SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS (ASC) SPECIALIST TEACHER

JOB INFORMATION

RGS

SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS (ASC) SPECIALIST TEACHER

Newcastle upon Tyne Royal Grammar School
Required from September 2023 or January 2024



THE POSITION

We have an exciting opportunity to join our superb Learning Support Department from September 2023 or January 2024 in this newly created role. We are looking for an inspiring teacher to initiate and model autism specific teaching strategies for Teachers / Teaching Assistants, relating to individual students within the classroom and whole school. The successful candidate will work with schools, parents, key agencies and CYP with Autism to ensure effective and successful inclusion within educational provisions.

We are particularly looking for a resourceful, collegiate, and forward-thinking practitioner, who will make a positive impact both within the classroom and beyond. Alongside a wholehearted contribution to the Learning Support department, you will naturally want to play a role in co-curricular activities, be they sporting, academic, musical or arts.

We are keen to invite applications from those who would like to make their own distinctive contribution to this ethos. Whilst all applications are considered on merit, we would particularly welcome applications from black and minority ethnic candidates who are currently under-represented in our staff community.



Job description: Social Communications Skills Specialist Teacher
Closing Date: 9.00am Tuesday 9th May
Contact: Lorraine Cattle (Head of Learning Support SENDCO) (l.cattle@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk)

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THE SCHOOL

Thomas Horsley, the original settlor of the Royal Grammar School Newcastle (RGS) pledged his legacy to the School in 1525. Almost 500 years later, RGS continues to flourish as the premier independent school in the North East of England and as one of the country's leading schools, and the Sunday Times' North East Independent School of the Decade 2020. Most recently, RGS was awarded the Sunday Times' 2023 North East's Top Independent Secondary School for Academic Performance. We regularly lead all northern schools in national league tables and pride ourselves on academic excellence, a high level of pastoral support, involvement in a wide range of sports and other co-curricular activities, and our commitment to bursaries and partnerships.

RGS has grown substantially in recent years. There are now some 1,340 students, over 260 of whom are in the Junior School. The Sixth Form of 350 students is one of the largest in the independent sector. We became coeducational 20 years ago and girls now comprise 43% of the school.

The school is based in the heart of the city, immediately opposite Jesmond Metro station. The school occupies over 30 acres of land and has state-of-the-art facilities, including five brand new art studios, a new library, a new Sixth Form Centre, a 25m swimming pool, two Sports Halls, a Performing Arts Centre, outdoor football/rugby pitches at Mooracres, an artificial turf pitch for hockey and the former County Cricket Ground.



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THE LEARNING SUPPORT DEPARTMENT

The department is a team of six colleagues with a wealth of experience in independent, maintained, special and specialist schools or units. Our aim is to ensure that every student can enjoy success in and out of the classroom, regardless of the barriers they may face. We like to ensure that all needs are met and to help every student feel willing and able to manage the school curriculum and provide individual or group support where needed.

All students, regardless of their needs, should be offered a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum appropriate to their needs, abilities and aspirations. We work closely with teachers and parents to provide individualised programs which target areas for development, whether it is academic or pastoral. We use a range of evidence-based educational and psychological approaches to help our students, with the student at the heart of decisions about their support.

We work with all ages, from Year 3 to Upper Sixth, and so flexibility, communication, positivity and good knowledge of SEND and pedagogy is vital. We provide regular training for the school, run a SEND special interest group, as well as supporting other schools and provide training on SEND in the North East.
We welcome the following new role as part of the expansion of the SEND Department to include all members of our school community and to continue to develop our provision for our neurodiverse students.







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DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Specialist Teacher will work under the guidance and within an agreed system of supervision of the Head of Learning Support (SENDCO) to implement agreed programs with individuals/groups, in or out of the classroom.

The duties and responsibilities highlighted in this Job Description are indicative and may vary over time. Postholders are expected to undertake other duties and responsibilities relevant to the nature, level and extent of the post and the grade has been established on this basis.

Support for Students

- Supporting the inclusion of pupils with ASC and related social communication difficulties.
- Supporting the development of whole school approach in the creation of an 'Autism' friendly environment. Using the AET Framework
- Raising awareness of the additional needs of pupils with ASC
- Applying teaching knowledge, skills, and experience to assist school colleagues in the development of appropriate skills to enable the successful inclusion of children and young people with ASC in their learning environment.
- To enable access to learning and social opportunities for students with ASC
- Providing training, where appropriate, to school staff
- Advising on the identification and assessment of pupils with ASC/Social Communication needs in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the SEND Code of Practice.
- Assessing the progress of individual pupils following the implementation of support programs
- Contributing to the development of individual plans/learning profiles through the identification of appropriate social communication targets, teaching strategies and resources.
- Attending relevant meetings regarding individual pupils and maintaining appropriate records.
- To maintain and produce detailed records of work, including observation reports and professional advice.
- To evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of intervention and support.
- To keep up to date with current research and new approaches towards Autism, sharing findings with colleagues
- Assess individual educational needs of students with Autism within the classroom and social settings, providing detailed reports of findings.
- Devise Individual Educational Plans to address autism specific difficulties to share with individuals, parents/carers and teachers

Liaison with families and external agencies

- Including parents/carers in any assessment of a pupil with ASC/social communication needs.
- Liaising with parents and providing training when appropriate to keep them informed of their child's progress and to provide advice and support relating to the difficulties the child encounters as a result of their ASC/social communication needs.
- Providing a professional report for Education Health Care Assessments and /or review meetings, as appropriate.
- Contributing to multi-agency meetings, as required.
- Maintaining regular contact with the families and carers of identified pupils, regarding their progress.

Professional Development

- Continue to attend relevant training relevant to the post.
- Attending and participating in whole school training and development activities as required
- Participating in Performance Management and any relevant development programs
- Attending service/team meetings, as appropriate.

Additional Duties

- The post holder will have high expectations of all students; respecting their social, cultural, linguistic, religious, and ethnic backgrounds; and be committed to raising their educational achievement.
- Treat all CYP consistently with respect and consideration and being concerned with their development as learners.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The following person specification indicates the areas of skills and personal characteristics, qualifications, training, and experience that we hope to find:

Qualifications and Training

Essential

- Secondary Teaching Qualification with QTS
- Teaching Qualification (First Degree or PGCE)
- Thorough knowledge of ASC / social communication needs and its impact in the classroom.
- Knowledge of how to keep children safe and practices and procedures that should be followed

Desirable

- Master's degree – Autism and Education and any other relevant Autism specific qualifications

Experience

Essential

- Relevant and successful working with pupils who have a wide range of ASC / social communication needs.
- Experience of working across different age phases in educational settings.
- Providing training for parents/staff/colleagues.
- Multi-agency and/or multidisciplinary working.
- Recording pupil progress against individual targets at SEN Support/EHCP.
- Supporting and advising parents.
- Working with pupils with Education Health Care Plans
- Experience of using social stories, 5-point scale, zones of regulation and various social communication support strategies.

Desirable

- Experience of working with pupils who are identified as having ASC in both special educational and mainstream settings.
- Experience of multi-agency working.
- Experience of supporting pupils to develop social communication skills/speech & language skills.

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Skills

Essential

- Working knowledge of relevant SEND policies and legislation.
- Understanding of principles of child development and barriers to learning.
- Ability to accurately assess pupil needs and progress.
- Ability to plan and implement effective intervention programs for pupils with ASC / social communication needs taking account of curriculum needs and enabling inclusion.
- Ability to liaise sensitively and effectively with parents/carers.
- Able to work collaboratively with colleagues, school staff and parents.
- Demonstrate excellent verbal and written language skills.
- Good record keeping skills.
- A reflective practitioner: ability to monitor, evaluate and improve own skills and practices.
- Ability to prepare and deliver training for a wide range of audiences.
- Understand and adhere to the need for confidentiality.
- Possess the ICT skills required to fulfil their duties.
- Ability to work under pressure and respond flexibly to changing situations.
- Ability to remain calm in response to challenging situations.
- To promote the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people.

Personal characteristics and other

- A commitment to supporting children and young people with ASC / social communication needs.
- Highly motivated and well organised.
- Ability to use own initiative and work independently.
- A willingness to develop innovative working practices.
- Adherence to evidence-based practice.
- Ability to work in a fast-paced working environment.
- Ability to communicate effectively with parents, students and staff in a variety of ways
- Understanding of, and commitment to equality of opportunity for all
- Understanding of, and commitment to the ethos of the school as a community
- Tact, discretion, and diplomacy
- A genuine liking of people and the ability to show warmth, good-humour, empathy, and sensitivity.
- Adherence to high standards of personal and professional conduct as outlined in the DfE Teachers' Standards.

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LIVING IN THE NORTH EAST

Whilst the North East is beloved and popular with so many, we know that not everyone will have had first-hand experience of it, so this is a short introduction to a city and region which we love, and believe you will too. Newcastle is a medium-sized city with an historic centre and a vibrant life of its own. There's culture and arts in the form of the award-winning BALTIC Art Gallery and The Sage, alongside several theatres that attract national touring productions. There's music from classical to club and we are home to the Royal Northern Sinfonia. There's also a growing food culture with some fantastic restaurants.

If you like sport then there's certainly no shortage of top-class entertainment: from Premier League football being played at St James' Park and EFL at the Stadium of Light to first class cricket at Durham (a mere half hour away), and great rugby at the Falcons, not to mention basketball and even ice hockey, and then there is the annual Great North Run. The North East has also produced some of the country's finest athletes in track and field and there are clubs aplenty to get involved with, most famously in Gateshead.

The coast and the hills are minutes away from the city centre. By car you can be in the middle of nowhere in 45 minutes, the Scottish Borders is only an hour away and the Lake District an hour and a half. The coast is served by the Metro (our version of the Tube), but some of the country's best beaches are up the road in Northumberland, less than 40 minutes by car. There's mountain biking, road cycling, climbing, and endless hill walks in stunning countryside. There are green spaces all over the city too, with plenty of parks for children and dogs alike to run around.

There are three local teaching hospitals, two universities in the city with another three close by. Some pioneering medical work goes on at the RVI, Great North Children's Hospital and the Freeman Hospital.

History abounds with more castles than you could count and sites of interest for almost every period of English (and border) history. Add that to a proud, independently minded and very friendly local population and we have most things you could want.

There are excellent primary schools in the region and city as well as some good secondary schools too, but staff do get a discount at the RGS. There are also a number of good competitor independent schools as well.



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MAIN TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- This is a full time, permanent post.
- Working Hours - Normal working hours will be those necessary to carry out the duties of the post.
- Salary - The salary will be determined by the RGS Teachers' Scale.
- The School is part of the Teachers' Pension Scheme and all teachers are automatically included in the Scheme.
- School lunch is provided during term time for staff on site.
- Education - At present the School's policy is to allow all eligible members of staff to educate their children at the school at concessionary rates, subject to their children meeting the academic entry requirements and subject to a place being available.
- Ongoing educational support and development of all staff with the provision of external and internal training courses, our middle leaders training programme for existing and aspiring managers.
- Car parking is provided during term time (limited spaces available).
- We offer an interest free travel loan for a corporate Metro travel pass.
- Opportunity to see free school productions in the Miller Theatre located in our Performing Arts Centre.
- Free use of a well-equipped gym, fitness suite and swimming pool.
- Access to our onsite confidential counselling service.
- We offer access to the school medical team (1 doctor and 2 nurses) for triage medical advice and free flu vaccinations.
- The school also offers an optional healthcare plan for all staff which includes optical, dental and physio cover, access to telephone GP consultations and a host of other benefits (terms and conditions apply).
- Invitation to join staff clubs and wellbeing activities during term-time.
- Staff social events throughout the year.
- Supportive and friendly community.
- Opportunity to join in with RGS tradition and become a member of the Stowell, Collingwood, Horsley or Eldon House.

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HOW TO APPLY

Candidates are advised to read the 'Information for Applicants' with particular care before applying.

If you have any queries or would like to arrange a visit to the school, please do not hesitate to email or to call the Head of Learning Support (SENDCO) (details below).

If, having looked through the website (www.rgs.newcastle.sch.uk) and read this job information pack and the Information for Applicants, you think this particular post would suit you, please say so (and why) in a covering letter of application. You must complete the application form, even if you want to also attach a CV. You are welcome to apply electronically, please email all documents to jobs@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk by the closing date.

The closing date for this role is 9.00am on Tuesday 9th May 2023.

Interviews will be held shortly after the closing date. We will hope to make the appointment as soon as possible following interview, offering the post and gaining acceptance, so applicants should arrive for interview with a clear idea of what would be involved in moving to the area (if necessary) and working at the RGS.

Reasonable travel expenses will be considered to attend an interview if candidates live outside the local area. This is normally up to a maximum contribution of £100 on provision of receipts. If your expenses will be significantly higher than £100 and an overnight stay is required, please note all expenses will need to be booked and approved in advance. If you plan to claim expenses, please contact the Head's Secretary, Sandra Ellis S.Ellis@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk in advance of your interview, who will talk you through the policy and advise on eligibility for reimbursement.

Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment

RGS is committed to the safeguarding of children and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers and those working in school to share this commitment. The school applies the Government's Safer Recruitment procedures to all candidates. More information regarding the checks can be found in the Information for Applicants and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2022).

Equal Opportunities

We are looking to appoint staff from a wide variety of backgrounds. Not just because it is the right thing to do but because at the RGS we recognise that those different experiences provide fresh perspectives, opportunities to challenge existing beliefs and provide opportunities to act as excellent role models for our diverse student body. We are committed to creating an inclusive and diverse school culture and our staff are at the heart of this. We are proud to be an equal opportunities employer and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and marriage and civil partnerships. Whilst all applications are considered on merit, we would particularly welcome applications from black and minority ethnic candidates who are currently under-represented in our staff community.

We encourage all candidates to complete an 'equal opportunities' form with your application. This will be sent directly to the HR team for monitoring purposes.

CONTACT DETAILS

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