



# Headteacher Application Pack

# Old Town Infant School and Nursery





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## Letter from the CEO of Coastal Learning Partnership, Paul Howieson

Dear Candidate

**Thank you for showing interest in the Headteacher vacancy at Old Town Infant School and Nursery.**

It is our great pleasure to count Old Town amongst the wider family of schools within Coastal Learning Partnership (CLP).

Old Town joined CLP at its inception in March 2020 when three like-minded trusts joined together to form a new Partnership. As an existing school within one of those three predecessor trusts, Old Town has been a highly valued member of CLP from the very start.

The existing Headteacher at Old Town often refers to his school as '*small but mighty*'! That phrase really captures the essence of this delightful school. Although Old Town is indeed relatively small – a two-form-entry infant school – there is nothing 'small' about its performance. Old Town was inspected by Ofsted in March 2025. A Section 8 inspection as they were at the time, inspectors concluded that '*the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection*'. Through the feedback from the inspector, it was clear that the school was nudging 'outstanding' in all areas, with no issues identified for improvement. Since then, the world of inspection has changed and Old Town now sits at the start of the usual four-yearly inspection window – but there is no doubt that Old Town is well placed to show 'exceptional' strengths in the future and we are looking for a leader to bring that firmly and positively into the school's reach.

Old Town really is a highly-successful and captivating school. It is simultaneously warm, caring and highly inclusive whilst remaining deeply ambitious for its pupils. It is a vibrant school community, rich in diversity. The school's strong values of curiosity, resilience, respect and independence bring tangible cohesion, purpose, belonging and meaning. It is a happy school: children enjoy being there, parents are pleased to send their children there and staff are proud to be part of it, making a real difference. Children achieve really well through Old Town; they typically start their school journey below average and are quickly supported to embrace Key Stage 2 on a very firm footing. This is due in no small part to the committed and talented staff; they are a forward-thinking and innovative team, working in meaningful partnership with families who greatly value the work of the school. We are extremely proud of Old Town Infant School and Nursery.

There have been meaningful and purposeful links established with a local receiving junior school to ensure transition is seamless for pupils transferring schools. Both schools have been eager to develop this aspect and have additional development plans for the future, including additional visits between the two schools.

The school's premises are a charming blend of the new and the historical. The school recently celebrated its 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary and you can see that in some of the architecture which captures the school's important history. But it also includes more recent and purpose-built aspects which bring a modern twist to the overall environment. Nestled right in the heart of Poole town centre, the school has turned its extensive outdoor spaces into an oasis of varied and engaging learning areas. The school's library is a real feature of accommodation and has attracted visitors from far and wide to admire its layout and provision for young children. The coastline is just a few steps away.

The school's nursery is successful and popular, providing the school with the chance to engage children early in their school journey; children join Reception confidentially because of the start they



have been given in Nursery. In their recent parent survey, 100% of respondents said that the school enabled their child to enjoy a positive and confident start.

Demonstrating the school's innovation and commitment to inclusion, Old Town has been running a bespoke provision for nearly two years. This is a well-designed and equipped space in which children's more complex needs are met really well. This is such a successful project that the school is currently working with the Local Authority to convert this provision to a formal Resourced-Base Provision. This move will secure this important space in the community for years to come. The school also hosts a satellite provision linked to Winchelsea Special School. Having been established at the school for around ten years, it is very much part of the fabric of the school. Although a separate entity – the children attending the satellite are not on roll at Old Town – the Winchelsea satellite enriches the school community in many ways, adding to Old Town's inclusion expertise and commitment.

The school has a well-earned and longstanding positive reputation. Parents are extremely proud to be associated with the school, valuing the dedication, commitment and professionalism shown by the staff. Recently, 100% of families responding to its survey said that they would recommend the school to other parents. The following comments are typical of the rest:

*'My child is eager to go to school every day.'*

*'We can see her confidence building and her reading and writing improving.'*

*'Rules are embedded from day one in a fun way.'*

*'We have a great amount of opportunity to engage with the school and help us as parents understand the learning taking place so we can also help contribute to the learning at home.'*

*'My child is pushed to achieve without pressure.'*

*'I have already and will continue to recommend Old Town Infant School. The community spirit and amazing staff are a breath of fresh air to a parent when we are looking for someone to not only teach and guide but be supportive of our children every day.'*

The school's Ofsted inspection in March 2025 identified a great many strengths. Inspectors recognised the values-led character of the school and that it is ambitious for every child: '*Pupils at Old Town Infant School and Nursery blossom.*' Inspectors also noted the strong behaviour for learning, the ambitious curriculum starting in nursery and how well vulnerable children achieve through the school.



Consistent with its commitment for schools to remain as expressions of their local communities, each CLP school has its own Local Governing Body. The Local Governors at Old Town are deeply committed to their school through effective challenge, monitoring and support. Governors make regular visits to the school and are well-known by staff and pupils. They stand ready to welcome and support their new Headteacher.

CLP is a Multi Academy Trust of twenty schools across two local authority areas (Dorset and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole councils) with professional central offices and training facilities in West Howe. CLP's two furthest points are St. Clement's and St. John's CE Infant School (in a beautiful Victorian building in sunny Boscombe) and Swanage Primary School in the Purbeck area of Swanage. Within the family of CLP, Old Town is surrounded by other schools who are keen to collaborate and share, both in the immediate area of Poole but also more widely across CLP's schools.

One of CLP's core values is 'Empower' and that shines in the way CLP encourages and celebrates variety and difference between its schools, setting it apart from other Multi Academy Trusts. CLP does not ask schools to be the same as each other but rather to learn from and support each other. Bringing its own expertise and character, each CLP school adds to the overall diversity of the group. As an infant school, Old Town is one of five within CLP, all within reasonably close proximity to each other. This brings real collaborative benefit - in addition to links with the junior and primary schools, too. All schools within CLP, whatever their size or type, are equally valued and share the same vision: to be 'schools of choice' which enable all children to become confident, compassionate, respectful and proficient citizens.

As Headteacher at Old Town Infant School and Nursery, you will immediately become part of a supportive and professionally generous network of Headteachers. You will also be supported by a highly competent central team, ready to assist you in realising your ambitions for your school. You can expect to be supported in all challenges around leadership of your school, including areas such as finance and HR, firmly within a climate of respect for your position as senior lead of the school. CLP ensures that its Headteachers have the space for creativity and vision. They are encouraged to be themselves, bringing their own character and style to their schools. Furthermore, CLP's Headteachers have a genuine 'voice'; through our collaborative approach and the value we place on working together in co-construction, Headteachers' opinions and talents influence what CLP is like and what it becomes. Through all of this, CLP's core value of 'Serve' is freely demonstrated.



CLP's schools have enjoyed a good deal of success together. We have seen multiple schools judged as 'good' since March 2020, including a number of schools which have improved since joining CLP from 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate'. We are delighted that the hard work of those Headteachers and their teams has been endorsed in this way. These experiences not only capture the impressive work of those schools, but they also recognise the positive impact of being part of the CLP family.

CLP's core values are 'serve', 'inspire' and 'empower' and I hope that some early sense of those values comes through this information pack. Our schools serve one another and, in turn, are served by a central team. Our Headteachers are empowered to confidently lead their schools' ongoing improvement journeys – and we all draw inspiration from each other along the way. The Headteacher of Old Town will not be doing the job alone!

I would strongly encourage you to make an informal visit to Old Town. You will find a warm and welcoming school with a big heart. Similarly, I would be delighted to speak with you about the school and about life in CLP more generally. The newly appointed Headteacher can count on the support, guidance and encouragement of CLP, including the Local Governing Body.



Old Town is adept at changing to meet the emerging needs of its community; we see that in many ways, some of which I've written about in this letter. For the next part of the school's journey, we will see it becoming even more inclusive and adapting for smaller cohorts in response to changing pupil numbers across the Local Authority area. It may become a bit smaller again...but no less mighty! That interesting challenge provides an opportunity for the school's future Headteacher. As you will see from the advert, we are approaching this recruitment process with real flexibility in mind. We are inviting applicants who wish to approach school leadership flexibly, to be a full-time Headteacher, but 'keep their hand in' with a routine teaching commitment or maybe there is someone out there who wishes to blend the role of Headteacher with that of SENDCo? Similarly, working on a part-time basis; that opportunity does not come along very often! We are open to those different approaches and flexibilities – just tell us about it in your application.

Thank you for your interest in Old Town Infant School and Nursery and best wishes for your application.

Yours faithfully,



**Paul Howieson**  
**Chief Executive Officer**





## Letter from the Co-Chairs of the Local Governing Body

Dear Candidate,

### Thank you for your interest in Old Town Infant School and Nursery

We are seeking to appoint a new Headteacher to lead our wonderful school.

We are proud that our school is thriving so well. It continues to be a happy and popular place of learning in the heart of Poole. We are extremely proud of the school's place in its community – indeed, those links into the local community, along with its relationships with parents – are central to its success.

We would urge you to visit our school if you can. You will be warmly welcomed in a happy and nurturing environment where '*children are at the heart of everything we do.*' You will see a purposeful learning environment with teaching and support staff bringing out the best in each and every child. There is a real 'family' feel to the school where every child is nurtured and encouraged and enabled to succeed. There is excellent support for children as we prioritise well-being with effective pastoral care. As a result, behaviour is excellent and children with additional needs are extremely well supported.

At Old Town, our levels of EAL are quite high and that adds to the richness of the school community. The children at Old Town achieve really well and we are proud of that. We have quite high levels of pupils who are disadvantaged, or who have Special Educational Needs, and we support those children really well so that they, too, enjoy success and fulfilment at school.

We are very proud of our recent Ofsted inspection. You can read the report on the school website and you will see that inspectors were really impressed with the school; if it had been a graded inspection at the time, we might have been recognised as 'outstanding'. Certainly, we think there is some highly commendable practice at our school and that is thanks to the skills, energy and commitment of the impressive team. We shine as a really strong school within the family of CLP. We are aiming to be 'exceptional' because that is what our children and their families deserve.

The school's values are Curiosity, Respect, Resilience and Independence. These values are thriving in our school community and we hold to them as the things that our children need as they live and learn through school and the world.

Relationships with parents are excellent as Paul Howieson has demonstrated with his examples of some comments following our very recent parents' survey. The highly experienced and talented staff in all areas of the school are dedicated and hard-working. Our committed local governing body is made up of parent governors and local people with a keen interest, and we will fully support and work closely with the new Headteacher.

We seek an inspirational and ambitious leader who will take our school even further! We really do believe that Old Town Infant School and Nursery is a school community that can be truly exceptional.

With many thanks for your interest in our wonderful school.

**Mike Randall      Lesley Hole**

**Co-Chairs of the Local Governing Body**



## **Headteacher, Old Town Infant School and Nursery, Poole Leadership Scale L9–L15 Flexible Leadership Opportunity**

Are you an aspiring school leader ready to take your first exciting step into headship without losing sight of your teaching craft?

Or an experienced leader looking for a more flexible opportunity?

Do you want to make a big impact in a small, nurturing and vibrant school community?

If so, Old Town Infant School and Nursery could be the perfect place to continue your journey!

### **Why this is a great Headship opportunity**

Old Town Infant School and Nursery is a small but mighty infant school located right in the heart of Poole, where every child matters and relationships sit at the centre of everything.

We serve children aged three to seven, offering a warm environment full of curiosity, creativity and imagination. Our staff team is talented, dedicated and supportive, an ideal environment for a new headteacher to grow or for an experienced one to enjoy a fresh opportunity.

As part of the Coastal Learning Partnership, you'll have access to collaboration and professional support, both from your Headteacher peers and from the strength of a professional central team.

### **A role designed to support you**

We warmly invite applicants on a flexible basis: whether you wish to work full time or continue your leadership journey flexibly and part time.

This headship allows you the option of leading full time, embracing your leadership role whilst also retaining your passion for the classroom through a teaching commitment of around two-day-per-week; or perhaps your full-time Headteacher role might include that of SENDCo if that is your area of expertise and passion? Or perhaps you are seeking to lead a school, working on a part time basis, around three days per week, but where you have flexibility and ownership of your working pattern?

If you are the right person to make a difference at our school, we want to hear from you.

### **What makes our school special?**

- Positive relationships with families and a strong community presence.
- A commitment to diversity and celebrating every child.
- Stimulating, imaginative learning environments fostering curiosity, a love of reading and a love of learning.
- An inclusive environment in which all children succeed, including through our emerging Resourced-base Provision and our relationship with Winchelsea Special School through our onsite satellite provision.

### **Who we think you might be**

- Energetic, warm and ambitious.
- Passionate about nurture, inclusion and exciting early learning.
- A people-person who builds trust and collaboration.
- Ready to shape a school while growing as a leader.

## What we can offer you

- A friendly, close-knit staff team.
- Enthusiastic and curious children.
- A manageable school size—perfect for a first headship.
- A central Poole location with strong community involvement.
- Professional development and support through the Coastal Learning Partnership.
- A chance to shape a nurturing early years setting.

## Ready to take the next step?

You are warmly encouraged to visit to the school, to arrange a convenient time please contact the office directly on 01202 673966 or [oldtown.office@coastalpartnership.co.uk](mailto:oldtown.office@coastalpartnership.co.uk). You are also invited to contact the Chief Executive Officer of Coastal Learning Partnership, Paul Howieson, who would be delighted to speak with you about the school and the wider Partnership. To arrange a convenient time for a conversation, please contact Helen Moors on 01202 806155.

**Applications:** Please send a completed application form to: [recruitment@coastalpartnership.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@coastalpartnership.co.uk)

**Closing date:** Midnight on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March

**Selection event:** Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March

To comply with our statutory safer recruitment practices and obligations, we are unable to shortlist incomplete applications. Please ensure you include a full employment and education history, details of two referees and explain any gaps in employment. **CVs will not be accepted.**

*Coastal Learning Partnership is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all staff and volunteers to share and demonstrate this commitment.*

*The successful candidate will be required to demonstrate that they meet the essential elements of the person specification and will be subject to pre-employment checks including a health check, and Enhanced DBS check, Child Barred List check and satisfactory references. We will conduct online searches of shortlisted candidates. This check will be part of a safeguarding check, and the search will purely be based on whether an individual is suitable to work with children. As care must be taken to avoid unconscious bias and any risk of discrimination a person who will not on the appointment panel will conduct the search and will only share information if and when findings are relevant and of concern. Applicants are advised that it is an offense to apply for the role if they are barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.*



## Additional School Information

### School:

Pupils on roll	147
Form entry	2
SEND pupils	10.3%
EAL pupils	40.2%
Pupil premium	31%



### Nursery:

Pupils on roll	37
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[Old Town Nursery Information](#)

## Links to further information

[Ofsted Report, March 2025](#)

### School Information

Old Town Infant School and Nursery is located in the heart of Poole town centre. Old Town Infant School and Nursery has a busy, thriving and positive atmosphere with impressive facilities and resources.

The school was previously a maintained school, managed by the then Borough of Poole Council. On 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016 the school joined five other local schools to form Harbourside Learning Partnership. Harbourside merged with two other local Trusts in March 2020 to form Coastal Learning Partnership.

### Local Area Information

If this role would require you to relocate to the Poole area, the links below may be of interest to you:

[Poole tourist information](#)

[Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council](#)



## Job Description: Headteacher, Old Town Infant School and Nursery

*Details of the role and professional responsibilities of a Headteacher are provided in the DfE's National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers. While the Headteacher is expected to meet those requirements and to carry out the duties as set out in the School Teacher's Pay and Conditions Document, we are looking for a Headteacher who will also regard the following as priorities in their leadership of the school.*

### Main Purpose

- Be a visionary leader who continually inspires, motivates and supports colleagues to provide an outstanding learning experience for every pupil in the school, fostering an environment of honesty and openness for all.
- Engender respect and trust throughout the school and be able to plan and deliver improvements through effective leadership, management and delegation.
- Work closely with the local governing body and the wider Partnership to ensure all children are eager to learn, aspire to reach their full potential and grow as emotionally intelligent, well-rounded individuals.
- Be welcoming and approachable, have high personal expectations as well as high expectations of colleagues, parents and pupils and show professional accountability, as well as deep loyalty to the school.
- Position Old Town as a proactive and professionally generous member of the CLP family of schools.

### Vision

- Lead by example, drawing on own expertise and skills and that of others.
- Embrace and build on existing successful practice, whilst looking at effective and innovative ways to enhance the educational experience to enable each pupil to flourish.
- Maintain a wide, current knowledge and understanding of education and school systems and pursue own continuous professional development.
- Be able to translate local and national policy into the school's context, taking into account the school's vision and values.

### Leadership & Management – Curriculum and Learning

- Set the climate and standards for inspirational teaching to occur in every classroom.
- Ensure the creation of a rich and inspirational curriculum which meets the needs of every pupil.
- Expect ambitious standards to be set for all pupils, overcoming disadvantage and advancing equality, holding staff accountable for pupils' outcomes.
- Evaluate the school's performance accurately and consistently, identifying priorities and means of improvement.
- Build further upon the current collaborative, friendly and nurturing ethos of the school.
- Support, care for and sustain the enthusiastic, dedicated and cohesive staff.
- Encourage and challenge colleagues at all levels to develop through high-quality training and sustained professional development.
- Build on existing strong partnerships with parents and carers, retaining an informal and open approach, ensuring they are well informed about the progress of their children and school curriculum, policies and achievements.

## **Leadership & Management - Systems and Processes**

- 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 and aligning with the arrangements of the wider Partnership where appropriate.
- Exercise strategic, visionary, curriculum-led financial planning to ensure the equitable deployment of budgets and resources, is in the best interests of pupils' achievements and the school's sustainability.
- Maintain the safe, calm and well-ordered environment for all pupils and staff, focused on safeguarding pupils, and recognising their exemplary behaviour in school and wider society.
- Work with CLP and local governors to recruit and retain staff of the highest quality, making appropriate arrangements for their induction to the school.
- Work with colleagues to deploy and develop all staff effectively in order to maintain and improve the quality of education provided.
- Oversee rigorous, fair and transparent systems and measures for managing the performance, professional conduct and practice of all staff, addressing any under-performance, supporting staff to improve and valuing excellent practice.

## **Shaping the Future & Strengthening Community**

- Fully embrace the work of CLP, actively engaging in all discussions and developments.
- Share innovation and work with others in the Partnership to develop excellent practice.
- Ensure the school is outward-facing, working with other schools to champion best practice and secure excellent achievements for all pupils.
- Continue to foster links and further develop the strong relationships which exist with parents, Governors, the wider community and the agencies which support the school.
- Ensure that new initiatives are carefully planned and thoughtfully executed to meet objectives, through clear and open communication with pupils, staff and parents/carers.
- Identify emerging talents, coaching current and aspiring leaders.

## **Safeguarding**

- Ensure that robust processes are in place to secure the welfare and safety of children, complying with both local and national requirements.
- Ensure that all staff share a strong commitment to safeguarding.

*This job description will be reviewed annually as part of the Headteacher's appraisal arrangements.*



## Person Specification: Headteacher, Old Town Infant School and Nursery

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Qualified Teacher Status</li> <li>▪ Evidence of, and commitment to, relevant continuing professional development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A relevant degree or higher degree qualification</li> <li>▪ NPQH qualification</li> </ul>
Experience:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Significant senior leadership experience (not necessarily at Headteacher level).</li> <li>▪ A proven track record of effective leadership and implementing whole school initiatives which have brought sustained improvement.</li> <li>▪ Effective management of the performance, professional conduct and practise of colleagues, including addressing underperformance, supporting all staff to improve.</li> <li>▪ Understanding of the current Ofsted evaluation framework.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Leadership experience within an infant school environment</li> <li>▪ Recent experience of the inspection process.</li> <li>▪ Experience of collaborative working across schools.</li> </ul>
Professional knowledge & skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Excellent understanding of how to achieve highly effective education.</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of the latest and proposed changes in educational policies and procedures.</li> <li>▪ Up to date knowledge of exemplary safeguarding practice.</li> <li>▪ Ability to articulate and communicate a vision for the development of the school</li> <li>▪ Have the credibility as an excellent teacher to monitor, evaluate and review classroom practice, promote improvement strategies and challenge underperformance at all levels.</li> <li>▪ Ability to accurately analyse and appropriately use performance data and other contextual information to identify areas for improvement.</li> <li>▪ Enhance the value of the school to the wider community and involve that community in enriching the learning experiences of pupils.</li> <li>▪ Ability to identify emerging talents and grow current and aspiring leaders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Awareness of key policy areas key policy areas including inclusion and equal opportunities and health and safety.</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of the wider legal and financial context of school leadership.</li> <li>▪ Exercise strategic, visionary, curriculum-led financial planning to ensure the effective use of budgets and resources.</li> </ul>

Philosophy & Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Champion the pursuit of an inspiring educational experience for all where every pupil can achieve success and be engaged in learning.</li> <li>Commitment to the school's wider community</li> </ul>	
Personal Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set the highest standards of honesty, integrity and professionalism at all times</li> <li>A self-initiator and developer, capable of self-reflection and able to set challenging personal targets</li> <li>Ability to work accountably under authority</li> <li>Approachable, visible with the ability to inspire trust and commitment from the school community</li> <li>Excellent interpersonal skills to foster the links with staff and stakeholders, e.g. governors, parents/carers, Partnership, local community, etc</li> </ul>	

*The post holder may be required to travel to other local sites, including other CLP schools as part of routine networking*

*Coastal Learning Partnership is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all staff and volunteers to share and demonstrate this commitment.*

*The successful candidate will be required to demonstrate that they meet the essential elements of the person specification and will be subject to pre-employment checks including a health check, and Enhanced DBS check, Child Barred List check and satisfactory references. We will conduct online searches of shortlisted candidates. This check will be part of a safeguarding check, and the search will purely be based on whether an individual is suitable to work with children. As care must be taken to avoid unconscious bias and any risk of discrimination a person who will not on the appointment panel will conduct the search and will only share information if and when findings are relevant and of concern. Applicants are advised that it is an offense to apply for the role if they are barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.*



## Coastal Learning Partnership – an employer of choice

CLP is committed to creating a diverse environment and is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. All applicants who meet the person specification will receive equal consideration for employment. We value the fact that our schools are very different, as are our colleagues within them. Our culture is one in which colleagues serve and inspire each other in the spirit of professional generosity; colleagues are empowered to be themselves and to be their best. At CLP, everyone is welcome and encouraged to achieve and be heard.

### Financial

**Competitive Salary**

**Recognising Continuous Service  
from other relevant employments**

**Higher than average Pension  
Contributions via our Occupational  
Pension Schemes**

**Holiday pay, increasing with service**

**Occupational Maternity pay**

### CPD and Training

**Excellent networking and training and  
development opportunities for all staff,  
from courses and qualifications to  
effective appraisal and internal  
transfer and promotional opportunities**

### Medical and Wellbeing Support

**Free and confidential counselling,  
physiotherapy, weight management  
support, menopause help, personal  
training, GP referral service and some  
private surgical procedures**

### Employee discount schemes

**Discounted BH Active Membership**

**Discount schemes offering a range of  
high street, restaurant, holiday,  
finance and other benefits**

**Cycle and Tech Schemes offering  
discounted equipment via payroll**

**Free Eye Tests for VDU**



## Coastal Learning Partnership School Locations

## Coastal Learning Partnership School Map

