



Ridgeway
Education
Trust



Stephen Freeman Primary School

Headteacher vacancy pack

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the role of Headteacher at Stephen Freeman Primary School, a school within Ridgeway Education Trust (RET). We are looking for an exceptional school leader to join us from January or April 2027, or as soon as possible after this, to lead a talented and committed team of staff, engaged and enthusiastic children and supportive parents and governors, as we continue to grow from strength-to-strength.

Where everybody, every moment and every idea counts.

Stephen Freeman Primary School is a 2-form entry school on the edge of Great Western Park in Didcot. The school is vibrant, diverse and happy. Staff show a deep commitment to providing the highest quality education for all pupils, regardless of their starting points.

Stephen Freeman joined Ridgeway Education Trust (RET) in November 2024. The trust provides a range of support including:

- Ongoing leadership development, including trust headteacher networks and leadership coaching for all of our heads;
- Support for school improvement from the Director of Primary Education;
- Central team support for finance, premises, HR, IT and catering;
- Trust support for safeguarding, reading for pleasure and curriculum development, including networks for English, Maths, Early Years and SEND.

We are proud of our school and the children, staff, families and governors who make it so special. Following the departure of our previous headteacher after a decade of committed leadership, we are able to offer an exciting opportunity for a leader to join us to guide us through the next phase of our ongoing development, building on the strong foundations that are already firmly in place.

If you would like to find out more about this position or arrange to see Stephen Freeman for yourself, please contact [Paul Shaughnessy](#), RET Director of Primary Education, for an initial discussion.

We very much hope that, after reading this pack, talking to us and seeing our school in action, you will choose to apply for this exciting and rewarding role.



Georgina Littler

Ridgeway Education Trust, CEO



Mark Bodeker

Chair of Governors

Stephen Freeman Primary School

The headteacher at Stephen Freeman is supported by a talented and experienced Senior Leadership Team, including a Deputy Headteacher and two Assistant Headteachers, one of which is also SENCo. An experienced, committed Local Governing Body (LGB), effectively supported by a RET governance professional, offers a healthy balance of support and challenge and, within the wider trust structure, works with the headteacher and senior team in retaining oversight and accountability for standards, safeguarding, SEND and stakeholder engagement – the 4 Ss delegated to Local Governing Bodies by our Trust Board.

The Stephen Freeman curriculum is hands-on, child-centred and rooted in the locality. Carefully sequenced subject-specific knowledge and skills are drawn together through clear cross-curricular links, helping children connect their understanding across disciplines.

While the curriculum is well-developed, it remains ever-evolving in order to most fully meet the needs of all children. All teachers and support staff are committed to their professional learning and engage fully with the CPD offer from both the school and the trust.

The curriculum is enriched and enhanced through a range of extra-curricular events, visits and visitors to extend children's experiences and interests. These include residential, author visits, day trips and local visits, as well as trust events including a music concert and sporting competitions. There are a range of wider opportunities in music and sport.

Our well-maintained school is situated in spacious grounds which include a Forest School, large field, fitness trails and attractive Early Years outside spaces. In the main school building, two school-led Enhanced Provisions ensure that pupils with additional needs can receive the best possible support. Our nursery, attended by pupils from the term after they turn 3-years-old, ensures that children get off to the best possible start.

More information about the work of the school is available on the school website: <https://www.stephen-freeman.school/>

Number of pupils on roll	Number of teaching staff	%age pupils entitled to Pupil Premium	%age pupils with SEND	%age of pupils who speak English as an additional language
431 incl nursery	16	27%	21%	15%

Our Trust

The values of ambition, integrity and leading for legacy are at the heart of Ridgeway Education Trust. They provide the compass that guides our decision making and ensure that children and young people are at the centre of our work.

Our mission is to create excellence through high quality education for three-to nineteen-year-olds with powerful collaboration at its heart. We believe that school improvement is most successful when underpinned by collaboration at all levels so that best practice is shared. High levels of professional trust sustain a healthy balance of support and challenge which in turn drive a culture of creativity and innovation. We value our people and take seriously our responsibility to support their wellbeing.

To find out more about us please refer to our [website](#) and our [RET Charter](#).

Of our six primary schools, Stephen Freeman joined us most recently, in November 2024. We are now a Trust of eight schools educating over 4000 children and young people.

A mixture of Church of England and community schools, two secondaries and six primaries, we embrace our diversity whilst recognising the strength of our close geographical proximity.

Primary schools within the Trust benefit from:

- Positive, collaborative relationships between heads and schools, including termly Primary Headteacher meetings. CPD networks for Maths, English, inclusion, safeguarding, Early Years and Senior Leaders.
- Trust leaders in Maths, Music, safeguarding and Reading for Pleasure.
- School improvement support.
- Outward-facing opportunities to visit and learn from other schools and trusts.
- A common Management Information System, Arbor, facilitating information- and data-sharing and analysis. Access to an annual capital budget with premises project management from the Chief Operating Officer and her team.
- Central team support for finance, HR, IT and catering services.
- Support, including clerking, from our in-house Governance team.
- Access to capital funding for larger scale premises work, delegated to our trust through the DfE School Conditions Allocation grant.

Our schools:

- All Saints CE Primary, Didcot
- Carterton Primary School
- Didcot Girls' School
- Hagbourne CE Primary School
- Long Wittenham CE Primary School
- St. Birinus School
- Stephen Freeman Primary School
- Sutton Courtenay CE Primary School



Who are we looking for?



We are looking for a headteacher who will build on our current strengths and drive our ongoing development by:

- Aspiring for the very best for every pupil and member of staff
- Embodying and further embedding our vision, values and ethos
- Leading our school with ambition, enthusiasm, kindness and understanding
- Continuing to develop the excellent, inclusive provision in place for every pupil
- Forming and maintaining strong relationships with our parents and carers and the wider school community
- Drawing on support provided through Ridgeway Education Trust to broaden opportunities for staff and pupils

In return we can offer you:

- Engaged and enthusiastic pupils
- A strong, supportive, talented and committed team of staff
- A strategically-focused and effective Local Governing Body
- Professional collaboration with other leaders across the Ridgeway Education Trust
- A comprehensive offer of support for ongoing school improvement
- A dedicated leadership coach
- High quality central services provided by our trust teams, including finance, premises, HR and IT, to allow you to maximise your focus on teaching and learning



Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	• DfE Qualified Teacher Status (QTS); • Evidence of recent and relevant professional experience that prepares you for this post	• National Professional Qualification for Headteachers (NPQH) or working towards this
Knowledge and Experience	• Substantial and proven successful primary teaching experience; • Experience of demonstrating impact on whole-school improvement work; • Detailed understanding of primary education, including current issues and challenges facing the sector; • A broad understanding of the Ofsted and other accountability frameworks; • Up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding, and experience of leading safeguarding practice within a school; • Knowledge of statutory frameworks and current good practice around curriculum, assessment, teaching and learning; • Experience of educating children with complex SEND in a mainstream classroom; • Experience of teaching in more than one Key Stage; • Experience of monitoring and evaluating performance and practice, and using this to develop and improve staff; • High expectations of pupil behaviour and the ability to demonstrate the effective use of behaviour management strategies; • An understanding of school finances and the principles of budget setting; • Experience of leading and managing change.	• Leadership experience in more than one school • Experience of leading in more than one Key Stage
Skills	• Ability to lead, manage, support and inspire colleagues, including through periods of change; • Clear, effective and confident communication skills with all stakeholders, including children, families and governors; • The ability to build effective and respectful working relationships with people from a diverse range of backgrounds; • Ability to hold people to account and to challenge under-performance; • Excellent analytical, problem-solving, negotiating and decision-making skills; • The ability to confidently analyse, understand and use data linked to teaching and learning and pupil outcomes; • The ability to create, implement and monitor a strategic school improvement plan based on effective self-evaluation, which prioritises and addresses development points at an appropriate pace.	
Personal qualities	• An inspiring communicator, committed to working collaboratively with all stakeholders; • Able to lead by example, seeking and acting on feedback to develop the highest quality provision for all pupils; • Resilient and able to bring determination to addressing school improvement priorities; • Aspirational and ambitious for the whole school community –themselves, staff, children and families.	

The application process

The closing date for applications is 12pm on Tuesday 22nd September.

Interviews for shortlisted candidates will take place on Monday 28th September.

Stephen Freeman Primary School, as a school within Ridgeway Education Trust, is committed to safeguarding children and young people. All post holders in regulated activity are subject to appropriate vetting procedures and a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Online checks will be carried out to comply with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

All schools in Ridgeway Education Trust are committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. The Trust expects all staff to share this commitment.

In line with GDPR legislation, the information you have provided will be stored on our secure database and will only be used to process your application. It will not be passed to any other organisation.





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