

Deputy Head (Academic)



Candidate Information

Permanent, Full-Time Position

April 2027 or September 2027 Start



Welcome to Aldwickbury

Thank you for your interest in joining Aldwickbury School. I hope this candidate information pack gives you a sense of what it is like to work at the school and the warm and positive environment you'll become a part of if you are successful in your application.

This is a wonderful opportunity to join our Senior Leadership Team at an award-winning school, at a particularly significant and inspiring stage in its journey. Building on the successful introduction of co-education and the recent opening of our Nursery, Aldwickbury is continuing to evolve with confidence, ambition and a clear vision for the future.

Aldwickbury has a strong reputation for educational excellence, exceptional pastoral care and a commitment to preparing children to thrive in a rapidly changing world. We are proud of our innovative approach to teaching and learning, including our Future Thinking curriculum, which sits alongside a rich and challenging academic programme.

As Deputy Head (Academic), you will play a central role in shaping the school's educational vision and strategic direction. We are seeking an inspirational and forward-thinking leader who is generous with their time, passionate about academic excellence, committed to developing outstanding teaching and learning, and dedicated to ensuring every child is known, challenged and supported to achieve their full potential.

The successful candidate will join a talented and ambitious staff team who care deeply about our pupils and who continually strive to provide an exceptional educational experience. In return, you will have the opportunity to make a significant contribution to the continued development of the school and help shape the next chapter of Aldwickbury's success.

I look forward to learning more about you and the experience, vision and leadership qualities you could bring to our school community.

Paul Symes
Headmaster



Introduction to Aldwickbury School

Aldwickbury is an award-winning independent day and flexi-boarding Pre-Prep and Prep School for boys and girls, located within 20 acres of grounds in Harpenden, Hertfordshire. Operated as an Educational Trust, the School is administered by a Board of Governors and is a member of the Independent Association of Prep Schools (IAPS). The School will be fully co-educational by 2031, with girls currently represented across all year groups up to Year 3.

At Aldwickbury, we inspire pupils to develop a love for learning, empowering them to try their best, embrace challenges, be themselves, and seize opportunities that come their way. Our approach focuses on nurturing the individual potential of each child, ensuring they feel supported in a safe and stimulating environment. We are a non-selective school with an emphasis on personal and academic growth. We are incredibly proud of the value we add to their education.

Aldwickbury is committed to offering a holistic education that enables pupils to achieve academic success, where creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and communication are at the heart of the curriculum.

As a forward-thinking school, our leadership team and staff continuously strive to enhance our educational offer. The Future Thinking initiative has been instrumental in helping children prepare for an ever-changing world.

We foster a strong sense of community, encouraging pupils to grow as confident, independent learners who are excited to contribute to the world around them. Through our dedicated staff, we aim to provide an outstanding experience that prepares pupils for the next stage of their education at a wide range of excellent senior schools.

Why Join Aldwickbury?

As Deputy Head (Academic), you will join a values-led community where ambition, kindness and collaboration go hand in hand. You will play a pivotal role in shaping the educational experience of our pupils, leading and inspiring colleagues, and helping to realise our ambition of becoming the leading co-educational prep school in the country.

Together, we empower children and staff alike to grow in confidence, realise their potential and find their greatness.



The Role

Job Title:	Deputy Head (Academic)
Reporting To:	Headmaster
Contract:	Full-time, permanent, required for April 2027 or September 2027
Leadership Structure:	Aldwickbury School is led by Paul Symes, Headmaster, who is supported by the Senior Deputy Headmaster and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), comprising the Director of Finance & Operations, Head of Pre-Prep, Assistant Head (Individual Development) and the Deputy Head (Academic)

Role Purpose

The Deputy Head (Academic) is a key member of the Senior Leadership Team, and plays a central role in shaping the educational vision of the School.

The post holder will lead the development of an ambitious, innovative and future-focused academic programme, ensuring that every child receives an exceptional education and is fully prepared for successful transition to senior school and life beyond.

Working closely with the Head, the Deputy Head (Academic) will champion excellence in teaching and learning, curriculum innovation, staff development and pupil achievement, while contributing to the strategic leadership and continued success of the School.

Key Responsibilities

Aldwickbury is committed to continuous improvement, and all staff are expected to actively participate in school activities and embrace a flexible, forward-thinking approach.

While every effort has been made to outline the key duties of this role, additional responsibilities may be assigned as needed and updated in line with the evolving needs of the school.

Strategic Leadership

- Serve as a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), contributing to the strategic direction and development of the School.
- Lead and support the delivery of the whole-school development plan.
- Contribute to the development and implementation of the School's vision and educational strategy.
- Promote a culture of fun, ambition, innovation, collaboration, creativity and continuous improvement.



Key Responsibilities (continued)

Academic Leadership, Teaching and Learning

- Lead and promote excellence in teaching, learning and assessment across the School.
- Lead Inspection preparation across the whole School.
- Foster a culture of high expectations, creativity and academic aspiration.
- Monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching through lesson observations, learning walks, coaching and review processes.
- Lead curriculum review and development to ensure a broad, balanced, ambitious and engaging educational experience.
- Work closely with subject leaders to develop and enhance curriculum provision.
- Work in partnership with the Assistant Head (Individual Development) to support all children and their needs.
- Ensure that teaching and learning effectively support, challenge and inspire all pupils.
- Promote excellence in scholarship preparation, enrichment and academic extension opportunities.
- Lead academic interventions and strategies to maximise pupil attainment and progress.
- Lead academic meetings with Heads of Departments throughout the school.
- Termly feedback to Governors providing an academic overview of teaching and learning and academic outcomes.
- As a skilled classroom practitioner teach a subject within the timetable and support the school's extensive co-curricular programme.

Future Thinking Curriculum

- Lead the strategic development of the School's Future Thinking curriculum in partnership with the Head of Future Thinking.
- Embed future-focused skills including critical thinking, creativity, problem solving, collaboration, communication and digital literacy throughout the curriculum and seek opportunities to weave these skills into the main academic curriculum.
- Ensure pupils are equipped to thrive in an increasingly complex, technological and interconnected world.
- Develop partnerships and initiatives that enhance pupils' future readiness and broaden their learning experiences.
- Lead the thoughtful integration of emerging technologies and digital learning opportunities across the School while recognising the importance of literacy, numeracy and writing skills.
- Be at the forefront of educational change, to have the vision and ideas to develop a curriculum that is ever-changing and delivers the skills required for the evolving world of work and higher education.

Assessment, Tracking and Academic Outcomes

- Lead the School's assessment, tracking and reporting framework.
- Ensure pupil progress data is used effectively to inform teaching, intervention and curriculum planning.
- Monitor academic standards and outcomes across all year groups.
- Analyse attainment and progress data, identifying trends and areas for development.
- Provide academic reports and insights to the Head, Governors and other stakeholders as required.

Senior School Transfer and Admissions

- Lead all aspects of senior school preparation, transition and destination planning.
- Oversee testing, assessment and tracking processes relating to senior school applications.
- Coordinate interview preparation, examination preparation, scholarship support and reference writing.
- Advise pupils and parents on appropriate senior school pathways and opportunities.
- Develop and maintain exceptional relationships with leading senior schools and remain abreast of admissions, scholarship and assessment requirements.
- Represent the School at senior school events, admissions meetings and networking opportunities.
- Monitor and analyse destination outcomes and senior school success rates.

Key Responsibilities (continued)

Staff Leadership and Development

- Lead, motivate and inspire teaching staff to achieve the highest professional standards.
- Line manage Heads of Department and other designated academic leaders.
- Foster a culture of professional learning, coaching and reflective practice.
- Support performance management, appraisal and professional development processes.
- Identify and develop leadership potential across the staff body.
- Encourage innovation, collaboration and the sharing of best practice.

Pupil Development and Wellbeing

- Serve as a visible, approachable and positive role model within the School community.
- Promote high standards of behaviour, conduct and personal responsibility.
- Work closely with pastoral leaders to ensure pupils achieve both academic success and personal wellbeing.
- Ensure every pupil is known, valued and supported to achieve their full potential.
- Champion an inclusive culture where all pupils can flourish.

Parent and Community Engagement

- Build positive and productive relationships with parents and families.
- Communicate effectively regarding academic progress, curriculum developments and senior school pathways.
- Lead and regularly review reporting procedures and organise pupil parent evenings
- Lead parent information events relating to academics, assessment and senior school transfer.
- Support admissions activity, open events and marketing initiatives.
- Act as an ambassador for the School locally and within the wider educational community.
- Showcase the school's academic achievements through the appropriate marketing channels.
- Work closely with the Senior Deputy Head in planning future academic dates.

Operational Responsibilities

- Contribute to the effective day-to-day leadership and management of the School.
- Oversee academic timetabling, curriculum planning and resource allocation.
- Ensure compliance with relevant educational, safeguarding and regulatory requirements.
- Attend school events, performances, open days and other activities as a member of the leadership team.
- Undertake such other duties as may reasonably be required by the Head.



Person Specification

Essential

Qualifications and Experience

- Degree and Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) or equivalent.
- Significant senior leadership experience within a preparatory, primary or independent school setting.
- Outstanding classroom practitioner, with credibility across a range of age groups.
- Visionary and passionate to inspire the next generation.
- Proven experience of leading teaching, learning and curriculum development.
- Strong understanding of assessment, tracking and pupil progress.
- Experience of managing, developing and inspiring colleagues.
- Experience of supporting pupils through senior school admissions and transition processes.
- Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

Desirable

- Experience within the independent preparatory or senior sector.
- Experience of scholarship preparation and extension programmes.
- NPQH, NPQSL or other relevant leadership qualifications.
- Experience of leading innovative curriculum initiatives.
- Experience of educational innovation, including the effective use of digital and emerging technologies to enhance teaching and learning.
- Experience of contributing to wider school strategy and development.

Knowledge and Understanding

- Excellent understanding of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Strong knowledge of curriculum design, academic excellence and school improvement.
- Knowledge of senior school admissions, scholarship and transition processes.
- Understanding of future-focused education and the skills young people will require to thrive in a rapidly changing world.
- Knowledge of safeguarding, compliance and regulatory requirements within an educational setting.

Skills & Abilities

- Inspirational and strategic leader with the ability to motivate and develop others.
- Excellent interpersonal, communication and presentation skills.
- Strong organisational, analytical and decision-making abilities.
- Ability to build effective relationships with pupils, parents, colleagues, governors and external partners.
- Ability to manage competing priorities and lead change effectively.
- Commitment to innovation, continuous improvement and educational excellence.
- Confident, visible and professional presence within the school community.

Personal Qualities

- Demonstrates integrity, professionalism and sound judgement.
- Collaborative, supportive and emotionally intelligent.
- Warm, approachable and committed to building strong relationships.
- Enthusiastic, resilient and a change leader.
- Committed to the wellbeing, achievement and development of every child.
- Intellectually curious, reflective and open to new ideas.
- Passionate about preparing young people to thrive in a rapidly changing world and inspiring them to reach their full potential.
- Hard working and committed to setting high standards that will inspire those around them.

Benefits

An attractive Senior Leadership remuneration package will be offered to the successful candidate. The salary offered will be dependent on skills and experience, and tailored to reward and recognise an outstanding leader.

In addition to the benefits outlined below, as a key member of the Senior Leadership Team, the successful candidate will have the opportunity to make a significant impact on the academic life of the school while benefiting from ongoing professional development and a collaborative, close-knit working environment.



Competitive pension scheme with life insurance



Staff fee remission (subject to place availability)



24/7 Employee Assistance Programme



Free access to facilities - swimming pool & sports hall



Complimentary school meals



Cycle to Work Scheme



Eye tests & flu jabs



Free on-site parking

Interview and Application Process

The closing date for applications is Monday 2nd November 2026.

Longlisted candidates are expected to be invited to attend interviews on **Monday 9th November 2026**, with shortlisted candidates attending final-stage interviews on **Monday 16th November 2026**. Candidates selected to progress through the recruitment process will be contacted with further details.

Early application is encouraged, as applications will be reviewed as they are received and we reserve the right to appoint at any stage of the recruitment process.

Thank you for your interest in joining Aldwickbury School. The information contained within this document is non-contractual and is intended to provide an overview of the role and the opportunities available.

All posts are subject to enhanced statutory checks.

Aldwickbury is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

The school aims to provide a safe and nurturing environment where all pupils are happy and can be themselves. Aldwickbury expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.





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