



Appleton CE Primary School
Building Wisely for Life

Introduction

Appleton Church of England Primary school is situated in a beautiful village, 6 miles from Oxford.

The most recent Ofsted inspection of the school took place in 2022. This rated the school as 'Good'. The latest SIAMS inspection took place in 2019 and the school was judged good overall and good for the impact of collective worship as well as for the effectiveness of RE.

After a recent period of instability, the school has undergone considerable changes with several new members of staff and a relatively new governing board. Last year the Governing board appointed an experienced interim Headteacher on a fixed term (12 month) appointment. He has had a very positive impact throughout the school, broadening opportunities for pupils, and engaging with both families and the wider community and welcoming them into the school. He will be moving on at the end of this academic year, as part of a planned departure, so Governors are wishing to appoint a substantive Headteacher who will build upon the excellent work of the last 12 months and continue to move the school forward.

Our vision: At Appleton Church of England Primary School, we follow Jesus' example of love and learn to build wisely for life. The foundations of our caring and inclusive community are kindness, responsibility and respect, and we strive to be the best we can be for ourselves and for others.

Our key values: Kindness, Responsibility, Respect.



A whole-school curriculum is based around a variety of themes, making use of a range of teaching and learning styles and of the wealth of learning opportunities on our pupils' doorsteps: in the immediate neighbourhood, through visits to the city's museums and exhibitions, through work in the school's grounds and through fieldtrips to other areas. Activities involving authors, artists, historians and scientists, as well as outdoor learning, all help to develop the children's knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes and their relationship with the local and wider world.



Parents and carers play an active role in the school, including through the Friends of Appleton (PTA) who organise fetes and other events in support of the school. The Governing Body consists of parent, church and local authority representatives. Governors support the school leadership in ensuring the provision of quality education: making sure that pupils are well equipped for the transition to secondary education, and for living as responsible and kind citizens in their communities.

School ethos

Appleton is a Church of England school with close contacts with the local St Laurence church. Pupils come from a variety of social, cultural and religious backgrounds. We welcome all: those from families who do not express adherence to a particular faith and those who come from a range of World Faith Backgrounds.

The school's CofE foundation is important, and pupils are involved in major Christian events which take place in the Church or at the school. The Rector, the Revd Wealands Bell, leads a weekly collective worship and is often in school.



The school prioritises the needs of its children: aiming to safeguard their welfare, and inspiring them to become responsible, motivated life-long learners, who aspire to make the most of their abilities, including (but not limited to their academic achievements). In trying to offer a 'home away from home', staff of the school have a strong commitment to promoting and supporting the well-being of all pupils. The school offers wrap-around care, through a contracted in Breakfast Club and an After School Club.

Governors believe that links with the local community, including with those not directly involved with the school, are vital: as a resource to draw on in the school's activities, as an opportunity for the pupils to 'give back' to the community and to forge relationships that span different ages and backgrounds, and as a means to showcase the work of the school. This will always be an area for continual development.

Contexts

Prior to the appointment of the interim head, the school had suffered from a falling roll (153). This is especially challenging in the wider context of a falling birth rate. In common with most schools, in the past ten or so years, funds delegated to the school by the government via the County have not grown sufficiently to make up for increasing costs. That trend too seems likely to continue for the foreseeable future. Both trends are impacting the operation of the school, and Governors are aware of strategic decisions that may need to be made in the future.

Up until 25/26, classes have been organised into single-year groups each with their own dedicated teacher(s). This model is under review to ensure the sustainable provision of high-quality education and diversity of extra-curricular opportunities for children. The school has a number of highly valued support staff, whose roles and hours are reviewed annually. The school also has a newly appointed business manager.

Ensuring the provision of quality education and support to pupils, including through safeguarding policies and practices, whilst making effective and efficient use of available resources is the top priority of the school. Governors are currently reviewing how best to ensure this for the coming years. Information about the latest budget submission, and about proposals for staffing and classroom arrangements will be provided at interview.

Apart from external inspections by Ofsted and SIAMS, the school makes use of advisory visits from Headteacher colleagues in other schools, from the school's link advisor of the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education (ODBE) and from Oxfordshire County Council officers. The school's improvement plan is updated to take account of the outcomes of such visits, internal evaluations of curriculum organisation, and the results of teaching and learning.

The school buildings are in a good state of repair, and the school is working closely with the Diocese to ensure that this continues.

Building on the school's strengths and addressing its challenges

In developing the Headteacher's person specification (see below), governors considered the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

BUILDING ON EXISTING SCHOOL STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- The existence of a well-motivated, skilled and experienced staff team, who exhibit a great team spirit. Staff value and respect each other and the children.
- Children are celebrated as individuals and supported according to their individual needs.
- The current leadership team have been working to provide personal and regular communications - both to individuals requiring support and the wider-school community - and this has been greatly valued by parents and carers.
- Developing links with the wider community form an important part of the school's work.

Appleton School offers a Headteacher the opportunity to make a significant impact on the development of the school; on the learning of pupils, including, for example, by building on the mutually supportive and collaborative way of working amongst staff and by nurturing the school's relationship with parents, carers and the local community. There is a huge amount of goodwill in the local community who share the school's vision and values and are deeply committed to supporting the school to thrive.

ADDRESSING CHALLENGES

- A falling roll has necessitated changes to the operational structure of the school. Whilst much of this will already be completed, change for children, parents, staff and the wider community must be effectively managed. Budgets require ongoing review to ensure that the quality of education and support for pupils remains good.
- Changes in staffing in all roles means that maintaining a strong team, delivering effective leadership and supporting the development of staff is important.
- Embedding the school values as part of behaviour management and ensuring the whole school buys into this approach.

Working closely with the Friends of Appleton (PTA) and the wider community may support the school with funding.

Job description and salary

Applicants should refer to the duties and responsibilities of Headteachers described in the government's latest 'Guidance on Headteachers' Standards', available at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-standards-of-excellence-for-headteachers/headteachers-standards-2020>

The salary offered is in the range of Leadership Group 2 point 15-21

Applications

To apply for the post please use the application form which can be downloaded from the school website <https://www.appleton.oxon.sch.uk/Headteacher-Vacancy/> and submit it together with any other relevant information to the Chair of Governors at office.3850@appleton.oxon.sch.uk

In completing the application form, in addition to providing the requested information and explaining the extent to which you meet the Person Specification, please give particular attention to why you feel your experiences, skills and disposition would make you a suitable Headteacher for Appleton CofE Primary School.

- **Closing date for applications:** Wednesday 18th March 2026 at 12:00pm
- **Shortlisting date:** Thursday 19th March 2026
- **Interview date:** Friday 27th March 2026
- **Start date:** Tuesday 1st September 2026

Appleton CofE Primary School is committed to safeguarding children and young people. This post involves the type of work with children and young people that requires applicants to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service check.