is the first of four purpose-built specialist centres the National Autistic Society and Surrey County Council are opening within mainstream secondary schools the area, thanks to generous financial support from the Cullum Family Trust

## **2016. National Autistic Society launch Too Much Information**

This is the charity's biggest ever campaign. Too Much Information aims to increase public understanding of autism and launched with a video which has reached 65 million people.

## **2017. National Autistic Society Enterprise Campus opens in Chigwell, Essex.**

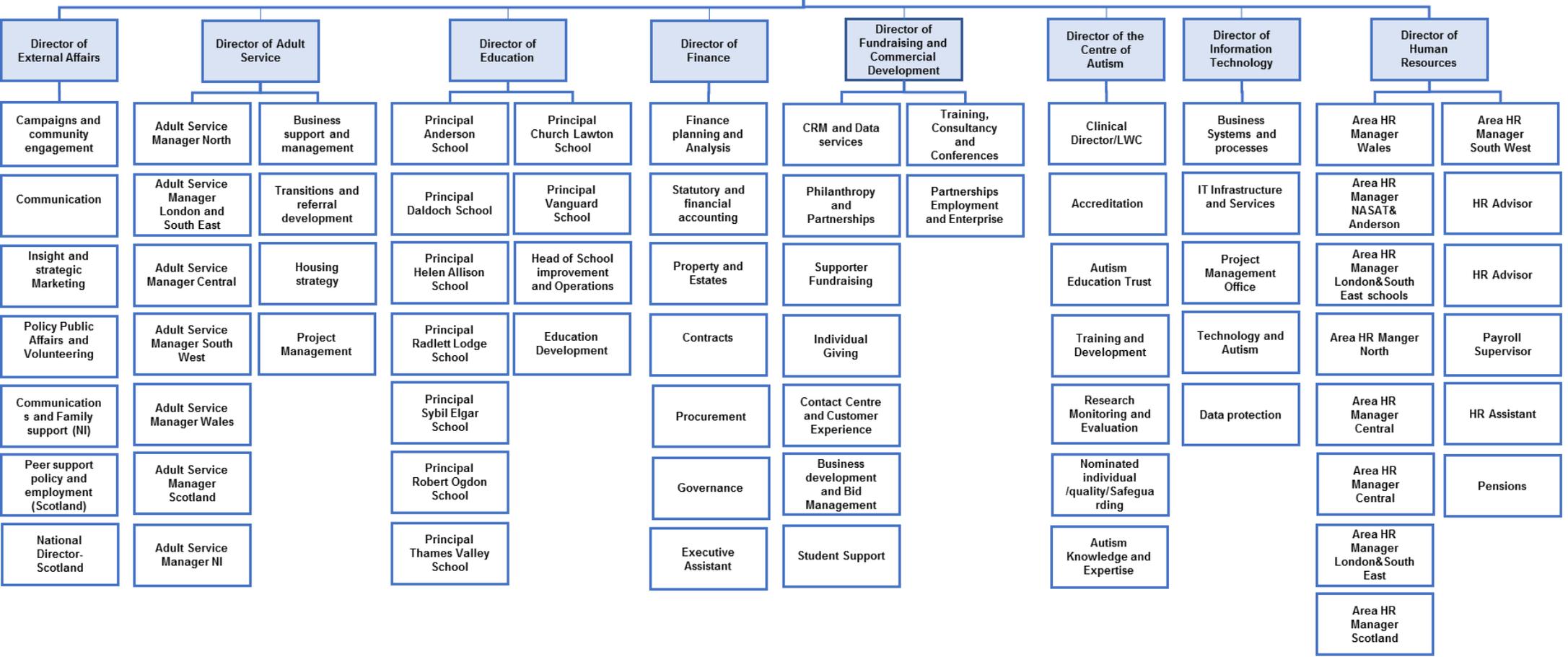
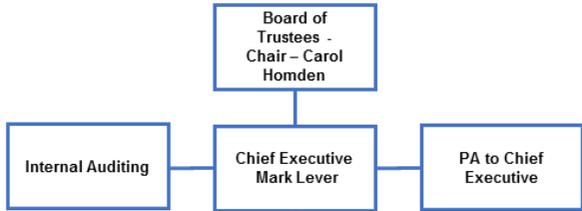
Our ground-breaking Enterprise Campus situated on a 13-acre site opened in September. The campus includes our eighth school, the Anderson School and our second diagnostic centre, the Lorna Wing Centre for Autism. The Enterprise Centre also situated at the campus opened this year.

# Our structures

National Autistic Society - Organisation



SMG





# About our schools

We have opened eight autism-specific schools, six of which have an independent status and two of which are free schools. Our independent schools are funded by individual fees paid by local authorities and governed by our board of Trustees. Many of the regulations and conditions that apply to state-funded schools do not apply to independent schools.



**Anderson School**

Anderson School is purpose-built autism specific school focusing on young people's futures and putting skills for life and employment at the heart of the curriculum. Situated on our 13-acre Enterprise Campus the school's facilities also include our Pathological Demand Avoidance Centre, sixth form centre, workshop and training facilities and indoor and outdoor sports facilities



**Daldorch House School**

Daldorch House School in South Ayrshire offers fully individualised care and education to autistic children aged eight to 21. Their tailored mix of care and support provides their pupils with a stepping stone into a positive future.



**Helen Allison School**

Helen Allison in Kent is a positive, friendly school that's been bringing out the best in autistic children and young people aged 5 – 19 for over 50 years. They provide a stimulating, high quality day education and residential services that helps each child reach their full potential.



**Radlett Lodge School**

Radlett Lodge School in Hertfordshire is a warm and welcoming day and residential school for autistic students aged four -19. The school works hard to make sure that their pupils have the best education, the best opportunities, and the best start in life.



**Robert Ogden School**

Robert Ogden School in Yorkshire opens up the world to each autistic child and young person, with a huge range of facilities and opportunities including enterprise. The school offers day and residential placements for pupils aged five -19.



**Sybil Elgar School**

Sybil Elgar School, our first school which opened over 50 years ago in Middlesex, has a creative approach and performing arts specialism which helps every autistic student learn and develop. They have an international reputation for innovation and a progressive approach to education. The school offers day and residential placements for pupils aged four to 22.

## National Autistic Society Free Schools

Our free schools are run through the National Autistic Society Academy Trust (NASAT); these are local day schools with a catchment area of about 45 minutes travelling time. Free schools have a local governance body and Board of Directors. The three free schools are: -

### Cullum Centres

Four purpose-built specialist centres the National Autistic Society and Surrey County Council have opened within mainstream secondary schools the area. The centres provide specialist support from trained staff, such as learning in small groups and therapies, and a calm setting to retreat to. The National Autistic Society Cullum Centres will be operated by the individual mainstream schools and pupils will spend the majority of their lesson time in the mainstream school itself. Every Cullum Centre will follow [MyProgress®](#), The National Autistic Society's methodology to an autism-specific education.



**Church Lawton School**

Church Lawton School in Cheshire believes in academic excellence. In their specially designed environment for autistic students between four – 19 will build on their strengths, learn with confidence and enthusiasm and achieve the very best they can.



**Thames Valley School**

Thames Valley School in Reading support students aged five – 16 on the autism spectrum to build on their strengths, learning, confidence and enjoyment. Their aim is to respond to the needs of each of their students, helping them to grow in confidence and achieve.



**Vanguard School**

The Vanguard school in Lambeth, due to open in January 2020, will provide a curriculum offer for students from across the spectrum who have a range of learning needs. The school will provide opportunities for the development of a wide range of independent living skills and will have a focus on community inclusion.

# About Helen Allison School



Helen Allison School is a warm and welcoming school for children with autism that has a consistent reputation of providing outstanding care and education. At its heart is a never-ending desire to continually innovate and be led by knowledge of best practice. It is a school that puts autism first before focusing on all other educational developments. The school caters for pupils from 5-19 of all abilities. Pupils study the full range of national curriculum subjects and take qualifications ranging from entry level, GCSE to A levels depending on their ability and relevance to their future pathway.

Pupils with even the most complex needs thrive at Helen Allison and parents quickly develop confidence that the school will make sure that the children in their care have the best education, the best opportunities and the best start in life. The school is creative and ambitious in the individual ways we achieve this. The school is ever evolving and always challenging itself.

Helen Allison School has strong links, is outward facing and knows there is always more to learn from others and that the only way we can do our best is by truly working with others.

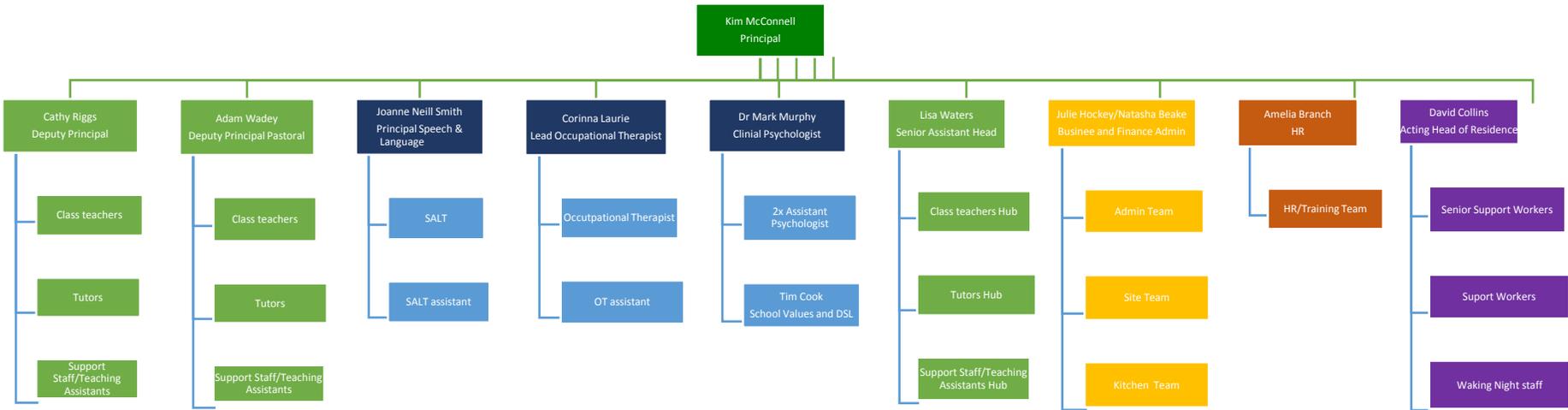
Helen Allison is in a strong position to welcome a new Principal. They will have an exciting, driven and friendly team behind them. The school is reflective and always looking to what more can be achieved for our pupils so this already strong school will evolve smoothly under new leadership and new ideas.

We are looking to appoint an inspirational Principal who has a passion for giving all children the best possible education and who would be excited to lead the next phase of our development. First and foremost, we are determined to do the very best for our pupils and their families. This is an exciting opportunity to join a great team both within the school and the wider charity and receive excellent training, support and networking opportunities. Join us as we continue to secure excellence for our inspirational pupils.

Please see our [school website](#) for more information about the school and what we do.

**You can find out more information about our school on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) [@NASHelenAllison](#)**

# Helen Allison structure



# Principal

**Division / Function:**  
Education

**Reports to: Director of Education**

**Works closely with:** National Autistic Society Head of Education Improvement and Operations (UK)

**Why**

**Job summary:**

Provide professional leadership, vision, direction and management of the school; leading, motivating and inspiring a staff team to work together to provide the highest standard of autism specific education. To establish a culture that promotes excellence, equality and high expectations of attainment for all students so that they are empowered to make positive choices about their own lives.

**What**

**Creating the future:**

- Lead the strategic direction of the school.
- Understand the inclusive and community focused vision for the school and work with parents, Directors and wider National Autistic Society to ensure the vision is shared across all stakeholder groups.
- Translate the school vision into an operational plans.
- Create a learning culture within the school.
- Share and support good autism practice across the community.

**Leading Teaching and Learning:**

- Keep up to date with current innovations in autism practice.
- Ensure autism practice is effective and evidence based and matches the needs of all pupils.
- Monitor, evaluate and review classroom practice and also the delivery of the after school enrichment curriculum.
- Ensure that information and data is used to drive improvement and track pupils' progress.
- Challenge under performance at all levels.

**Develop Self and working with others:**

- Develop and maintain effective systems and procedures for staff induction, professional development and performance review.
- Establish partnerships with local schools and community groups to ensure maximum inclusion opportunities for all staff and pupils and in-reach opportunities for partners.
- Develop, model and maintain a culture of high expectation.

**Securing accountability:**

- Ensure the safeguarding and welfare of all pupils.
- Maintain effective arrangements to safeguard children in line with up- to- date regulation, National Autistic Society policy and the ISS
- Reporting accurate, timely information and evaluation to governors
- Ensure staff accountabilities are clearly defined, understood and agreed.
- Work with the Executive Director of Education to ensure that the school meets all statutory responsibilities.

**Managing the organisation:**

- Produce and implement evidence based improvement plans and policies.
- Recruit, retain and deploy staff appropriately.
- Ensure that the needs of all pupils are met through an organisational structure that reflects the vision, values and aims of the school.
- Work closely with the Executive Director of Education and the Business Manager to plan business development, marketing, income generation and planned expenditure as well as effective management systems and practices to ensure value for money and improved school and service standards in line with targets.
- Work in partnership to provide leadership and direction for the financial and business growth and financial success of the school.
- Work closely with local authorities to identify students who will benefit from placement at the school.

**Strengthening the community**

- Work collaboratively with other schools, colleges, community groups and stakeholders to respond to needs and enable inclusion.
- Support and promote good autism practice across the wider community and stakeholder groups.
- Engage with parents so that they are empowered to take a key central role in supporting learning in the school.

No job description can be fully comprehensive, and from time to time the successful candidate may have to undertake other professional duties as directed by the Director of Education

# NAS Principal Person Specification

|  | Essential | Desirable | How Assessed |
|--|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| <b>Qualifications:</b>   |           |           |              |
| First degree or equivalent.  | X         |           | A            |
| Qualified teacher status.  | X         |           | A            |
| Higher degree or equivalent of further study.  |           | X         | A            |
| Additional qualifications in Special Educational needs   | X         |           | A            |
| Ongoing participation in a range of relevant in-service training.                                    | X         |           | A            |
| Recent and relevant management development / training / continuing Professional Development.         |           | X         | A            |
| Experienced Head teacher with registration for or completion of NPQH                                 | X         |           | A, R         |
| <b>Teaching and Management Experience:</b>   |           |           |              |
| Substantial experience as a Principal of a SEN/Autism specialist School                              | X         |           |              |
| Previous senior leadership experience at Deputy Head teacher level or above.                         | X         |           | A, I, R      |
| Extensive knowledge of a range of Special Educational Needs including autism                         | X         |           | A, I, R.     |
| Excellent track record of successful leadership of significant school improvement strategies.        | X         |           | A, I, R      |
| Experience of monitoring school performance at every level.  | X         |           | A, I         |
| Experience of setting challenging school targets.  | X         |           | A, I         |
| Experience of working positively with Trustees and/or serving on a Governing Body                    |           | X         | A, I         |
| Experience in leading educational projects, innovation, strategic planning and financial management. | X         |           | A, I         |
| Proven track record of successfully working with local authorities.                                  |           | x         | A, I         |

|  |   |   |         |
|--|---|---|---------|
| Experience of managing an autism specialist provision in either a mainstream school or special school      | X |   | A, I    |
| Experience of teaching children and young people across the autism spectrum                                | X |   | A, I    |
| Ability to plan effectively from a range of evidence regarding school improvement.                         | X |   | A, I    |
| In-depth understanding of assessment theory and practice.  | X |   | A, I    |
| Understanding of effective teaching and learning strategies.   | X |   | A, I    |
| Understanding of effective teaching and learning strategies for autistic children and young people         | X |   | A, I, R |
| Knowledge and understanding of the fundamental importance of personalised learning.                        | X |   | A, I    |
| Evidence of the ability to embrace and manage change.  | X |   | A, I    |
| Successful establishment of links with the local community and external partners.                          | X |   | A, I    |
| Experience of business development and generating income   |   | X | A, I    |
| Ability to manage and allocate resources and budgets   | X |   | A, I, R |
| <b>Personal and Professional Skills and Attributes:</b>  |   |   |         |
| Outstanding leader, committed to distributive leadership and teamwork.                                     | X |   | A, I    |
| A passionate commitment to the academic, personal and social development of children and families.         | X |   | A, I    |
| The skills and experience to set and manage budgets, strategic planning, HR management and Business skills | X |   | A, I    |
| Excellent interpersonal, communications and organisational skills. Approachable and supportive.            | X |   | A, I    |
| Ability to involve and maintain strong and positive relationships with the community.                      | X |   | A, I    |
| Actively seeking new approaches, ideas and challenges. Be willing to be innovative and to take risks.      | X |   | A, I    |

|   |   |   |         |
|---|---|---|---------|
| Ability to think and act strategically and work collaboratively as part of the National Autistic Society.                 | X |   | A, I    |
| Committed to community engagement and inclusion   | X |   | A, I    |
| To be able to present papers at Conferences, represent the National Autistic Society at a range of events, market the NAS |   | X |         |
| To be able to work collaboratively with NAS Principals, LA's, parents, employers, local schools and other stakeholders    | X |   |         |
| Committed to the involvement of parents as partners in the education of their children                                    | X |   | A, I    |
| To be able to work with the media (Television, Radio and Social media) to promote the school and the NAS.                 |   | X |         |
| Evidence of a thorough understanding of safeguarding and safer recruitment procedures                                     | X |   | A, I, R |

**A- Application Form, I – Interview, R - Reference,**

## **Terms and conditions of Employment**

| <b>Subject</b>              | <b>Criteria</b>   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>Data protection</b>      | <p>We will process the information or data you give on this form and hold it on computer and on your personal records if you are appointed.</p> <p>We may process the information or data for the purposes of monitoring, statistical analysis and to keep accurate employment records.</p> <p>By returning this form, you will be giving your explicit consent to the processing of the data in it, including anything that may be considered to be sensitive personal data by the National Autistic Society – who is your employer.</p> |
| <b>Salary</b>               | <p>Payment is made by bank credit transfer. Salary is paid monthly in arrears on or around the 28<sup>th</sup> of each month.</p>   |
| <b>Safeguarding</b>         | <p>The post holder must be committed to safeguarding the welfare of children.</p> <p><b>This post is subject to satisfactory enhanced disclosure and barring service check.</b></p>   |
| <b>Medical Clearance</b>    | <p>The successful candidate will be required to complete a Function Based Health Assessment Questionnaire; this is for the purposes of assessing whether any reasonable adjustment can be made to enable you to undertake your role.</p>  |
| <b>References</b>           | <p>Professional/Employment – please provide the names of TWO referees who are known to you in an employment/professional relationship. <b><u>You should include your Manager from your last employment.</u></b></p> <p>In addition references will be sought from all previous education or healthcare sector employers.</p>  |
| <b>Notice</b>               | <p>Notice Period is based on Teacher's terms and conditions</p>   |
| <b>Working Arrangements</b> | <p>You are contracted to work 195 days per annum including 190 pupil days in accordance with your school terms and work programmes, and a maximum of 1265 hours as reasonably directed by the Director of Education. Pro rata arrangements will apply for part time staff.</p> <p>Note: Normal hours may be varied to meet the changing needs of the school. There may be occasions when additional hours are necessary to meet specific or special requirements.</p>   |
| <b>Leave</b>                | <p>The dates of your School terms/individual work programmes will be defined by the Director of Education and advised annually in advance. Outside term time you will be considered to be on holiday unless agreed by your line manager</p> <p>Holiday pay is in accordance with your normal working basic contractual pay.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 weeks</li> <li>• Part-time staff receive a pro-rata entitlement.</li> </ul>   |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Pension Scheme</b>                       | Qualified Teachers will be entered automatically into the Teachers' Pension Scheme on joining.   |
| <b>Probation</b>                            | All employees have a standard probationary period of six months.   |
| <b>Sick Pay</b>                             | First six months of service (or until completion of satisfactory probation period) - Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)<br>After 6 months service: 3 months full pay and 3 months half pay for full-time staff and pro-rata for part-time staff. |
| <b>Travel and Subsistence for Interview</b> | Candidates for interview will be entitled to travelling and subsistence expenses, the details of which can be given on request.  |