



THE DOWNS SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM



Information for candidates

www.thedownsschool.org





Welcome to The Downs School

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in joining The Downs School and Summit Education Trust. This pack aims to provide you with information about The Downs School, the opportunity and the recruitment process. Set in the heart of the West Berkshire Downs, The Downs School is a special place where staff are totally committed to excellence and achievement at all levels. We know that there is always more to do to ensure that every child's educational experience is rich, character-building and of the highest possible standard. We are striving to move beyond our highest achievements through our philosophy of "Learning together, learning for life".

As a founding school within Summit Education Trust, we are proud to be part of an ambitious and collaborative family of schools, firmly rooted in our local communities. The Trust brings together schools that share expertise, support one another and work together to create the very best opportunities for students and staff alike, while still valuing the individuality and character of each school. When our teachers are asked what they like most about their roles, the answer is nearly always the same: the students. Our students are a credit to our school, with exceptional behaviour and a desire to learn and achieve. With a wealth of extracurricular activities, we are proud to support the whole child and develop well-rounded individuals for the future.

Summit Education Trust offers seamless education to their schools from age 2 to 18. The Downs School is an 11–18 comprehensive school and is a successful, oversubscribed and popular school serving the Downs area of West Berkshire. Currently, the roll is over 1,400 including a well-established and successful Sixth Form of over 400 students. The school is in a beautiful rural setting with good road links to Newbury, Reading, Didcot and Oxford, just 10 minutes from the A34.

We are confident that The Downs School and Summit Education Trust is a rewarding place in which to build your career.

If you would like to have a discussion about this post or to arrange a visit, please contact Sarah Townsend, HR Manager, on 01635 270022 or stownsend@thedownsschool.org. I look forward to welcoming you to the school.

Yours sincerely,

MR CHRIS PROSSER | Headteacher & CEO Summit Education Trust



Outstanding leadership and management pervade the school. Leaders ensure that exceptionally high achievement is sustained and that there is a continuous drive to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

OFSTED REPORT



Our School and our future

At The Downs School, we give all our students the very best start in life, to help them develop into well-rounded young adults, able to venture into a rapidly changing world with confidence and determination.

Set in the heart of the West Berkshire Downs, The Downs School is an exceptional place, where we pride ourselves on our small school feel and strong sense of community. Our ethos is formed from the strong partnership between staff, students and parents, who work together to create an environment in which young people are supported to realise their full potential and achieve their personal goals.

The Downs School is high performing with a proven track record of success with our young people, but we are not a school that wants to stand still. We know that there is always more to do to ensure that every child's educational experience is rich, character-building and of the highest possible standard. We do this by promoting equality of access and achievement for all, via a rich and diverse curriculum that allows students to become confident, well rounded and creative citizens who are ambitious for their future selves.

A Levels 2026

13%

of entries gained
A*

33%

of entries gained
A* - A

62%

of entries gained
A* - B

At BTEC
84%

of entries gained
A* - C

84%

of vocational courses
Distinction* -
Distinction

GCSEs 2026

30%

of grades
9 - 7

83%

of grades
9 - 4

51.4%

of vocational courses
Distinction* -
Distinction



Our Values

Educating today's students for the world of tomorrow. We will achieve this through Learning together, learning for life, which runs through the daily life of the school, providing us with the guidance we need to realise our vision and achieve outstanding outcomes for our students.

Learning together

Our school is a supportive community where we all learn together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and fairness, and everyone's contribution is valued. A place where:

- We embrace differences in cultures, beliefs and backgrounds.
- Our staff are passionate about teaching and about their own development.
- We support each other to discover new things, take risks and learn from our mistakes.

Learning for life

Our school supports students to be confident, well-rounded individuals who will keep learning throughout their lives. We do this by:

- Developing resilience; striving for excellence and responding positively to challenges.
- Cultivating the habits of independent thought and curiosity of mind.
- Emphasising the importance of contributing to the wider community.

Our values underpin everything we do



COURAGE Be bold, having the self-belief to overcome your challenges and face your fears head on.

RESPONSIBILITY Be independent and self-reliant, taking the lead to make the world a better place.

EQUALITY Be respectful to others and earn respect in turn.

AMBITION Believe that you can succeed and then strive to make the success a reality.

CREATIVITY Expand our horizons by asking questions, inventing, experimenting and being brave enough to make mistakes.

RESILIENCE Tough times don't last; strong people do.

INTEGRITY If it's not right don't say it. If it's not true don't say it. Do the right thing and earn the trust of the people around you.



The exceptionally high achievement in the sixth form indicates that the quality of teaching is the same as that observed in the main school.



Well-being

At The Downs School we understand that the positive well-being of our staff is essential for retaining, motivating and in promoting the well-being of our students. Our staff balance a large number of tasks and demands on a daily basis, so it is important that they feel supported so in turn they can support our students. See how we actively manage workload and promote well-being at The Downs School.

Teaching & learning

- Developmental Walkthrus using Instructional Coaching
- Monday and Wednesday morning briefings to keep you updated
- Curriculum, Pedagogy, Assessment and Development time in Faculties every other Wednesdays
- Clear communication through staff and student bulletins
- Comprehensive support for ECTs
- Time given for ECTs for training
- Time given to Mentors for mentoring
- Time given to undertake NPQs
- Clear Downs Development ladder
- Head of Faculties lead their faculty assessment and feedback policy.

Behaviour

- Clear and effective Therapeutic behaviour structures in place to support all staff
- Senior staff on call presence around school everyday
- After school and Saturday school detentions run by SLT
- Clear communication through student updates every other Wednesday briefing

Managing workload

- Email protocol - no expectation to answer emails out of working hours and holidays
- Remote access to allow staff to work flexibly
- No detailed written reports to parents and carers
- No direct emails from parents to teaching staff
- Flexibility for individual needs for discretionary leave
- Regular staff surveys to get honest feedback on what needs to improve
- Well established Well-being and Workload working group
- Time for you Tuesday – no meetings



Ofsted found that staff are incredibly positive about the school and value the significant investment in their professional development. Teachers are passionate experts in their subjects and continually develop their knowledge, within a school that is considerate of staff workload and provides thoughtful well-being initiatives.

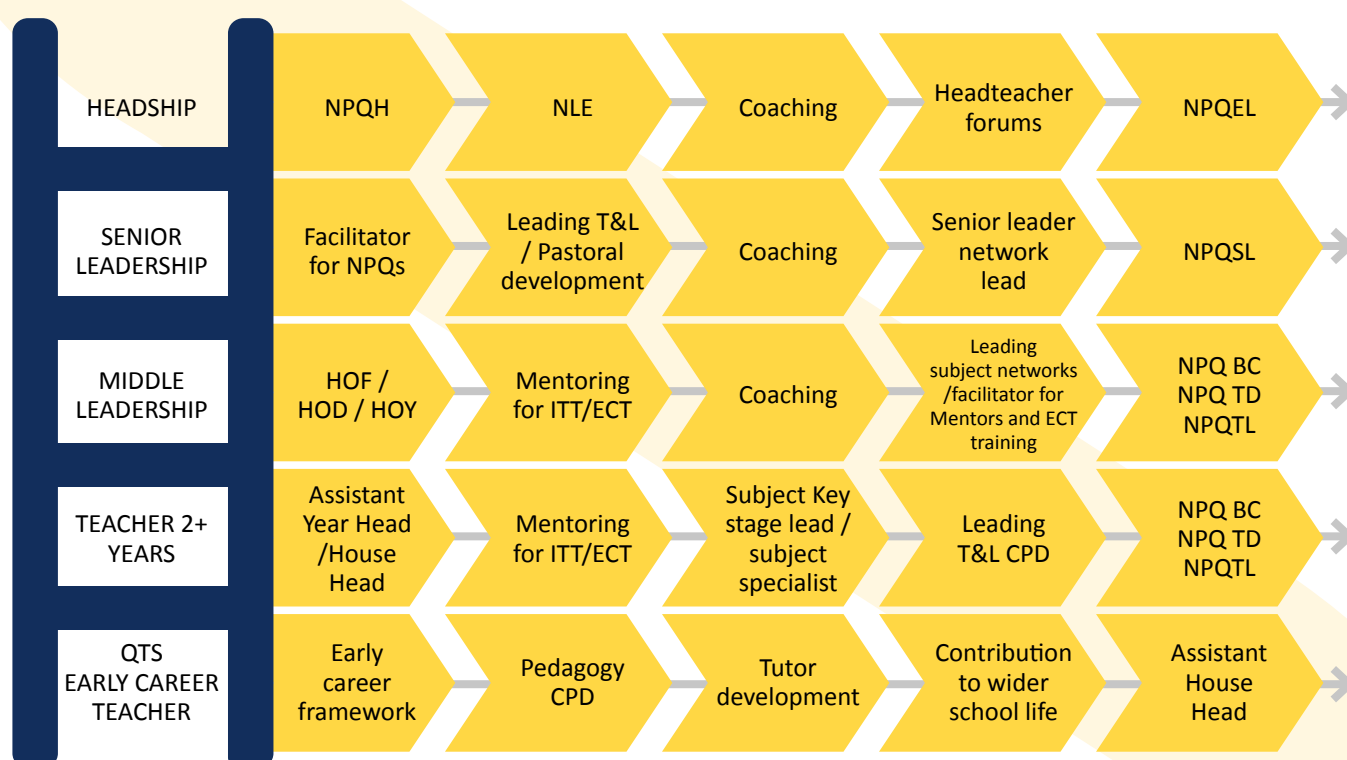
Professional relationships between pupils and staff are warm and positive, pupils' behaviour is impeccable and lessons are studious and industrious. Underpinning it all is a strong sense of community that permeates the school.



The Downs School Development Ladder

In keeping with our motto, 'Learning together, Learning for life' we place a lot of emphasis on professional growth of our staff. We have a well developed bespoke CPDL programme (developed together) that allows all staff to grow and develop along carefully chosen pathways.

Learning together, learning for life.





Opportunities at The Downs School



At The Downs School we understand that the positive well-being of our staff is essential for retaining and motivating them and in promoting the well-being of our students. Our staff balance a large number of tasks and demands on a daily basis, so it is important that they feel supported so in turn they can support our students. The list below highlights what we actively do at The Downs School to manage workload and to promote well-being.

Countless opportunities to get involved with wider life of the school - e.g. Duke of Edinburgh, ski trips 	School closes at 6pm  Book swap box in staff room 	Gym and Swimming Pool available for staff use... available to 5.30pm  	Head's breakfast - opportunity to say how things are going 	Refreshments before parents' evenings and school events 	Flu jab available to all staff 
Well-being and workload group 	Social events throughout the year 	Loyalty card at Café 6 if you bring your own mug 	Counselling available to all 	Employee Assistance Programme 	



Part of Summit Education Trust

At The Downs School, we are proud to be a founding school of Summit Education Trust; an ambitious and collaborative family of schools rooted in the heart of our local community.

Summit Education Trust brings schools together to share expertise, develop staff, strengthen opportunities for young people and provide long-term stability for education across our region. While every school retains its own identity and character, we believe we are stronger when we work together.

WHAT DOES THIS MEANS FOR OUR NEW STAFF?

Professional Growth

Opportunities to work collaboratively across schools, share best practice and develop leadership pathways at every stage of your career.

Shared Expertise

Access to a wider network of colleagues, subject specialists and experienced leaders across both primary and secondary education.

A Trust With Purpose

A carefully growing trust that puts children and staff well-being at the centre of decision making.

Retaining School Identity

While part of a wider trust, The Downs School remains proud of its own culture, traditions and strong community relationships.

Opportunities Beyond The Classroom

The chance to contribute to trust-wide projects, innovation, curriculum development and school improvement work.

Teachers & associate staff considering a role at The Downs School often tell us they are looking for somewhere with a strong sense of community, supportive colleagues and opportunities to grow professionally. Through Summit Education Trust, staff at The Downs School are part of a close working partnership of schools that believes in collaboration, professional growth and providing the very best opportunities for our young people.



How to Apply

If you would like to learn more, we warmly invite you to visit our school, so that you can experience our ethos in person. Visits to the school will not form part of the selection process. Please contact Sarah Townsend, HR Manager, and our recruitment team on 01635 270000 or email recruitment@thedownsschool.org.

We encourage early applications, as we reserve the right to close this vacancy if sufficient applications are received. Please apply via My New Term. For more information, contact Sarah Townsend, HR Manager and the HR team on 01635 270000 or recruitment@thedownsschool.org.

As part of any recruitment process, the school collects and processes personal data relating to job applicants. The school is committed to being transparent about how it collects and uses that data and to meeting its data protection obligations. Please view our privacy notice for job applicants for further information. Please address any enquiries on this to the data protection officer by emailing DPO@thedownsschool.org.

Successful candidates will be subject to social media checks, a DBS enhanced check along with other relevant employment checks.

The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.



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