Dear Colleague,

Thank you for expressing an interest in working at The Sydney Russell School.

**History**

The Sydney Russell School opened in September 1990, formed from three constituent schools with long local traditions, as part of a Borough re-organisation of secondary education. The school is well-established, large (ten forms of entry, c. 1,700 students), takes both girls and boys and has a thriving 6th Form of 225, part of the Southern Sixth Form Consortium in co-operation with three neighbouring schools.

The school is popular with local parents and over-subscribed with first choices. The success of our approaches is evidenced by the fact that we are also now involved in setting up a brand-new 10 form-entry secondary school – Riverside School - as the lead partner school, utilising Sydney Russell’s proven structures and processes.

**Ethos**

My agenda is a transparent one. In many ways I am a traditionalist: I take a very firm line on discipline, uniform and good manners. We moved decisively away many years ago from any mixed-ability teaching groups: all classes are in one of three broad ability bands, with many departments, such as Science and Maths, using additional finer setting. On discipline, we have a centrally-organised reward and relocation scheme and school detention to take the strain off individual members of staff as well as behaviour modification groups to take any particularly challenging students out of mainstream classes completely. Generous additional funding has enabled us to provide further extensive targeted support in the form of Learning Mentors, a Learning Support Unit and additional support assistants.

My approach to leadership and management is also crystal-clear: set a clear vision and the highest expectations, ensure that everything needed to complete the job effectively is in place, appoint very good people and then let them get on with the job, with the minimum interference and the maximum support. This means cutting out all unnecessary meetings and paper-work - no morning briefings, no scheduled line-management meetings, minimal monitoring processes – releasing time and energy to concentrate on what really makes a difference: continually improving learning and teaching in the classroom.

**Achievement**

Our examination results show the impact of the huge changes which have been made at the school over the last few years, with GCSE 5+ A\* - C inc English and Maths rising from 34% in 2008 to 67% in 2015. Our targets and predictions for the coming two years show further sustained improvements, moving to 80% 5+ A\* - C inc English and Maths.

We are one of the top three schools in our local authority on all key examination measures, both at GCSE and A’ Level. We are the leading school in the authority for the EBac, performing significantly above the national average.

**Ofsted**

Our most recent published Ofsted inspection was in May 2013, when we were graded Outstanding in all categories.

**Premises**

The school is based on a single site, which has benefited from substantial capital investment since the school’s formation.

The school has just come to the end of a two-year £26 million building programme funded under Building Schools for the Future, which has left us with superb all-new or refurbished accommodation. We have the best general purpose classrooms in the country – every single one 50% bigger than the norm and equipped with 32 PCs – and all our specialist rooms have been refurbished to a very high standard, with excellent ICT facilities.

We have also expanded – adding another 10 classrooms to enable us to take 12 forms of entry from September 2013. Within the next five years we will be one of the largest schools in the country.

I hope you will have gleaned from this brief snapshot of the School that I believe Sydney Russell is a rewarding and welcoming place to work.

I look forward to receiving your application and, hopefully, to meeting you in due course.

Yours sincerely,

**Janis Davies**Principal