

Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in the post of Head of Geography at Royal Harbour Academy. I hope that this letter will provide you with enough information to make an application. However, if you have any questions, or if you want to visit the school prior to applying, please feel very free to contact me.

Royal Harbour Academy is a non selective 11-18 mixed school of 900 students, with an increasing roll. It has two purpose built, modern sites about a mile apart – one containing the Lower School, Years 7 – 9 and the other containing the Upper School, Years 10 – 13.

The school is located on the outskirts of Ramsgate, one of the three Thanet towns, together with Broadstairs and Margate. It is a lovely seaside area, with an abundance of relatively cheap Victorian, Edwardian and regency houses – a fantastic place to live and to bring up a family. It is within easy striking distance of the continent – indeed you can see France on a clear day – and 70 minutes from London by train.

However, Thanet is also one of the most deprived parts of the UK, one of the supposedly under-performing coastal areas, characterised by high unemployment and low aspirations. Ramsgate used to be a thriving port and Broadstairs and Margate were popular holiday resorts before cheap flights made package holidays popular and put this area out of business. Royal Harbour Academy serves some particularly tough ex-mining estates and many of our students are from families who have been unemployed for generations. Many do not believe that they have any ownership whatsoever of English culture, nor any reason to believe that they can have what others expect as a matter of course – a job, a house and a stake in society. Our job – our mission – is to change this forever by providing them with an outstanding education and the keys to a successful and fulfilled future.

In part this is being achieved because we are a part of Coastal Academies Trust (CAT), a small multi academy trust consisting of four secondaries, Dane Court Grammar School, King Ethelbert School, Hartsdown Academy and the newly outstanding Cliftonville Primary school – as well as Royal Harbour Academy. The Trust believes in taking collective responsibility for all of its students. If one school is under-performing, then we are all under-performing. We do this by

sharing practice and sharing challenge, whether this is through careful and expert scrutiny of data by senior leaders from each school, or as Headteachers by sharing the best ways to make rapid progress.

The enormous benefit of being a part of CAT will affect you too. You will lead a team of committed and talented staff in the Royal Harbour Academy, for whom you will be accountable although you will of course be fully supported by senior leaders in the school. However, you will also be a part of a wider team across the Trust, of Heads of Geography and other key middle leaders, sharing practice and supporting each other to constantly improve. We are a part of Pixl, committed to share practice and knowledge across the whole country and we are particularly proud of our status as an International Baccalaureate World School, delivering the International Baccalaureate Careers-related Programme in our Sixth Form and developing the Middle Years Programme in KS3, and actively engaged in sharing practice across the IB world community of schools. Thanet is no longer a backwater on the margins – it is very much at the centre of a huge community of partners, committed to developing the quality of education we offer. Royal Harbour Academy is right at the centre of this fantastic and exciting educational community.

The school has an interesting history and has only existed in its current form for three years. The Upper School site used to be the Marlowe Academy, one of the original academies, closing in August 2015 on 5.6% five A*-Cs including English and maths – the worst performing school in the UK. Its buildings, staff and students were absorbed into The Ellington and Hereson School (now the Lower School site) and we changed our name to ensure that we were inclusive and to make it clear that this was new beginning and a new school for the community. By the end of the first year, we had improved the results for the former Marlowe students by 300% and for the former Ellington and Hereson students by 33%. Although the first year was difficult, we now have a settled and stable rhythm, confirmed by an Ofsted section 8 visit in October last year – which said, ‘Leaders and managers have taken effective action to maintain the high standards of behaviour and attitudes identified at the school’s last inspection.’ Our second set of results were disappointing and reflected our need to adapt to the more challenging qualifications in English and Maths, which I firmly believe we have now done.

The appointment of a new Head of Geography is of huge importance for the school. Not only is Geography an important part of Progress 8, but the skills developed through the subject are crucial for our students in their future lives. We need you to be passionate about the importance of Geography, as well as a leader who will develop the teachers of Geography into a team of experts. We want our teachers to love their subjects and to talk to each other about teaching and we will expect you to be a key leader in this culture, championing Geography, and its importance, in everything you do.

This is a fantastic opportunity for an ambitious teacher who wants to play a key part in changing a whole community through education, as well as being at the cutting edge of educational development in a deprived coastal area. If you can have an impact here, in what is viewed by the profession as a challenging school, then you will be well set to have an impact in senior management and then as a headteacher. My job will be to support you to the hilt and to prepare you for senior leadership. Coastal Academies Trust takes talent spotting and staff development very seriously indeed and you will also have access to a huge range of expertise and opportunity across the Trust.

Even more importantly, I am personally committed to the children who come to this school and need me to provide them with better chance in life than their parents had. I will not step away from that responsibility – and I need to have about me colleagues who will share this task with me. If you became a teacher because you believe that education can change lives, then this is the job for you. This is a school where education really matters.

I need a Head of Geography to start at Easter or September and time is short so I will act quickly once I have good quality applicants. The deadline for applications is midday on Friday 19 January 2018 and, remember, you are very welcome to visit the school or ask me anything you wish before you apply. I hope very much that you will want to come and work with me and the superb team of committed teachers at the Royal Harbour Academy and I look forward to receiving your application.

Yours

Handwritten signature of Paul Luxmoore in black ink on a light grey background.

Paul Luxmoore

Executive Headteacher of CAT

Handwritten signature of Simon Pullen in black ink on a light grey background.

Simon Pullen

Headteacher