



April 2018

Dear Applicant

Re post: Director of Strategy and Resources

Many thanks for showing interest in our advertised post for Director of Strategy and Resources.

It is my privilege to be the Headteacher of Forest Hill School, a unique and ambitious school with a well-established comprehensive and inclusive ethos. Our student intake is a genuine reflection of the community in our district of London and we are clear that they should expect the highest of standards in all aspects of their education. Our broad and creative curriculum gives them a firm basis on which to move forward to make choices for examination subjects as they progress through the school. A culture of aspiration and high expectations underpins this progression, with our students playing a key part in shaping the learning process.

Forest Hill's ethos is aptly summarised in our motto 'Aspiring to excellence together'. We are a community in which mutual support and a spirit of relentless ambition drive a desire to ensure that we constantly strive to surpass previous achievements. All community members are encouraged and expected to contribute to this culture thus ensuring that the creativity and evolution of our student offer is maintained. We are a performing arts school, but creativity does not simply apply to our performing arts subjects, but also to the academic curriculum in which we promote engagement, enquiry and ingenuity. We want our students to emerge from Forest Hill as engaged citizens and leaders of the future, fully equipped to confidently enter a competitive world.

We communicate and reinforce the vision and ethos of the school community through our Core Values, which were developed in consultation with all stakeholders:

- **Aspiration**
- **Ambition**
- **Rigour**
- **Partnership**
- **Community**

All aspects of life at Forest Hill are underpinned by these values, and we promote them as the prerequisites of academic excellence and success. The values also encapsulate a sense of pride in belonging to Forest Hill, something which is shared by all students and staff.

The school has been through an extremely challenging 18 months. Shortly after becoming Headteacher it became necessary to address a substantial budget deficit. In order to agree a deficit loan, a reorganisation of school staffing was essential to bring costs within control. Union action in relation to this resulted in 13 days of lost learning last academic year with an inevitable knock-on effect on outcomes. I am happy to say that this period of unrest is behind us. Our new staffing structure is now in place filled with enthusiastic and motivated colleagues keen to move the school forward. Ofsted visited in December 2017 and judged that we are not yet good, which matched entirely with our own robust self-evaluation. I encourage you to read the report in its entirety. Whilst it highlights areas for development which the school had already identified, there is also an extremely positive narrative about the actions leaders have already taken to improve the school, leading to an upward trajectory. We have clear plans aimed to take us out of our current Ofsted category within 5 terms.

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Headteacher: Mike Sullivan BSc (Hons)

We now find ourselves in a new and very positive chapter in the school's journey. We are in a strong position to realise our vision of excellence. We wish to add to the fantastically committed and enthusiastic staff body in order to further accelerate and sustain our rapid improvement. We want colleagues at Forest Hill who have a desire to contribute their skills and knowledge at this exciting time, and to learn with us. The strategic vision and drive of school leaders to secure positive accountability is at the heart of our journey. There is a renewed focus on the development of a bespoke and challenging curriculum, a relentless pursuit of excellence in standards of teaching and learning and the improvement of outcomes for all students. Forest Hill School places a heavy emphasis on the holistic development of our young people. Our pastoral system is a real strength and we are recognised for this. The focus on performing arts broadens the curriculum but also gives many opportunities outside of it, with free music lessons available to all and a plethora of opportunities to become involved in music, drama and dance performances within the school and beyond. We have a strong tradition of sporting excellence with our representative teams regularly winning honours at local and London-wide levels, as well as nationally. In addition to this sport is widely enjoyed at participation level as part of our extra-curricular offer, with many clubs, activities (including the Duke of Edinburgh's Award) and school journeys available to our students. We actively encourage staff to bring their passions and interests to add to our wider offer.

At Forest Hill School staff wellbeing and professional development is very important to us. We have an early closure one day per week to provide dedicated planning time as well as identified slots in the meeting cycle for assessment of pupils' work. The school also provides all staff with high-quality personalised training linked to priorities identified in the performance management cycle.

We currently have a vacancy for the post of Director of Strategy and Resources. The successful candidate will have a solid track record of excellence in the field of school finance and resourcing, ideally with experience of PFI contracts. Evidence of this, and your leadership skills, will be clear in your application.

I hope our values and standards strike a chord with you and that you will pursue your interest in the above post. In order to apply please submit the completed Lewisham/Forest Hill School or TES application form by no later than noon on the closing date of **Thursday 3rd May** to vacancies@foresthillschool.co.uk, along with a personal statement stating how you meet the person specification and how your previous experience has prepared you for this role.

I look forward to receiving your application.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M J Sullivan', written in a cursive style.

Mike Sullivan
Headteacher