

Ridgeway
Education
Trust



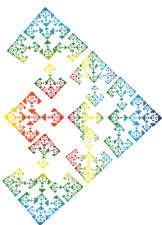
Didcot Girls' School

Appointment of Headteacher



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Welcome from the chair of governors

Thank you for your interest in becoming the next Headteacher of Didcot Girls' School.

We are a values-driven and high performing all girls' secondary school based in Didcot, south Oxfordshire. As our mission statement describes: *'We are a vibrant school community which empowers girls to become resilient and to fulfil their potential as future leaders.'* Our values of inclusion, high expectations and respect underpin everything that we do.

Working closely with the governors, the headteacher will play a pivotal role in shaping the future direction of the school in alignment with our vision and values. Didcot Girls' School has been judged Outstanding by Ofsted in its last two inspections (November 2015; November 2022) and outcomes are routinely in the top 5% of schools nationally for progress. The school is oversubscribed year on year and has featured in *The Sunday Times Parent Power Guide and the Good Schools' Guide*. Didcot Girls' School shares a large mixed sixth form and a close, collaborative and mutually beneficial relationship with St Birinus Boys' School. Both schools are proud to be a part of Ridgeway Education Trust which educates over 4,400 children and young people and currently comprises these two high-performing secondary schools, six primary schools and a SCITT (School Centre for Initial Teacher Training). To find out more about the Trust, please see our [RET Charter](#).

Our previous Headteacher, Georgina Littler, was promoted to the role of Chief Executive Officer of Ridgeway Education Trust from this September and the school is currently led by interim co-headteachers. We are now seeking an exceptional leader who can steer the school through the next phase of its development and who is committed to our values. The successful candidate will have experience of raising standards in education at a senior level and be excited to take the school forward, leading a team of dedicated professionals and a strong community of students, staff, parents and governors.

This pack provides you with more information about Didcot Girls' School and the post. Visits to the school prior to application are encouraged between 1st-12th December and can be arranged via Fionna Blessing, PA to the CEO on fblessing@ridgewayeducation.com

I do hope that once you have found out more about us, and if you are excited by the opportunity to lead Didcot Girls' School, that you choose to make an application.

With best wishes

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Brooke'.

Teresa Brooke
Chair of Governors, Didcot Girls' School

An Introduction to Didcot Girls' School

Didcot Girls' School is both ambitious and inclusive. As the only all-girls' comprehensive school in Oxfordshire, we are proud of the superb opportunities we offer for our girls to develop in an environment which fosters resilience, leadership skills and a commitment to the highest educational standards. Our co-educational sixth form shared with St Birinus School offers excellent progression to study in a vibrant and growing sixth form community. Didcot Girls' School is consistently one of the highest performing schools both in Oxfordshire and the UK. In November 2022, Ofsted judged the overall effectiveness of the school to be Outstanding once again. We are pleased that the report recognises and validates our mission statement and describes the distinctive elements of our provision. Please click [here](#) to read the report in full.

Summer 2025 GCSE results were superb with 87% of all students achieving 4+ in English and Maths, and 72% doing the same at 5+. Results at A level in the mixed sixth form shared with our partner school, St Birinus School, are also extremely strong with 35% of grades awarded as A* or A and 65% achieving Grades A*-B. These results place us as one of the highest performing schools in the county.

Significant and ongoing work means that the curriculum in each subject is well planned and sequenced. Core knowledge and threshold concepts are clearly identified and deliberately taught and assessment is planned so that it is both effective and has due regard to teacher workload.

The wide range of leadership opportunities in the school - there are large numbers of student leaders including House and Deputy House Captains, Sports Captains, Science, Reading and Music Ambassadors, Student Council representatives- are recognised and celebrated through the Leadership Ladder which runs from Years 7 - 11 inclusive. We offer a rich choice of extra-curricular clubs and encourage all of our students to participate. The House system is a strong feature of the school, and this facilitates girls mixing across year groups, to foster friendly but fierce competition.

The sense of connection to the school community, so that all young people feel included in the life of the school, is an ongoing priority. We focus on the wellbeing of our students alongside academic excellence and a vibrant extra-curricular provision. It is important to us that our girls are known and valued as

individuals and that they enjoy their time at the school. We have a raft of highly qualified and excellent pastoral staff dedicated to supporting students and their families.

Teaching and support staff are well motivated and valued for the important work they do. Training and development opportunities support the ongoing development of our staff who benefit from leadership roles available in the school and across the trust. Workload and wellbeing of staff are carefully considered as a whole school priority.

The school's culture is palpable and commented on by those who visit us as being welcoming, aspirational and purposeful. We are immensely proud of our school.

An Introduction to RET

Ridgeway Education Trust is committed to delivering excellence through high quality education for children and young people with powerful collaboration at its heart.

Ridgeway Education Trust began as the coming together of Didcot Girls' School, St Birinus Boys' School and the shared mixed sixth form in 2015. The vision of the trust board was to create a 3-19 trust, dedicated to providing excellent education for children and young people in Didcot and the surrounding area. Six primary schools have since joined RET, two sponsored schools and four academy converters, and we are proud to be a trust of eight schools responsible for over 4,400 children and young people. Our schools are all closely geographically located, with a 45 minutes' drive the longest distance from one to the other. From September 2024 we have launched our own SCITT with Teach First so that we can train and develop primary and secondary teachers for RET and the wider system.

The Trust's values of ambition, integrity and leading for legacy are at the heart of our work together.

The Trust is outward looking; we work closely with other multi-academy trusts and schools locally and nationally and are keen to learn from the best and to contribute to the wider school system.

We have an ambitious three-year strategic plan which is available [here](#).

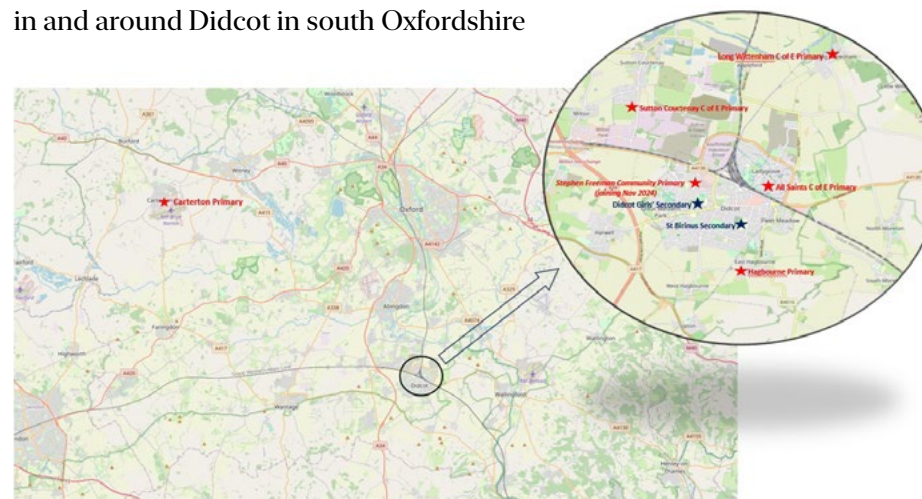
Please read more about our schools [here](#).

Who are we?



Where are we?

Our eight schools and the SCITT are located in and around Didcot in south Oxfordshire



Didcot Girls' School Mission and Values

Our Mission:

We are a vibrant school community which empowers girls to become resilient and to fulfil their potential as future leaders.

Our Values





Governance and Leadership

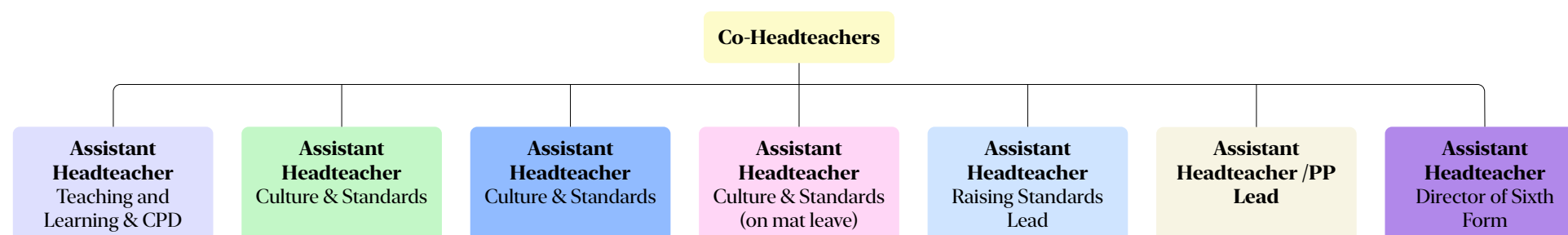
Governors

Local governing bodies (LGBs) in the trust are responsible for SEND, safeguarding, stakeholder engagement and standards. The trust board is responsible for the strategic direction and oversight of the trust and its schools. The LGB is supported by an excellent Company Secretary and governance team. Regular meetings and training opportunities, including an annual strategy day, ensure our governors have the knowledge and skills they need. The LGB meets five times each year.

The Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) works together collaboratively on whole school priorities and to ensure the smooth running of the day-to-day life of the school. The SLT are ably supported by the RET Central Team which leads on Governance, Finance, HR, Health & Safety, IT and Catering for the trust's schools. The Central Trust team is based in offices at Didcot Girls' School. Our expert and supportive CFO, COO, Company Secretary and HR Services Lead head up teams that ensure our Headteachers and their senior teams can focus their time and capacity on the quality of education in their schools and working with staff, students and families.

The headteacher is line managed by the Chief Executive Officer





What makes Didcot Girls' School a great place to work?

The shared motivation of the DGS team of governors, leaders, teachers and support staff is tangible. We believe that education has the potential to transform lives. Social justice matters to us all and we are determined that all of our children and young people, especially our most disadvantaged, thrive.

Walking through Didcot Girls' School, you will experience the joy of a welcoming, vibrant and inclusive learning community. We believe that school improvement is most successful when underpinned by deep collaboration at all levels: we are always stronger together. Teaching and learning, school improvement and staff CPD are at the core of ensuring our students and staff have access to the best opportunities and development. We live our values, offering high levels of support and challenge through respectful and dignified relationships.

Our commitment to staff wellbeing and ongoing professional development is shared in our [RET Staff Charter](#).

We offer national terms and conditions, including teachers' and local government pension schemes, for teaching and support staff respectively.





The Role

Working closely with the Chief Executive Officer and governors, the postholder will provide strategic direction for Didcot Girls' School and articulate the vision, values, and ethos of the organisation to inspire and empower others to share in achieving them. They will shape the school's culture and ultimately be accountable for the performance of the school, enabling young people to develop their potential and thrive.

The Person

Below is a comprehensive list of qualifications, experience, skills, knowledge, and personal qualities. Applicants should be able to demonstrate expertise in most of these areas.

Job Description

School culture

- establish and sustain the school's ethos and strategic direction in partnership with those responsible for governance and through consultation with the school community
- create a culture where pupils experience a positive and enriching school life
- uphold ambitious educational standards which prepare pupils from all backgrounds for their next phase of education and life
- promote positive and respectful relationships across the school community and a safe, orderly and inclusive environment
- ensure a culture of high staff professionalism

Teaching

- establish and sustain high-quality, expert teaching across all subjects and phases, built on an evidence-informed understanding of effective teaching and how pupils learn
- ensure teaching is underpinned by high levels of subject expertise and approaches which respect the distinct nature of subject disciplines or specialist domains
- ensure effective use is made of formative assessment

Curriculum and assessment

- ensure a broad, structured and coherent curriculum entitlement which sets out the knowledge, skills and values that will be taught
- establish effective curricular leadership, developing subject leaders with high levels of relevant expertise with access to professional networks and communities
- ensure that all pupils are taught to read through the provision of evidence-informed approaches to reading, particularly the use of systematic synthetic phonics in schools that teach early reading
- ensure valid, reliable and proportionate approaches are used when assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum

Behaviour

- establish and sustain high expectations of behaviour for all pupils, built upon relationships, rules and routines, which are understood clearly by all staff and pupils
- ensure high standards of pupil behaviour and courteous conduct in accordance with the school's behaviour policy

- implement consistent, fair and respectful approaches to managing behaviour
- ensure that adults within the school model and teach the behaviour of a good citizen

Additional and special educational needs and disabilities

- ensure the school holds ambitious expectations for all pupils with additional and special educational needs and disabilities
- establish and sustain culture and practices that enable pupils to access the curriculum and learn effectively
- ensure the school works effectively in partnership with parents, carers and professionals, to identify the additional needs and special educational needs and disabilities of pupils, providing support and adaptation where appropriate
- ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties with regard to the SEND code of practice

Professional development

- ensure staff have access to high-quality, sustained professional development opportunities, aligned to balance the priorities of whole-school improvement, team and individual needs
- prioritise the professional development of staff, ensuring effective planning, delivery and evaluation which is consistent with the approaches laid out in the standard for teachers' professional development
- ensure that professional development opportunities draw on expert provision from beyond the school, as well as within it, including nationally recognised career and professional frameworks and programmes to build capacity and support succession planning

Organisational management

- ensure the protection and safety of pupils and staff through effective approaches to safeguarding as part of the duty of care
- prioritise and allocate financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and probity in the use of public funds
- ensure staff are deployed and managed well with due attention paid to workload
- establish and oversee systems, processes and

policies that enable the school to operate effectively and efficiently

- ensure rigorous approaches to identifying, managing and mitigating risk
- ensure the school meets all statutory requirements including safeguarding

Continuous school improvement

- make use of effective and proportional processes of evaluation to identify and analyse complex or persistent problems and barriers which limit school effectiveness, and identify priority areas for improvement
- develop appropriate evidence-informed strategies for improvement as part of well-targeted plans which are realistic, timely, appropriately sequenced and suited to the school's context
- ensure careful and effective implementation of improvement strategies, which lead to sustained school improvement over time

Working in partnership

- forge constructive relationships beyond the school, working in partnership with parents, carers and the local community
- commit their school to work successfully with other schools and organisations in a climate of mutual challenge and support

- establish and maintain working relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues across other public services to improve educational outcomes for all pupils

Governance and accountability

- understand and welcome the role of effective governance, upholding their obligation to give account and accept responsibility
- establish and sustain professional working relationship with those responsible for governance
- ensure that staff know and understand their professional responsibilities and are held to account
- ensure the school effectively and efficiently operates within the required regulatory frameworks and meets all statutory duties

Note: The Headteacher may be asked by the CEO and/or governing body to undertake other duties reasonably regarded as falling within the duties and responsibilities of the post. This job description may be amended at any time after consultation with the postholder.

Headteacher of Didcot Girls' School

Person Specification

Qualifications and training

| | |
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| Qualified Teacher status | Essential |
| NPHQ/NPQSL | Desirable |
| Evidence of further professional development | Essential |

Relevant Experience

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Extensive and recent experience as part of a successful senior leadership team | Essential |
| Proven track record of raising standards in teaching and learning | Essential |
| Experience of successful leadership of change, including evaluating problems, developing and implementing appropriate solutions and monitoring effectiveness | Essential |
| Understanding of effective and successful financial management within a school, or the appetite to learn these skills | Essential |
| Experience of leading, motivating, supporting, challenging and developing staff to secure improvement | Essential |
| Successful leadership and team working and an ability to make decisions under pressure when required to do so | Essential |
| Proven experience of managing successful performance management | Essential |
| Experience of effective working with Governors | Essential |
| Teaching experience across 2 or more Key Stages | Essential |
| Experience of participation in external collaborations and partnerships | Desirable |
| Experience of working in a 6th form environment | Desirable |
| Experience of establishing and maintaining highest standards of behaviour management | Essential |

Relevant skills/attributes

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Commitment to, and appreciation of, the distinctive attributes of single sex education for girls | Essential |
| Excellent interpersonal skills | Essential |
| An analytical and creative thinker who can synthesise information and make connections across different leadership priorities to drive progress and innovation | Essential |
| Effective team leader who understands the importance of personal development for all colleagues | Essential |
| Ability to motivate and develop commitment among teaching and support staff | Essential |
| Role model for respectful relationships as driver for the ethos of the school community | Essential |
| A commitment to inclusion and providing for the whole range of students' needs and abilities | Essential |
| Good numeracy and data handling skills, especially in relation to student data | Essential |
| An understanding of, and commitment to, promoting and safeguarding the welfare of students | Essential |
| Ability to prioritise and manage personal workload and set an example of effective delegation | Essential |
| Ability to communicate clearly, orally and in writing, with a range of stakeholders within and outside the community | Essential |

| Knowledge | |
|--|-----------|
| Knowledge of current major issues in teaching and learning, curriculum development and inclusion within 11-19 age range | Essential |
| Knowledge of Ofsted criteria and implications of Ofsted judgements | Essential |
| Understanding of the implications and opportunities of working within a multi-academy trust | Desirable |
| Understanding of the importance of working collaboratively with all stakeholders in the Trust, including the wider community and other schools | Essential |

| Personal Qualities | |
|---|-----------|
| An unwavering moral purpose to secure the highest standards and to counter disadvantage for all young people | Essential |
| Ability and enthusiasm to promote and shape the vision and values of the learning community | Essential |
| Ability to create, inspire and promote a culture of high achievement for all | Essential |
| Ability to plan, prioritise, monitor, evaluate, influence and lead effectively in a healthy culture of accountability | Essential |
| Ability to recognise and nurture strengths and skills in others and delegate appropriately | Essential |
| Ability and willingness to relate to pupils of all ages in order to motivate them to achieve their potential | Essential |
| Integrity, commitment, resilience, energy to persevere and succeed | Essential |
| Willingness to make difficult decisions in the best interests of the school community | Essential |
| Ability to manage difficult conversations and challenge well | Essential |

Safeguarding

Our selection process will assess rigorously all candidates' suitability and their commitment to safeguarding children. This will include:

- Testing candidates' understanding of, and commitment to, safeguarding children.
- Identifying gaps and anomalies in career histories and examining original certificates of professional qualifications and proof of identity.

Asking referees specific questions about:

- Reasons to doubt candidates' honesty, trustworthiness or reliability;
- Whether candidates are currently the subject of any form of disciplinary or competency inquiry or warning;
- Any disciplinary offences relating to children including any in which the penalty is "time expired";
- Any child protection concerns.

We reserve the right to contact referees to check any concerns arising from the application, reference or interview.

Please ensure one of your referees is your current or most recent employer. If you do not name your current employer, we will contact them to seek a reference.

Appointment Process and How to Apply

Applicants should address their application form to Teresa Brooke, Chair of Governors at Didcot Girls' School. This should include a supporting statement which fully addresses the competencies outlined in the job description and person specification and outlines their interest in the post. Completed applications should be uploaded via My New Term following this link:

[Headteacher at Didcot Girls' School, Didcot, Oxfordshire | MyNewTerm](#)

The closing date for applications is Tuesday 6th January 2026 at 8am and shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend interviews at the school on Tuesday 20th and Wednesday 21st January 2026.

Didcot Girls' School 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, and the safeguarding and wellbeing of children and young people across the Trust. 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.

