

Candidate Information Pack

...because children deserve better





Positive

Resilient

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Different

Passionate

Collaborative

Welcome



Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in joining Pivot. Every day I see the huge positive impact we have on the lives of the children and young people we teach and support, and I sincerely believe we are a very special organisation. By the time you finish reading this brochure I hope you think so too

Pivot exists because we believe children deserve better. Better chances, better care, better support; better than they are offered elsewhere. They deserve all this and more, and at Pivot we will do everything we can to make sure they get it

I founded Pivot because I know what being excluded feels like; I know what it's like to always wonder why you don't fit in at a mainstream school; and I know how easy it is to take a path which can quickly lead to dark and difficult places without realising the effect it has on the lives of the people around you that care and love you.

At Pivot we teach and support those children who are too often viewed as difficult and troublemakers. We don't see that. We see children with huge potential, despite the challenges they face every day – the trauma, the chaotic family life, the neighbourhoods blighted by drugs and gangs but also the neighbourhoods where social pressures and issues are not confined to any particular demographic. We see children and young people and often families who need someone on their side, someone to believe in them and understand them, someone to guide them, at the same time as setting clear boundaries and high expectations for them. We try to achieve the difficult balance of supporting and understanding while not condoning the behaviours which are often the symptoms of trauma.

Our purpose is to give all children access to equal opportunities and chances for life – however unequal their backgrounds are, and however limited they, and often others, think their chances are.

By joining Pivot you will have a chance to make a huge difference to the lives of children, young people and their families. You will also have the chance to grow professionally and personally. You will be surrounded by people who are driven by the belief that children deserve better, and you will be supported to learn and to develop your career.

Pivot is on an exciting journey. Sadly, the demand for what we do is growing rapidly. The number of children excluded from schools continues to grow, and for many reasons more children than ever find that mainstream schools are not the environment for them to learn and thrive in. We are committed to teaching and supporting as many of those children as we can, and that means rapid growth. We currently have 5 sites. We are actively looking at more right now, and over the next 5 years we expect to open more schools. To do this we must have the right people on board – people who believe that children deserve better and who are able and willing to be part of the journey for us and for them. I hope you will want to be part of that journey.

Michael Smith, CEO



Why Work at Pivot?

At Pivot we believe children deserve better. In our Academies we teach and support children and young people who have been excluded from school, or for whom mainstream school isn't the right environment for them to thrive. Every day our teams do incredible work, making a huge difference to some of the most complex and challenging children, many of whom come to us with some really traumatic backgrounds. We are doing great things – but we have so much more to do.

Even before the pandemic the demand for good quality provision far exceeded supply. The past year has widened the gap even more – and we are stepping up to the challenge. In the months and years ahead we have hugely ambitious plans to open many more schools, so we can reach out to hundreds and then thousands more children and young people who need our teaching and support.

Above all you will want to work for Pivot because you want to make a huge difference to the lives and the prospects of children who are dealing with big challenges – and every day you will get the chance to do just that. The prospect of being able to grow with us and to develop your own skills and talents may also be important to you. If so you're in the right place, as we take our responsibility to invest in every person who works with us very seriously indeed. Maybe you want to get back to what drew you to working with children and young people in the first place. Our culture is very different to most mainstream schools in so many ways – our schools are small, our class sizes tiny (often 4 or 5 children), which gives you the chance to give every child the time and attention they need. We don't do bureaucracy, we take decisions quickly, and our entire culture is driven by our belief that children deserve better.



Our business is like a family – we support each other, we look out for one another, and we do whatever it takes to make sure we do the very best for children and young people. It's really that simple.

“The best thing about teaching at Pivot is that I have freedom to try new ideas to meet the needs of our children; they re-discover a love of learning. Watching that process is very special.” Teacher

Our Schools

We have five schools already open, with more on the way.

Pivot 6, Bradley

At Pivot 6, we offer specialist support for KS4 children who have been permanently excluded from mainstream school. We offer core academics, creativity and personal development but also clear focus on developing children's softer skills. Our aim in Pivot 6 is to support students academically and socially to prepare them for transition back into mainstream school.

Kirklees Lower

Kirklees Lower opened in September 2021, providing additional high-quality capacity for children and young people with complex SEMH and other learning needs. Here we offer a calm and nurturing environment where pupils feel safe to learn and make mistakes. By embedding the Zones of Regulation and Emotion Coaching approaches throughout our practice, we support learners to connect and regulate their emotions. Our curriculum is broad across all Key Stages and has elements of academic; wellbeing; creative and experiential opportunities.

Kirklees Upper

Our school at Kirklees Upper provides support for young people in Key Stage 4, who have a wide range of complex needs, many of whom come to us with an EHCP. We have space for up to 35 young people.

We work with students and their parents/carers to provide bespoke support based on the individual needs of each child, giving them opportunities to gain a variety of qualifications and to follow different routes through to employment. Our students study to GCSE, and they can also learn functional and vocational skills in Music, Health and Fitness, Business and Photography.

"The school provides an oasis of calm for pupils who have previously experienced disruption to their schooling. This makes a significant difference to pupils' personal development and welfare."

OFSTED February 2018



Our Schools

Leeds Lower

Our Key Stage 2 primary school in Leeds East supports children, aged 7 to 11, who require a more therapeutic approach to their education and may have Social, Emotional and Mental Health challenges and/or Autism, with space for up to 35 children.

Children follow the National Curriculum as well as having the opportunity to access a number of offsite activities such as horse riding, visiting museums and trying a variety of sports.

Inside the school, we have reading corners, teaching zones and special areas dedicated to emotional support, to help promote independence and develop a passion for learning. We also have outdoor space, including a play area, an outdoor classroom, a sensory garden and an allotment. We even have a school Labrador, Buddy, who the children love to share cuddles with, read to and take for walks.

"At school now, we get to go horse riding on Tuesdays and I also get to take Buddy for walks. Food technology is my favourite lesson."
Student



Leeds Upper

Our Leeds secondary school is a short walk from the primary school and caters for students aged 11-16, with space for up to 45 young people.

In common with the primary school, we provide support for young people who may have a wide range of complex needs. We teach students in small groups with a high staff to pupil ratio. Our core subjects are English, Maths, Science and PSHE, and we also offer PE, Food Technology, Art, Drama, Health and Social Care and Photography, working towards GCSE and vocational skills exams in years 10 and 11. Learning often takes place offsite, and our students are able to join in with other sessions including horse riding, boxing and gym work.

"Everyday is different, with all sorts of challenges but you are never alone, there is always someone who can help you."
Administrator





The Children we Teach and Support

Every child and young person that comes to us has their own unique story. Here are just some of them.

Jade started at Pivot having been excluded from school because of her violent outbursts and disruptive behaviour. She had suffered years of abuse at the hands of her father, and at the age of 10 she was put into residential care. Three years later her mother managed to get custody of her, only to throw her out of the family home a few months later, leaving her homeless at the age of 14. In the time she has been at Pivot Jade has gone from zero to almost 100% attendance; she has begun to trust the adults who teach and support her; she has shown that she is bright and capable; and she has started to build a new future for herself with our help.

Sasha came to us having been excluded from mainstream school because of drug and alcohol abuse, and a record of persistent non-attendance. She had got involved with a local gang, with evidence that she was being groomed by members of the gang. A year after starting at Pivot Sasha became pregnant at the age of 14. She is receiving support to keep her daughter, and she is determined to give her baby chances in life she was never given herself. Since her daughter was born Sasha hasn't missed a single day of school, and she is on course to do well in her GCSEs this year.

Daniel was permanently excluded from two schools before being referred to Pivot. At the age of 11 Daniel witnessed his father being brutally murdered in front of him. Daniel is quiet and angry, and prone to violent outbursts. But at Pivot he receives the support he needs to deal with the trauma he has suffered. There is much further to go, but Daniel is slowly coming back to the world.

Tai is highly intelligent and loves to learn. He also has autism spectrum disorder which makes it difficult for him communicate with others, and to deal with new routines. He's brilliant at maths and art but also incredibly sensitive to noise, bright colours and temperature. He needs things to be just right so he can thrive. In a class of 30 children in a mainstream classroom it's impossible for him to get this; at Pivot it's simply what we do.

Every child and young person has a different story, a story which the world doesn't see and often a history which mainstream schools are not equipped to deal with. At Pivot we have the time and skill to listen to them and to help them write not just a new chapter, but a whole new story for themselves.

How to Apply

We hope that after reading this, you're inspired to be part of our team.

Attached to all of our adverts, you will find an application form and job description and person specification detailing the duties and responsibilities of each post, including the skills required.

To apply for any vacancy at Pivot, you are required to complete an application form. This forms part of our safer recruitment procedures. For this reason, we do not accept CV's for posts.

Whether you are applying for a teaching or support post, we encourage you to refer to the job description and specification as a guide and give specific examples, where possible, to demonstrate how you match to the requirements of the post.

For our safer recruitment procedures, we ask for details of two referees. Please note that one referee should be from your current employer, usually your line manager or the Headteacher, if working within a school setting.

Completed application forms should be sent to the HR Team at recruitment@pivot-group.co.uk.

Applications should be received no later than the closing date and time. We do encourage you to submit your application form as soon as possible as we reserve the right to change the closing date for a vacancy.

At The Pivot Academy, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and we expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We particularly welcome applications from under-represented groups including ethnicity, gender, transgender, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

Please be aware that any successful candidate will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure Barring Service check.



"There is a great sense of 'family', between the students, staff and the whole company. Pivot reaches out to everyone and encourages everyone to be their best."
Administrator



HR Team
The Pivot Academy
Unit 11
Killingbeck Drive Leeds
LS14 6UF

e. recruitment@pivot-group.co.uk
w. pivot-group.co.uk

