

**GOSFORD HILL
SCHOOL**



**Headteacher
Application Pack – July 2026
Gosford Hill School**





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A Welcome from the Chair of Governors

Thank you for your interest in the position of Headteacher at Gosford Hill. This is an exciting time for the school, with work well underway on construction of our new school building, due to open during 2028. The new build project creates a rare opportunity to lead the school through a pivotal moment in its history, transforming the education we can offer while building on the strong community roots which make the school so special. But the school is about a lot more than its physical buildings. We are looking to appoint an inspirational, implementation-focused leader who can capitalise on the opportunities afforded by the new build while planning strategically for the future; who is ambitious for all of the students and staff; and who will build on the strong fundamentals already in place as we seek to achieve ever more for the young people in our care.

The school has recently received a very encouraging Ofsted inspection report, which recognises how far the school has progressed, meeting 'expected standard' in all but one category. We are confident that the school is well placed to make the further improvements necessary to maintain this upwards trajectory.

Our core values of *Responsible*, *Respectful* and *Resilient* are at the heart of everything we want to do as a school. We know that young people are facing unprecedented challenges, and it is our responsibility to give every one of our students the confidence and ambition to be independent and resilient adults. School is no longer about getting the qualifications for entry to a particular job - young people will require flexibility, social skills, communication skills and probably most importantly, the ability to learn new skills in a future we cannot predict. This is the culture we want the school to embody, in which all of our students can thrive and be happy.

Our teaching, extra-curricular provision and pastoral care is resolutely focused on inclusion - we are committed to everyone being able to fulfil their potential in whatever direction that takes them, and to minimise barriers that might make achievement more challenging. Whether it's in academic attainment, sport, art, music, Duke of Edinburgh or World Challenge, the school achieves and celebrates success. We also recognise that the best way to achieve success for our young people is by working closely with parents and carers.

Kidlington has a strong sense of community, with many of our students (and some of our teachers) having long family connections



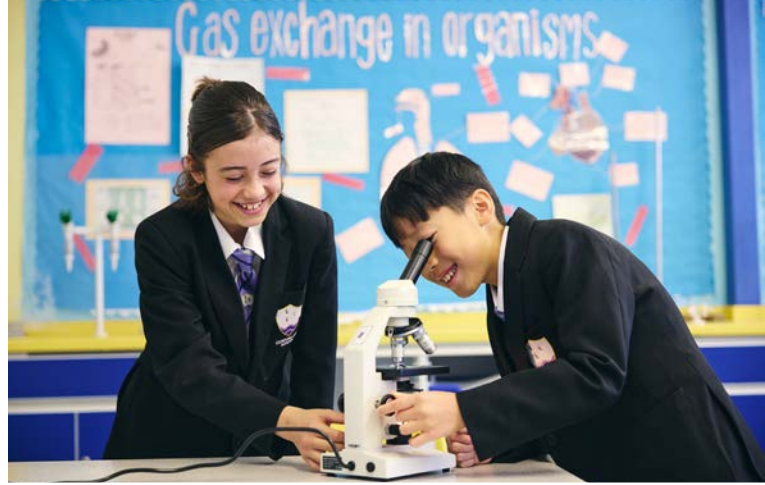
with the school. As a governing body, we want the school to continue to build on those relationships, serving the whole community. The new building gives us very exciting new opportunities to do that.

The school is part of River Learning Trust (RLT), a multi-academy trust that also includes The Cherwell School, The Swan School, The Marlborough School and Chipping Norton School. This puts us within a network of schools in close geographical proximity who are able to work together and share good practice, all becoming stronger as a result.

If you are committed to helping every young person enter the adult world as a responsible, respectful and resilient citizen, we would love to hear from you. If you would like an informal conversation about the role, please contact Clare Carpen, EA to Paul James, CEO, via ccarpen@riverlearningtrust.org, to arrange a conversation. School visits can be arranged in the first two weeks of September.



Margaret Lloyd
Chair of Governors, Gosford Hill School



About Our School



Gosford Hill School is a popular and successful school on an attractive and spacious site located in Kidlington, on the northern edge of Oxford. There are nearly 850 students (including our Sixth Form) and a staff of around 100 teaching and support staff who work hard to achieve our ambitions for our young people.

It was founded in 1932 as a co-educational 'National' school, became a mixed community comprehensive in the 1960s, and became a standalone Academy in 2012. In 2020, the school joined The River Learning Trust (RLT), a multi-academy trust comprising 30 secondary and primary schools, mostly in Oxfordshire. The school serves students from 11 to 18 across the whole ability range. Most of the students live locally, but the school also serves the wider area, including the surrounding villages of Islip and the 'seven villages of Otmoor'. Contract buses bring students into school each day, whilst most students walk or cycle to school.

Work started this year on the exciting project to rebuild the school, as part of phase three of the Department for Education Schools Rebuilding Programme. Our brand new purpose built school will be constructed on



▲ CGI of the entrance to our brand new school

our existing site and delivery will be phased to enable the school to be operational throughout the build. We are the first school in Oxfordshire to be on the programme. The design of the new school is very much bespoke to our needs in terms of being able to deliver our ambitious curriculum. The external landscaping will support our wider educational offering such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award, geography field work and sport. The facilities have been designed so that the school will be at the heart of the community, providing access for many local groups beyond the school day. Kidlington Leisure Centre is on the same site, and will continue to share some facilities with the school.



▲ CGI showing exterior of new school building



▲ An artist's impression of proposed Main Hall

River Learning Trust (RLT) is a multi-academy trust responsible for a number of primary and secondary schools and a school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) provider within Oxfordshire and Swindon.

Our Vision

Education has the power to change lives, communities and society for the better.

At the River Learning Trust we believe that we can achieve more for our pupils, trainees, staff and communities by working together rather than alone.

All of the schools in the River Learning Trust are united by a common belief in the benefits of working together, and by our commitment to our three shared principles.

Our vision is for our schools and SCITT to improve rapidly, continuously and sustainably: to be better faster together.

Our 'Why?' is that children and young people 'only get one go' in school and that our schools should improve faster and be better as part of RLT to ensure the best possible 'go' for our pupils.

Our 'How' is through the highest possible support and challenge for our schools and each other, underpinned by our three principles.

We use the principles of 'aligned autonomy' to empower colleagues in schools to perform well; we rarely direct from the centre but rather support leaders and other colleagues to do their work exceptionally well in their own context.

The schools and SCITT are united by their commitment to the principles of the trust and a common belief in the benefits of everything that is gained by working together.

What Matters To Us

The River Learning Trust is a community of children, young people and adults with shared principles. These principles are:

- ▶ Commitment to Excellence; striving for the best educational experience through continuous improvement.
- ▶ Everyone Learning; creating and taking opportunities that enhance lives through evidence-based practice supporting adult and pupil learning.
- ▶ Respectful Relationships; acting with care, integrity, and fairness in all we do.

The Power Of People

High-performing organisations have the right organisational culture, effective processes and well-trained, motivated colleagues in the right roles.

We focus a great deal on people and the importance of continuous professional learning and development. This role provides an excellent opportunity to impact development and improvement across all of our schools.

The Trust's Schools

We currently educate around 14,500 pupils and have around 2,000 colleagues working in the trust. The SCITT trains around 110 trainees across some 40 schools in Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Wiltshire.

Secondary Schools

Cheney School
Chipping Norton School
Gillotts School
Gosford Hill School
Kingsdown School
The Cherwell School
The Marlborough CofE School
The Oxford Academy
The Swan School
Wheatley Park School

Primary Schools

Barton Park Primary School
Bayards Hill Primary School
Beckley CofE Primary School
Charlbury Primary School
Cutteslowe Primary School
Edith Moorhouse Primary School
Edward Feild Primary School
Garsington CofE Primary School
Horspath CofE Primary School

Primary Schools (Continued)

Horspath CofE Primary School
Larkrise Primary School
Madley Brook Primary School
Middle Barton Primary School
New Marston Primary School
Rose Hill Primary School
Sandhills Primary School
Seven Fields Primary School
Tower Hill Primary School
Witney Community Primary School
Windrush CofE Primary School
Wolvercote Primary School

Alternative Provision

Meadowbrook College

SCITT

OTT

Teacher School Hub

Oxfordshire Teaching School Hub (The Cherwell School)



Our Location

Kidlington has an historic centre, thriving local shops and well established housing estates alongside planned new developments. It is very well-connected, lying on excellent transport routes. The village is 5 miles north of Oxford and 7 miles south of Bicester, at the gateway to the beautiful Cotswolds which lie to the west.



▲ Quaint canalside cottages in Kidlington



▲ Church Street, Old Kidlington

Road

We are just off the main A34, which connects to the M40 and the M4, with easy access to London and the M25. There is adequate parking, shared with Kidlington Leisure Centre, and there are ample cycle racks.

Train

The school is a twenty minute walk or a short bus ride from Oxford Parkway Railway Station, which has direct trains to Oxford

Central, Bicester, High Wycombe and London Marylebone, which is just 50 minutes away.

Bus

There are frequent and regular bus services to central Oxford, Woodstock and Bicester.

Nearest Airports

Kidlington is 46 miles from Heathrow, 67 miles from Luton, 84 miles from Gatwick, and 60 miles from Birmingham.



▲ The historical City of Oxford



▲ The spectacular Blenheim Palace

Job Description



Post Title:	Headteacher
Leadership Spine	L28-34
Accountable to:	The Local Governing Body
Contract type:	Full time, permanent
Start Date:	1 st January 2027

Responsibilities

- ▶ As the lead professional in our school, you will build and share a clear vision for a vibrant and inspirational educational community which expects and nurtures the best in everyone.
- ▶ You will lead by example, supporting high quality professional development for all staff.
- ▶ You will secure a climate of tolerance, inclusivity and respect, with standards of exemplary behaviour and aspirational achievement.

Qualities and Knowledge: The Headteacher will...

- ▶ Hold and articulate clear values and moral purpose, focused on providing a world class education for our students.
- ▶ Demonstrate optimistic personal behaviour, positive relationships and attitudes towards the school's students and staff, the trustees and staff of the River Learning Trust, and towards parents, governors and members of the local community.
- ▶ Lead by example – with integrity, creativity, resilience, and clarity – drawing on their own scholarship, expertise and skills, and that of those around them.
- ▶ Sustain wide, current knowledge and understanding of education and school systems locally, nationally and globally, and pursue continuous professional development.
- ▶ Work with political and financial astuteness, within a clear set of principles centred on the school's vision, ably translating local and national policy into the school's context
- ▶ Communicate compellingly the school's vision, and drive the strategic leadership, empowering all students and staff to excel.

Students, Staff and Wider Community: The Headteacher will...

- ▶ Demand ambitious standards for all students, overcoming disadvantage and advancing equality, instilling clear responsibility and accountability in staff for the impact of their work on students' outcomes.
- ▶ Secure excellent teaching through a clear understanding of how students learn and of the core features of successful classroom practice and curriculum design.
- ▶ Establish an educational culture of professional learning, integrity and openness as a basis for sharing best practice within and between schools, drawing on and conducting relevant research and robust data analysis.
- ▶ Create an ethos within which all staff are motivated and supported to develop their own skills and subject knowledge, and to support each other.
- ▶ Identify emerging talents, coaching current and aspiring leaders in a climate where excellence is the standard, leading to clear succession planning.
- ▶ Hold all staff to account for their professional conduct and practice.
- ▶ Actively listen to and take account of the views of stakeholders, including students, staff, governors, parents and carers, in shaping the vision for the school and the experience of those within the school community.
- ▶ Work constructively within the local community to ensure the school has a positive reputation and to develop community links to the benefit of students and staff.

Systems and Process: The Headteacher will...

- ▶ Ensure that the school's systems, organisation and processes are well considered, efficient and fit for purpose, upholding the principles of transparency, integrity and probity.
- ▶ Provide a safe, calm and well-ordered environment for all students and staff, focused on safeguarding students and developing their exemplary behaviour in school and in the wider society.
- ▶ Establish and maintain rigorous, fair and transparent systems and measures for managing the performance of all staff, valuing excellent practice, addressing any under-performance, and supporting staff to improve.
- ▶ Welcome strong governance and actively support the governing board to understand its role and deliver its functions effectively – in particular its functions to set school strategy and hold the Headteacher to account for student, staff and financial performance.
- ▶ Exercise strategic, curriculum-led financial planning to ensure the equitable deployment of budgets and resources, in the best interests of students' achievements and the school's sustainability.
- ▶ Distribute leadership throughout the organisation, forging teams of colleagues who have distinct roles and responsibilities and hold each other to account for their decision-making.

The School-led System: The Headteacher will...

- ▶ Create an outward-facing school which works with other schools, local partnerships and organisations – in a climate of mutual challenge – to champion best practice and secure excellent achievements for all students.
- ▶ Contribute actively to the high performance of all schools in the River Learning Trust, playing a constructive role in the Education Board and in working with colleagues from other schools in the Trust.
- ▶ Develop effective relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues in other public services to improve academic and social outcomes for all students.
- ▶ Challenge educational orthodoxies in the best interests of achieving excellence, and meeting the needs of Gosford Hill students.
- ▶ Contribute to shaping the current and future quality of the teaching profession through high quality training and sustained professional development for all staff and working effectively with the wider Trust.
- ▶ Inspire and influence others, both within and beyond schools, to believe in the fundamental importance of life-long education.
- ▶ Model entrepreneurial and innovative approaches to school improvement, leadership and governance.



This Job Description outlines the responsibilities of the post and does not describe in detail all the duties required to carry them out. It will be reviewed annually or as changing circumstances require.

Gosford Hill School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people and preventing extremism; all staff must ensure that the highest priority is given to following the guidance and regulations to safeguard children and young people.

The successful candidate will be required to undergo an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and obtain any other statutorily required clearance. Employment will also be conditional on the receipt of at least two acceptable references (one of which must be from the current/latest employer) and evidence of the formal qualifications required for the role.

Person Specification



Post Title:	Headteacher
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Qualifications and professional experience

You will...

- be a qualified teacher with a demonstrable commitment to continuing professional development
- have a track record of sustained success and positive impact as a senior leader in secondary education
- have experience of leading the achievement of improved results and outcomes
- have experience of curriculum development and the implementation of high quality teaching strategies which enrich and extend learning
- have experience of implementing effective strategies for supporting positive student behaviour and meeting pastoral needs
- have experience of effective methods of consultation and dissemination to develop and communicate vision, values and policies

Professional and technical knowledge

You will be able to demonstrate...

- widespread knowledge of current educational issues and their impact
- expertise in effective teaching and learning
- a sophisticated understanding of school improvement and change management
- a detailed knowledge of curriculum change and development processes
- knowledge and understanding of effective strategies for supporting and improving student behaviour, engagement and achievement
- a thorough knowledge and understanding of safeguarding procedures and practices
- proficiency in critical self-evaluation, including highly effective use of school data and information
- an understanding of budget formulation and management
- a recognition of excellence in education

Personal skills and qualities

You will have a proven ability to:

- inspire and motivate staff, students and parents
- look forward and lead change positively, openly and collaboratively
- establish priorities and manage dilemmas
- analyse and resolve problems arriving at fair and acceptable decisions
- devolve responsibility to colleagues with clear mechanisms for empowerment, monitoring and review
- communicate clearly and cogently through all media
- challenge constructively and be open to challenge
- work collaboratively and strategically with governors

In addition, you will be someone who...

- has integrity
- has a passion for education and a commitment to comprehensive principles and inclusivity
- is visible, approachable, confident and energetic
- can demonstrate authority and presence
- demonstrates the school's values and standards by example
- thrives on challenge and finding solutions
- is consultative but will make decisions and be accountable for them
- maintains a sense of humour as well as a sense of direction!



How To Apply



Visits

We warmly invite any prospective candidates to have a tour of the school. Tours will be available between the 8th - 18th September. To request a tour, please contact Nicola Cooke, PA to the Headteacher by telephone, 01865 374971, or email, jobapplications@gosfordhillschool.org.

Application Form and Letter of Application

Please complete the application form via My New Term, ensuring that you also complete the supporting statement. Please tell us how your experience to date has prepared you for the role of Headteacher and how, through your current role, you can demonstrate energetic and impactful leadership, particularly through significant periods of transformation. Please refer to the job description and person specification as this will form a key part in our shortlisting.

Deadline

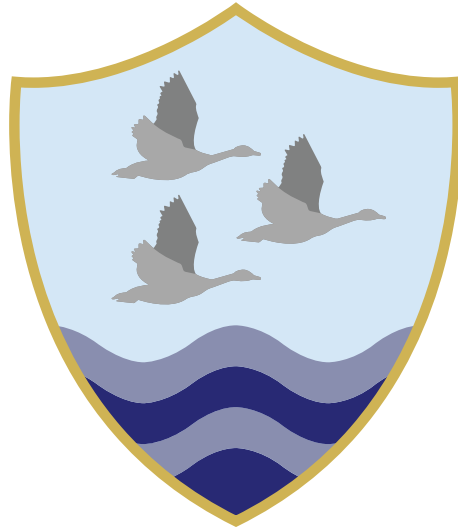
Please submit your completed application form via www.MyNewTerm.com by **9:00am on Monday 21st September 2026**.

Shortlisting

Shortlisted candidates will be notified by **5:00pm on Wednesday 23rd September 2026**.

Interviews

Interviews will take place on **Wednesday 29th and Thursday 30th September 2026**.



**GOSFORD HILL
SCHOOL**

“Be the best you can be”

July 2026

