



THE DOWNLEY SCHOOL

"Learning, Growing and Succeeding Together"



Appointment of Teaching Assistant Information for Candidates

The Downley School

Faulkner Way

Downley

High Wycombe

Buckinghamshire

HP13 5AL

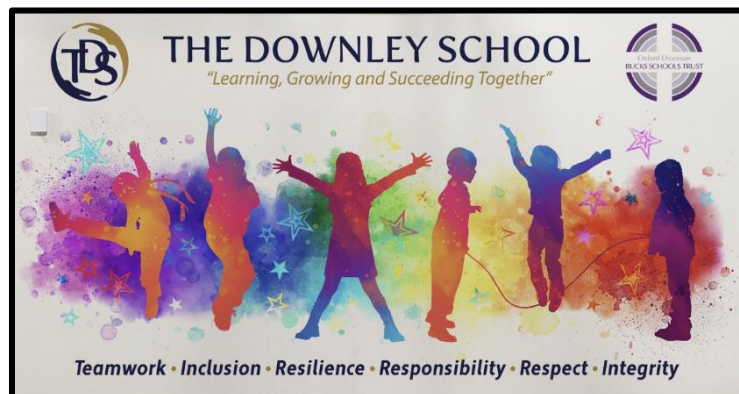
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Headteacher: Ms Leanne Dandridge

Chair of Governors: Mrs Sally Perkins





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This document provides candidates with information about the appointment of a class teacher at The Downley School.

Please refer to the advert for specific details regarding the appointment for this post.

ODBST is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment. Post holders are subject to appropriate vetting procedures and a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced check.

ODBST is an Equal Opportunities Employer.



Welcome from the Chair of Governors and Chief Executive of ODBST

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in joining the team at The Downley School. This recruitment pack aims to give you a flavour of the school and our ethos and values, as well as further details about the role.

The Oxford Diocesan Bucks School Trust (ODBST) and the Governors of this school seek a dynamic and inspirational team member to build on the successes achieved by the current leadership team during a programme of school improvement. We are looking for someone with high aspirations, a child-centred approach and a drive to implement the vision for the school through exemplary practice.

Our children are lively and inquisitive with a strong sense of personal responsibility linked to our values and ethos. They take pride in the school and its achievements. Supporting them are a dedicated and developing staff team who have real aspirations for the children they teach and for their own professional development.

The ODBST and Governors have high expectations of the class teachers and will work hard to support them in providing a safe, caring and highly effective learning environment for all children.

You are welcome to visit the school prior to making your application and we will be pleased to arrange a tour and a chat with a member of staff - please contact the school office on 01494527033 or email sbm@dnl.odbst.org

Sulina Piesse
Chief Executive Officer
ODBST

Sally Perkins
Chair of Governors
The Downley School



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A message from the Headteacher

The first time that I came to The Downley School, I could tell that it was a magical place to be. I knew that I wanted to work here because the sense of community was so strong. The children were so enthusiastic and questioned the world around them. They welcomed me warmly and talked excitedly about their learning.

I wasn't wrong, and since joining the team in April 2023 I have seen the strength of community and relationships here. The Downley School is a two-form entry primary school with a big heart. Our children come from truly diverse backgrounds and speak many different languages. It is a happy and lively school where both children and adults work together as a strong, nurturing team.

The staff are amazing and all work incredibly hard to give children the best opportunities available. The Downley School is developing into an inspiring school; developing happy, well-rounded children with a love for learning, underpinned by our values: Teamwork, Inclusion, Resilience, Respect, Responsibility and Integrity.

Our school joined ODBST in September 2023. Being one of 14 schools offers all staff the unique opportunity to be part of a community of committed teachers and leaders who regularly share best practice and support each other. The Trust has allowed us to grow as a school but still maintain our distinct and unique identity. Our Local Governing Board (LGB) ensures that The Downley School makes decisions that are best for the school and its community. Although we are part of a Christian Trust we remain a non-faith school.





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This is an exciting opportunity for an inspirational, highly motivated, ambitious and dynamic person to join our team. We are very excited about the future and ready to embrace new challenges as we embark on the next stage of our school improvement journey. We are looking for a confident team member with excellent communication skills and a strong motivation to continue to inspire our children and engage positively with members of our school community.

We hope this pack supports you in finding out more about our school. The pack includes background information about the school and our Trust, ODBST. It also includes information about the application process and the job description.

Please do come to visit and get a feel for the school in person.

Yours sincerely,

Ms Leanne Dandridge

Headteacher





About Us

The Downley School is a two-form entry primary school. The community is culturally and ethnically diverse and we pride ourselves on being an inclusive school. Our age range is from 4 to 11 years old and we have capacity for 420 children. There are two classes in each year group with a maximum of 30 pupils in each class. Our children come from a wide range of backgrounds and approximately 24% of pupils speak English as an additional language. This figure is not representative of the culturally rich and diverse community we serve, where children are encouraged to embrace and celebrate their backgrounds.

- 11% of children are entitled to Free School Meals
- 14% of children are eligible for the Pupil Premium grant.
- 13% of pupils are on the SEND register, and 2% of pupils have an Education Care Plan





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Learning, Growing and Succeeding Together

We believe in providing a safe and happy **learning** environment where children and adults are valued, **nurtured** and empowered to **succeed**.

We believe **learning** is the foundation on which **our** children's futures are built and equips them for a **successful** life ahead.

We aim for children to develop and **grow** through a diverse and culturally rich curriculum.

We are committed to providing an excellent education through helping children to **succeed**, by **growing** enquiring minds, instilling the motivation to **learn** and the ability to work both independently and **together**.

For more information please visit the school website www.thedownleyschool.co.uk





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Our Facilities

We are very lucky at TDS to have a wonderful outdoor setting with very spacious grounds and a large diversity of tree species. EYFS have their own outdoor spaces, in addition to our playground and vast field. Our wooded Forest School area, pond and yurt add to our curriculum offering to make learning special for our children. We have an onsite Breakfast and Afterschool Club.

As we have recently joined the ODBST we will soon be seeing exciting improvements to our site, including a new playing area, developments to our Forest School area and outside spaces to further enhance the outside learning environments. Extensive redecoration projects are planned to complement our already exciting learning environment and showcase our curriculum.





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Working with partners

We aim to encourage and develop relationships with our local community so that there is a close liaison between the community and the children in our school. The school is an integral and important part of Downley and the surrounding area.

With TDS Governing Body

At TDS we have an Academy Improvement Board. This currently consists of 4 governors. We are looking to appoint more governors.

With parents and families

We know that the most successful education takes place when parents/carers, staff and governors all work together. Parents and carers are involved with the whole school community in a variety of ways:

- Parent Teacher Association
- Helping with visits & in class
- Supporting with fund raising events
- Attending curriculum evenings

The school's PTA, is a thriving group of parents that organises numerous events throughout the year. It provides an important link between parents, the school and the local community, and raises significant funds to support the school.



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The PTA are currently supporting the school to furnish a parent room, purchase new reading books to support our phonics programme (Little Wandle) and sport equipment required for us to be able to participate in local netball and football leagues.



With secondary schools

The move to secondary school is an important step for pupils and parents. We work in partnership with our local secondary schools and Bucks Council to ensure our children and their families are well-informed about the transfer process. The children participate in visits to local schools

With Chiltern Hills Montessori

We work closely with Chiltern Hills Montessori who rent space from our additional building, TDS+. The Reception team and the Montessori work together to ensure that the Montessori curriculum supports our curriculum and they participate in Forest School learning activities together.

With Chiltern Wood School

We have started working closer with Chiltern Wood, a specialist school that adjoins our site. Children have read to children, sung songs to them and invited them to watch their performances.





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I can definitely see an overall improvement in the school and my children's learning. I am ever so pleased as I know my children are in good hands.

In the words of our parents....

My child looks forward to going to school everyday, which is the main thing we are happy about!

The happiness and productivity of both the children and the teachers has been very positive and noticeable since Ofsted and particularly since the arrival of Ms W who has already made a massive positive difference. We have had a lot of support from Mr X/Miss Y and Miss Z has been very appreciated during my child's struggles with anxiety: they have all gone above and beyond. TDS is a great school now!!

... I just wanted to say thank you to you and all the staff at The Downley School for guiding 'our son' so well through these important years. Our son has thoroughly enjoyed his time at Downley...I don't think that you and your staff will ever fully understand the difference that you have made and continue to make. The encouragement, support and care that you give to our children to help them feel safe and secure, to challenge them to be the best they can be, and to enable them to build friendships, a love of learning and the belief that they can face whatever is ahead, is invaluable. So, thank you. Thank you for turning our school around, for enabling our children to feel part of a community, and for forming strong foundations on which they can build.

Parent

We have seen the school go from strength to strength and the quality of the teaching has excelled. Our children have come on leaps and bounds which we are so pleased about. TDS community has gone from strength to strength, from children - Teachers - Parents, it feels like one team and everyone seems supported. The communication is clear and consistent. Finally, it really does feel like the lovely village school we have been wanting for so long. We are confident in the leadership and feel as though a new and positive chapter at TDS really has begun.



About the Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST)

ODBST is a Diocesan Multi Academy Trust (MAT) established by the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education (ODBE) in September 2017 to provide an organisation for schools seeking to become an academy within a MAT within the Buckingham episcopal area (which covers Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes). It is a mixed MAT; any school is able to apply to join:

- ❑ voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, academy or community;
- ❑ primary or secondary;
- ❑ mainstream or special;
- ❑ self-converter and sponsored;
- ❑ free Schools

ODBST supports its unique schools to excel. The vision is for our schools to be afforded as much autonomy as possible, with maximum devolved powers from the Board of Trustees. Each academy is supported to strive for excellence, with a dedicated core team in partnership with the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education.

Our Vision and Values

"Empowering our unique schools to excel"



We aspire for every pupil and adult to 'experience life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). Each of our schools has a unique character of its own and we will work to ensure that this vision embraces all our pupils and adults, regardless of background and belief.

We empower our schools to deliver a broad, enriched and exciting curriculum, coupled with a shared zest for life and learning.

We have identified 4 core values: Inclusivity, Community, Service, Empowerment that resonate with what we believe the ODBST Learner and Leader should follow. They reflect the values that are central to our schools and the diocese. Through our values, we aim for excellence for everyone in our Trust. Building on the uniqueness of our pupils, families and school communities, we strive to enable everyone to develop and thrive intellectually, socially, culturally and spiritually.



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At ODBST we work in unison with all our families. Together we learn, love, achieve and flourish. Within our family of schools, each individual is encouraged to discover and grow talents to their full potential.

At ODBST this means that everyone is accepted and supported, regardless of faith or culture. We will strive for everyone to be given every opportunity to reach their potential. We believe everyone is unique and everyone matters.

Many pupils and staff in our schools will come from diverse home backgrounds and our pupils will be at different stages of their own academic and spiritual journey during their time in school. All pupils will receive support, guidance and challenge so that they are motivated, ambitious and courageous individuals who seek to be the best they can be. We embody the experience of an inclusive community, where we share our gifts, where the emphasis is on what we can contribute, rather than on what we might receive and where we give to each according to need.

"Our differences are our strength as a species and as a world community" Nelson Mandela their talents to their fullest potential. We believe by encouraging, inspiring and building each other up we secure the best outcomes for every member of our community.

We believe quality relationships and partnerships are a central element of interdependence: all are needed and valued and each person is important. We will work together to support each other so that everyone can make a contribution and their talents to their fullest potential. We encourage everyone to have a sense of pride in their community and the wider world.

*"The minute we become an integrated whole,
we look through the same eyes and
we see a whole different world together"*
Azizah Al-Hibri





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service



We encourage everyone to look after themselves and others around them. We encourage children in our schools to seek the common good in all that they do through acts of kindness. ODBST believes that our gifts and talents are to be used in ways that will improve the lives of themselves and others. We help children to develop skills that will allow them to participate fully and contribute positively to the social and cultural life of modern Britain, maximising opportunities for our children to serve their school and local community. We create a culture where serving one another and the wider community is celebrated and seen as an important mark of character development. We regularly invite visitors to our schools who are making a difference to society through their service and courageous advocacy, to inform and inspire us and to present positive role models with ethical and moral integrity for us to follow.

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others" Mahatma Gandhi

At ODBST we will encourage everyone to trust in their own capabilities and to recognise their potential. We want to challenge ourselves to be the best we can be – even when this becomes hard. We will do this by leading by example, supporting and guiding one another, celebrating accomplishments, providing opportunities for all, developing confidence, resilience and perseverance in both our children and our adults. We will encourage curiosity with a mindset of continuous improvement and personal growth. We want our pupils to be able to say, 'I am special because..... and I am learning to excel at.....'

"There is no gate, no lock, no bolt that you can set upon the freedom of my mind" Virginia Woolf





Our ODBST values in action



Our inclusivity value will be seen in action when our differences become our strength and achievement.

Our community value will be seen in action when pupils and adults are learning, loving, achieving and flourishing together.

Our service value will be seen in action when pupils are seeking the common good in all that they do.

Our empowerment value will be seen in action when our pupils are

able to say, 'I am special because..... and I am learning to excel

at.....'

ODBST Shared Services

Shared services are funded through a service charge from each school's General Annual Grant (GAG) to provide the ongoing support for ODBST schools to run effectively. Being part of the ODBST means schools have access to a dedicated team of professionals providing expertise in all of the following areas:

- School Improvement
- Governance
- Finance & Operations
- Human Resources
- Data Protection
- Health and Safety
- Admissions
- Capital Projects



Why join the ODBST Team?

As an employee of the Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust you will work with inspirational colleagues who are focused on delivering a broad, enriched and exciting curriculum, coupled with a shared zest for life and learning. We are an inclusive employer that embraces diversity and encourages everyone to discover and grow their talents to be the best they can be.

Training Opportunities

To support your development, we offer a highly regarded Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme which includes training and network meetings to support governors, leaders, teachers and support staff across our Trust. We hold an annual ODBST conference for senior leaders and work with our sister Trust, the ODST, for an annual conference with them also. In addition, as a member of staff you will have access to online training that covers areas such as Health and Safety and Data Protection.

Our CPD programme is constantly evolving based on feedback received, with new events being added all the time.

Career Development

We have established an "Aspirant Leaders" programme for those aiming to be our school leaders of tomorrow. The programme is facilitated by experienced leaders and provides a forum to explore the types of topics and scenarios that senior leaders face on a daily basis.

As a growing Multi-Academy Trust, we have an increasing number of opportunities for staff to grow and experience different school settings as they progress their career, whilst remaining within the ODBST family.



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Health and Well-being

The health and well-being of our staff is of paramount importance to us, and we are committed to a healthy work life balance for our employees. To demonstrate our commitment, we are proud to have signed up to the Department for Education's Staff Wellbeing Charter and established a well-being ambassador group with the primary aim of enhancing staff well-being across the trust. We have open channels of communication to ensure our employees know where to turn for support. We encourage well-being suggestions from our staff and ensure all ideas are listened to and considered.

We have a monthly well-being newsletter for staff and an Employee Assistance Programme in place which offers staff a 24-hour confidential telephone line with support on a range of different topics, including health, bereavement and finances. In addition, we provide access to a well-being app and web portal where employees can access a range of resources, such as a mood tracker, mini health checks and healthy eating advice.

Pension Scheme

As an ODBST employee, support staff have access to the Local Government Pension Scheme and teaching staff have access to the Teachers' Pension Scheme. You don't pay tax or national insurance on your contributions and the ODBST adds a generous employer contribution. All staff are entitled to opt-out of the pension scheme should they wish to do so.





Teaching Assistant Description and Person Specification

The post-holder will be expected to support whole class learning, groups of children or individual children having specific or particular needs, as directed. The post-holder will share in the care and wellbeing of pupils throughout the school. Teaching Assistants will be fully informed about the needs of groups and individuals' they are supporting and where working with named children the outcomes of their Educational Healthcare Plan and those targets set by external professionals.

Teaching Assistants will work under the direction of class teachers and the SENDCO to support and deliver planned learning interventions.

Responsibilities and role

Teaching and learning:

- Plan, provide and adapt support for children inside and outside the classroom in order to enhance their learning, accelerate their progress and enable them to fully participate in activities
- Provide timely and incisive feedback on pupil progress and the impact of interventions
- Support the emotional, social, behavioural and pastoral needs of pupils under the direction and guidance of teachers and leaders, assisting with any specific behaviour management strategies
- Assist teachers with summative and formative assessment and setting next step targets
- To access and prepare resources that meet the learning needs for groups and individuals
- To assist with general classroom management and the organisation of resources and equipment
- Assist in the implementation of Individual Provision Maps and EHC plans for individuals or groups of children and assess and monitor their progress
- Support the school's curriculum through attendance at educational visits
- Outdoor learning & play support



Working Collaboratively:

- Where appropriate, foster links between home and school
 - Where appropriate, and under the direction of class teachers and the SENDCO, communicate and meet with parents
 - Work with external professionals, such as speech therapists and occupational therapists, as necessary
 - Attend and contribute to annual reviews, as appropriate, and contribute to the writing of reports on pupil progress for SEN children
 - To participate in relevant professional development and attend any training courses wherever possible to benefit the education and wellbeing of the children
 - Attend staff and team meetings and training days, as required, to develop experience and broaden awareness, expertise and skills
 - Participate in the school's procedures for performance management

Administrative assistance:

- Support the teacher in record keeping and other tasks in order to advance teaching and learning
- Carry out administrative and clerical tasks e.g. photocopying, inputting pupil data and classroom display to assist in the smooth running of the class
- Undertake other duties from time to time as the class teacher requires

Standards and quality assurance:

- Comply with the school's rigorous approach to safeguarding
- Support the vision and ethos of the school
- Act as a role model for the school's values
- To be aware of and follow the school's policies and procedures
- To maintain confidentiality about home-school/pupil-teacher/school work matter
- Be proactive in matters relating to health and safety
- Set a good example in terms of dress, punctuality and attendance
- Undertake any other professional duties that may be reasonably assigned by the Headteacher



Break and lunchtime Duties

There will be a rota of duties for staff working inside or outside the school during breaks. The rota will allow for movement within roles. Teaching Assistants be asked to:

Be on the playground at break time on a rota basis:

- Supervise children during break or lunch either inside or outside. This involves supervision of children before, during and after they have eaten their lunches as per the rota of responsibilities
- Ensure the safety of children at all time
- Be on duty on the playground to support positive play, effective playground behaviour and to ensure the smooth running of break sessions

Safeguarding:

To be responsible, under the direction of the Headteacher or other DSL's, for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of all children within the establishment and to ensure that safeguarding is a priority by following procedures effectively and immediately. Vigilance and sensitivity is essential.

Health and Safety:

- To have an overview of children with identified medical need
- To support and care for children who are injured or sick
- Assist in keeping accurate medical records when necessary
- Supervise and assist children with dressing and undressing, in line with school policy, when necessary
- To attend to any personal care needs as required
- Attend up to date and relevant first aid training



The law requires you to:

- take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by what they do at work
- co-operate with their employers on health and safety matters
- do their work in accordance with training and instructions
- inform the employer of any work situation representing a serious and immediate danger, so that remedial action can be taken

Health and safety training relevant for your role will be provided, in the first instance, this is via SMARTLOG. You are required to conduct this in a timely manner.

NOTE:

The current main duties and responsibilities of this post are outlined in this job description. The list is not meant to be exhaustive. The need for flexibility, shared accountability and team working is required. The post-holder is expected to carry out any other related duties that are within the employee's skills and abilities, commensurate with the post's banding and whenever reasonably instructed.

The school expects all staff to be flexible. This means that a play team member can be expected to carry out duties that are not specified in this job description but that are within the scope of responsibilities of the post.

This job description will be reviewed after one year and any review will include discussion with the post-holder.



PERSON SPECIFICATION – Teaching Assistant

| | Essential Criteria | Desirable Criteria |
|--|---|--|
| Qualifications, Training and Experience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of 5 GCSEs or equivalent including English and Maths (Grade C/4 or above) Experience of working with or caring for children of relevant age | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of working in a classroom environment Experience of teaching small groups Experience of supporting pupils with SEND |
| Professional Knowledge and Understanding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of and adherence to the concept of confidentiality and safeguarding Ability to supervise and assist pupils | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of classroom roles and responsibilities |
| Skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to make effective use of ICT Secure literacy and numeracy skills | |
| Communication and Team Working | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment to working collaboratively (teamwork), both within LSA Teams and wider school staff, to ensure students' needs are met Ability to build positive working relationships with students, parents, teachers and professionals. Good communication skills | |
| Management and Organisation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational skills | |
| Professional Qualities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment to improvement and maintaining high standards High level of professionalism and confidentiality | |
| Personal Qualities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caring personality with ability to be firm and set clear boundaries when needed | |



Selection Process

Guidance for Applicants

These notes are intended to help you make the best application possible.

1. Please read the application pack carefully. This pack contains the class teacher job description and criteria we are looking for, alongside the expected duties.
2. Complete the application form on My New Term. You must include your complete work history in your application, including any times where you were not working and the reasons for this.
3. Applicants are required to complete a supporting statement. Please make sure you address the criteria outlined in this pack when writing your personal supporting statement.
4. If you are able to do so please visit our school before applying. Please contact the school office on 01494 527033 to organise a visit
5. Should you have any queries about the application process please contact Leah Ovens
6. Completed applications must be uploaded to My New Term

The information you provide will help us understand how you meet the requirements of the role and so helps us to short-list candidates for interview. Our shortlisting decisions are based solely on the information you supply in your application so that we can ensure fairness.

Safeguarding

The Downley School provides a safe and secure environment for pupils to learn. The school, its Governors and the Trust are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and safety of children and young people and operates a strict Safeguarding Policy, with procedures being rigorously and consistently applied. The Assistant Headteacher will be required to demonstrate a commitment to promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people.



DBS Checks

In line with our safeguarding and child protection policy, all employees and volunteers working in specific roles at ODBST will be subject to satisfactory clearance being obtained from the Disclosure and Barring Service. The check will be undertaken as part of the appointment process with the successful candidate.

Equal Opportunities

ODBST is a fair employer promoting equal opportunities, which do not disadvantage any person on the grounds of a protected characteristic. We are committed to providing clear and transparent guidelines and complying with our legal obligations under the Equality Act (2010).

We will use the information provided by you in the Equality and Diversity section of your application form to monitor our equal opportunities policy and practices. This part of the form will be separated from the main application form and will not be taken into account in the selection process.

Background Checks

Applicants are asked to provide the name and contact details of two referees on their application form. References will normally be taken up for short-listed candidates prior to interview. If you do not wish us to contact your current employer before interview, please indicate this clearly on your form. Any offer of employment is subject to receipt of at least two satisfactory references.

The Trust will carry out online searches on short listed candidates. Searches carried out will be done so in accordance with current data protection legislation on the basis of public task for the purposes of safeguarding. Information which is found to suggest the person is unqualified for the role, poses a safeguarding risk or risks damaging the reputation of the Trust will be investigated through discussion with the applicant and will form part of the overall information on which to base the hiring decision.



We are required to check that anyone taking up employment with us has the legal right to work in the UK. Short-listed applicants will normally be asked to provide documentary evidence to support their entitlement to work in the UK prior to any offer of employment being made.

This post is covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions) Order 1975 because it is a post which involves working directly with children or young people and the applicant is required to declare any criminal convictions (or cautions or bind-overs) including those which are "spent". The amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013, 2020) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected' and are not subject to disclosure to employers, and cannot be taken into account. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found on the Disclosure and Barring Service website.

In addition, the successful candidate will be asked to complete a range of safer recruitment checks including a health assessment; proof of qualifications and professional memberships; identity and address checks and if the role requires, a driving check.

Data Protection

The information you provide as part of your application will be used in the recruitment process. We will hold your data securely with access restricted to those involved in dealing with your application and in the recruitment process. Once this process is completed the data relating to unsuccessful applicants will be destroyed after six months. If you are the successful candidate, your application form will be retained and form the basis of your personnel record.

Applications

Applications should be made using our online application process via My New Term

Applications that come through alternative channels or in alternative formats will not be considered.

Interview and Selection Day

Please refer to the advert for recruitment dates relating to this vacancy.



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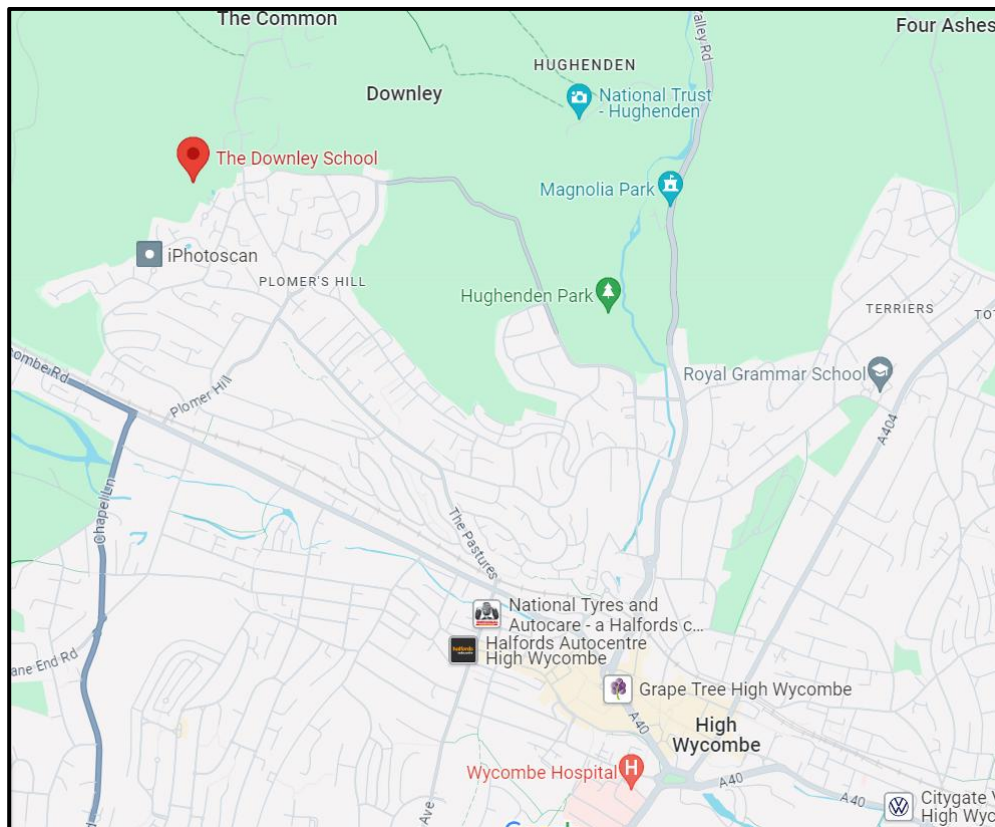
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Shortlisted candidates will be advised of the range of tasks and activities that will make up the selection process. You will be asked when invited to interview to confirm your availability to attend the interview day.

The Downley School

Faulkner Way
High Wycombe
HP13 5AL
Telephone: 01494527033
Email: Office@dnl.odbst.org



***Thank you for your interest in The Downley School
and the Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust***