

DEPUTY HEADTEACHER INFORMATION PACK

ARAGON PRIMARY SCHOOL MARCH 2026



The Willow
LEARNING TRUST

Working together for Excellence

“Be the Best You Can Be”

Dear Colleague,

I am delighted that you are interested in the position of Deputy Headteacher at Aragon Primary School, a proud member of the Willow Learning Trust.

After five years as Deputy Headteacher, I am thrilled to be taking up post as Headteacher of Aragon from September 2026. As we look ahead to the next chapter of Aragon's journey, the CEO, Governors and I are seeking to appoint an ambitious and inspiring Deputy Headteacher to join our Senior Leadership Team and help lead the school into its next phase of development, building on the exceptional foundations established by our retiring Headteacher. This is a rare opportunity to join a stable, supportive and highly successful team.

Aragon is a thriving and inclusive school where children are at the heart of every decision we make. Our pupils are happy, confident and proud of their school. Strong relationships between staff and pupils create a calm, purposeful environment where children feel safe, supported and ready to learn. We hold high expectations for all, and our pupils respond with excellent behaviour, kindness and a strong sense of responsibility.

Thank you for your interest in the Deputy Headteacher position at Aragon Primary School. We hope the information in this pack, alongside the school's website and the May 2025 Ofsted report, gives you a helpful insight into the ethos, values and work of the school.

Aragon is a popular three-form entry primary school with Nursery, set within spacious grounds on the border of Merton and Sutton. The school is proud of its strong sense of community and its aspiration for every child to "be the best that we can be". Pupils are encouraged to have high expectations of themselves, show kindness and responsibility, and contribute positively to the school community.

We are proud that our pupils achieve highly, with outcomes consistently above national averages. Our recent Ofsted inspection recognised the strength of our curriculum, the exemplary behaviour of our pupils and the culture of care and high expectations that defines Aragon.

This is an exciting opportunity for a talented leader who shares our ambition for children and is ready to play a central role in shaping the next stage of Aragon's development within a forward thinking and research-informed school community.

I warmly encourage you to visit the school to experience our community first-hand. To arrange a visit, please contact Natalia Grannelli at aragon@aragon.merton.sch.uk.

Adam Gilbert
Headteacher Designate
Aragon Primary School

The school is committed to providing a broad and inclusive education that enables all children to thrive, develop a love of learning and reach their full potential.

We look forward to receiving applications from talented leaders who share these values and ambitions.

Steve Hume
Chief Executive Officer
Willow Learning Trust





About our School

Aragon Primary School is a thriving and inclusive school in the London Borough of Merton, educating pupils from Nursery to Year 6. As part of the Willow Learning Trust, the school benefits from strong collaboration across the trust while maintaining a clear identity at the heart of its local community. Aragon has been recognised for its high standards, strong relationships and a culture where pupils are encouraged to be ambitious, curious and proud of their learning.

The school provides a broad and carefully sequenced curriculum that enables pupils to build secure knowledge and skills across all subjects, knowing and remember more. This has helped us to achieve exceptional outcomes, that are significantly above national and placed us in the **top four schools** in Merton in 2025.

Early reading is taught through **Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised**, ensuring pupils develop strong foundations in phonics and reading. In 2025, **97%** of children passed the **Year 1 Phonics Screening Check**.

In mathematics, the school follows **Maths No Problem**, supporting deep conceptual understanding and mathematical reasoning. In 2025, **94% of pupils met the expected standard in Key Stage 2 mathematics, with 54% achieving the higher standard**, placing outcomes significantly above national averages. Aragon is proud to be recognised as a **Maths No Problem Beacon School**.

We are extremely proud of our rich and varied wider curriculum. Alongside high quality classroom teaching, pupils benefit from **specialist teaching** in music and Spanish, enabling them to develop their knowledge, creativity and cultural understanding across a range of disciplines.

Pupil voice is highly valued, with a wide range of leadership opportunities. Ofsted noted that pupils feel there is “something for everyone”, valuing roles such as reading champions, where they support younger pupils with reading.

Teaching and learning at Aragon is rooted in evidence-informed practice. Staff draw on research including **Rosenshine’s Principles of Instruction**, guidance from the **Education Endowment Foundation**, cognitive science, and more. These approaches are brought together in the school’s Teaching and Learning Handbook, ensuring clarity and consistency in high quality teaching from Early Years through to Year 6.

Inclusion sits at the heart of the school’s ethos. Quality-first teaching, early identification of need and carefully targeted support ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, can access an ambitious curriculum and thrive academically, socially and emotionally.



Aragon is also widely recognised for its exceptional outdoor play provision and is proud to hold the OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) Gold Award. Play is viewed as a vital part of children's development, supporting physical health, creativity, collaboration and wellbeing. Through the OPAL programme, pupils have access to rich and varied play opportunities that encourage imagination, problem solving and independence, making playtime a valued and purposeful part of the school day.



Personal development is valued. A **wide range** of trips, workshops, visitors and enrichment opportunities deepen pupils' learning while providing memorable experiences that help shape them into kind, thoughtful and responsible members of society. Pupils are encouraged to think critically about the world around them and develop the confidence and character needed for the next stage of their education.



Sport and physical activity have a high profile at Aragon. Pupils have many opportunities to represent the school across the borough in a range of sporting events and competitions. This commitment to sport is reflected in the school achieving the **Platinum Merton School Sports Mark**.



The school is proud to hold a number of recognised awards, including the **Artsmark Award**, recognising the strength of creative opportunities across the curriculum. The school is particularly fortunate to have a dedicated art studio **Room 13**, staffed by our resident artist.

Aragon Primary School also plays a key role in developing future teachers. We are the lead school for the primary programme of **Sutton SCITT**, a highly successful teacher training provider judged Outstanding by Ofsted.



Together, these strengths create a **vibrant** school community where pupils **flourish**, staff work **collaboratively** and **high expectations** are matched with genuine care for every child.

About the Willow Learning Trust



The Willow Learning Trust, established in 2017, is a partnership of schools in Sutton and Merton working together to raise standards and provide exceptional opportunities for pupils. The Trust currently comprises Glenthorne High School, Aragon Primary School and Abbey Primary School, three schools that have collaborated productively for many years. While united by shared values and a common vision, each school maintains its own distinctive identity, leadership and local governance, enabling schools to remain rooted in their communities while benefiting from the strength of a wider partnership.

The vision of the Willow Learning Trust is to raise standards across the local community through close collaboration between schools. The Trust is characterised by high expectations, high aspirations and a commitment to excellence for both pupils and staff. Schools within the Trust work together to develop ambitious, broad and engaging curricula, underpinned by evidence-informed teaching and learning and enriched through a wide range of opportunities for academic, artistic and sporting success.

A key strength of the Trust lies in its collaborative culture. Schools work closely together to share expertise, develop curriculum provision and support one another in driving school improvement. This includes collaborative curriculum planning, joint professional development and the sharing of best practice across schools. Staff benefit from a strong programme of professional learning and development, including cross-school collaboration, mentoring and support.



The Trust also values the development of the whole child. Across its schools, the taught curriculum is complemented by a rich programme of enrichment and extracurricular opportunities that help pupils develop confidence, resilience and a strong sense of identity within their communities. Strong pastoral systems and high expectations for behaviour and attitudes ensure that pupils feel known, supported and able to thrive.

Another key feature of the Trust is its commitment to teacher training and developing future educators. The Trust oversees Sutton SCITT, an Ofsted Outstanding school-centred initial teacher training provider, which supports trainee teachers across a wide partnership of schools in South London. This commitment to developing teachers ensures that the Trust continues to build expertise and strengthen the quality of education across its schools.

Through collaboration, innovation and a shared commitment to excellence, the Willow Learning Trust empowers its schools to flourish while ensuring that every pupil benefits from a high quality education within an inclusive, supportive and ambitious learning community.



Job Description

Responsible to: Headteacher

Grade: L9-L13 (Inner London)

Purpose of Post:

To assist the Headteacher in securing the highest possible educational standards for all pupils by creating an environment in which staff maintain high expectations and pupils thrive academically, socially and emotionally.

The Deputy Headteacher will work closely with the Headteacher to provide strategic leadership, promote excellence in teaching and learning, and ensure that the school operates within a positive ethos where individuals feel valued and personal endeavour and responsibility are encouraged.

The Deputy Headteacher will model outstanding primary practice and support the continued development of a culture of high expectations, inclusion, and professional growth across the school.

General Responsibilities:

1. Assist the Headteacher in maintaining an inspirational working environment underpinned by a positive ethos in which all individuals feel valued and personal endeavour and responsibility are encouraged.
2. Promote consistently high expectations for pupil achievement, behaviour and attitudes to learning.
3. Provide a strong role model for high quality primary teaching and professional practice.
4. Support colleagues in the execution of their professional duties and professional development.
5. Support the supervision and professional development of teaching and support staff.
6. Deputise for the Headteacher in their absence.

7. Support the Headteacher in the internal organisation and management of the school, including line management responsibilities and performance management.
8. Contribute to the review and development of school policies and procedures.
9. Support the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of strategies to raise standards and improve outcomes for pupils.
10. Promote pupils' welfare, safeguarding, health and safety, and support their academic and social development.
11. Act as a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), promoting a strong safeguarding culture across the school and ensuring that safeguarding procedures are implemented effectively in line with statutory guidance.
12. Ensure safeguarding is prioritised in all aspects of school life and that staff understand and fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.
13. Implement and reinforce the school's behaviour policy and expectations.
14. Lead assemblies and represent the school at events as required.
15. Attend and contribute to meetings of the Trust and Local Governing Body as appropriate.
16. Undertake any other duties reasonably requested by the Headteacher.





Specific Responsibilities:

The Deputy Headteacher will have strategic leadership responsibilities across key areas of the school.

Strategic Leadership of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

Provide strategic leadership for the development, implementation and evaluation of high-quality teaching and learning across the school.

Responsibilities include:

- Leading the development and implementation of the school’s pedagogical approach to ensure consistently high-quality teaching across all phases.
- Providing strategic oversight of ambitious curriculum design, sequencing and implementation to ensure a broad, ambitious and well-structured curriculum.
- Ensuring that teaching enables all pupils, including those with additional needs, to access the curriculum and achieve well.
- Leading the development of adaptive teaching strategies to remove barriers to learning.
- Ensuring assessment and feedback practices support pupil progress and inform teaching effectively.
- Overseeing the school’s monitoring and evaluation cycle.

- Supporting and developing subject leaders to ensure strong leadership and accountability across the curriculum.
- Leading staff’s professional development linked to teaching and curriculum priorities.
- Leading the induction and support of Early Career Teachers.
- Leading the induction programme for new staff.
- Promoting parental engagement with curriculum and learning.
- Working collaboratively with partner schools on curriculum development where appropriate.
- Providing oversight of teaching and learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure strong foundations for learning.

Inclusion and Equity

Working alongside the Headteacher, SENCO and relevant leaders to ensure a strong inclusive culture where all pupils can succeed.

Responsibilities include:

- Alongside the SENCO, lead the development of a school culture in which high quality, everyday inclusive teaching is understood as the most effective method of meeting the needs of all pupils, particularly those who find learning hardest.

- Promote high expectations for all pupils, ensuring that inclusion is embedded across curriculum design, adaptive teaching practice and pastoral systems.
- Lead the development, implementation and evaluation of the Pupil Premium strategy, ensuring it is evidence-informed, aligned with school priorities, and improves outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- Provide strategic oversight of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, ensuring statutory duties are met, reasonable adjustments are made, and the accessibility plan is implemented and reviewed.
- Ensure leaders work in strong partnership with parents, external specialists and the local SEND system, promoting the local offer and securing positive transitions for pupils.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of inclusion strategies, interventions and adaptations, reporting regularly to the Headteacher and governors.



Staff Development and Appraisal

- Leading and managing the staff appraisal process.
- Supporting leaders in conducting effective performance management.
- Identifying professional development needs and coordinating appropriate training and support.

Operational Leadership

- Supporting the day-to-day operational management of the school.
- Supporting school organisation including timetabling where required.
- Managing staff absence and supporting the effective deployment of staff.

School Improvement

- Supporting the implementation and monitoring of the School Improvement Plan.
- Contributing to the development of the School Self Evaluation process.
- Evaluating the impact of improvement strategies and reporting outcomes to the Headteacher and governors where appropriate.



Person Specification

Specification	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
1. Qualifications, Education and Training			
1.1 Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)	✓		A
1.2 Degree or equivalent qualification	✓		A
1.3 Leadership Qualification (NPQ)		✓	A
1.4 NASENCO or NPQ for SENCO (NPQSENCO)		✓	A
2. Experience			
2.1 Significant successful experience as a primary classroom teacher	✓		A/I
2.2 Experience of leadership and management within a school at senior level or equivalent	✓		A/I
2.3 Experience of improving teaching and learning	✓		A/I
2.4 Experience of monitoring and evaluating classroom practice	✓		A/I
2.5 Successful experience of promoting inclusion, equality and diversity, to ensure every child can aim high and succeed whatever their background or circumstance	✓		A/I

Specification	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
2.6 Experience in leading appropriate strategies to ensure children with special educational needs and disadvantaged children can access a full curriculum, progress and achieve well.	✓		A/I
2.7 Experience of leading staff professional development	✓		A/I
2.8 Experience of whole school curriculum leadership	✓		A/I
2.9 Experience of line managing staff	✓		A/I
2.10 Experience of collaborating within a multi academy trust		✓	A/I
3. Knowledge and Understanding			
3.1 Strong understanding of effective teaching and learning in primary education	✓		A/I
3.2 Secure knowledge of curriculum design and implementation	✓		A/I
3.3 Understanding of inclusive practice and adaptive teaching	✓		A/I
3.4 Knowledge of strategies to raise pupil achievement	✓		A/I
3.5 Understanding of assessment systems and pupil progress	✓		A/I
3.6 Secure understanding of safeguarding and child protection responsibilities	✓		A/I
4. Skills and Abilities			
4.1 Ability to inspire and motivate staff and pupils	✓		A/I
4.2 Strong leadership and organisational skills	✓		A/I
4.3 Ability to analyse data and use it to improve outcomes	✓		A/I
4.4 Excellent communication and interpersonal skills	✓		A/I
4.5 Ability to support and develop colleagues professionally	✓		A/I
4.6 Ability to balance strategic leadership with operational responsibilities	✓		A/I
5. Personal Qualities			
5.1 Commitment to high expectations and inclusion	✓		A/I
5.2 Integrity and professionalism	✓		A/I
5.3 Resilience and adaptability	✓		A/I
5.4 Collaborative leadership style	✓		A/I
5.5 Commitment to the values and ethos of the school	✓		A/I

The Willow Learning Trust is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from all the sectors of the community. We are committed to protecting our pupils and staff and therefore have a rigorous recruitment process which include assessing candidates' suitability to work with children. Candidates will be shortlisted against the above essential criteria assessable from application forms. Issues relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children will be explored during the interview process.

Tips for Application

Completing the Application Form

Your application form plays a key role in the selection process, so take time to complete it fully and accurately as shortlisting decisions are based solely on the information you provide. Ensure you refer to the Person Specification when completing your application and provide clear evidence and examples showing how you meet each criterion.

Personal Details

Please complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form at the end of the application. This form is used for monitoring purposes only, will be removed before shortlisting, and destroyed after use.

Career History

We are interested to hear details of your work history, including paid employment, voluntary work, or periods of unpaid work such as caring responsibilities. If a job title does not clearly describe your duties, provide a brief summary of your main responsibilities. You may use additional sheets if required. Please ensure there are no gaps in your employment history. If you do have gaps, please ensure you account for this time on the Application Form.

Education, Qualifications, and Training

You should list all relevant qualifications and training as requested in the Person Specification, remember to include any additional qualifications or courses that demonstrate your skills or knowledge. Please note you will need to provide proof of qualifications later in the recruitment process.

Statement of Suitability

This section is your opportunity to demonstrate how you meet the Person Specification. Address each criterion and provide specific examples of your experience and achievements. Instead of writing 'I am organised and meet deadlines', describe a situation that proves this, such as: 'I organised a fundraising event for a local playgroup within six months, coordinating a team of five volunteers.' We cannot assume your experience equals ability, so please explain how you achieved results. You may use examples from voluntary work, hobbies, or other relevant activities.

Relationships

We do not exclude applicants who are related to staff or Governors. However, if you are related to someone, they will not be involved in the selection process. Failure to disclose a relationship may result in dismissal. 'Related' includes cohabiting.

Pre-employment checks

It is Trust policy that any job offer will be conditional on receipt of all pre-employment checks including: satisfactory references, preemployment medical clearance, enhanced DBS disclosure, online checks and for teaching roles, verification of teaching qualifications. In addition you will be asked to complete an online medical questionnaire and may be required to attend a medical assessment. All employees must have an Enhanced DBS, which can be checked using the on-line service or the school will organise this for you.

Interviews

Willow Learning Trust uses a variety of selection methods, which may include teaching a lesson for teaching roles, ability tests, presentations, or work-related exercises. You will be informed of the methods in advance. Interviews will include questions about your application, safeguarding, and child welfare. Any concerns from references will also be discussed.

Complaints

We are committed to equality of opportunity in recruitment. If you believe you have been discriminated against during the process, for example based on race, age, gender, disability, or religion, you may submit a complaint. Complaints must be made in writing to the Headteacher /CEO within three working days of being rejected after an interview. Please explain the reason for your complaint. The Headteacher/CEO or representative may contact you before confirming the outcome.





Deputy Headteacher

£72,858-£79,385 (L9-L13 Inner London)

Start Date - September 2026

Are you an ambitious leader ready to help build on our strong foundations and lead us forward?

Following the internal promotion of our Deputy Headteacher to Headteacher, we are offering a rare opportunity to join our stable, forward-thinking leadership team at a time of real strength for Aragon. With excellent outcomes, a highly inclusive culture and a well-established curriculum, we are looking for a Deputy Headteacher who will help build on these foundations and support the school's next phase of development.

We are seeking an ambitious and reflective practitioner with experience in curriculum development, inclusive pedagogy and developing others. You will model excellent practice, contribute to school improvement and demonstrate strong safeguarding knowledge, excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to work collaboratively with staff, families and external partners.

This is an excellent opportunity for someone ready to work closely with the Headteacher and wider team to shape the future direction of our thriving school.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check.

We also offer a wide range of benefits designed to support both your professional and personal well-being, including:

- A warm, community-focused school ethos, where teamwork, kindness and professional support are at the heart of daily life.
- A strong commitment to staff well-being and work-life balance, with flexibility for personal events when needed.
- A personalised programme of professional development, enabling you to deepen your expertise, grow as a leader and progress in your career.
- Access to Trust-wide collaboration, with close links to Glenthorne High School and Abbey Primary School through the Willow Learning Trust.
- Staff benefits including Benenden Healthcare, the Cycle to Work Scheme and the Legacy Childcare Voucher Scheme.
- A culture that values innovation, shared learning and professional trust, ensuring staff feel empowered to make a meaningful contribution.

Closing date for applications: Tuesday 24th March 2026 11.59pm

Interviews: Tuesday 14th April 2026.