



Backwell School
Reception

Headteacher

Application Pack

December 2024



LIGHTHOUSE
SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

Contents

Welcome from the Chair of Governors	Page 3
Vacancy and Application Details	Page 4
Introduction to Backwell School	Page 6
School Charter	Page 9
Job Description and Person Specification	Page 12



“What makes this school special is that it provides consistent academic excellence, yet remains a school whose hallmarks are friendliness, belief in the breadth of opportunity for all and a real sense of community. “

Welcome from the Chair of Governors: Jacci Ramplin

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the post of Headteacher here at Backwell School for September 2025.

We are a thriving and successful school in which the challenge is not only to maintain and improve the school's performance but also to ensure that we deliver for every one of our students. Staff, students and parents rightly expect a lot from the leaders in our school and although Backwell is a demanding place to work it is also a hugely enjoyable and rewarding context. We have great common purpose in our commitment to young people and belief in the transformational power of education.

The school has been led since 2016 by Jon Nunes, who was previously Deputy Headteacher and Head of Sixth Form. After nine successful and inspiring years leading Backwell, Jon has decided that he is ready to retire. The Backwell Governors and Lighthouse Schools Partnership (LSP) Trustees are looking for someone who lead the school into its next phase.

Backwell continues to offer an excellent provision to the young people it serves; both academically and through the extensive co-curricular offer, there is a solid foundation for future success. We now hope to appoint a successor who can help us fulfil our potential for continued improvement. There are very many strengths that we will all want to maintain at Backwell, but we know too that new leadership will bring change and we will support our new Head in delivering that.

I hope this application pack contains much of the information that you will need. However, as this is an exceptionally important process for the school and a significant decision in your own professional career, please do not hesitate to contact Clair Gardner, Head's PA (01275 463371 or cgardner@backwellschool.net), if we can add to or clarify any of the details that you have been sent.

Visits to the school are most welcome and Natalie Wilcox (LSP Director of Secondary Education) will be able to offer you up to an hour for a tour of the school and a discussion about any questions you would like to raise. School leaders, including Jon Nunes, will also be available for any school specific questions that you may have where possible. Please call or e-mail Clair who will be happy to make the visit arrangements - dates that have been set aside are:

- Wednesday 11 December (11:00am onwards)
- Thursday 12 December (9:00am - 11:30am)
- Monday 16 December (11:00am - 3:00pm)
- Tuesday 17 December (All day)

Natalie will seek to accommodate any requests outside these dates where possible and further dates of Wednesday 8, Thursday 9 and Friday 10 January 2025 are also available.

I hope that you will feel encouraged to submit an application to us and may I thank you in advance for the thought and effort that this will inevitably entail.

With best wishes,

Jacci Ramplin

Chair of Governors

Backwell School is a friendly and welcoming nine form entry school in a picturesque village, just a short distance from Bristol.

The Governors and Trustees are seeking to appoint an excellent Headteacher to work with the school's well respected team leading Backwell on the next part of their journey.

We are looking for a leader who will:

- support our continued journey in excellence with a focus on informed practice in the areas of curriculum and pedagogy to ensure we provide outstanding educational opportunities for all our young people.
- bring a track record of success in enabling all pupils to reach their potential, particularly those who are vulnerable.
- have the knowledge and qualities needed to continue to develop colleagues so that they achieve the highest standards of teaching and learning and who is themselves a skilled classroom teacher.
- demonstrate a personal commitment to inclusion and diversity of staff and students.
- enjoy celebrating the team's successes.
- see value and opportunity in collaborating with schools across LSP (our MAT) and beyond, whilst also championing Backwell School.

Our staff say they want a leader who...

- is approachable, visible and can build positive relationships.
- values the contribution of co-curricular experiences, including the Arts, Sport, Outdoor Education and the extensive wider offer at Backwell.
- prioritises staff and student wellbeing through genuine care, consideration and strong relationships.
- will build a strong, strategic vision for the school.

We can offer you:

- happy, well-behaved, caring and confident students.
- a talented and dedicated staff team valued for their innovation and creativity
- significant opportunities for collaboration and professional development within the Lighthouse Schools Partnership Trust.
- Lighthouse Schools Partnership offers an excellent benefits package including contributory pension scheme, a comprehensive employee assistance programme and benefits (offering discounts on shopping), cycle to work scheme and electric car scheme.

We would encourage prospective candidates to visit our school prior to application. Visits are scheduled for.

- Wednesday 11 December (11:00am onwards)
- Thursday 12 December (9:00am - 11:30am)
- Monday 16 December (11:00am - 3:00pm)
- Tuesday 17 December (All day)

Please email cgardner@backwellschool.net or call 01275 463371 to book a visit.

Further visits will be available in January 2025.

Applications should be submitted through our online recruitment [here](#) platform and candidates should attach a letter of application addressed to Mrs Jacci Ramplin, Chair of Governors (please do not include a curriculum vitae)

The deadline for applications is 9.00am on Tuesday 21 January 2025

Interviews will be a three-day process taking place on Tuesday 4, Wednesday 5 and Thursday 6 February 2025.

There will likely be further shortlisting during the three days.

Lighthouse Schools Partnership supports Equal Opportunities Employment. This Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. Enhanced DBS checks are required for all successful applicants



Advert

Headteacher

Start Date: September 2025

Pay Scale: L36—L40

Application Process

How to apply:

Applications should be submitted through our online recruitment platform and candidates should attach a letter of application addressed to Mrs Jacqui Ramplin, Chair of Governors (please do not include a curriculum vitae).

Please address the following issues in your letter of application:

- Examples of your work which provide evidence of your leadership skills and that demonstrate how you would work effectively in this post;
- The values and philosophy which underpin your commitment to education.

The written application will be scored against the selection criteria in deciding whether to shortlist applicants.

Referees:

Please ensure that you enclose the names and contact details of TWO referees (address, telephone or email) to support your application.

One of the referees should be your current Headteacher or, in the case of existing Heads, your Chair of Governors.

References will be used to support the selection process and will therefore be obtained prior to interview.

Applications should be submitted through our [online recruitment platform iTrent](#).

The closing date for applications is 9.00am on Tuesday 21 January 2025

Closing date for applications:

9.00am on Tuesday 21 January 2025

Application submission:

Online, [via iTrent](#).

Interview Dates:

Tuesday 4, Wednesday 5 and Thursday 6 February 2025

Address:

Backwell School, Station Road, Backwell, Bristol, BS48 3BX

Tel:

01275 463371

Website:

www.backwellschool.net



Introduction

We are proud of our school, our students and our track record of achievement and community. Our outcomes are consistently strong and reflect a trend of success in this excellent school. We cannot, however, rest on our laurels as our community rightly expects a lot from Backwell and a large school such as this requires strong, energetic leadership.

Backwell School is successful, friendly and inclusive. We pride ourselves on the warmth of our school community, the richness of our curricular and co-curricular offer and the very high quality of the staff who work here. In the paragraphs that follow, we have tried to highlight some of the key features of our community and to describe what makes this school such a rewarding place to work.

The Surroundings

The school is situated in the village of Backwell, just outside Nailsea, in North Somerset. It serves many pupils from Yatton, the wider area of North Somerset as well as some areas of south Bristol and the surrounding villages. Bristol is seven miles away (less than 10 minutes by car, bus or train) and offers a full range of cultural, social and sporting activities. There are many attractive places to live within easy reach. Staff travel comfortably to the school from as far away as South Wales.

The School

The school opened in 1954 and retains some of the original features, including the impressive theatre which is well used by the talented students. In 2011, the school converted to Academy status and joined the Lighthouse Schools Partnership in the academic year 2017/2018. We see ourselves as a community comprehensive school in nature, if not in name, and we will always work closely with our Trust colleagues as well as other local schools, the Local Authority and the Regional Director's office.

Backwell is an 11-18 co-educational comprehensive school in Group 7. There are approximately 1600 students on roll (PAN 270) including around 300 students in the Sixth Form; most study A Level courses but there are also good vocational options. The school is nine form entry with pupils placed in all-ability tutor groups. The school remains consistently over-subscribed.

Pupil Performance

Examination results are consistently above national average in both attainment and progress. In 2024, 57% of pupils achieved the Grade 5 or above basics measure in GCSE English & Math and 81% 4+ and Progress 8 is looking at being 0.21 (sig+). At A Level, VA was also positive and students go onto ambitious destinations feeling successful and ready for the next step of their education. More information on previous outcomes can be found here: [Backwell School - Compare school and college performance data in England - GOV.UK](#)

Whilst examination results are an important aspect of the school, we are much, much more than 'just exams'. The exceptional wide offer means that readiness for next steps includes many of the key skills needed for engagement in modern society. Students can participate in a huge variety of clubs and experiences across their time at school. Backwell is very well-known locally for its incredible drama and musical productions and performances which are the highlight of the school calendar. The detailed offer can be found on the school's website.



Introduction to Backwell School



Introduction to Backwell School

Accommodation

The school has an eclectic range of buildings, from the impressive original theatre to our most recent building, opened in 2021, which houses a fabulous new Sports Hall, fitness suite and state of the art science laboratories. There has been a programme of building over the years, but the school maintains its setting in beautiful countryside surroundings. Part of the school is organised into House Blocks with each House having a common room.

Backwell School also has a Nurture Hub which is a key part of the school; it provides a safe and calm environment for our most vulnerable young people.

Pastoral Organisation

Years 7 and 8 are led by Heads of Year, allowing pastoral leaders to be specialists in transition from primary school. In Years 9-11, students move into the pastoral house system where inter-house competitions and opportunities for role-modelling by other students is a key element. Students have pride in their House and there is a strong sense of belonging.

The House system is a cornerstone of the Backwell tradition. Students in Years 7-11 are organised into four Houses (Cotswold, Sedgemoor, Quantock and Mendip). Each House has its own identity and tradition, and they work very closely together. The House structure changes in Sixth Form so that students who join Backwell in Year 12 can feel the same sense of belonging.

There is a well-established pastoral programme that is delivered by tutors. Great importance is attached to the tutor's role, with responsibility for the personal, social and academic development of children in the tutor group. British Values and SMSC are delivered through PSHE, the Tutor Programme, curriculum time and through the House system.

The school has a clear policy on behaviour to ensure that there is a consistent approach and this forms part of the Backwell Behaviour Toolkit. Students and adults are expected to be polite, courteous and tolerant. Bullying in any form is challenged vigorously.

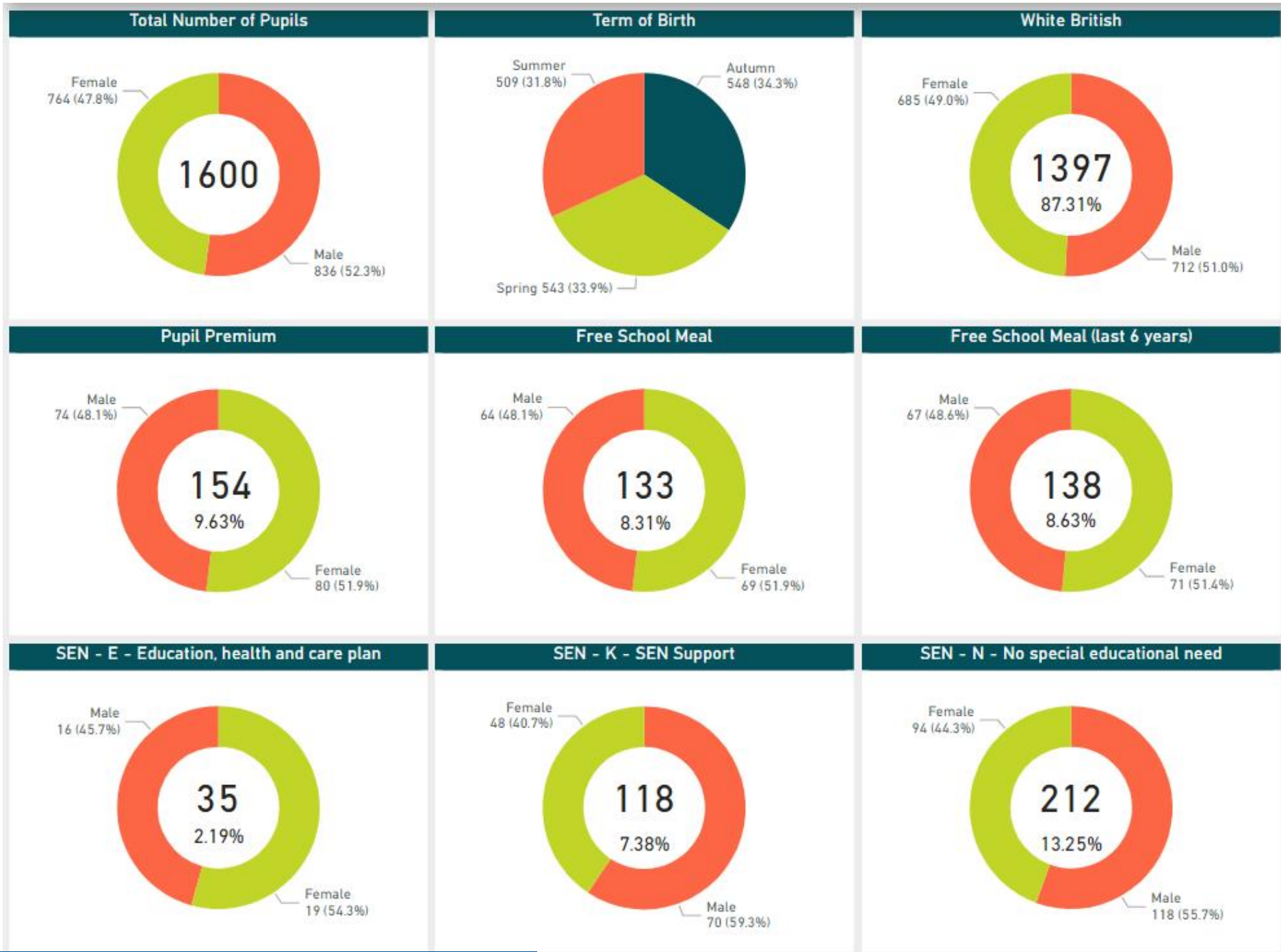
Governance

Our [Trust Scheme of Delegation](#) defines the remit of our Local Governing Body. Part of the ethos of our Trust is to encourage very considerable delegation to schools and this is clearly set out in the document.

The Trust

Backwell is one of 30 school in Lighthouse Schools Partnership (LSP). There are three other large secondary schools and the relationships between the schools are strong. Headteachers meet regularly along with the Director of Secondary and there is positive collaboration between the schools. The Trust's [latest Strategic Plan](#) is available on the [LSP website](#).

The Trust's central offices are based at Gordano School in Portishead.



Demographics

The School Charter

We are committed to maintaining a comprehensive school with a non-selective intake of students at age 11 which aims to enable and ensure that all its young people become:

- Successful, independent and enterprising young people who enjoy learning and achieve their best in all that they do.
- Confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.
- Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to their local, national and global communities and who respect diversity, in all forms.

The school will:

- Support the individual needs of all students.
- Provide and maintain a safe, caring and stimulating physical, social and learning environment where individuals are treated with respect, and discriminatory behaviour is challenged.
- Provide an excellent education for all students, giving them the opportunity to use and develop their individual skills and abilities, and enjoy their time at school.
- Maintain a broad, balanced and appropriately challenging curriculum that addresses the needs of all students.
- Encourage students to take pride in their school and to contribute to its development.
- Recognise and reward the achievements of students.
- Respond to and serve the needs of the local community.
- Work with parents, the community, other schools and local and national services for children and young people.
- Value the contribution of all staff and parents.
- Be committed to the professional development and wellbeing of all staff.
- Employ all staff under terms and conditions that are fair and reflective of their individual roles and responsibilities, taking into consideration relevant national and local terms and conditions.
- Consult staff on matters relating to their terms and conditions of employment, recognising the role of trade unions and professional organisations.

Our School Charter

Curriculum



Curriculum

At Backwell School our primary aim is to ensure that all pupils develop the knowledge and skills necessary to play their part in society and live fulfilled and successful lives.

We also want them to enjoy their time at school and have opportunities to pursue their interests and ambitions inside and outside the classroom. We therefore subscribe to the shared strategic aim of the other Lighthouse Schools Partnership (LSP) schools.

1	One which is broad allowing students to acquire a wide body of knowledge across a range of different subjects and extra-curricular activities	All students will be given the opportunity to experience a wide range of different subjects and disciplines.
2	One where students acquire the most powerful knowledge	Each subject will carefully consider and include the most important and challenging content within their discipline.
3	Enabling progress through a carefully sequenced curriculum	This allows key concepts, knowledge and themes to be revisited and built upon with whilst being increasingly challenging. This will need deliberate mapping within each curriculum area.
4	One which builds upon prior learning ensuring that students gain incrementally more complex understanding	With KS2 now being more challenging, our KS3 curriculum needs to reflect this in terms of its demands on students. This requires understanding of what is covered at primary school and how subjects can build upon this.
5	One in which knowledge is remembered long term and which is transferable across differing contexts	Knowing more + remembering more = progress. Subjects have a responsibility to support each other in the delivery of knowledge e.g. maths in science or drama in English.
6	One which is bold and exciting and one in which teachers have high expectations of what students can achieve	We want students and their teachers to enjoy learning and be ambitious about what they can achieve. This will lead to better outcomes.
7	One which prepares students for life in modern Britain allowing them to make safe, informed and responsible decisions	Ultimately this goal and can be seen as acquiring the best qualifications possible however it is also about the wider benefits of a well-constructed curriculum such as effective CIAG, SMSC and PSHE.
8	One which develops students into responsible, healthy, kind and ambitious young adults.	We want students to be ready to take an active role as citizens, armed with the resilience, self-respect, tolerance and drive to live a full, successful and positive life.
9	One which enhances the cultural capital of all students.	We want all students to be exposed to some of the key cultural, social and functional knowledge and skills to allow them to fully partake in our modern society.



Curriculum

Curriculum Information

At Key Stage 3 students are mainly taught in mixed-ability groups but there is some setting in Maths, Languages, PE and Science. All students study Art, Design Technology (DT), Performing Arts, English, a Modern Foreign Language (French or Spanish), Geography, History, Mathematics, Music, Philosophy and Religion (P&R), Physical Education (PE), Personal, Health and Social Education (PHSE) and Science. Some study a second foreign language from Year 8 onwards. From Year 9 onwards all students will begin to study their KS4 Science course(s).

The majority of students study GCSE courses, usually taking nine or more subjects. All take English Language, English Literature, Maths and at least a double award in Science (approximately half of our students take all three separate sciences). The vast majority will also take, at least, one modern language (French, Spanish or German)

More detailed curriculum information can be found in the 'Curriculum' pages of the school website, where you will find details of the school's approach to the curriculum together with a document outlining the curriculum content for Years 7, 8 and 9. The Key Stage 4 Options Booklet (Years 10 and 11) can be found on the 'GCSE Options' page and the Sixth Form Course Booklet on the 'Sixth Form Admissions and Courses' page.



The Post

Job Description

Purpose of the post:

To provide professional leadership of Backwell School securing its continuing success and improvement, ensuring high quality education for all its students and excellent standards of learning and achievement.

Reporting to:

The Chief Executive of the Lighthouse Schools Partnership and Backwell School Local Governing Body.

Line Managed by:

The Director of Secondary Education and accountable to Local Governing Body.

Headteacher Responsibilities:

This job description reflects and references the DfE Headteacher Standards 2020.

Ethics and Behaviour:

- build relationships rooted in mutual respect, and always observe proper boundaries appropriate to this 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 the position, students' vulnerability or might lead students to break the law

As the head of the Backwell School community and the leading professional:

- serve in the best interests of Backwell's pupils
- conduct yourself in a manner compatible with this influential position in society by behaving ethically, fulfilling the professional responsibilities, and modelling the behaviour of a good citizen
- uphold the 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 your own continued professional development, engaging critically with educational research
- make a positive contribution to the wider education system

School Culture:

- strengthen and sustain the school vision and ethos in partnership with the Local Governing Board and through consultation with the school community
- continue to create a culture where students experience a positive and enriching school life
- uphold ambitious educational standards which prepare students 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 through the Backwell Toolkit, across all subjects and key stages, built on an evidence-informed understanding of effective teaching and how students learn
- ensure that effective strategies are in place, closely monitored and reviewed, to continue to rapidly close the gap for disadvantaged students and other vulnerable groups
- 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 to shape and develop the curriculum

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 valid, dependable, and proportionate approaches are used when assessing students' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum

Behaviour:

- establish and sustain high expectations of behaviour for all students, built upon relationships, rules and routines, which are understood clearly by all staff and students
- ensure high standards of student 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 students with additional and special educational needs and disabilities
- establish and sustain culture and practices that enable students 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 students, providing support and adaptation where appropriate
- ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties regarding 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



The Post

The Post



- 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 students and staff through effective approaches to safeguarding, as part of the duty of care
- prioritise and allocate financial resources appropriately in line with the School's Development Plan, 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

Continuous School Improvement:

- make use of effective and proportional processes of evaluation to identify and analyse complex or persistent problems and barriers which limit the school's 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 the school to collaborate successfully with other schools and organisations within and beyond Lighthouse Schools Partnership 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 students

Governance and Accountability:

- understand and welcome the role of effective governance, delivering leaders' obligations to give account and accept responsibility
- establish and sustain professional working relationship with the Local Governing Body and the Board of Trustees
- 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

This job description may not necessarily be a comprehensive definition of the post. It will be reviewed as appropriate and may be subject to modification or amendment at any time after consultation with the holder of the post.

Essential Requirements		Form of Assessment
Qualifications and experience		
1	Qualified Teacher Status.	Application
2	Evidence of continuous professional development.	Application
3	At least three years of proven strong, successful leadership as a Deputy Headteacher or similar role in a secondary school.	Application, Reference & Interview/Assessment
Leadership		
4	The ability to think strategically and take the leading role of a large team to develop, build on and communicate a shared vision and strategic plan which inspires and motivates the whole school community.	Application, Reference & Interview/Assessment
5	Evidence of successfully implementing, managing and evaluating change.	Application, Reference & Interview/Assessment
6	The ability to build on current strengths and initiatives and ensure a smooth transition that delivers continuous improvement.	Application, Reference & Interview/Assessment
7	A clear understanding of and enthusiasm for current issues in education and evidence of embracing, implementing and embedding new research/approaches/technologies which are relevant to teaching and learning.	Application & Interview/Assessment
8	Evidence of holding others to account for their quality of work and performance.	Application, Reference & Interview/Assessment
9	Experience in financial planning, resource management and budget setting.	Application & Interview/Assessment



Person Specification

Person Specification

Pupils and staff

9	Evidence of raising standards that have impacted positively on pupil attainment and teaching and learning.	Application, Reference & Interview/
10	Significant experience in evaluating and using data to plan and improve pupil experience and outcomes.	Interview/ Assessment
11	A clear understanding of what makes good and outstanding teaching and the ability to develop a culture where striving for outstanding teaching and learning is central to the school's work.	Interview/ Assessment
12	A commitment to valuing, supporting and encouraging the professional development of all staff members.	Application & Interview/ Assessment
13	An understanding of how to lead others to use data from a variety of sources effectively in order to support pupil progress, including closing the gap between students who receive the pupil premium and those who don't.	Interview/ Assessment
14	A clear understanding of and commitment to promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children.	Application, Reference & Interview/

Community

15	Evidence of building and nurturing a strong, positive and collaborative team culture that enables all staff to carry out their respective roles to the highest standard and for all staff to work effectively together to deliver school improvement.	Application, Reference & Interview/ Assessment
16	A commitment to building and maintaining effective and positive relationships with parents, carers, governors, the wider community and other schools.	Application, Reference & Interview/ Assessment

Personal qualities

17	Can inspire and influence others, within and beyond the school, to believe in the fundamental importance and value of education in young people's lives.	Interview/Assessment
18	Excellent communication and presentation skills and proven ability to listen to, understand and work effectively with all children, staff, governors and parents.	Application, Reference & Interview/Assessment
19	The ability to foster an open, transparent and equitable culture and deal effectively with difficult conversations and conflict at every level.	Application & Interview/Assessment
20	Knows how to set limits on working life and supports others in doing so.	Application, Reference & Interview/Assessment

Desirable experience

1	NPQH or equivalent	Application
2	Relevant postgraduate qualification such as Master's degree	Application
3	Previous/current Headship experience	Application
4	Experience in budget setting, monitoring and review at whole school level	Application
5	Leadership of collaboration between schools	Application
6	Experience in leading CPD or shaping educational thought through publication or academic activity	Application



LIGHTHOUSE
SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

Backwell School:

Backwell School, Station
Road, Backwell, Bristol,
BS48 3BX

01275 463371

www.backwellschool.net

Lighthouse Schools Partnership:

Gordano School, St Mary's Road,
Portishead, BS20 7QR

01275 841396

www.lsp.org.uk