



Assistant Headteacher (Full or part-time) Information for Applicants





Thank you for your interest in the assistant headteacher role at Denefield. The successful candidate will join the school at extremely exciting time in Denefield's development. Please read the following information in conjunction with the more generic 'Working at Denefield' document.

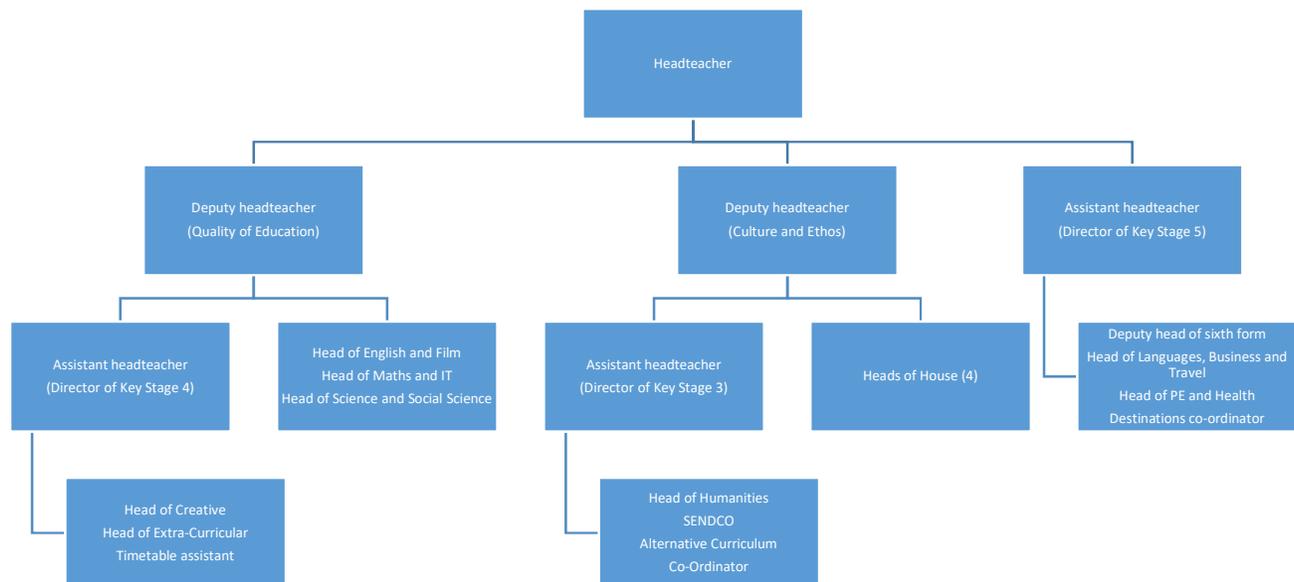
In so many ways, Denefield is exceptionally strong and successful. The school has an excellent reputation in the local community and we are always oversubscribed. The school has developed significantly since its successful Ofsted inspection in November 2023. All our major stakeholders – students, staff and parents and carers – rate the school very highly. The school is calm and welcoming, and student behaviour overall is excellent. Our staff are caring and committed – both to students and to their own professional practice. Standards of teaching and learning overall are high and this is reflected in outcomes at GCSE and A-Level. We are a standalone academy with a support and challenge agreement with the River Learning Trust (RLT), an Oxford based multi-academy trust. Each of RLT's three annual peer reviews of Denefield have emphasised the strong vision, leadership, culture and teaching of the school. Our student roll is growing, and this has helped ensure that financially Denefield is very strong and secure. Our Sixth Form is emerging as a clear beacon of excellence and recruits students from a number of schools across West Berkshire and Reading.

At the same time, like all the best schools, Denefield aims to be better still. We are a reflective school and we know what our areas for development are. We are determined that attendance of all groups of students will improve and have a clear plan in place for this. We know that some of our students are less engaged in lessons, and we have a comprehensive and sustainable strategy to rectify this. We realise that some of our students lack the key vocabulary they need to succeed and that others fall behind with their homework – which impacts their understanding and their outcomes. We have the clear beginnings of a programme in place to support with that. Ultimately, we know that the outcomes for some students, particularly disadvantaged students but also some groups of SEND students, are not as strong as they could be and are holding those students back. We are aware and we are determined. As part of this, we are moving from a vertical to a horizontal pastoral system in September 2026. Our reasoning is clear: we want more and better levers to impact on year group culture and to support with students' attendance, behaviour, welfare and progress.

Added to this is the changing national picture. The new Ofsted framework undoubtedly puts additional onus on schools and school leaders. We welcome the focus on the most vulnerable groups including SEND students, those who are disadvantaged, those who are or were looked after and those with social workers. At the same time, we accept the responsibilities that the new Ofsted framework creates for schools. In addition, the government's White Paper and associated announcements lay down new challenges and opportunities for schools like ours. How should we prepare for the increasing SEND needs that mainstream secondary schools are expected to manage? How do we narrow the attainment gap between disadvantaged students and their peers – or even better, eliminate that gap? What should our response be to the proposed changes to the Key Stage 4 qualifications framework? How do we embed the new enrichment entitlement? And given that Denefield has recently researched multi-academy trusts and decided to remain standalone, how should we react to the government's expectation that all schools become part of larger trusts?

So the successful applicant will join Denefield at an extremely exciting time. They will join an exceptionally positive and able Leadership Team. Alongside the Headteacher there are two Deputy Headteachers (Quality of Education, and Culture and Ethos) and three Assistant Headteachers (one for

each Key Stage but also with other responsibilities). One of the Assistant Headteachers works 0.8FTE and one 0.9FTE. We share a common vision of excellence for all, regardless of background or academic ability. Levels of trust and challenge within the team are high and this is partly a result of conscious development by all team members, grounded in the work of Patrick Lencioni. The responsibilities of the team, shown below, will undoubtedly change in September. This is a result of this new Assistant Headteacher appointment and because of the move to a horizontal pastoral system. Our Heads of Faculty, Heads of Year and the Senior Leadership Team will join together at a residential Leadership Conference in September, and we hope that our new Assistant Headteacher will join us there.



We are, of course, looking for an exceptional applicant. This is an additional post, a result of the steady expansion of Denefield’s student roll in recent years. We are looking for a very strong classroom practitioner with extensive middle or senior leadership experience. We want someone with a real understanding and proven success with the most vulnerable students. And we are looking for someone with interest and experience of organisational change. But the successful candidate’s values and attributes are just as important. We are looking for someone who is confident and also humble. A candidate who will put forward strong ideas, based on evidence, as well as listening carefully to others and adjusting their opinions. An applicant who is tough and resilient – because educational leadership demands this – but is also kind, caring and reflective. A candidate with exceptional organisational skills and who is prepared to drive through organisational change, listening to others and leading them on the journey. Ultimately, someone who cares passionately about the progress and outcomes of all young people, regardless of background or ability.

In return we offer the opportunity to make a real difference and to achieve personal and professional fulfilment. We offer a flexible and comprehensive package of support and training including through national leadership qualifications and we encourage and support further career progression. Many Denefield staff benefit from flexible working and we offer this where possible and appropriate. We benefit from first-class facilities for staff as well as students while all staff benefit from a comprehensive employee assistance programme.



If this sounds like you, then we would love to hear from you. Please arrange to visit the school by emailing DenefieldHR@Denefield.org.uk, or, if that's not possible, please give us a call. And if you think this is the right post for you, don't hesitate to apply.

Application deadlines

Applications close	Monday 13 April, 9.00am
Shortlisting	Wednesday 15 April
Interviews	Monday 20 and Tuesday 21 April