

April 2020

Application for Early Years Visual Impairment Play Specialist

Thank you for your interest in the vacancy for the above position.

Valence School is a Kent County Council Foundation residential and day Special School for students from age 4 to 19 with physical disabilities, complex medical needs and associated learning difficulties. We are part of the Kent Special Educational Needs Trust (KsENT).

We have a large, dedicated staff team of over 250 people providing specialist teaching, social care, therapies and nursing care to an exceptionally high standard.

Valence School is a supportive environment and a rewarding place to work, and whether working directly with our students or in a school support role, every member of staff participates in enabling students to learn and aspire to achieve meaningful independence. Students flourish in a supportive but challenging environment, making good educational progress and achieving a range of accreditation as they get older.

Please find enclosed the following forms:

- Application Form } to complete and return
- Equality Monitoring Form } to complete and return
- Mission Statement
- Copy of the Advertisement
- Job Description and Person Specification.

The closing date is **14 June 2020** and we look forward to receiving your completed forms at your earliest convenience. Interviews are expected to be held on 2 July 2020.

Valence School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every student and we expect all staff to share this commitment. References will be taken up before interview and successful applicants will need an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check. Please note that smoking (including e-cigarettes) is prohibited within the school premises and grounds.

Should you require any additional information or would like to arrange an informal visit to the school please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely
Sarah Lowndes
HR Manager



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w: valenceschool.com

Early Years Visual Impairment Play Specialist Part Time - 24 hours per week - Term Time Only £11,105 actual gross p.a. (Kent Range 6) Based in Ashford, Shepway or Dover

We are seeking to appoint an Early Years Visual Impairment Play Specialist to join an enthusiastic and successful countywide team for Sensory impairment. This is an opportunity for practitioners from the Early Years Foundation Stage (birth to 5 years of age) to work with young visually impaired children through play-based intervention.

The Sensory Service works with children from birth or diagnosis in the home and preschool settings. You will work with individual children with visual impairment supporting development through play-based activities and plan for the smooth transition from home to settings or schools. You will work under the direction of a Coordinator for Visual Impairment and contribute to a multi-disciplinary approach.

Applications are invited from qualified and experienced Early Years practitioner (NVQ Level 3 in Early Years and Childcare or equivalent) with additional qualifications in, or experience with, Portage, visual impairment, Braille, mobility or other related specialisms.

This post will deliver services to young visually impaired children in South Kent (Ashford, Shepway or Dover district) and the post will be based with one of the Specialist Teaching and Learning Services teams.

You must be able to travel across Kent to meet the requirements of the service. - travel expenses are paid. Applicants should describe in their application how they meet the criteria of the person specification.

For further information on this post please contact Karen Martin on 07827 361247 or email kmartin@valence.kent.sch.uk

For application details please visit www.valenceschool.com/staff-vacancies or contact HR by emailing vacancies@valence.kent.sch.uk

Closing date for applications 14 June 2020
Interviews expected to take place 2 July 2020

Valence School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every student and we expect all our staff and volunteers to share this commitment. References will be taken up before interview and the successful applicant will require an enhanced DBS check.

Job Description: EARLY YEARS VISUAL IMPAIRMENT PLAY SPECIALIST

Grade:	Kent Range 6
Responsible to:	Visual Impairment Coordinators Area Coordinator for Sensory Impairment
Accountable to:	Head of Sensory Service Valence School Principall

The STLS Sensory Service are part of the Specialist Teaching and Learning Services employed by Valence School. The team delivers sensory support across the county and operates from 15 different bases.

Purpose of the Job:

Working under the professional direction of the VI Coordinators and in collaboration with the Specialist Teachers for Visual Impairment to:

- provide early intervention through play activities to support the learning and development of children with visual impairment in their early years
- support the families of children with visual impairment in liaison with other agencies
- support inclusion in Early Years for children with visual impairment
- plan and support the smooth transition from the home environment to preschool settings and schools

Main duties and responsibilities:

1. To provide specialist advice and model good play techniques to encourage and enable learning for visually impaired children within home and preschool settings.
2. To work peripatetically offering programmed visits of support to the child and their family at home, and to the child's preschool setting or special school nursery.
3. To work independently to devise and deliver enjoyable play programmes for young children with visual impairment from birth or diagnosis through to the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
4. To communicate effectively and sensitively with parents respecting cultural and family values.

5. To work in partnership with parents providing practical or emotional support to develop positive play opportunities, celebrate success and encourage independence and mobility.
6. To use a range of strategies to establish and develop communication with young children with visual impairment and to those with visual impairment and additional medical, behaviour and learning needs.
7. To support the development of visual skills and tactile skills, including pre-Braille literacy, in the home and in preschool settings.
8. To work jointly with a Specialist Teacher for Visual Impairment to prioritise visits, record information, set outcomes, monitor progress and write reports.
9. To support Specialist Teachers for Visual Impairment in evaluating children's progress including observations of the use of functional vision and the use of a range of assessment tools.
10. To provide advice and support about a child's visual impairment to families, Early Years Practitioners and Reception Class Teachers in order to support access to curriculum, the environment and independence, including supporting transitions into preschool settings and schools.
11. To deliver bespoke training, either independently or as part of a team, to guide the work of other adults supporting teaching and learning in the early years.
12. To liaise effectively with any other agencies working with children with visual impairment, including joint working with other agencies or as part of a multidisciplinary team, ensuring all partner agencies have a good understanding of the child's visual impairment.
13. To link families and practitioners with partner agencies, voluntary organisations and resources that will provide a wider range of support for the family and child's needs.
14. To provide regular, in depth records, reports and data as required by the line manager or for Annual Reviews/Multiagency Meetings as appropriate.
15. To undertake personal professional development including attendance at conferences/courses for visual impairment or Early Years and to participate actively and effectively in the Performance Appraisal process.

The deployment of the post holder will be on an area basis, but some aspects of the role will require travel across the county.

This job description is provided to assist the post holder to know their principal duties. It may be amended from time to time in consultation with you without change to the level of responsibility appropriate to the grading of the post.

The following outlines the minimum criteria for this post. Applicants who have a disability and who meet the minimum criteria will be shortlisted.

Applicants should describe in their application how they meet these criteria.

	MINIMUM
QUALIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educated to GCSE level or equivalent including English and Maths • NNEB qualification or an NVQ level 3 equivalent in Early Years and Childcare or similar • Additional qualifications or experience in Portage, Mobility or Visual Impairment
EXPERIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working in an early years setting or school in a role such as a Teaching Assistant, with experience of young children with visual impairment
SKILLS AND ABILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work autonomously and on own initiative in meeting clear deadlines, confidently and competently applying knowledge and skills acquired from training • Ability to work flexibly to achieve team objectives • Good interpersonal, organisational and communication skills including the ability to maintain confidentiality • A positive attitude to working with young children and empathy with parents and understanding of family dynamics • Good oral and written skills, and competence in IT • Ability to travel to meet the requirements of the service
KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the Early Years Foundations Stage Curriculum • Knowledge and understanding of child development in the early years and an awareness of effects of visual impairment on the process • Knowledge and understanding of Special Educational Needs and visual impairment in particular • Sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum • Knowledge of Braille or a willingness to develop this skill
BEHAVIOURS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to equalities and a respect for diversity • "Can do" approach • Able to use initiative and flexible thought • Team working and co-operation



Mission Statement

Student's views and rights are central to the ethos of Valence School.

Its mission is to provide a learning community where there is quality education, care, access and therapy in order to promote each student's intellectual, physical, social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing.

Our work is about enabling children and young people who have special physical, medical and sensory needs to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding together with the confidence, self-esteem and self-dependence necessary for them to participate in and contribute to society in the way each chooses.

The School's aims are to:

1. Meet the individual needs of each student as documented in their individual Statements of Special Educational Needs.
2. Maintain and develop in students lively enquiring minds; to promote the ability to question and argue rationally; to encourage students to apply themselves to a range of tasks and skills.
3. Provide a multidisciplinary approach to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that meets individual needs with full access and accreditation.
4. Raise students' self-esteem and self-confidence and create in them a sense of personal excellence enabling them to acquire knowledge and skills relevant to life in a fast-changing world.
5. Help students to develop self-knowledge, spiritual and moral awareness and understanding and respect for other people's feelings, values and beliefs.
6. Help students to understand the multicultural world in which they live as citizens and the inter-dependence of individuals, groups and nations and the rights and responsibilities of living in today's Britain.

Our Child Protection Policy can be found on our [website](#)