

Assistant Heads – Progress and Achievement

Joanne Hayes BSc. (Hons), PGCE and NPQH – Swale Urban



I was very excited to start working for VSK in 2014. Working with children in care has been a huge part of my career. After studying for my Psychology degree and PGCE I began working with children in care, both as a residential worker in a children's home and as a teacher in a secure unit. Following this I worked as a Children's Rights Officer, advocating on an individual and local level for children in care of a London Borough. I also sat as an education advisor on a Fostering Panel for an independent fostering agency. After a short time working for Children 1st in Scotland I returned to teaching, working as an Assistant Head and managing a Pupil Referral Unit. I gained my NPQH in 2010".

Gina Turner Ba (Hons) and PGCE – Canterbury and Swale Rural



I joined VSK as Assistant Head for the locality of Canterbury in January 2015. Prior to this I worked for six years as an inclusion Leader in a large Primary School in Thanet. The school had a specialist resourced provision for children with physical disabilities and a high percentage of vulnerable children and families. I have had in-depth training regarding ASD, ADHD/ADD, Attachment Disorder, various speech, language and communication difficulties, including alternative methods of communication. I am trained in and have used Makaton signs and symbols, social stories and comic strip conversations. Over the years I have learnt an extensive range of behaviour management strategies and techniques and have completed the Solihull Training course. I have also acquired the National Accreditation for SEN Coordination. I am very happy to become part of a pro-active, growing service dedicated to working towards better outcomes for children in care!

Simon Fosse-Collins BEd. (Hons) - Thanet



I have been the Assistant Head for Swale since October 2014 and previously worked as an EWO supporting CiC with their attendance at school since 2009. Prior to this I worked with Kent Safe Schools delivering Youth Action Groups, Buddy Training, e-Safety and supporting children who had been excluded from Thanet secondary schools. I also have experience of working in Alternative Curriculum where I was a Course Leader in Dover, as well as experience of working with NEETS and long term unemployed people in Thanet.

Margaret Hamlyn Ba (Hons) - Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and OOC



I qualified as a teacher in the late 1970s and taught for a couple of years before going to live in Spain, where I taught English as an additional language and raised a family. On my return to the UK in 1997 I retrained as a teacher and studied for my Ba (Hons) degree in Education. I have also studied a post-graduate course in Attachment. I spent the following years working as a teacher in primary schools, moving to be a SENCO and then being given the opportunity to set up an inclusion unit within a secondary school. My last job before joining VSK was as an Inclusion Manager within a large primary school with its own on-site nursery. I believe this range of experience, and my passion for supporting vulnerable pupils helps me in my role as Assistant Head and SENCO for VSK.

Joanne Kelly MA and PGCE - Dartford, Swanley, Gravesham and Sevenoaks



I joined VSK as an Assistant Head in 2011. Before that I supported children in different ways such as being a Specialist Teacher for Behaviour and Learning in Gravesham, a consultant in the Medway Behaviour and Educational Support Team, as a SENCO, as a Head of Maths and a class teacher. I have had the privilege of working in a variety of settings in the primary and secondary age groups, as well as in a PRU with a residential facility. My degree was in Economics and History from Cambridge University, I then went on to study teaching and achieved my PGCE and MA. I am currently studying to achieve the NPQSL and I hope to complete that this year. I've been working on a Solihull Approach training programme for professionals supporting fostered and adopted children in conjunction with STLS and CiC CAMHS - and I am currently working with the OCYPC to develop some training on 'In Care in School' for Kent. I look forward to continuing to develop the support for Kent CiC in our schools this year with the fantastic North Kent team.

Rachel Calver Ba (Hons) and PGCE - Further and Higher Education



I joined VSK in September 2013 after working within the Further Education sector for the past 12 years. Starting as an FE teacher, I then moved across to join the Aim Higher Project to support widening participation in Higher Education where I started working with CiC and CL. Continuing with this project, and becoming a Careers Adviser, I developed an initiative that continues today, to have a Designated Member of Staff for CL in all of the Kent and Medway University and Colleges, acting as key contacts for the young person and professionals. I then supported the development of a publication for CL on their opportunities Post16. Whilst working in FE I became the Student Services Manager and was able to implement a number of strategies to support the education of CL, to ensure they were aware of the support available to support progression. It was in this role that I began working with VSK. I have been able to bring with me the knowledge of the Post16 sector, and the key contacts already established to ensure that networking is strengthened. We have been delivering training to Foster Carers and Social Workers on Post16, and plan to increase the uptake of the training to ensure the young person is clear of the options available to them. With the recent development of the VSK extending its remit to include those aged 16 to 18 years it will be an exciting year ahead, expanding on the Post16 team and support other key professionals in the midfield of Post16.

Jen Kemp Ba (Hons) – Ashford, New Romney and Hythe



I began my journey with the service in January 2008 being appointed as the LAC Education Adviser for Mid Kent. Since then I have witnessed a team of 5 advisers grow into a team of over 80 staff, developing into an integrated multi-agency service and then re-born as a Virtual School in line with the national directive for improving children in care's educational and health outcomes in 2010. I am now Assistant Head within the South Kent Locality supporting schools and students in Ashford, New Romney and Hythe. Previously to VSK I graduated from university in 2003 having studied in Primary Education and post graduate Educational Studies and began work as an outreach project officer for children with social and emotional needs and led a team of colleagues to deliver peer mentoring schemes in the Swale schools district of Kent. As a team leader in KCC's Kent Safe School's service I also became county lead for Anti-bullying and represented the authority on the South East branch of the Anti-bullying Alliance. I am also trained in restorative approaches and mediation techniques, and have a particular interest in attachment and therapeutic approaches for children. As a VSK Assistant Head I am passionate about improving the life chances for our children in care and work hard to support colleagues in schools and social work teams to promote the importance of stability, continuity and meaningful engagement in education.

Rebecca Dutton Ba (Hons) and PGCE – Dover and Folkestone



I have been fortunate enough to join VSK as Assistant Head for the Dover and Folkestone District. Education is key to ensuring that young people increase their life chances, emotional wellbeing and self-esteem; it is this view that has driven my career choices to date. I qualified as a secondary English teacher in 1994 and have been privileged to have taught in several large secondary schools in Kent, working with numerous students from a vast spectrum of backgrounds. Class teaching has always been my priority; however I have also held a variety both pastoral and subject leadership roles, including: Director of Years 10 and 11, Director of English and finally culminating in a Deputy Headship of a school in challenging circumstances.

I have always been committed to ensuring that all young people within my professional care are provided with the best educational opportunities, particularly those who are most vulnerable. Alongside my teaching career, my husband and I have been foster carers for 14 years. We offer a therapeutic approach to the children in our care, with training in attachment theory, play therapy, ASD, trauma, positive management of challenging behaviour, separation and loss. As a foster carer I have seen first-hand the fragile tension between academic success and stability, and the impact this has on a placement. I am acutely aware of the significant barriers that children in care face. My position within VSK will enable me to further champion and advocate for our children in care, striving for the exemplary support and positive advantage that these young people deserve.

Jemma Page Ba (Hons) – Maidstone and Malling

