



CENTRE ACADEMY EAST ANGLIA

Meet our Staff



To Parent/Carers,

It has become a commonplace for schools to claim that their teachers play an important role in a child's educational experience. However, all too often these same teachers remain rather anonymous. At Centre Academy East Anglia, however, we proclaim that our teachers and all staff members are *the key element* to success for all our children. With that in mind, we believe that you will both enjoy and profit from the information contained in this booklet, for it will introduce what we believe to be a truly outstanding Faculty—teachers and other staff members, dedicated professionals who have *chosen* to work with students with special educational needs.

Teaching children who face learning challenges is, indeed, a very different kind of teaching than one will find in a mainstream classroom. It requires highly trained and experienced men and women who are fully in command of small group, subject-specific instructional techniques. Their methods are multi-sensory, and especially important, they are always highly supportive, nurturing and patient.

Beyond this, special needs teachers must be able to *connect* with their students. In this regard, you will note from this brochure the wealth of experience CAEA teachers have; this experience transcends in many instances the classroom, and you will see that our teachers have in virtually every case brought much more than university qualifications—which are themselves both advanced and specialised—with them to the School.

The writer and philosopher Henry Adams noted that “A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.” This is certainly the case with the Faculty of Centre Academy East Anglia: dedicated professionals helping children reclaim their futures.



Dr Duncan Rollo

BA; MA; Ph.D; Post-Doc Fellow;
Principal/ CEO of the Centre Academy
Schools

Dr Rollo is a product of both the British and American educational systems. A native of Dundee, Scotland and a naturalised US citizen (who has also retained his UK citizenship), he spent his formative years in American and British schools. He holds a BA in English and Education, an MA in English and a Ph.D. in English and American and European Drama. He was later awarded a post-doctoral fellowship in the Department of International Relations at the London School of Economics and Political Science

Dr Rollo's teaching career includes appointments to various US universities, including Virginia Tech (where he was awarded Master Teacher status), Briarcliff University (where he served as Director of Writing), and Georgetown University (where he worked with international graduate students). He was also a visiting lecturer in American Drama at the Kennedy Centre for the Performing Arts in Washington D.C., and later spent a decade with the US Government, where he held diplomatic status.

Since returning to the UK some 30 years ago, Dr Rollo has served as Head of English and Academic Dean at one of the American schools in the London area, and as Vice President for Development at an international university. He subsequently accepted an appointment as Director of Studies at Centre Academy London and later as Headmaster, and in 2010 became Principal of both CA London and CA East Anglia.

Dr Rollo is the author of three books on writing and a variety of magazine articles dealing with various aspects of education. He was elected to the *Cum Laude Society* for his contributions to education and was named a Fellow of the Royal Society for the Arts.

Dr Rollo is a Board Member of CReSTeD, the council for support of schools teaching children with Dyslexia.



Mrs Kim Salthouse

BA (Hons); M Ed SEN; Cert Ed; Dip
SpLD; PGCPD
Head of School

Mrs Salthouse's appointment as Head of School at Centre Academy East Anglia reflects her considerable experience as a special needs teacher who has always focused on the child's need for self-esteem and confidence, and who is dedicated to helping all pupils reach their full potential. Her interest in special needs was initially prompted by her two children, who were diagnosed with specific learning difficulties. Mrs Salthouse therefore learned from experience: that with support and encouragement children can learn not only to cope with learning challenges but can frequently transcend them.

A native of London, Mrs Salthouse spent her formative years in Kent, where she developed a love of the countryside—excellent preparation for her eventual move to Suffolk. Her interest in children and learning challenges motivated her to begin a variety of academic courses, and these resulted in her award of a BA (Hons) in Specific Learning Difficulties. She subsequently studied with Dr Beve Hornsby, at the time the leading professional in special educational needs, under whose guidance she completed her Diploma in SpLD.

Mrs Salthouse subsequently worked in partnership to establish a parent's advice centre in Basildon Essex, providing support for families whose children were experiencing difficulties in school. Following a move to Suffolk she accepted a position at Framlingham College, Suffolk, supporting pupils throughout the school, and also taught at their junior school, Brandeston Hall, later becoming Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator at the College.

Mrs Salthouse accepted an appointment at The Old Rectory, which later was to become CA East Anglia. She took a year off to lead a special inclusion pilot project for Norfolk County Council in a senior state school, returning the following year to The Old Rectory as a set one teacher. Following completion of her M Ed, Mrs Salthouse served as Senior Teacher, and when the school was amalgamated as part of the Centre Academy Schools in 2010, accepted the appointment of Head of School.



Mrs Lara West
NVQ Level 3 Business and
Administration
PA to Head of School/Office Manager

Mrs West has a broad and unusual background that embraces a variety of settings. Born in Germany, she returned to the UK and was educated at the Westgate School in Winchester, Hampshire. She was a boarding student at Westgate, and this has given Mrs West significant insight into the boarding experience.

Her first job involved a return to Germany, where she was a secretary to a Commanding Officer in the British Armed Forces based in Germany.

Mrs West subsequently returned to England and settled in Suffolk. Her interest in education resulted in positions in schools in Ipswich and Colchester.

Mrs West accepted the position of Secretary to the Head of School at CAEA in 2012, which she enjoys immensely. She manages all aspects of a very busy office, including personnel records, admissions and appointments for parents and prospective students. In addition to her secretarial duties, she was recently made Office Manager for the school.

Mrs West has two adult children, two grandchildren—and at least some time for reading and spending time with her family.



Mrs Lisa Gilbert

**BA; PGCSE; SENCo; PAPPAs; CBT;
SENCo/Designated Safeguarding Lead
Licensed Thrive Child/Adolescent
Practitioner**

A native of Essex, Mrs Gilbert brings a variety of experience to her position as Special Educational Needs Coordinator. Following university, she accepted a position with Barclays Bank and, at age 23, became the youngest bank manager in the organisation. She subsequently relocated with her family to Spain, where she taught English and Spanish at an independent bilingual school.

Upon her return to the UK in 2010, her commitment to education was reflected as she began a career in mainstream and independent schools teaching Maths and Spanish at GCSE level.

Mrs Gilbert's focus on special needs education carries on a family tradition, as her mother was a special needs teacher. Thus, inheriting her mother's passion for SEN, Mrs Gilbert returned to university and qualified as a SENCo.

In 2017, she accepted the position of SENCo at CAEA. She has since been appointed to the Senior Management Team and was recently also named as the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. She also supervises the school's therapeutic programme and, indeed, supports a number of students through individual counselling.

Mrs Gilbert is married and has two adult boys. She admits to a love of travel, shopping and spending time with her family and two dogs, Bella and Buster.



Mrs Sandie Whall
B.S.c (HONS); PGCSE;
Teaching & Learning Co-
ordinator/Teacher

Mrs Whall brings an exceptionally broad range of teaching and academic skills to her position at Centre Academy, where she has been a key professional for over a decade. Her wide range of experience embraces working with the full spectrum of ages, needs and abilities of our students; these include Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, ASD, ADHD and Moderate Learning Difficulties.

Mrs Whall started her career as a Learning Support Assistant. After earning her university degree, she began to specialize in 'Early Years Education,' qualifying as a Class Teacher and gaining Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). Mrs Whall has since continued with her studies to include a focus on Special Educational Needs whilst exploring the fields of 'Difficulties with Literacy', 'Educational Enquiry' and 'Educational Leadership' at Masters level.

Teaching Literacy, Geography and Science and Forest School are particular passions for Mrs Whall, who strives especially to encourage students to become active learners and to develop an interest in the world around them. She essentially founded CAEA's Forest School programme, which has enriched the lives of many of our students.

Mrs Whall is a veteran and key member of the Senior Management Team (SMT) at CAEA. She is responsible for overseeing teaching and learning, staff induction, meeting prospective pupils and sharing pastoral oversight of a tutor group.



Mr Vaughan Steward
B.S.c (HONS);
Examinations Officer, Curriculum
Coordinator/Teacher

A Suffolk native, Mr Steward spent his youth enjoying the freedom of the countryside, moved to the Stowmarket area aged 14 and now resides in a small village near the metropolitan centre that is Bury St. Edmunds.

At age 16, Mr Steward studied Sport Science at West Suffolk College and developed an interest in working with children. After earning his diploma, he moved on to Northampton University, earning his degree in Sport and Exercise Science. It was during his work on a pedagogical module that Mr Steward decided that teaching was the profession for him.

Following university, he entered the world of education as part of the SEN Department at Northgate High School in Ipswich. Intended for a year, the position turned into three years of significant experience and gave Mr Steward an interest in working with students with special educational needs. He subsequently accepted a place on the Suffolk and Norfolk Graduate Teacher Training Programme, training as a PE teacher at Stowmarket High School. After obtaining his QTS, Mr Steward spent a year supply teaching, working in primary and secondary schools around Suffolk.

Mr Steward's broad experience and interest in SEN made him the ideal candidate for a position at CAEA, and he was appointed History and PE Teacher in September 2010. Since that time, he has taken leading roles in Curriculum Development, Examinations and related areas, and has also been a key member of the Senior Management Team.

Mr Steward's hobbies include reading, music and, as he admits, playing/watching/reading about sport, much to his wife's dismay!



Ms Michelle Coleman
BA(Hons); PGCE; TEFL
Teacher

Born in Belgium, Miss Coleman spent her childhood and early adult life in Norfolk. Her original ambition was to be a physiotherapist for Norwich City Football Club! However, her Science GCSE results suggested that her strengths lay in English and History, thus making prophetic her mother's reminiscence that she had always saved her pocket money every week to buy a book, and then would read it in a single morning.

Family life and a move down the A140 to Suffolk meant that her career choices were put on hold. She spent several years living in Germany, where she enjoyed the different culture and travelling around Europe. Returning to the UK she became involved with the Princes Trust and the desire to reconnect with learning and share her knowledge was rekindled.

As a slightly more mature student Miss Coleman gained a BA (Hons) degree in English and History, followed by her PGCE at UCS in Ipswich. She then worked in several mainstream secondary schools, teaching GCSE English and KS3 Drama. She attended an interview at CAEA in 2019, to be met by exceptionally well-behaved, polite students. Within weeks of starting at the school she realised that it was a unique and special place to work.

As all the students will know Miss Coleman's singing voice and artistic talents are tenuous – though like a CAEA student she will give a 100% effort, whether it's singing the pirate song from 'Treasure Island' or drawing illustrations to help explanation of certain points from a book. Over the past few years, she notes that there has been a concerted effort from GCSE students to convince her that the Muppet version of 'A Christmas Carol' is amazing; she has so far resisted!



Mrs Andrea Glover

BA(Hons); MA; PGCE; TESOL; BDA
Approved Teacher; Assoc.Member
Dyslexia Guild;Teacher

Born into an RAF family, Mrs Glover spent her childhood moving regularly but finally settled in Suffolk. She holds an MA in Social Anthropology from Edinburgh University and enjoyed working on projects in India and supporting refugees in Ipswich. Supporting students in the EAL department of a secondary school led her into teaching as a profession.

Mrs Glover qualified as a middle years English teacher in 2004 and enjoyed many years teaching in a Suffolk middle school, where she also took on the roles of drama leader and literacy co-ordinator.

Following the closure of middle schools, Mrs Glover decided to train as a L7 specialist teacher in dyslexia and SpLD with Dyslexia Action. During this period, she supported many children who were struggling at school for a variety of reasons. After qualifying as a British Dyslexia Association approved teacher, she started her own tutoring business and particularly enjoyed giving advice and support about literacy to families.

Mrs Glover currently teaches English and Humanities at CAEA and is also training to become a dyslexia assessor. The entire faculty has profited from her expertise in dyslexia, and this has been particularly the case with the discussions she has led on this topic and the seminars she has presented.

In her free time, she enjoys playing volleyball and walking in the beautiful Suffolk countryside.



Mr Stephen Lloyd
BA(Hons); PGCE
Teacher

A native of Suffolk, Mr Lloyd completed a BTEC in Art and Design and subsequently earned a BA(Hons) in Editorial Photography from the University of Brighton. This led to a career in photojournalism, initially with the East Anglian Daily Times and then to the Evening Echo as a senior photographer. After five successful years, Mr Lloyd spent a year of discovery and adventure, travelling across five continents.

Returning to the UK, he was adamant that he wanted to work with young people but also include art in some capacity. After volunteering at a local youth club based in Woodbridge he began working with young people at the flagship Housing Group Charity, a position that enabled him to gain considerable experience focusing on young people's needs and providing support for families whose children were experiencing a variety of difficulties.

Realising that teaching young people had become his vocation, Mr Lloyd then completed his PGCE at Sheffield Hallam University and subsequently accepted a position at a pupil referral unit in Barnsley and then began a full-time position as a BTEC level 3 course leader in photography at Birmingham Metropolitan College.

Following 10 fulfilling years, during which Mr Lloyd continued to hone his teaching skills, Suffolk's siren call became louder and he accepted a position at CAEA teaching art. Mr Lloyd has since taken charge of the entire art and design programme and is now looking forward to developing further what is an innovating and creative curriculum for all CAEA students.



Ms Kimberly Martin
BA Hums;
Teacher

A Cambridgeshire native, Ms Martin's love of the outdoors has been reflected in twice spending extended periods backpacking around Europe and, in one instance, walking the Camino de Santiago in northern Spain. From a young age, however, she also knew that she wanted to be a teacher, and this led to her gaining a degree in Humanities with Religious Studies from the Open University.

As a military spouse, she then spent 10 years in the United States, gaining Education Specialist Credentials in English as a Second Language and SEN, the latter inspired by her sibling's journey through Special Education programmes. These qualifications gave her qualified teacher status in two US states and, upon her return to the UK, were transferred to Qualified Teacher Status.

Upon that return to the UK, Ms Martin initially worked at a Pupil Referral Unit in Suffolk and then accepted a position at CAEA as a junior class teacher. She has since assumed the role of Unit Award Scheme teacher, a position that she particularly enjoys because of its diversity and the opportunities it affords its students.

Ms Martin's passion for the outdoors has also been much appreciated at CAEA, reflected when she was named as head of the school's Duke of Edinburgh Scheme. In this role, Miss Martin's favourite motto, from J.R.R. Tolkien, is particularly germane: 'Not all who wander are lost.' She is particularly passionate about making the Scheme available to as many students as possible.



Mr William Pipe
Cert Ed; City & Guilds Lev 4 Teaching
Qualification
Teacher

Originally from Essex, Mr Pipe brings significant teaching and related experience to CAEA. Leaving school at 16, he began a 25-year career in printing, becoming involved in digital imaging and related skills and also with training apprentices and journeymen in digital media.

In the early 2000s, anticipating the decline of print press in the UK, Mr Pipe returned to college and completed his teacher training, subsequently achieving a Cert Ed. During this period, he also worked at West Suffolk College as a technician and teaching assistant. This was fortuitous, as he was introduced to special needs students in the Foundations Studies department.

Mr Pipe's increasingly broad experience subsequently led to teaching positions at Clacton-on-Sea, where he delivered English, Maths and employability skills to adults, at Colchester Institute, where he helped introduce the new functional skills courses in English, Maths and IT, and at Her Majesty's prisons, where he taught media, web design and photography.

The breadth of Mr Pipe's experience made him especially attractive to CAEA, and he subsequently accepted a position at the school directing the IT programme. In addition, he takes a very active part in various CAEA activities, and his willingness to perform on the guitar is especially appreciated. Mr Pipe's diverse abilities are also on display in venues in both Suffolk and Essex, where he appears on occasion as a singer/songwriter.



Ms Cynthia Schears
BSc in Bio Chem; PGCE; QTS
Teacher

Passionate about science, wildlife, and the natural world, Ms Schears studied all three sciences at A level and then gained her Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Biochemistry from University College London. As a student she travelled extensively whilst taking on a variety of jobs to finance her adventures, including working in Paris and San Francisco.

After graduating she worked for the Ministry of Defence as a scientist at Porton Down before moving to Scotland to complete a master's degree at Stirling University. Her MSc thesis included a research project whilst on placement at the Swiss pharmaceutical company Ciba Geigy at their chemical factory in Paisley. She then did a further two years research in the field of biotechnology which included a period spent in the USA.

Ms Schears subsequently spent the next 10 years working in industry for some large multinational companies, including Glaxo and Proctor and Gamble. On moving from London to East Anglia to start a family, she began to teach science to adults at a local college. Realising she really enjoyed teaching she subsequently undertook a school-based PGCE through the UEA, gaining Qualified Teacher Status.

Having taught science in several schools and pupil referral units in Suffolk she developed an interest in teaching students with special needs and initially arrived at CAEA as a supply teacher. She enjoyed teaching the students so much in such a lovely rural setting she stayed on and took on developing the school's science programme. This included moving students from a single science GCSE to a double GCSE award. Ms Schears' approach is to demystify science for her students and help them make connections between the information they learn and their own world. She also teaches Environmental Science in the American Diploma Programme and has been instrumental at steering students to form a school Eco Council, which resulted in Centre Academy becoming an Eco School in 2018.



Mrs Anne Shaul
Bed: DipSpLD, TEFL
Teacher/Teacher in Residence

The teaching staff veteran at CAEA, Mrs Shaul was born in Bishop Auckland, Co. Durham. Her career did seem pre-ordained, as both her parents were teachers and from a very early age she had decided to follow in their footsteps. Accordingly, she gained her Bachelor of Education Degree at St Martin's College in Lancaster.

This qualification led to a teaching career of some 43 years, during which Mrs Shaul has taught in both the private and the state sectors in Berkshire, Essex, Suffolk and Spain. The breadth of her experience and her versatility are also reflected in posts that have involved teaching to children as young as 4 and as old as 19.

That breadth of experience and versatility have been very much in demand at CAEA for the last 14 years. Not only has Mrs Shaul taught a variety of classes and year groups but she also pioneered the Unit Award Scheme. A combination of the academic and the life-skills programmes, the UAS has provided a valuable alternative approach for a significant number of our students. Finally, in addition to her teaching duties, Mrs Shaul has been CAEA's Teacher-in-Residence since she began her duties at the school.

Mrs Shaul is married and has two grown daughters, and three granddaughters. Her husband, John, lives in Spain in their house which they bought seventeen years ago. She returns to Spain during the holidays. Mrs Shaul says she enjoys the best of both worlds, living in Spain and working in England, although she misses John and, indeed, Bailey, the family dog.



Mrs Suzanne Simpson

Post Grad Diploma in Counselling (BACP
Registered Counsellor)

Drama School at the Guildford School of
Acting Teacher

Mrs Simpson has enjoyed the most varied and interesting of careers. A native of Essex, she attended Southend High School for Girls, the Guildford School of Acting, the French Institute in London, the State University of New York (US) and the University of East Anglia. The common thread is Mrs Simpson's love of drama and the theatre. In fact, her first role at the age of 11 was to play a part with only one line--but she was also required to sneeze!

Mrs Simpson's first 'real' theatre job was backstage at London's Haymarket Theatre where she was Dresser to the legendary actress, Claudette Colbert. Additional positions followed at the Haymarket, the Richmond Theatre, Theatre Clwyd Outreach, the Unicorn Children's Theatre; she also performed in the musical "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" touring to large theatres throughout the UK.

Her passion for the theatre is complemented by her devotion to children. In this regard, she has held a multiplicity of positions, including coordinator of a hospital deaf unit; learning support assistant for the SEN unit at the John Paxton Primary School; drama teacher at Hethersett Old Hall School in Norfolk, Queenswood School in Hertfordshire, Mildenhall College Academy and Debenham High School in Suffolk. Mrs Simpson most recently earned a post graduate diploma in counselling from UEA and will be studying part-time to become a qualified Play Therapist at Leeds Beckett University.

Mrs Simpson's broad experience and versatility have been most appreciated since she accepted a position at CAEA in 2019. She has recently been appointed as the school's Drama Teacher.



Mr Viswanath Suria
PGCE; BE Engineering & Tech
Teacher

Mr Suria was born in Kerala, India. After progressing through his primary and secondary education from six different schools across the country, he completed his bachelor's degree in engineering from the country's SRM University.

He moved to the UK in 2007 to pursue a post-graduate degree at the University of Essex. While studying for this qualification, he began offering private tutoring in Mathematics on a one-to-one basis to GCSE and A-Level students; in doing so, he garnered outstanding reviews from a variety of students and their parents. After completing his course at Essex, he continued to offer this bespoke service to mainstream, SEN, private and grammar school students.

Mr Suria's success in working individually with a range of students led to his appointment as a subject specialist with Pet-Xi, a renowned education training provider that offers intensive, result-oriented courses in GCSE Maths at schools throughout the UK.

Mr Suria's success and his expertise working with individual students led to his appointment as a teacher of Mathematics at CAEA in 2017. His teaching encompasses a broad range of ages throughout the school, something he notes he enjoys immensely. He spends his spare time analysing stock markets, reading detective novels and watching sports.



Mrs Rebecca Widdowson
BA(Hons) Degree; PGCE
Teacher

Mrs Widdowson's passion for Music began at primary school when she began playing the Clarinet, aged 9, and she hasn't looked back since! She completed a Foundation Diploma in Music (majoring in performance) at Colchester Institute where she also participated in the Swing Band, Clarinet Choir and Vocal Choir.

Realising that teaching was her vocation Mrs Widdowson enrolled on the Music Degree course at Colchester Institute, majoring in Education. This opened doors into working in the classrooms of local schools with a focus on supporting students with additional needs.

She also served in numerous schools throughout her degree years, teaching Clarinet, Flute, Saxophone and Piano to help fund her way through University. After gaining her BA Hons in Music Education, she completed her PGCE at Goldsmiths, University of London.

Mrs Widdowson returned to Suffolk and accepted the post of Music Teacher at Thurston Community College, where she still works three days a week. This enabled her subsequently to accept a similar post at CAEA in 2017, where she continues to shape the Music Curriculum and to enthuse her students through practical music lessons. Under her guidance, CAEA students have performed in various musical events, including the school's annual musical.

"There is music in every child. The teacher's job is to find it and nurture it." Frances Clark



Mrs Samantha Wright
BA(Hons);QTLS

A native of Hampshire who spent some years in sunny Tenerife, Mrs Wright returned to the UK some 22 years ago. Settling in Suffolk to enjoy her family and to bring up her daughter, she decided to gain qualifications as a teaching assistant. This led to a position at Pear Tree Mead Primary School and her increasing desire to make a career progression into teaching.

Her passion for teaching led to her employment as a teaching assistant at Pear Tree Mead Primary School in 2003, delivering a wide range of lessons from reception to Year 6 that broadened her understanding of subject progression and the importance of supporting children's learning. After gaining her Higher Level Teaching Assistant status (HLTA), Mrs Wright became increasingly drawn to supporting and teaching pupils with additional needs.

In 2006 she accepted a position at Priory Special Academy where, as an HLTA she taught and tutored her own class. She subsequently completed her BA Honours in Children's Care, Learning and Development and qualified as a primary school teacher with QTLS status. After ten happy years at Priory and gaining valuable experience teaching pupils with a wide range of SEND, she moved to a main stream primary in Bury St Edmunds where, although happy, she missed teaching and supporting children with additional needs.

This proved a blessing for CAEA, as Mrs Wright accepted a teaching appointment last year. She admits that beginning her duties during the Covid pandemic was challenging but she notes that she is enjoying teaching our younger pupils very much. As for any free time that she may have, Mrs Wright's love for animals and the countryside are very much evident as she looks after and rides her horse—yet another passion.



Miss Caitlin Banham
BSC (Hons) Occ Therapy
Occupational Therapist

Miss Banham grew up in a Suffolk village and, as a six former, volunteered at the local hospice where she was inspired by an outstanding team of occupational therapists who empowered those they worked with to be as independent as possible. She soon realised that a career as an occupational therapist would be her goal. .

Subsequently moving to Norwich to attend the University of East Anglia, Miss Banham began her studies for a degree in Occupational Therapy. Completing her final placement in an SEN school, she particularly enjoyed working alongside teachers to help children thrive. Graduating from UEA with a BSC in Occupational Therapy three years later, Miss Banham had also completed a dissertation exploring the effectiveness of deep pressure therapy for autistic children (currently awaiting publication by the university).

Following her graduation and realising that she was becoming particularly interested in developing effective regulation strategies for children, Ms Banham concluded that she would be best placed in a professional setting that would bring together occupational therapy and education.

Miss Banham was subsequently pleased to accept the position of occupational therapist at CAEA. In addition to her therapeutic duties she is also working on becoming a qualified sensory integration practitioner.



Miss Clare Bates
BSc(Hons) Sp & Lang; Diploma Lev 3
Social Care
Speech & Language Therapist

A native of Bury St Edmunds, Miss Bates' dream of becoming a Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT) grew from working alongside a qualified SaLT at Bury's Riverwalk School, where she initially served as a supply teaching assistant and subsequently as a full-time TA. She remained at Riverwalk for six years before having her daughter and deciding on a change of career.

Accordingly, Miss Bates decided to attend West Suffolk College, where she completed her level 3 diploma course, "Access to Health and Social Care." The course required significant focus on psychology, sociology, physiology and related subjects. Achieving distinctions and merits in the majority of these courses, Miss Bates was rewarded with an offer to study at her chosen institution of higher learning, Edinburgh's Queen Margaret University. Four years of additional training at Edinburgh resulted in her gaining the BSc in Speech and Language.

Heeding the call of friends and family, Miss Bates then returned to Suffolk where she accepted a position at Addenbrookes Hospital. While enjoying this role, she continued to want a return to an SEN school-based environment.

Centre Academy East Anglia was more than happy to oblige, and Miss Bates is now able to devote her time and energies to leading the school's therapeutic speech and language programme.



Mrs Alison Beadman
S.A.C. Dip Level 3 (TA); Institution of
Occupational Safety & Health
Health & Safety Officer/Medication
Officer/Site Manager

Mrs Beadman is CAEA's Renaissance figure, someone capable of wearing many hats—especially appreciated in a small setting. A native of Suffolk and the daughter of a farmer, she arrived at the school in 2004, someone used to embracing numerous responsibilities, from driving a tractor to organising planting to bringing up a family.

Mrs Beadman's initial responsibilities were largely in the kitchen, reflecting her Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering. It soon became clear that her rapport with children would also work in the classroom; over the years, this is a role that she has taken on from time-to-time, most recently in the Social Skills programme buttressed by her Level 3 Teaching Assistant Diploma (with Distinction).

The various aspects of safety and related areas at CAEA have also been embraced by Mrs Beadman. She holds a current St John Ambulance certificate in First Aid, and this enables her to function as the school's Head of Medication, Health and Safety Officer, Fire Marshal and Lead Invigilator. Her knowledge of the school and its grounds has meanwhile resulted in her being named Site Manager.

With all these responsibilities, Mrs Beadman still finds time to work in the school's front office—and she even is qualified to drive the CAEA minibuses!



Mrs Nicola Dent
City & Guilds Lev 3 –SAFER Care
Housemistress

Versatility is Mrs Dent's watchword, coupled with a history of caring for others. Over the years she has worked for a chemist, where she learned much about medication; worked as a carer for a young lady with severe and complex physical and mental needs; held a position as a carer for the elderly—to name a few.

With this background, Mrs Dent was particularly attractive to Centre Academy, and in 2015, she was appointed as assistant to the head of care. A few years later, she was promoted to House Mistress for the school's boarding girls. In this capacity, she was responsible for ensuring their safety and, particularly important, helping them with any challenges they might encounter.

Mrs Dent's versatility and insights about young people again materialised when, following an unexpected vacancy, she stepped in as the school's cook. She immediately showed an understanding of the foods that the children would like and, indeed, dishes that were good for them—all the while continuing to support the school's boarding girls.

With the demise of our boarding programme, Mrs Dent has been appointed and promoted to the position of Cook for CAEA. In accepting the position, she noted that "I have found myself in an environment that cares, encourages, and accepts all."



Mrs Michelle Brown
TEFL;NCFE Cache Lev 2
Learning Support Assistant

A native of western Australia and an inveterate traveller, Mrs Brown arrived in Suffolk with her husband (a Suffolk native) and two daughters eight years ago. Her enjoyment in meeting new people and learning about different ways of life have been the foundations of her entry into education.

Her original pathway was through her six years of experience in the travel industry. She initially developed a keen interest in education after volunteering in a village school in Laos, where she taught English to children who were, she notes, “very keen learners.” This planted a seed and upon moving to the UK later in 2013, Mrs Brown started work at a secondary school as a teaching assistant, during which her passion for working with children with additional needs was repeatedly reinforced.

While in this role, Mrs Brown trained as an ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) and spent additional time on the pastoral side of education; this reinforced her belief that academic and pastoral development go hand-in-hand.

Increasingly aware of the limitations in what mainstream schools could offer SEN students, Mrs Brown accepted a position with CAEA in April 2020. Since then, she has been working in the classroom while also supporting other elements in the school. She notes that she especially enjoys working in a small school, being part of a team where ideas are shared and developed, and having conversations throughout the day with her students.



**Mr Mel Seager
Gardner**

Mr Seager’s official title as CAEA’s “Gardner” is certainly accurate, but it belies many of the other responsibilities that he has embraced since he became part of the school some 17 years ago.

Mr Seager’s background is, indeed, diverse. Leaving school at age 15, he started as an apprentice butcher and then went on to work on a fruit farm, specialising in taking care of the orchards and subsequently driving to Covent Gardens with the fruit he harvested. Later, he spent an additional seven years driving a variety of lorries around the UK.

The breadth of his background well equipped Mr Seager to begin work at CAEA, where he does, indeed, spend a considerable part of his day looking after the school’s grounds; this may involve anything from mowing the extensive lawns to fixing fences to ensuring that the electric gates are working—and even to feeding our always-hungry ducks. An especially important part of his responsibilities involves ensuring that all aspects of the grounds are safe, and in this he works in tandem with our Site Manager.

Blessed with the ability to learn quickly the names of all our students, Mr Seager supports them in the daily Games sessions, where he works with the Games teacher in helping students acquire new athletic skills. Mr Seager is also responsible for our student vegetable garden, in which he teaches students some of the knowledge and skills that successful gardening requires. Finally, Mr Seager is responsible for driving our students in the minibuses so that they can engage in various educational pursuits. Perhaps “Differentiation” is the term that most applies to Mr Seager!

Support Staff

The support staff at CAEA are the backbone of the school, providing excellent meals for both students and staff, and looking after the fabric of the school.



Miss Daisy Bonner
Diploma in Art and Design
Learning Support Assistant

Miss Bonner joined CAEA this January as Admin Assistant and LSA. She assists Mrs West with her never-ending administrative responsibilities, and she offers a helping hand during lessons whenever necessary. Miss Bonner is certainly finding her feet – she has started to do her part during lunchtime duties and at the end of the day with taxi duties.



Miss Lauren Kelly
Kitchen Manager

Miss Kelly grew up in Suffolk, she left school and went onto college to study health and social care. After her studies she went onto work at a café where she found a love for cooking.

In 2014 Miss Kelly joined CAEA as a kitchen assistant. As well as working within the kitchen Miss Kelly would spend break times supervising our students, this enabled her to get to know them well.

Travelling has always been a passion for Miss Kelly, she has spent many summers in different parts of the world exploring different cultures.

Over the years at CAEA Miss Kelly has progressed in the kitchen and is now the Kitchen Manager. She has introduced a variety of fresh homemade meals to the school's menus.



Mrs Diane Brooks
Housekeeping

Mrs Diane Brooks born and bred in Suffolk. Mrs Brooks left school and has worked at a cosmetic factory; a picture framing company which opened in her village; she thoroughly enjoyed the job and even had a stand at the Ideal Home Exhibition selling pictures. The company moved and Mrs Brooks' role changed as she looked after two families who each had three children. She left this to have her own two children. For several years Mrs Brooks looked after six elderly people before joining the school in 2008 where she helps in the kitchen (and has become famous for creating some wonderful desserts!), does the laundry for the boarding students and serves lunches.



Miss Bethany Fisher
Housekeeping

Miss Bethany Fisher is CAEA's Housekeeper. Miss Fisher went to school at Thomas Gainsborough and then attended Colchester Institute, where she studied hair dressing and left as a junior hair stylist. Miss Fisher enjoys road trips, visiting new places and photography, especially of cars and scenery.



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