

Sponne School

A Music & Science Academy



Inspiring
Achievement

January 2020

Dear Colleague

Thank you very much for your interest in our teaching post here at Sponne School. I hope that you will find the enclosed information helpful.

Sponne School is a very successful oversubscribed 11-18 mixed comprehensive school that converted to an Academy in March 2011. Presently, Towcester has a population of around 10,000. We have approximately 1410 students at the current time including about 250 in our sixth form. Our roll is set to increase in the future due to the expansion of housing in the Towcester area with plans for up to another 2700 houses to be built! This will mean expansion for our school though we will endeavour to maintain our inclusive and personal ethos.

The school has achieved very good examination results over the years and served its community well. In 2019 we achieved outstanding results with 75 of students gaining 5 or more 9-4 grades including English and Mathematics at GCSE and a value-added score of +0.1. Despite our inclusive policy at KS5 'A' level results are also consistently high with 97% pass rate, 17% gaining A*-A in 2019 and an average points score per entry of 33.

Following an Ofsted inspection in October 2012, we received the highest possible grading of 'outstanding'. In addition to this, they judged student achievement to be outstanding, teaching to be outstanding and leadership and management to be outstanding. The inspectors commented that "students consistently make better than expected progress", "lessons are engaging, varied and fun", students' behaviour is good – they are courteous to each other and to adults", "the sixth form is outstanding" and they concluded that "led by its inspirational Headteacher, leadership and management at all levels including governance are outstanding" and that "students receive first-rate experiences to prepare them for life beyond the academy". This is extremely pleasing and it is very good that Ofsted have recognised the excellent provision available here at Sponne.

Sponne is more than just academic achievement. We are proud of our innovations and the benefits these bring to students and their learning. The learning day begins at 8.45am with lesson one, with a total of four 1 hour lessons before a lunch break of 40 minutes and a tutorial time of 20 minutes each day which includes assemblies and tutorial sessions. This is followed by our final 1 hour lesson (period 5) in the afternoon and in addition to this, an enhancement session for an hour after school. This is an opportunity to hold a club or activity either for "invited" students for catch-up or revision, 'traditional' extra-curricular activities or other new leisure pursuits. Around 50% of our students come from the surrounding villages (and beyond) so we provide transport after these sessions to get them home.

Learning is central to what we do here at Sponne. An overwhelming majority of our students are keen and want to learn and the few that are more reluctant are persuaded to take part by following the very positive examples of the other students. This means that the teaching is both

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rewarding and satisfying though the challenge is to be innovative and inspirational. Our parents are generally very supportive and see great value in education.

Professional development is crucial to our growth as teachers and leaders. As a teaching School we take a lead on the organisation of CPD in the South west of Northamptonshire and therefore our staff benefit from easy access to course such as ITP, OTP, NPQML and NPQSL as well as the local schools middle leader network meetings that allow our staff the opportunity to discuss and share best practice. We are therefore also the lead school in a school-based teacher training partnership consisting of six local secondary schools. We train around 34 secondary students each year across many subject areas and also at the Primary level in partnership with our local Primary Schools. In addition to these, we have students from traditional PGCE courses undertaking their teaching practice here at Sponne each year.

ICT plays a very important part in the lives of our learners. We are committed to ensuring that it is used as a tool to support and improve the learning opportunities for all. ICT is available in all areas of the school with a whole-school wired and wireless network providing the backbone for the sharing of information. All teachers have access to a laptop and white boards, mostly interactive, and gaining data from SIMs is quick and easy through our web-based portal system called Go4Schools. Staff, students and parents gain access to the curriculum using Google Docs wherever they are and staff can login to their work areas from home as if in school.

We are very well blessed with excellent Faculty Learning Leaders (Heads of Faculty) and Progress Learning Leaders (Heads of Year). These colleagues provide excellent professional support for staff throughout the school. The senior team consists of myself, one Deputy Head, five Assistant Headteachers and the Business Manager. Governors are keen, challenging and very supportive. Our support staff colleagues are excellent and through our student services, they provide a very effective centralised service to both students and staff.

This is a vibrant place to work and I hope that you are excited by the post. To apply, please write a letter to me of no more than 2 sides of A4 and enclose a completed application form which should be returned to the school by the closing date on the advertisement.

Thank you for taking an interest in Sponne and I look forward to receiving your application.

Yours sincerely



Iain Massey
Head of Sponne School