

SEND & INCLUSION

Assistant Headteacher/ SENDCO

Ponteland High School · Pele Trust

*A significant role within the Senior Leadership Team -
with the weight, the resource and the mandate to make
inclusion a school-wide reality.*

SALARY

L11-L15
£66,368-£73,105

CONTRACT

Full time, permanent

AVAILABLE FROM

September 2026 / January 2027

THE ROLE IN 30 SECONDS

Everything you need before you read on.

Salary

£66,368 – £73,105

Leadership scale L11–L15 · permanent, full-time

AVAILABLE FROM SEPTEMBER 2026

THE SCHOOL

Ponteland High School

11–18 secondary, ~1,600 students · purpose-built campus, Callerton Lane, Ponteland, NE20 9EG.

THE TRUST

Pele Trust

A multi-academy trust of fourteen primary and secondary schools across Northumberland and North Tyneside.

THE ROLE

AHT / SENDCo & Inclusion

A Senior Leadership Team post with strategic responsibility for SEND and inclusion across the school.

THE TEAM

Large Curriculum Support team

Experienced staff, plus access to cross-phase SENDCo network.

VISIT BEFORE APPLYING

Strongly encouragedContact **Kieran McGrane** ·
k.mcgrane@peletrust.org.uk

APPLY TO

Kieran McGrane, CEO

k.mcgrane@peletrust.org.uk · Application form plus supporting statement.

IN THIS PACK

01 From the CEO**03** The opportunity**05** SEND at Ponteland High School**07** How to apply**09** Person specification**11** Visit. Apply. Join us.**02** From the Chair**04** About Ponteland High School**06** Working within Pele Trust**08** Job description**10** About Pele Trust



A LETTER FROM

Kieran McGrane

Chief Executive Officer · Pele Trust

We are looking for someone who brings fresh thinking, strong SEND credentials, and the confidence to lead at the most senior level.

Dear prospective candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the post of Assistant Headteacher / SENDCo & Inclusion at Ponteland High School. This is a school with genuine warmth, a strong sense of community, and high expectations for its young people and this is an exceptional leadership opportunity in our Trust.

I am extremely proud to have Ponteland High School in our Trust. The staff team is talented and committed. The school is clear about where it wants to go next, and it has the leadership and the determination to get there.

The SEND and inclusion brief is one of the most significant in the school. We have a large, experienced Curriculum Support team, a broad caseload that includes some complex needs, and a real appetite to think carefully about how we continue to develop our offer for students with additional needs. We are looking for someone who brings fresh thinking, strong SEND credentials, and the confidence to lead at the most senior level.

As part of Pele Trust, you will join a highly collaborative network of schools and leaders. The SEND support that comes with that is tangible and practical.

I strongly encourage you to visit the school before applying, and I would be very happy to speak with you informally at any stage. Please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Kieran McGrane

Chief Executive Officer, Pele Trust



A LETTER FROM

Barry Hirst

Chair of the Academy Committee · Ponteland High School

The appointment of an Assistant Headteacher for SEND and Inclusion reflects how seriously we view this work. It is not a peripheral role – it sits at the heart of the Senior Leadership Team.

Dear candidate,

On behalf of the Academy Committee at Ponteland High School, thank you for your interest in this post.

SEND and inclusion are a priority for our Academy Committee. We have governors with real knowledge and experience in this area, and we take our responsibility seriously. We want Ponteland High School to be a place where every young person, whatever their needs, is known, valued and supported to achieve their very best.

We are looking for someone who can help us understand more fully the needs of our students, build staff confidence across the school, and lead improvements that make a meaningful difference to young people's lives and futures. You will find an Academy Committee that is supportive, engaged and ambitious for everything this school can be.

I very much hope you will consider applying, and I look forward to welcoming the right candidate into our school community.

Barry Hirst

Chair of the Academy Committee, Ponteland High School

THE OPPORTUNITY

A leader who can look at all of it with fresh eyes.

<p>SALARY</p> <p>£66,368–£73,105</p> <p>Leadership scale L11–L15</p>	<p>START DATE</p> <p>From September 2026 or January 2027</p>	<p>CONTRACT</p> <p>Permanent Full-time</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE TO</p> <p>Headteacher</p>
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THE MISSION

To lead the development of an inclusive, ambitious culture where every student, particularly those with SEND, is supported to access the curriculum and achieve exceptional outcomes.

SEND and inclusion at Ponteland High School are properly resourced and deeply valued. The Curriculum Support team is large, the caseload is broad and includes some complex needs, and the structures are in place. What the school is looking for now is a leader who has the experience to know what excellent SEND provision looks like, and the skills to build it.

STRATEGIC SEND LEADERSHIP

Set the direction for SEND and inclusion as a substantive member of the Senior Leadership Team.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Build staff knowledge and confidence through training, coaching and whole-school CPD.

EXEMPLARY PROCESSES

Ensure EHCP processes, data, annual reviews and provision maps are sharp and of high quality.

EVERY STUDENT KNOWN

Ensure every student with additional needs has a person who knows them and a plan that works.

This is not a post for someone who wants to coordinate a caseload. It is for someone who wants to change the way a school thinks about its most vulnerable students. The post is available from September 2026 however we accept that a January 2027 start date is likely more realistic and we will work with the right candidate on a start date that works.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

A school built for ambition – in a community that values it.

Ponteland High School is a large, oversubscribed 11–18 secondary of approximately 1,600 students. In November 2020, the school moved into purpose-built, state-of-the-art facilities ; an outstanding learning environment that reflects its ambitions for students and staff.

The school’s core purpose is clear: every student should be happy, feel safe, and achieve exceptionally well. That means high expectations in every classroom, teachers who know their students as individuals, and a real commitment to the quality of what happens in lessons.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and academically ambitious. The school has a long-standing commitment to language learning, and students benefit from a rich range of enrichment – trips, visits and activities that go well beyond the timetable.



1,600

Students on roll, oversubscribed

11 – 18

Large secondary with sixth form

2020

Purpose-built, state-of-the-art campus

14 Schools

Primary & Secondary

“ Ponteland High School is part of Pele Trust – leaders collaborate on improvement, share what works, and support each other, while each school keeps its own identity and its own relationship with its community. ”

SEND & INCLUSION

Every student known, valued and supported.

Inclusive

Ambitious

Evidence-informed

Relational

Structured

The school is committed to operating as an inclusive school and to meeting the additional needs of all learners.

The SEND register takes a broad view, recognising students across a range of need levels – from those flagged for monitoring through to those with Education, Health and Care Plans. Provision follows a clear three-wave pathway, with the graduated assess-plan-do-review cycle at its heart.

A LARGE, EXPERT TEAM

The Curriculum Support team is large and experienced. Curriculum Support Assistants are linked to specific subject areas to make the most of their knowledge and skills.

EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS

The school works regularly with Educational Psychologists, School Health, CYPS and the Northumberland County Council SEND team.

THE BASE

A dedicated space used to support more vulnerable students during unstructured time, and for small-group teaching and targeted interventions.

TRANSITION & ACCESS

Exam access arrangements are managed carefully from Year 7 screening onwards, in line with JCQ requirements. Transition planning is carefully managed both into and out of the school.

WORKING WITHIN PELE TRUST

A network that takes SEND seriously.

One of the real advantages of working within a multi-academy trust is what it makes possible. Within Pele Trust, the support for SENDCos is substantive and practical.

Support for SENDCos

WHAT THE TRUST PROVIDES

- A dedicated cross-phase SENDCo network – primary and secondary colleagues meet regularly to share practice, work through common challenges and ensure joined-up transition
- Experienced, engaged SEND governors at Ponteland High School
- **SEND peer reviews** built into the Trust's quality assurance cycle, providing structured external challenge
- Direct access to the Trust's preferred Educational Psychologist partners, for specialist advice, assessment and training

“This is a network that takes SEND seriously – not as a compliance function, but as part of what it means to run good schools.”

HOW TO APPLY

We'd love to show you the school.

CLOSING DATE

26 June 2026

Applications must be received by 12 noon on Friday 26 June 2026.

INTERVIEWS

2 July 2026

Interviews to take place on Thursday 2 July 2026.

CONTACT

Kieran McGrane, Chief Executive Officer, Pele Trust

EMAIL

k.mcgrane@peletrust.org.uk

FORMAT

Completed [application form](#) plus supporting statement of no more than 2 A4 pages.

SUBMIT TO

Clare Barker · c.barker@ponthigh.org.uk

CLOSING

12 noon, Friday 26 June 2026

INTERVIEWS

Thursday 2 July 2026

WEBSITE

www.ponthigh.org.uk

BEFORE YOU APPLY

We strongly encourage visits ahead of application. Seeing the school, meeting the team and getting a feel for the community is the best way to know whether this is the right opportunity for you — and we welcome those conversations. Contact Kieran McGrane to arrange a visit or an informal discussion about the role.

Safeguarding & pre-employment checks

Pele Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff to share this commitment. The successful candidate will be subject to an enhanced DBS check. This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. All appointments are subject to pre-employment checks as required by Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE).

JOB DESCRIPTION

The role, in formal terms.

JOB TITLE AHT / SENDCo	LEADERSHIP SCALE L11–L15	RESPONSIBLE TO Headteacher	RESPONSIBLE FOR SEND & Inclusion
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MAIN PURPOSE OF ROLE

As a member of the Senior Leadership Team, to actively contribute to the strategic and operational leadership of Ponteland High School; and to lead the development of an inclusive, ambitious culture where every student – particularly those with SEND – is supported to access the curriculum and achieve exceptional outcomes.

01 SCHOOL CULTURE AND INCLUSION

Develop and sustain an inclusive ethos where every student is known, valued and supported.

- Support the Headteacher to develop and sustain an inclusive school ethos and strategic direction, where every student is known, valued and supported to succeed
- Play a leading role in creating a culture of high expectations for all students, particularly those with SEND or additional needs
- Promote an environment where pupils with SEND feel safe, visible and fully included in school life, not simply managed within it
- Champion a relational and evidence-informed approach to inclusive practice, embedding this across the school community

02 TEACHING

Lead CPD and coaching for inclusive, adaptive teaching across the whole school.

- Exemplify high-quality, adaptive teaching and promote high expectations for all members of the school community
- Lead CPD and instructional coaching relating to SEND, cognition, communication needs and inclusive practice
- Ensure teachers understand and implement reasonable adjustments effectively and consistently
- Promote high-quality teaching as the first and most important universal intervention for students with SEND

03 CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENT

Ensure students with SEND access a broad, ambitious curriculum with sharp assessment.

- Ensure students with SEND access a broad, ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum
- Oversee screening, referral and diagnostic systems so needs are identified early and accurately
- Ensure valid, reliable and proportionate approaches are used when assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding
- Lead the identification and implementation of Exam Access Arrangements in line with JCQ guidance

04

BEHAVIOUR AND PASTORAL SUPPORT

Provide joined-up, early support where SEND intersects with behaviour or attendance.

- Work closely with pastoral and attendance teams to provide joined-up, early support for vulnerable students, particularly where SEND intersects with behaviour or attendance
- Promote a relational approach to inclusion while maintaining high expectations and clear boundaries
- Implement consistent, fair and respectful approaches to supporting students with SEND within the school's behaviour framework

05

SEND AND STATUTORY DUTIES

Hold ambitious expectations and lead exemplary statutory processes.

- Hold ambitious expectations for all pupils with additional and special educational needs and disabilities
- Oversee the school's SEND register, ensuring accuracy, regular review and effective sharing with staff
- Coordinate EHCP provision, annual reviews and statutory processes, ensuring deadlines are met and documentation is of high quality
- Manage SEND funding effectively, and ensure full compliance with the SEND Code of Practice (2015) and associated statutory guidance
- Develop the school's SEND policy in line with the SEND Code of Practice and any Government reforms
- Oversee the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND policy
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support
- Report regularly to the Headteacher, SLT and Academy Committee on SEND outcomes, provision quality and strategic priorities

06

LEADING STAFF AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Build a high-performing team with clarity of purpose and the skills to meet student need.

- Lead high-quality professional development that draws on evidence-informed practice and nationally recognised frameworks, building staff capability at all levels
- Lead annual appraisal processes for identified teaching and support staff within the SEND and inclusion team
- Take responsibility for the development of specialist SEND and inclusion staff, ensuring clarity of purpose and the skills to meet student need

07

ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Line manage the SEND team, deploy resources effectively, maintain high-quality records.

- Ensure the protection and safety of pupils and staff through effective safeguarding, as part of the duty of care
- Line manage SEND and inclusion staff, including Curriculum Support Assistants, ensuring effective deployment and a strong team culture
- Allocate SEND resources efficiently and effectively, and maintain high-quality records, provision maps and intervention tracking

08

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT, PARTNERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

Identify barriers, strengthen systems, build partnerships and share practice across the trust.

- Use proportional evaluation to identify barriers to progress and develop clear, targeted improvement plans
- Review and strengthen SEND systems and provision with fresh thinking – the school recognises that the increasing numbers of students with SEND requires a new approach
- Build strong partnerships with parents and carers, and effective relationships with health, social care and the Local Authority
- Work collaboratively with other Pele Trust schools to share effective practice, and support the Headteacher in being accountable to the Academy Committee

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

These responsibilities are underpinned by consistently high standards of principled and professional conduct as set out in the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles). Both within and outside school, the postholder must build relationships rooted in mutual respect and observe proper professional boundaries; show tolerance and respect for the rights of others; uphold fundamental British values; and ensure personal beliefs are not expressed in ways that exploit their position or pupils' vulnerability.

As a leader of our school community, the AHT / SENDCo & Inclusion must serve in the best interests of pupils; conduct themselves ethically and model good citizenship; uphold their obligation to give account and accept responsibility; and take responsibility for their own continued professional development.

Successful applicants will be required to comply with all Pele Trust policies. This post is subject to full enhanced DBS disclosure checks, which will be subject to rechecking as appropriate.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

What we look for in the right candidate.

Essential – required for shortlisting
 Desirable – strengthens an application

	ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS	DESIRABLE
QUALIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ First or second class (Hons) degree ■ Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) ■ NPQ SENCo or equivalent - or demonstrable commitment to complete within three years of appointment ■ Evidence of significant, continuing CPD in SEND and inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ NPQSL or equivalent leadership qualification ■ Additional specialist SEND qualification (e.g. dyslexia, autism, speech and language)
EXPERIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Significant leadership experience in a secondary school setting ■ Proven track record of improving outcomes for students with SEND ■ Experience as a SENCo or in a significant SEND leadership role ■ Successful leadership of school improvement in SEND or inclusion ■ Highly effective classroom practitioner skilled in adaptive teaching ■ Experience of managing, deploying and developing SEND and support staff ■ Experience of working with external and multi-agency teams ■ Deep understanding of safeguarding practice and principles ■ Experience of the full EHCP process, from identification to annual review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Experience of leading whole-school SEND/inclusion CPD or instructional coaching ■ Experience of overseeing Exam Access Arrangements ■ Experience as a Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Professional skills and knowledge.

■ Essential ■ Desirable

	ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS	DESIRABLE
PROFESSIONAL SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ability to improve outcomes for students with SEND and for all pupils ■ Strong understanding of adaptive and evidence-informed teaching practice ■ Skilled in analysing SEND data and using it to drive targeted improvement ■ Ability to manage and deploy SEND resources to maximum impact ■ Skilled in building partnerships with parents, carers and external agencies ■ Ability to lead, challenge, support and motivate staff to meet high expectations ■ Effective communicator - able to explain complex needs clearly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Skilled in the use of specialist assessment tools ■ Experience developing evidence-informed SEND resources ■ Understanding of trauma-informed and relational approaches to inclusion
KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Thorough, current knowledge of the SEND Code of Practice (2015) ■ Understanding of the four areas of SEND need: Cognition & Learning; Communication & Interaction; SEMH; Physical & Sensory ■ Knowledge of EHCP processes, provision mapping and SEND funding ■ Sound understanding of Exam Access Arrangements and JCQ criteria ■ Knowledge of effective, evidence-informed approaches to inclusive education ■ Understanding of safeguarding legislation and its relevance to SEND 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Familiarity with the current Ofsted framework as it applies to SEND ■ Knowledge of the Local Offer and partnership working with the LA SEND team ■ Understanding of neurodiversity and how it shapes curriculum and teaching

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Leadership, vision, and how you show up.

Essential
 Desirable

	ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS	DESIRABLE
LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Strong leadership qualities with a clear commitment to inclusive education ■ Evidence of successfully leading SEND-related school improvement ■ Ability to translate strategic vision into practical systems and effective action ■ Experience of leading and line managing a team ■ Adaptable, open-minded and able to question established approaches constructively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Effective leadership in a Senior Leadership Team role ■ Evidence of developing a high-performing SEND or inclusion team
VISION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A clear, unwavering commitment to inclusive education and high ambitions for all students ■ A belief that every student can achieve - the school's role is to remove barriers, not lower expectations ■ A conviction that high-quality teaching is the most important factor in outcomes for students with SEND ■ Commitment to collaborative working with other schools, agencies and families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Aspiration to contribute to SEND and inclusion leadership across Pele Trust and beyond
PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Relates to all students positively, with particular empathy for those with additional or complex needs ■ Capacity to earn the trust and respect of pupils, staff, governors and parents ■ Resilient, reflective and solution-focused; calm, visible and consistent leadership presence ■ Excellent written and verbal communication skills; integrity, optimism and a sense of proportion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Acts as an outstanding ambassador for Ponteland High School and Pele Trust

*This post is not subject to the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and an enhanced DBS check is required.
 Assessment methods: (a) application, (i) interview, (r) references, (t) ability tests, (p) presentation, (o) other e.g. lesson observation / task.*

ABOUT PELE TRUST

A learning community, brought together by choice.

A multi-academy trust formed in February 2019, bringing together fourteen schools across Northumberland and North Tyneside – primary and secondary, serving pupils aged 3–18.

OUR PURPOSE

To build a learning community, brought together by choice, that enables our schools to support and challenge each other to provide consistently outstanding education, whilst offering a more certain and stable pathway for students, parents and staff.

To have an influential voice contributing to the development and enrichment of education across the north-east of England.

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

We offer training packages for a broad range of staff. Aspiring leaders undertake National Professional Qualifications, and all colleagues can access training relevant to their specific needs and role.

Our bespoke Trust Leadership Development programme, Peer Reviews, Networks and middle leader placements offer a unique opportunity to develop and share skills and expertise across the Trust.

PELE TRUST VALUES

What we hold each other to.

Excellence

Integrity

Openness

Collaboration

Compassion & Kindness

Optimism

Humility & Service

Accountability

OUR AMBITION

To be a learning community where everyone is happy to be, learns and improves, is known well and valued for who they are, has a place, is fulfilled, consistently experiences a rich and stimulating learning environment, and treats others with respect, dignity and courtesy at all times.

Directors have aspirations to grow the Trust further, increasing our reach and our ability to have an influential voice across the north-east. Joining Pele Trust now means being part of that growth. Further information can be found at www.peletrust.org.uk

TAKE THE NEXT STEP

Visit us. See the school. Join us.

If what you have read here resonates – come and see it for yourself. The school is best understood in person, on a normal day, with students in lessons and staff doing the work.

STEP 1

Arrange a visit

Strongly encouraged before applying. Kieran will arrange a time that suits you and a tour with the right people.

Kieran McGrane, CEO
k.mcgrane@peletrust.org.uk

STEP 2

Submit your application

[Application form](#) plus supporting statement of no more than 2 A4 pages. We are interested in your SEND track record and your vision for inclusive leadership.

Clare Barker
c.barker@ponthigh.org.uk

The appointment of an Assistant Headteacher for SENDCo and Inclusion reflects how seriously we view this work. It sits at the heart of the Senior Leadership Team.

BARRY HIRST, CHAIR OF THE ACADEMY COMMITTEE

www.ponthigh.org.uk Pele Trust ·
Ponteland, NE20 9EG · peletrust.org.uk