



Headteacher Application Pack

Space to learn, grow and be inspired

RESPECT * KINDNESS * TRUTH * POLITENESS * DOING YOUR BEST



January 2024

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in becoming the new Headteacher of Sonning Common Primary School. We are a happy and inclusive school in the centre of Sonning Common village providing space to grow, learn and be inspired.

After 15 happy years of incredible service, our current Headteacher is moving on to retirement and we are now seeking an outstanding candidate to build on our successes and help us to achieve our ambitious vision for the school. The school maintained its rating of 'Good' by Ofsted in September 2023 and the feedback we received from our inspection was reassuring and heartwarming. Our school is truly valued by the community it serves.

The pupils at Sonning Common Primary are happy, engaged and well supported by an outstanding team of dedicated teachers and staff. We are very fortunate to not only have well-resourced classrooms, but also large playing fields, a swimming pool, good access to other local facilities and a library on site. Our pupils value their school.

As our new Headteacher you will strive for excellence and build on the values at the heart of our school community. You will be ambitious yet nurturing, fostering a culture of openness and mutual respect. You will also set the safeguarding and welfare of our pupils as your highest priority. As change is a constant feature in education, you will embrace new ideas and have an entrepreneurial spirit in making our school the best it can be. In return, you will be assured of a supportive board of governors, exceptional staff, an active PTA and parent community, and you'll work with kind, curious, and enthusiastic learners.

You are warmly invited to visit the school and get a sense of everything that Sonning Common Primary School has to offer. Information on how to arrange a visit is at the end of this pack.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Keith Settle
Chair of Governors





About Sonning Common Primary

We are a happy and inclusive school proudly providing space to grow, learn and be inspired. Our location in the centre of Sonning Common village helps to do this as we are situated on the edge of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, with easy links to large towns such as Reading and Henley-on-Thames. The school benefits from large playing fields, an onsite swimming pool and library, in addition to well-resourced classrooms. We are very proud of our Forest School which gives all pupils a chance to appreciate and learn about the amazing environment they are in.



Our children develop within a nurturing and caring environment to become independent, free-thinking learners who have a secure moral and spiritual grounding. We are ambitious and want every staff member and child to achieve their full potential.



We provide a stimulating academic environment and design our curriculum to engage and excite our pupils, so that they gain an independent desire to learn. We have a dedicated team of Subject Leaders who craft the strategic vision in each area of the curriculum and look for opportunities to engage students in those areas in new ways. Our high academic standards are demonstrated by our excellent Key Stage 2 results, showing how well equipped our children are for their transition to secondary school. We continued to be rated 'Good' in our most recent Ofsted inspection in September 2023.

Like any other primary school we face challenges. From September 2025, we shall be reducing our intake from two form entry to one form entry, reflecting the demographic trend in our community, though we continue to maintain one of the largest physical sites in our area. We also have a growing intake of pupils with SEND requirements and we are committed to supporting their needs as best we can. It is important to us that our new Headteacher will be able to meet these challenges and further enhance the school in pursuit of its vision.

We aim to serve the needs of our wider school community. We provide a range of services to support busy working parents including a Breakfast Club, After School Care and Holiday Club.



Vision & Values

Our school is a values-led community school centred around making good relationships, teamwork and caring for others. Our staff members are dedicated to providing an education for the whole child, giving every individual an exciting and interesting start to life. Around 350 boys and girls aged between 4 and 11 and 80 adults make our school the amazing place that it is.



We are proud to provide everyone with a space to learn, grow and to be inspired. Our values of Respect, Kindness, Truth, Politeness and Doing your Best help us to shape the culture of our school. We have an ambitious school vision which we expect the successful candidate will support and develop:

for Students

- Improve teaching and learning so that teaching is recognised as consistently outstanding.
- Maintain our record of above local and national averages for progress and attainment in the core subjects.
- Forest School will make a measurable impact in school improvement and wellbeing.
- Attendance will be at more than 96%, with additional support to increase attendance of disadvantaged pupils.



for Parents

- Become the natural first choice of school for the village and surrounding areas.

for Staff

- Develop strong leadership and management across the school with expectations and ambition to always improve.
- Support all staff to continually develop and enable them to reach their full potential in their role and inspire both pupils and staff alike.

for Community and Sustainability

- Collaborate with the community on a wide range of activities and knowledge sharing.
- To be recognised as one of the most eco-friendly schools in the country, having reduced waste, increased wildlife and biodiversity onto the site, saved energy and generated our own.
- Sustain a healthy budget which provides for good financial resilience and the ability to invest in the improvement of our pupils' learning.





Key Facts:

Local authority	Oxfordshire
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	373 (changing to single form entry 2025)
Website	http://sonningcommonprimary.co.uk/
Latest Ofsted Report (September 2023)	https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50231004

Quotes from our most recent Ofsted report:

- “The school is a kind and respectful community.”
- “Pupils are keen to come to school to learn.”
- “Pupils are diligent and they know that their teachers will be kind and will give them help when needed.”
- “Pupils value the very broad range of extra-curricular activities that the school offers them.”
- “Across the school, staff strive to consistently implement the school’s carefully considered vision.”
- “Careful planning of additional support minimises time away from the classroom. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve well.”
- “Reading is a joy to many pupils.”
- “Pupils’ understanding of the world around them is broadened by an interesting range of experiences.”





Job Description

1. Shaping the Future

- a. Work with the Governing Body (GB) and others, to develop the strategic direction for the school, resulting in a collaborative, ambitious vision, which will be used in the School Improvement Plan (SIP).
- b. Produce and implement clear, evidence-based improvement plans and policies for the development of the school and its facilities, ensuring that learning is at the centre of strategic planning and resource management.
- c. Ensure that the vision is shared, understood and consistently acted upon by the whole school community.
- d. Set ambitious targets for achievement and ensure that the school community understands the need to have high standards and expectations of themselves and others.
- e. In conjunction with the Governing Body, regularly review the staffing structure for the school and take appropriate action to make changes as required.
- f. Manage the school's financial and human resources effectively and efficiently to achieve the school's educational goals and priorities.
- g. Develop a long-term finance plan to ensure that resources are available and effectively used to meet the clear priorities of the SIP.
- h. Monitor the SIP and initiatives regularly through self-evaluation of the school, pupil progress data, lesson observations, feedback from senior leaders and external sources and take action to ensure improvement is continuous in all areas.
- i. Secure a rich environment and a broad, balanced and creative curriculum that promotes successful teaching, learning and high standards of achievement and engagement, identifying and recognising good practice.
- j. Promote the intellectual, spiritual, moral, cultural and physical development of pupils through strong professional and personal leadership. Securing the conditions for all pupils to develop to their full potential irrespective of social or economic factors, race, gender, ethnicity, disability or learning needs.
- k. Be responsible for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people within the school as the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- l. Be responsible for implementing strategies to develop the extended school provision to meet the needs of the community.



- m. Develop links with other schools in order to share best practice and to drive school improvement.
- n. Maintain a positive partnership between all members of the school and the wider community and ensure that the school has an open and inclusive ethos.
- o. Deal successfully with situations which may include change and / or conflict resolution.
- p. Develop a culture of high expectations where good or outstanding teaching and learning becomes the norm.
- q. Be an excellent role model, exemplifying an outstanding standard of teaching and promoting high expectations of behaviour and classroom management to all members of the school community.
- r. Ensure that all pupils have end of year targets and that their progress is monitored robustly, through regular assessments, accurate levelling, appropriately delivered and evaluated interventions and professional dialogues where staff are held to account by senior leaders.
- s. Ensure that children who meet the criteria for Pupil Premium funding have been identified; strategies implemented, interventions evaluated, and children are tracked and robustly monitored in order to narrow the gap between different groups of children.
- t. Ensure that the school is inclusive and has excellent provision and support for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN), English as an Additional Language (EAL), and those who are high achievers or vulnerable.
- u. Ensure that transition between years and phases is effectively managed.
- v. Ensure that the organisation and implementation of the curriculum enables staff to deliver good or outstanding teaching and learning so that pupils are engaged, focused and can achieve.
- w. Ensure that the monitoring and evaluation of lesson planning, learning, teaching, assessment, pupil voice and levels of attainment are effective in delivering continuous improvement and are appropriate to meet every pupils' needs.
- x. Monitor and evaluate the priorities and targets in the SIP and review their impact on standards and quality and take any follow up action as may be necessary.



2. Leading Teaching and Learning

- a. Develop a culture of high expectations where good or outstanding teaching and learning becomes the norm.
- b. Be an excellent role model, exemplifying an outstanding standard of teaching and promoting high expectations of behaviour and classroom management to all members of the school community.
- c. Ensure that all pupils have end of year targets and that their progress is monitored robustly, through regular assessments, accurate levelling, appropriately delivered and evaluated interventions and professional dialogues where staff are held to account by senior leaders.
- d. Ensure that children who meet the criteria for Pupil Premium funding have been identified; strategies implemented, interventions evaluated, and children are tracked and robustly monitored in order to narrow the gap between different groups of children.
- e. Ensure that the school is inclusive and has excellent provision and support for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN), English as an Additional Language (EAL), and those who are high achievers or who are in receipt of Pupil Premium funding.
- f. Ensure that transition between years and phases is effectively managed.
- g. Ensure that the organisation and implementation of the curriculum enables staff to deliver good or outstanding teaching and learning so that pupils are engaged, focused and can achieve.
- h. Ensure that the monitoring and evaluation of lesson planning, learning, teaching, assessment, pupil voice and levels of attainment are effective in delivering continuous improvement and are appropriate to meet every pupil's needs.
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3. Developing Self and Working with Others

- a. Motivate staff through effective distributed leadership, personal example and excellent communication thereby developing and empowering individuals and sustaining effective teams that deliver improvements in teaching and learning across all phases.
- b. Foster an open, transparent and equitable culture, with clear policies and procedures which are known and understood by all.
- c. Solve problems and resolve conflict through firm but sensitive leadership and management.
- d. Encourage a culture of self-development and continuous professional development through providing opportunities for distributed leadership, mentoring, training and networking.
- e. Work with staff to maximise their contribution toward improving and sustaining the quality of education provided and standards achieved.
- f. Ensure that constructive working relationships are formed within school teams and between pupils and staff.
- g. Support and motivate staff to carry out their responsibilities and achieve high standards and be prepared to take appropriate action when performance is unsatisfactory.
- h. Carry out appraisal of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) with regular reviews of their overall performance and achievement of objectives.
- i. Ensure that the whole school appraisal and pay policies are fully implemented and report annually on their effectiveness to the Governing Body.
- j. Plan, allocate, support and evaluate work undertaken by staff, whether working individually or in teams, ensuring clear delegation and definition of roles and responsibilities.
- k. Identify and undertake professional development opportunities to further develop your own leadership skills to benefit yourself and the school.



4. Managing the Organisation

- a. Be responsible for the internal organisation, management and control of the school.
- b. Recruit and retain high quality teaching and support staff and ensure that safe recruitment requirements are met.
- c. Ensure that the range, quality, quantity and use of all available resources are focused on improving the quality of education, improving pupil achievements, and securing value for money.
- d. Be responsible for the efficiency and effectiveness of the school in particular the management of the school's human and material resources and ensure that the school premises are maintained, safe, clean and secure.
- e. In conjunction with the Governing Body ensure that the annual budget for the school is prepared appropriately and includes priorities for expenditure and the allocation of funding is in line with the finance strategy and the SIP.
- f. Ensure that the school accounting systems are sound and effectively managed by the School Business Manager (SBM) and adequate financial, safeguarding, educational and administrative records are kept.
- g. Ensure recommendations from any audit reports are implemented appropriately.
- h. Ensure both the external and internal areas of the school are tidy, attractive and fit for purpose.
- i. Ensure the school is compliant with health and safety legislation.

5. Securing Accountability

- a. Develop an organisation in which everyone shares knowledge and understanding and accepts collective accountability for the success of the school.
- b. Engage the school community in systematic and rigorous self - evaluation of the work of the school.
- c. Collect, use and share a variety of data including external evaluations and comparative data to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school in order to raise standards and promote achievement and accountability for pupil learning.



- d. Be accountable for the development, implementation and review of all school policies, procedures and activities, to monitor and report on progress and outcomes and take or propose action where necessary.
- e. Be a member of the Governing Body.
- f. Develop and sustain effective relationships with the Governing Body to ensure effective governance of the school and the discharge of Governing Body responsibilities.
- g. Determine, maintain and review effective reporting systems which appropriately inform stakeholders on relevant school matters, including regular reports to the Governing Body.
- h. Develop and present a coherent, understandable and accurate account of the school's performance to a range of audiences including the GB, parents, staff, LA, HMI and Ofsted.

6. Strengthening Community

- a. Ensure parents are well informed about the progress of their children, curriculum provision, school policies and achievements and about the contribution they can make to the success of the school, through reports, letters, meetings and the school's web site.
- b. Be fully appraised and aware of educational and other appropriate developments whether national or local and assess their impact on the school.
- c. Enhance and sustain the school's standing and role within the local community.
- d. Develop and implement a clear communication strategy for the school to ensure an accurate, consistent and informative approach across all media is used.

The duties outlined in this job description are in addition to the duties and responsibilities of Headteachers as set out in the Annual Teachers Pay and Conditions Document. The duties are not exclusive and may be modified by the Governing Body, after discussion, to reflect or anticipate changes in the job, commensurate with the salary and job title.



Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications and training		
Qualified teacher status	X	
Degree	X	
Relevant postgraduate qualification	X	
Senior Leadership Development (e.g. National professional qualification for headship (NPQH))		X
Up to date safeguarding training (e.g., DSL and safer recruitment training)		X
Experience		
Successful senior leadership and management experience in at least one school for a minimum of five years	X	
Teaching experience in a range of contexts	X	
Leadership of whole school improvement including self-evaluation and strategic planning based on a thorough analysis of what is working well and identification of complex barriers	X	
Demonstrable experience of successful management of staff and staff development	X	
Professional knowledge		
Up to date knowledge of Keeping Children Safe in Education and ability to develop a whole school culture around safeguarding	X	
Understanding of evidence informed curriculum design that meets the needs of all learners and the ability to lead this with and through others across the whole school	X	
Understanding of evidence informed approaches to reading in order that all children have the skills they need to access all aspects of learning	X	
Knowledge of effective governance and a willingness to engage constructively in accountability processes	X	
Knowledge of effective strategies that successfully manage behaviour and promote positive learning behaviours	X	
Knowledge of how to work effectively in partnership with parents, carers and professionals to meet the needs of all pupils including those with SEND	X	
Knowledge of statutory duties and regulatory frameworks and a determination to ensure that this knowledge is kept up to date	X	



Professional skills		
Ability to communicate a vision and inspire others	X	
Ability to plan strategically and evaluate accurately	X	
Effective communication and interpersonal skills	X	
Understanding of high-quality teaching and assessment based on evidence, and the ability to model this for others and support others to improve	X	
Data analysis skills, and the ability to use data to set targets and identify areas for development	X	
Understanding of school finances and financial management		X
Personal qualities		
A commitment to getting ambitious outcomes for all pupils and promoting the ethos and values of the school	X	
Ability to ensure positive working relationships	X	
Ability to work under pressure and prioritise effectively	X	
Commitment to maintaining confidentiality at all times	X	
Commitment to safeguarding	X	
Commitment to equality, ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways that exploit the position	X	
Commitment to working in partnership with parents, carers, the community, the local authority, and other partners	X	

Safeguarding & How to Apply

A full job application pack and application form can be downloaded here:

[SCPS Vacancies](#)

Deadline for applications - Application forms should be submitted with a covering letter addressed to Keith Settle, Chair of Governors, by 8am Monday 19th February to sbm@sonning-common.oxon.sch.uk. CVs cannot be accepted.

Shortlisting will take place from 19th February and successful candidates will be invited to an interview by 4pm on 23rd February 2024, pending satisfactory references.

Further details about interview arrangements will be provided to those shortlisted.

Interviews will be held in the week beginning **Monday 4th March 2024**.

Start Date: **1st September 2024.**

Visits to the school are most welcome by appointment. Please contact Kate Balcon, our school business manager (sbm@sonning-common.oxon.sch.uk) to arrange a time.

Please write to us if you have any questions sbm@sonning-common.oxon.sch.uk.



Safer Recruitment

Oxfordshire Schools are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

This post involves the type of work with children and young people that requires applicants to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service check and appropriate Right to Work clearances in line with our recruitment and selection practices. The possession of a criminal record will not necessarily prevent an applicant from obtaining this post. All users are considered confidentially and according to the nature of the role and information disclosed.

Sonning Common Primary is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Sonning Common Primary School
Grove Road
Sonning Common
READING, RG4 9RJ