

# The SWAN Trust

## St. John's Primary School Headteacher Recruitment Pack



We believe in every child  
having a  
Bright Future



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### 1. Invitation to apply from the CEO

Dear Applicant,

We are delighted that you are interested in applying for the Headteacher position at St. John's Primary School. This is an exciting and challenging role where the primary purpose is to continue building upon the school's successful journey of improvement. Raising standards of attainment for all children will be a core focus, along with providing a secure, compassionate, and consistent environment where children and their families can thrive.

You will need to demonstrate energy, passion, commitment, ambition, and strategic vision to lead this school through its next phase of development, ensuring its reputation within the community as a family-oriented school where all can succeed is enhanced further.

St. John's Primary School is a unique school known for its compassionate and caring approach, highly valued by the families it serves. It has undergone rapid improvement, and now is the time to develop this further, securing success for the children, staff and community.

Please find enclosed the job description and person specification, which provide more details about what we are looking for. You are warmly invited to contact the school should you wish to arrange a visit. Please contact the school office to make an appointment on 01483 476450.

We look forward to working with the successful applicant as they undertake this exciting position.

Yours sincerely,

Elaine Cooper  
CEO  
The SWAN Trust

## 2. Application

### 2.1 Vacancy Timeline

Please return your completed application form no later than **12 noon on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025** to:

Elaine Cooper, CEO  
[ceo@swantrust.co.uk](mailto:ceo@swantrust.co.uk)

or

The SWAN Trust  
c/o Beaufort Primary School  
Kirkland Avenue  
Woking  
Surrey GU21 3RG

Date	Information
Closing Date	12 <sup>th</sup> May 2025, 12 noon
Shortlisting	13 <sup>th</sup> May 2025
Request to attend interview	13 <sup>th</sup> May 2025 – Successful shortlisted candidates will be contacted by telephone and then email
Interview	22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2025
Decision	To be ratified by Trustees - Feedback available after this time

## 3. About The SWAN Trust

We are passionate about providing the best possible education, with the highest ambitions for all children. We believe that every child has the potential to succeed, and we are relentless in our pursuit of academic excellence. We also believe that it is important for children to feel happy, safe, supported, and loved, and we are committed to providing a positive and inclusive learning environment within the 21st Century. The Trust knows that its people are its greatest asset and aims to provide as many opportunities as possible for growth and development. Outstanding leadership is key to enhancing educational opportunities and improving the quality of learning for all our children. We believe in school-to-school support and purposeful, research-based collaboration. Headteachers in our Trust participate fully in our cycle of challenge days, collaboration visits, and various network meetings. Our established central team supports Headteachers with operational issues, and the CEO and Director of Education are always on hand to provide support. Our strong sense of team means that the joy and challenges of headship are shared equally.



## About St. John's Primary School

Our mission is to empower children to have a bright future. We believe that in our ever-changing, complex world, the children of today need to develop the knowledge, skills and strength of character to create their own bright future.

St. John's is a one-form entry primary school with a FEET funded Nursery situated in the village of St. John's, Woking. We are a fully inclusive school with a caring, family feel and high aspirations for every child in our care. With around 215 pupils, our school is small enough for everyone to know and look out for one another, but large enough to provide a range of experiences, including after-school clubs and fantastic educational trips and visits. Our staff love working here, and we are fortunate to have a highly experienced team. We make decisions about the school together, always putting children at the heart of every decision.

We are very proud of the academic achievements of our children, who make good progress from the point at which they join us. Our children are happy, well-motivated, and enthusiastic who enjoy learning and take pride in their school. We wholeheartedly believe that the development of each child is about more than classroom achievements. We have a strong focus on well-being and happiness, promoting good mental and physical health for all children and adults at our school. Our values of kindness, courage, respect, responsibility, determination, and honesty are taught throughout the school year and underpin everything we do.

Our curriculum aims bring our purpose of education to life and act as a driver for change, providing focus for curriculum choices. The aims are:

- Developing spoken language and vocabulary
- Promoting healthy lifestyles
- Fostering a connection with nature
- Living by our values

We aim to create a culture of aspiration, building the confidence of our children, empowering them to approach the unknown with self-belief and positivity, believing in themselves and their capabilities. We aim to inspire and nurture a strong sense of resilience in our children so that any challenges they face can be approached with determination.





## **Job Description - Headteacher of St. John's Primary School**

### **Core Purpose**

To provide vision, inspiration, leadership and strategic direction to the school, enabling children to be the best they can be, in partnership with the Trust, the Local Governing Committee and staff team, to ensure that the school continues its journey towards excellence. At St. John's Primary School we strive to achieve the highest quality learning environment and experience for all children and staff.

### **The Headteacher will:**

- Provide vision, leadership and direction for the school;
- Establish high standards and expectations of the teaching and learning within the school;
- Ensure high quality continuous professional development for staff;
- Secure a climate of exemplary behaviour of children;
- Ensure that the school is managed and organised to meet its aims and targets in an efficient manner;
- Manage the school budget to maximise the benefit for children and the school, ensuring funds are allocated appropriately;
- Work with Governors and the Executive Team to develop and implement a shared vision for the school;
- Ensure that the ethos and values of the school are upheld;
- Develop and maintain relationships with the wider community;
- Ensure high standards of care and safety are maintained for children, staff and visitors.

### **Specific responsibilities attached to the role include:**

- To form a vision and direction for the school, setting out high expectations with a clear focus on children's achievement;
- Inspiring, motivating and influencing staff and children, taking a leading role in maintaining the highest standards of teaching, learning and pupil behaviour management;
- Being an excellent role model for all staff and children in all aspects of school life;

- Promote the safety and wellbeing of children and staff;
- Being an exemplar for all school policies and practices;
- Providing guidance and support to staff in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

## **Headteacher Standards at St. John's Primary School**

### **Excellent Headteachers: qualities and knowledge:**

- Hold and articulate clear values and moral purpose, focused on providing a worldclass education for the children they serve;
- Demonstrate optimistic personal behaviour, positive relationships and attitudes towards their children and staff, 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 children and staff to excel.

### **Excellent Headteachers: children and staff:**

- Demand ambitious standards for all children, overcoming disadvantage and advancing equality, instilling a strong sense of accountability in staff for the impact of their work on children's outcomes;
- Work with staff, parents, carers and professionals to provide support and appropriate adaptations for children with additional needs. Ensuring the school fulfils statutory duties regarding the SEND Code of Practice;
- Secure excellent teaching through an analytical understanding of how children learn and of the core features of successful classroom practice and curriculum design, leading to rich curriculum opportunities and children' well-being;
- Establish an educational culture of 'open classrooms' 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 where 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.

### **Excellent Headteachers: systems and process:**

- 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 children and staff, focused on safeguarding children and developing their exemplary behaviour in school and in the wider society;
- Establish rigorous, fair and transparent systems and measures for managing the performance of all staff, addressing any under-performance, supporting staff to improve and valuing excellent practice;
- Welcome strong governance and actively support the Local Governing Committee to understand its role and deliver its functions effectively – in particular its functions to set school strategy and hold the Headteacher to account for children, staff and financial performance;
- Exercise strategic, curriculum-led financial planning to ensure the equitable deployment of budgets and resources, in the best interests of children's 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.

### **Excellent headteachers: the self-improving school system**

- Create an outward-facing school which works with other schools and organisations - in a climate of mutual challenge - to champion best practice and secure excellent achievements for all children;
- Develop effective relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues in other public services to improve academic and social outcomes for all children;
- Challenge educational orthodoxies in the best interests of achieving excellence, harnessing the findings of well evidenced research to frame self-regulating and self-improving schools;
- Shape the current and future quality of the teaching profession through high quality training and sustained professional development for all staff;
- Model entrepreneurial and innovative approaches to school improvement, leadership and governance, confident of the vital contribution of internal and external accountability;
- Inspire and influence others - within and beyond schools - to believe in the fundamental importance of education in young people's lives and to promote the value of education.

## Person Specification

### Professional competencies

- Strategic planning and review;
- Finance –project costing and budgetary management;
- Resource management – estimating, monitoring and securing resources in a multi-tasking programme environment;
- Strong inter-personal skills in establishing relationships, both within the Trust and beyond, positively influencing stakeholders and partners;
- Excellent negotiation and collaboration skills;
- Consulting – enabling partners to identify and/or clarify problems and then developing and implementing appropriate solutions to address issues.

### Essential skills and experience

- Educated to degree level, and highly respected within the Educational sector, fully aware of Government policy, school management, and strategies for improving education outcomes;
- Proven experience of sustained school improvement;
- Evidence of taking decisive action as necessary;
- Strong influencing, negotiation and advocacy skills;
- Proven experience of motivating and leading effective teams and delivering projects in a multi-skilled environment, to meet project objectives;
- A successful track record of building effective working relationships at all levels and reinforcing partnership;
- Sound judgement, ability to identify and escalate critical issues/risks effectively, and a proactive pragmatic approach to problem resolution;
- Evidence of continuous professional development;
- Recent and relevant Headship experience.



## The SWAN Trust Leadership Standards

### Culture and ethos

- School culture
- Behaviour
- Professional development

### Curriculum and teaching

- Teaching
- Curriculum and assessment
- Additional and special educational needs

### Organisational effectiveness

- Organisational management
- School improvement
- Working in partnership

### Ethics and professional conduct

Leaders are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of principled and professional conduct. They are expected to meet the Teachers' Standards and be responsible for providing the conditions in which Teachers can fulfil them.

Leaders uphold and demonstrate the Seven Principles of Public Life at all times. Known as the Nolan Principles, these form the basis of the ethical standards expected of public office holders:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

Leaders uphold public trust in school leadership and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour. Both within and outside school, Leaders:

- Build relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observe proper boundaries appropriate to their professional position;
- Show tolerance of and respect for the rights of others, recognising differences and respecting cultural diversity within contemporary Britain;
- Uphold fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
- Ensure that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit their position, children's vulnerability or might lead children to break the law.

As Leaders of their school community and profession, Leaders:

- Serve in the best interests of the school's children;
- Conduct themselves in a manner compatible with their influential position in society by behaving ethically, fulfilling their professional responsibilities and modelling the behaviour of a good citizen;
- Uphold their obligation to give account and accept responsibility;
- Know, understand, and act within the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities;
- Take responsibility for their own continued professional development, engaging critically with educational research;
- Make a positive contribution to the wider education system.

### **1. School culture**

Leaders:

- 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 children experience a positive and enriching school life;
- Uphold ambitious educational standards which prepare children 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.

### **2. Teaching**

Leaders:

- Establish and sustain high-quality, expert teaching across all subjects and phases, built on an evidence-informed understanding of effective teaching and how children 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.

### **3. Curriculum and assessment**

Leaders:

- 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 children 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 children's knowledge and understanding of the curriculum.

#### **4. Behaviour**

Leaders:

- Establish and sustain high expectations of behaviour for all children, built upon relationships, rules and routines, which are understood clearly by all staff and children;
- 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.

#### **5. Additional and special educational needs and disabilities**

Leaders:

- Ensure the school holds ambitious expectations for all children with additional and special educational needs and disabilities;
- Establish and sustain culture and practices that enable children 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 children, providing support and adaptation where appropriate;
- Ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties with regard to the SEND Code of Practice.

#### **6. Professional development**

Leaders:

- 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 Teachers' Standards for 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.

## **7. Organisational management**

Leaders:

- Ensure the protection and safety of children 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.

## **8. Continuous school improvement**

Leaders:

- 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.

## **9. Working in partnership**

Leaders:

- 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 children.

## **10. Governance and accountability**

Leaders:

- Understand and welcome the role of effective governance, upholding their obligation to give account and accept responsibility;
- Establish and sustain professional working relationships 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.