Headteacher

Slade Nursery School, Headington, Oxford

Role starting 1st September 2026, (applications for alternative starting dates will be considered)

Do you want to lead a vibrant, forward thinking and diverse nursery school that places children, learning and the community at the heart of everything it does?

The governors of Wood Farm Primary and the Slade Nursery Schools are looking for an ambitious, creative and dedicated professional to join us as Headteacher of the nursery school. The Slade Nursery School and Day Nursery is a highly successful and vibrant early years setting, serving the diverse Headington community in Wood Farm, Oxford. Federated with the adjoining primary school, and located in beautiful modern accommodation, this is a unique and exciting opportunity for an aspiring leader to take their first step into headship within a supportive and collaborative environment.

About the School

Our nursery school is federated with Wood Farm Primary School, in the heart of Oxford's Lye Valley. It is located close to the hospitals of Headington and a short bus ride away from the city centre.

This is a unique opportunity to be part of a federation taking children from the age of 6 months up to 11 years. At the heart of everything we do at our federation is our ambitious vision: to give every one of our children a world-class education, in a beautiful school where every child can flourish academically and socially - whatever their background and starting points.

The nursery school provides high-quality start for children aged 6 months to 4 years, through a curriculum grounded in the school values of Resilience, Independence, Creativity, Curiosity, Respect and Knowledge.

Our nursery school is a vital part of the Wood Farm community. We have a rich variety of different cultures in our school, with over 19 different languages spoken at home by our children. We are proud to offer a safe, welcoming space for families, where children thrive and parents feel supported. In addition to our educational provision, we host a community food hub and a popular stay and play group, helping to meet the wider needs of local families.

The successful candidate will benefit from the support and mentoring of a well-respected and experienced executive headteacher, making this an ideal opportunity for someone stepping into headship for the first time or wishing to develop their headship career.

The purpose-built school is spacious with three classrooms a day nursery space, a school library and the 'Home Hub', a suite of rooms specially designed and used to support children with communication and interaction, self-regulation and wellbeing.

Professional development is a priority for the school, and we have a 'Learning Zone' space, specifically for staff planning, preparation and assessment. We are very proud of the staff team. In the last year, we have supported several colleagues with apprenticeships in Level 2 Early Years Qualifications and others with their Level 3 Early Years Qualifications.

All classrooms and the day nursery have direct access to specially designed outdoor learning environments. We prioritise outdoor learning and have a forest school on site

The successful applicant will:

- Be an excellent teacher, with strengths in working with children across the full early years age range, and who is able to lead and inspire our children and staff
- Be an ambitious leader, who will continue to develop our outstanding school on the next stage of its journey
- Bring experience of and passion about working in a diverse community
- Have a strong, clear vision of the importance of high-quality nursery education
- Be dedicated to the progress and well-being of all children

We can offer the appointee:

- The exciting opportunity to lead a vibrant, friendly and effective school committed to growing and to making a lasting difference to children and families
- A well-resourced and stimulating learning environment
- A dedicated and hard-working staff team
- Coaching and mentoring from an experienced executive headteacher and support from a wider team of highly-experienced senior leaders
- A beautiful working environment, in an easily accessible location with excellent transport links
- Opportunities for professional development and career progression

Working closely with the federation executive headteacher and governors, you will be responsible for the strategic direction and day-to-day running of the nursery school. You will have proven experience of senior leadership or headship and be looking for the next step in your career.

Visits are encouraged, by prior arrangement. Please contact Lynn Wyatt, Nursery School Administrator, by phone (01865 750670) or email office.1011@slade-nurs.oxon.sch.uk to arrange a visit or if you would like to arrange an informal conversation about this post.

To apply, please complete the application form, which can be found here. Completed application forms must be emailed to sbm.2589@wood-farm.oxon.sch.uk by noon on Wednesday 15th April 2026.

Closing date: Wednesday 15th April 2026, 12:00pm

Interviews from: Wednesday 23rd and 24th April 2026

Safeguarding:

Due to our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, the successful applicant will be required to undertake an enhanced criminal record check via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Please note that it is an offence to apply for this role if the applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.

Our child protection policy can be found on our website.

Our selection process will assess rigorously all candidates' suitability and their commitment to safeguarding children. This will include:

- Identifying gaps and anomalies in career histories.
- Asking referees specific questions about:
    - Reasons to doubt candidates' honesty, trustworthiness or reliability
    - Whether candidates are currently the subject of any form of disciplinary or competency inquiry or warning
    - Any disciplinary offences relating to children including any in which the penalty is "time expired"
    - Any child protection concerns.
- Testing candidates' understanding and commitment to safeguarding children.
- Examining original certificates of professional qualifications and proof of identity.

We reserve the right to contact referees to check any concerns arising from the application, reference or interview. Please ensure one of your referees is your current or most recent employer.

As part of our shortlisting process, we will also carry out an online search as part of our due diligence on the shortlisted candidates, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025).

Job description

JOB TITLE:	Headteacher of Nursery School, Day Nursery and Early Intervention
GRADE :	Leadership Pay Spine L8-L14
TERMS:	According to School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document
MANAGED BY:	Executive Headteacher
ACCOUNTABLE TO:	The Governing Body
RESPONSIBLE FOR:	All staff employed within the nursery*.

*Within this job description references to 'the nursery' mean The Slade Nursery School, the Day Nursery, and services to children and families (including early intervention services) that are operated from the nursery school.

PURPOSE OF JOB:

To provide leadership, educational services and management of The Slade Nursery School.

This will include:

- Ensuring the delivery of high-quality provision for children from birth to 5, in order to improve outcomes for all.
- Taking responsibility for the setting of a balanced budget.
- Ensuring the further development of an integrated centre for children and families, based around a nursery school, day nursery and services for children and families.
- Promote the development of early intervention services for use by the wider community.
- Provide day to day leadership of the nursery school and contribute to the strategic leadership of the Wood Farm Slade Federation.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES:

- To fulfil the duties of a Headteacher of a nursery school as laid down in the current School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, and to develop the full integration of all services and settings within the setting.
- To be responsible for the management of the nursery throughout the year (including ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place for the day-to-day management of the nursery in the absence of the head).
- To work with the Executive Headteacher to develop the strategic vision for the nursery, and the overall vision for the Wood Farm Slade Federation, and to be part of the senior leadership of the Federation.
- To lead the nursery senior team in implementing the vision, and in providing robust and incisive leadership of the nursery and Early Intervention Services.
- To work with the Executive Headteacher and other senior leaders within the Wood Farm Slade Federation in the pursuit of excellence, and in ensuring the highest level of outcomes for all children.

KEY JOB OUTCOMES

In addition to the expectations of a Headteacher of a nursery school

1. Lead the education and care of children by:

- Developing outstanding education and day nursery provision for each child according to their age and needs.
- Ensuring an inclusive environment in the nursery in which all children's personal and educational needs are valued and respected.
- Ensuring that rigorous and robust safeguarding procedures are followed, to keep children safe and to protect them from radicalisation, and that there is excellent liaison with other agencies and early intervention services.
- Leading staff teams throughout the nursery in the development of a high-quality early years curriculum and provision.
- Work with the Executive Headteacher in drawing up and implementing appropriate improvement plans, and in the strategic development of Early Years provision and Early Intervention services within the Federation.

2. Lead staff by:

- Being responsible for the recruitment and selection of staff, in consultation with the Executive Headteacher, and working with Governors and other stakeholders as appropriate.
- Providing a clear framework of roles and responsibilities for senior leaders within the nursery and enabling all staff to be supported and developed.
- Ensuring that highly effective systems for the performance management of nursery staff are implemented, and that staff within the nursery receive excellent continuing professional development.
- Working with senior leaders across the Federation in ensuring provision of training opportunities and in supporting initial teacher training.

3 Lead the nursery by:

- Promoting the role of the nursery as a centre of excellence, developing links with other local services, enabling the dissemination of good practice, the sharing of resources and working in partnership with parents, carers, users and other schools and settings working in the area.
- Ensuring that the core purpose of the nursery is to meet the needs of children and families to achieve better outcomes for both.
- Ensuring on a day-to-day basis that the nursery is a healthy and safe environment for children and adults. Working with the Executive Head teacher and other senior leaders to ensure the effective and safe management of the building and resources for the maximum benefit of children, parents and the wider community.
- Working in partnership with Governors to enable them to fulfil their role in the strategic leadership of the Federation.
- Ensuring effective leadership and management of the nursery throughout the year (including ensuring that appropriate day-to-day leadership is in place during holiday periods or during the planned absence of the head of nursery).
- Working with the Executive Headteacher to develop a comprehensive and integrated programme of family support and health services, and provide day-to-day leadership of such services.

- Supporting the local authority to ensure an appropriate level of local early years provision and admissions protocols.

GENERAL

- So far as reasonably practicable, the post-holder must ensure that safe working practices are adopted by employees, and in premises/work areas for which the post-holder is responsible, to maintain a safe working environment for employees and service users. These are defined in the nursery, and Federation's policies and codes of practice.
- Work in compliance with the codes of conduct, regulations and policies of Oxfordshire County Council, and its commitment to equal opportunities.
- Ensure that output and quality of work is of a high standard and complies with current legislation/standards/ risk management principles.
- Carry out any duties that are relevant to the post of a Headteacher and/or requested by the Director for Children, Young People and Families or on his/her behalf, and the Governing Body.
- This list of duties is not meant to be exhaustive. The post-holder will be expected to adopt flexible attitudes to their duties which may have to be varied subject to the needs of the service and in keeping with the general profile of the post.

March 2026

Person Specification	Essential	Desirable	Application	Interview
Qualifications and experience				
Qualified Teacher Status	x		x	
NPQH or equivalent		x	x	
Evidence of continuing professional development	x		x	
Further qualifications in Education, such as a master's degree in education or a related area		x	x	
Recent relevant experience within a senior management role	x		x	
Recent successful teaching experience	x		x	x
Experience across the Early Years spectrum (birth to five years)		x	x	x
Experience and understanding of working in accordance with safeguarding procedures	x		x	x
Experience of leading staff and promoting their professional and personal development.	x		x	x
Knowledge of school financial arrangements and audit system.		x		x
Experience of working with stakeholders (e.g. staff, governors, partner settings/schools, involving parents and the community) to achieve agreed objectives.	x			x
Track-record of successful grant applications.		x	x	
Experience of strategic leadership and improvement leading to high quality outcomes for all learners.	x		x	
Experience of delivering inset and staff training.		x	x	x
Experience of leading staff appraisal		x	x	
Experience of developing a high-quality relevant curriculum for all learners.	x		x	
Successful experience in formulating and delivering an Improvement Plan.		x	x	x
Experience of promoting and developing inclusive practice and policies including for children with special educational needs.	x		x	
Successful experience of carrying out effective self-evaluation of school management		x		x
Experience of working in a multi-agency context including work with statutory and voluntary agencies, community organisations, groups and individuals.	x		x	
Successful experience of project management.		x		x
Experience of effective management of people.	x		x	

Person Specification	Essential	Desirable	Application	Interview
Experience of developing and implementing inclusive services, including those which meet the needs of vulnerable families and minority groups		x		x
Leadership				
Experience of making decisions under pressure.	x			x
Ability to articulate and deliver a vision for high- quality integrated provision.	x			x
Ability to organise and manage a range of services to be provided including day care, out- of- school activities and services provided within a fee structure.	x			x
The skills and abilities required to form effective professional relationships with staff, children, families and the community.	x			x
Knowledge and attributes				
Commitment to understanding the importance of and adhering to key policies and current legislation such as health and safety.	x		x	
Commitment to equal opportunities.	x		x	x
Knowledge of statutory guidance on Early Years	x		x	
Skills and abilities				
Good communication skills, both written and oral, to a variety of audiences.	x			x
Inputting and analysing data to improve outcomes for children and families	x			x