



Headteacher Welcome Pack

St Helen's Primary School



Headteacher Welcome Pack

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Summary

Are you an ambitious values-driven leader ready to shape the next chapter of a thriving village school?

Are you ready to take the next step into headship and make your mark?

St Helen's Primary School is seeking an aspiring leader to build on strong foundations and lead a welcoming, ambitious village school into its next phase. With the support of an experienced governing body and a committed team, this is an excellent opportunity to grow into the role of Headteacher while driving meaningful improvement and shaping the future of the school.

St Helen's Primary School is a warm, inclusive, and high-performing one-form entry school at the heart of a proud and supportive community. Following the successful leadership of our current Co-Headteachers, we are seeking a Headteacher who can build on strong foundations and lead the school confidently into its next phase.

This is an exciting moment for the school. With a strong ethos, committed staff team, and engaged governing body, we are well placed for further growth.

We are looking for a leader who:

- Combines **strategic clarity with emotional intelligence**
- Is highly visible and committed to **building relationships across the community**
- Can **inspire and develop staff**, driving high expectations for all pupils
- Brings the resilience and **ambition** to lead sustained school improvement
- Is **excited** and can provide **inclusive** leadership through a period of academisation, whilst holding continued high standards for pupils and staff

In return, we offer:

- A **welcoming**, enthusiastic, and well-behaved pupil community
- A dedicated and **committed** staff team
- Strong and **supportive** governance team
- A genuine **opportunity** to shape the future of the school and wider system
- An **opportunity** to receive high-quality CPD and leadership support from local trusted partners



Letter of introduction from the Chair of Governors

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the position of Headteacher at our school. As Chair of Governors, I am delighted to introduce you to our wonderful one-form entry village school - a place which we believe offers a unique and rewarding opportunity for an aspiring or established leader.

The school is in the heart of our local communities of Bluntisham and Colne. We take immense pride in our ethos, which is rooted in kindness, ambition, and mutual respect. Visitors frequently comment on the "feel" of our school; it truly feels like a family. Because of our size, every member of staff knows every child by name, and our older pupils take pride in supporting and mentoring the younger ones, creating a cohesive and nurturing environment where every child is valued.

The Governing Body is proud of the school's journey so far. We are a supportive, engaged, and stable board with a diverse range of expertise. We do not view ourselves as distant overseers, but as partners who are keen to work alongside the school leadership. We are committed to providing the right balance of challenge and support to ensure you have the resources and backing to succeed.

This vacancy arises following the planned retirement from the role of our current Co-Headteachers. They have worked hard to establish a culture of high expectations and emotional well-being. We are looking for a leader who will continue their excellent work, whilst also bringing a fresh perspective to guide us through our next chapter of growth and sustainability.

Looking ahead, we are focused on securing the best possible future for our pupils and community. To support this, we are exploring academisation and are currently undertaking a due-diligence process with Meridian Trust. Meridian Trust has a strong local presence, with other Primary, Secondary and Special schools within our community, the majority of our pupils go on to attend one of their secondary schools locally. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this positive and exciting next step with you.

This is an exciting time to be joining our family at St. Helen's and shape the future structure and educational opportunities for our community.

If you are a leader who values a close-knit community, believes in a holistic education, and wants to work with a dedicated, passionate team? We would love to hear from you to learn more about the vision you could bring to our community.

Yours sincerely
Matthew Sampson
Chair of Governors

"Leaders are ambitious for all pupils"

*"Pupils are happy at this welcoming village school.
They enjoy learning and playing together. Playtimes are calm and happy.
Pupils play together kindly. They say, 'the teachers are kind and everyone is nice'."
OFSTED 2022*



Letter from the current Co-Headteachers

Dear Candidate,

As we prepare to hand over the leadership of this wonderful school, we wanted to share a few reflections that might help you picture the community you may soon be joining.

Between us, we have seen this school from two vantage points: one of us has had the privilege of leading here for several years, watching the school grow, evolve, and strengthen; the other has experienced the school through fresh eyes this year, discovering its character, its potential, and the warmth with which new leaders are welcomed. Despite our different journeys, we are united in our admiration for this community and in our belief that it is a truly special place to lead.

You will find staff who care deeply about their work and about one another. They are committed, thoughtful, and ambitious for their pupils. The staff are responsive to CPD and implement new ideas quickly and with enthusiasm. Our children bring energy, curiosity, and a genuine love of learning that makes every day rewarding. Families place great trust in the school, and the governing body is supportive, engaged, and determined to secure the very best for the future.

Like all schools, we have faced challenges, and there is important work still ahead. But what stands out here is the willingness of the whole community to meet those challenges with honesty, optimism, and a shared sense of purpose. This is a school that embraces improvement, values collaboration, and thrives under clear, compassionate leadership.

As you consider this role, we hope you see not just a vacancy but an opportunity to shape the next chapter of a school with strong foundations and exciting potential and to bring your own vision and strengths to lead a community ready for its next phase.

We wish you every success in the application process and, should you become the next Headteacher, we know you will have as much joy as we have had, and wish you every fulfilment in the journey ahead.

Warm regards,

Julia Walker and Andrew Robertson
Co-Headteachers

*“Pupils talk with great enthusiasm about the books they are reading.
They love to hear their teachers read stories aloud”*

*“Teachers know their pupils well.
They plan interesting activities, and pupils respond with enthusiasm”*
OFSTED 2022



The selection process

The vacancy is for a **Full-Time Headteacher to start in September 2026**.

The salary scale is L12-L19

Your application form should be completed with reference to the Job Description and Person Specification: we ask that you limit your further information to two A4 pages. The selection panel will take into account the qualifications and skills of each applicant as well as experience.

Key Dates

Closing date for applications: Tuesday 12th May at 9am

Any applications received after this will not be accepted.

Short listing: 12th-13th May 2026

Candidates chosen for the short list will be notified as soon as possible afterwards. Unsuccessful candidates will also be notified.

Interviews: planned for Friday 15th May 2026

We warmly welcome visits from prospective candidates. If you wish to arrange a visit or have any questions about the application process, please contact Amie Lill, School Business Manager on 01487 841468 or by email: finance@st-helens.cambs.sch.uk

If distance prevents you from visiting the school, as an alternative, it may be possible to arrange a video meeting with the Chair of Governors.

Please make contact by email to MSampson@st-helens.cambs.sch.uk to request an appointment.

Safeguarding

Our school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The post-holder must uphold this commitment at all times. This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check and satisfactory references.

Equal Opportunities

The Governing Body undertakes not to discriminate unlawfully, either directly or indirectly, against a job applicant or one of its own employees, on the grounds of sex or marital status, or by reason of race, nationality, gender orientation, colour or ethnic or national origins.

Please note that in keeping with current legislation, canvassing any member of staff or member of the governing body is prohibited and will be considered a disqualification.



About our school

St Helen's primary is a well-established school, set in generous grounds. There are 7 classrooms set across two buildings, with Brambles Childcare occupying a third separate building. We have 1 hall, a quiet multi-purpose space 'The Hub', a music room, dedicated PPA room, staffroom with kitchen, Headteacher's office and SENCO/multipurpose office space.

Outside we have a large playground including an outside classroom space that enables a class of 30 children to be seated on benches for outdoor learning. The structure also allows for the children to access shade and seating during playtimes. There is also a trim trail and climbing wall for the children to play on, The Nest reading pod for children to relax in and interactive 'Active boards' encouraging physical activity, coordination and fun.

Beyond the playground, our expansive field is home to our dedicated Forest School area. This is an integral part of our Early Years curriculum and provides valuable opportunities for exploration, resilience-building and hands-on learning. Throughout the year, pupils from all year groups access this space through our Nurture Groups, supporting wellbeing, confidence and a strong connection to the outdoors.



WINNING COVER DESIGN BY BETHANY (KITE CLASS)
Friends of St. Helen's registered charity: 277524





Curriculum

We follow the Monster Phonics scheme to support children in learning to read and spell. Through its fun characters and colour-coded system, pupils develop secure phonics knowledge, accurate pronunciation and it supports children in becoming confident, fluent readers.

Building on this strong start, we use Superhero Spellings to support the teaching of spelling across the school. This structured and engaging approach helps children to learn, practise and apply spelling rules with confidence.

We have recently introduced Kinetic Letters as our whole-school handwriting programme. This evidence-based approach develops strong pencil control, correct letter formation and fluent, legible handwriting, ensuring children take pride in their written presentation.

In the Early Years, Drawing Club is central to our writing provision. By combining high-quality texts, rich vocabulary and imaginative illustration, children develop their speaking, creativity and early writing skills in meaningful and engaging contexts. This approach is built upon in Key Stage 1 through Curious Quests, where pupils continue to strengthen their writing through purposeful and stimulating experiences.



In mathematics, we follow the White Rose Maths scheme to deliver a carefully sequenced and progressive curriculum. Through reasoning, problem-solving and deep conceptual understanding, pupils build confidence and develop secure mathematical knowledge.

We place great importance on developing essential life skills. Through the Skills Builder programme pupils grow in confidence as communicators, collaborators and problem-solvers. They are supported to develop leadership skills and resilience, preparing them for future learning and life beyond the classroom.

As part of our commitment to high-quality oracy, last year we worked with Voice 21 to prioritise purposeful talk across the curriculum. Pupils are taught to articulate their thinking clearly, listen actively and engage respectfully in discussion. This focus on oracy is continuing this year to strengthen both learning and confidence across the school.

As members of the Hunts School Sports Partnership, our pupils benefit from high-quality sporting events, inter-school competitions and a wide range of enrichment opportunities. This partnership supports our commitment to promoting active lifestyles, teamwork and sporting achievement.



Skills Builder
Gold Award
2025 - 28



Wider community school links

We are proud of the strong partnerships we have built within our local community. An enthusiastic team of volunteer readers generously give their time each week to support our children's reading, helping to nurture confidence and a lifelong love of books.

We maintain strong links with local church community groups, who lead some of our assemblies and organise and run special events at both Easter and Christmas.

As a Cambridge University Faculty of Education Partner School, we regularly support student teachers through high-quality mentoring during their placement periods, reflecting the strength of our teaching practice.

Our Vision and Values

St Helen's exists to provide, support, and champion high-quality education at the heart of our local community.



We consider thoughts and feelings of others.



We try our best and persevere even when we find things difficult.



We treat others as we would like to be treated, we are thankful.



We try new things and take calculated risks, even if we are afraid.



We have faith in our friends and the people who help us.



We recover quickly from difficulties and learn from our experiences



Friends of St Helen's (FOSH) PTA

FOSH is an active and supportive parent–teacher association that plays a key role in school life. Run by parents and carers in partnership with staff, FOSH raises funds to enhance pupils' learning experiences and resources beyond the school budget. Through events and activities throughout the school year, FOSH also helps to strengthen relationships between families, the school, and the wider community.

Party in the Park, the school's largest and most popular annual community event is organised by FOSH. It brings together pupils, families, staff, and the wider community for an afternoon of celebration, with entertainment, activities, food, and fundraising. This year it is on Saturday 6th June 2026 and we'd love you to attend.

Brambles Childcare

Brambles Childcare was established in 2000 and is based in a purpose-built setting on the St Helen's School site, working closely with the school and sharing facilities. It also offers Breakfast and After School provision.

A registered charity and member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance, Brambles is Ofsted inspected and run by a committee of volunteer trustees. It provides funded childcare for children from age two, offering a play-based approach that supports children's social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development.

School Development Priorities

Our current priorities include:

- To embed good practice in the teaching of reading and improve outcomes.
- To improve writing attainment across the school.
- To improve the quality of teaching and learning in geography.
- To ensure that disadvantaged and vulnerable children have equitable access to the curriculum and wider school life.

Inspection

St Helen's was last inspected by Ofsted in June 2022.

The Inspection concluded that St Helen's is a Good school. It commented:

Pupils are happy at this welcoming village school. They enjoy learning and playing together. Playtimes are calm and happy. Pupils play together kindly. They say, 'the teachers are kind and everyone is nice'.

Pupils behave sensibly in lessons. They respond well to adults' high expectations. Pupils are keen to learn and do well. They listen carefully to their teachers and follow instructions straight away. They concentrate on their work. They are confident to share their ideas and listen to each other. They reflect on how to improve their own work and generously praise the work of others.

Pupils have many opportunities to express themselves. They love to read and chat in 'the nest'. Older pupils organise clubs for younger pupils. Pupils take part eagerly in dance workshops. Their enthusiastic singing is delightful. They produce artwork using lots of different resources such as clay, paint and computer software.

Pupils learn about different religions, cultures and ways of life. They are tolerant, respectful and kind.



Key School Information

Age range of pupils:	4yrs - 11yrs
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number of children on roll:	186
Average class size:	27
Attendance:	92.10%
% of pupil premium children:	12%
% of pupils with SEN:	17%
% of pupils with EAL:	0.90%
KS1 phonics results:	95% met the expected standard
KS2 Multiplication check results:	34%
KS2 results % ARE:	Reading 65% (35% Greater Depth) Writing 65% (3% Greater Depth) Maths 65% (13% Greater Depth) Combined 55% (3% Greater Depth)
Type of school:	Foundation School (<i>LA Maintained</i>)
School awards include:	Skills builder Gold award, School Games Gold Award, Arts Mark school, Cambridge University Faculty of Education Partner school
Number of staff (<i>support & teaching</i>):	36
Latest Ofsted rating (Jun 2022):	Good



Location

Bluntisham is a thriving and well-established village in Cambridgeshire, home to a close-knit community of just over 2,000 residents. Situated eight miles east of Huntingdon and close to St Ives, the village enjoys the benefits of a peaceful rural setting while remaining well connected to nearby towns and services. Neighbouring villages include Colne, Earith, Woodhurst, and Somersham. Notably, the prime meridian runs through the western edge of the village.

Rich in history and character, Bluntisham has deep roots dating back over a thousand years and is proud of its heritage, reflected in landmarks such as the beautiful Grade I listed St Mary's Church and the historic village centre. The surrounding Fenland landscape provides a distinctive environment, with a strong tradition of agriculture and outdoor life. Bluntisham is low-lying and flat, typical of the Fen landscape, and was once known for fruit growing and was home to the famous Bury Fen Bandy Club, influential in the development of modern bandy.

Today, Bluntisham is a vibrant and supportive community with excellent local amenities, including a village hall, sports facilities, churches, local businesses, and public transport links in nearby St Ives and the Guided Bus route into Cambridge. The village has a strong sense of identity and community involvement, with residents actively supporting local events such as the Scout's Bonfire and Fireworks night, village Beer Festival, clubs, and the school.

This is a community that values its school, works in partnership with staff, and offers a rewarding opportunity for a primary headteacher eager to lead, inspire, and make a lasting difference.



What our pupils, staff, parents and governors would like in a Headteacher

At St Helen's Primary, our pupils, staff and parents share a strong sense of pride in our school. When asked what they would value most in a Headteacher, our pupils, staff and parents shared the qualities they believe are essential.

Our Pupils Are Looking for a Headteacher Who:

- Is kind, caring and approachable
- Is happy and visible around the school
- Takes time to say "good morning" and makes us feel welcome
- Enjoys spending time with children and being part of school life
- Makes jokes and can have a good giggle.
- Helps and supports them
- Is firm but fair.
- Good at sorting problems
- Gets to know them well

Our children value warmth, positivity and a leader who builds relationships with them each day.

Our Staff Are Looking for a Headteacher Who:

- Is approachable, understanding and supportive
- Demonstrates flexibility and emotional intelligence
- Has a sense of humour and fosters a positive working culture
- Provides clear and confident leadership for pupils
- Is organised
- Brings strategic direction and ambition, while recognising and building upon the school's many existing strengths.

Our staff seek a leader who will inspire, empower and guide the school confidently into its next phase of development.

Our Parents Are Looking for a Headteacher Who:

- Is approachable, visible and available
- Is kind, welcoming and forward-thinking
- Is child focused
- Communicates openly and follows through on commitments
- Maintains a strong presence on the playground at the beginning and end of the school day

Our parents value integrity, accessibility and leadership that strengthens partnership between home and school.

Our Governors Are Looking for a Headteacher Who:

- Can provide clear strategic leadership
- Make data-driven decisions
- Leads through inclusion
- Able to build strong relationships throughout the community



Job Description

Main purpose

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and we expect all staff to share this commitment.

The Headteacher will carry out their professional duties in accordance with and subject to the national conditions of employment for Headteachers, the provisions of all applicable legislation, and any orders and regulations having effect under the applicable legislation.

The Headteacher will be responsible to the Governing Body for the conduct, management and administration of the school, subject to any rules, regulations or policies made either by the Governing Body on matters for which it is responsible, or by another authority with respect to matters for which the Governing Body is not responsible, or by Central Government.

The headteacher will:

- Formulate the aims and objectives of the school and provide overall strategic leadership
- Establish policies for achieving these aims and objectives
- Manage staff and resources to that end
- Monitor progress towards the achievement of the school's aims and objectives
- Lead by example and model best practice regarding professional conduct, workload and personal development
- Be a role model for all in our community

Duties and responsibilities

Qualities and knowledge

- Lead by example, holding and articulating clear values and moral purpose, and focusing on providing excellent education for all pupils
- Build positive relationships with all members of the school community, showing positive attitudes to them
- Keep up to date with developments in education, and have a good knowledge of education systems locally, nationally and globally
- Work with political and financial astuteness, translating policy into the school's context
- Communicate the school's vision compellingly and drive strategic leadership
- Seek training and continuing professional development to meet own needs

Pupils and staff

- Demand ambitious standards for all pupils, instilling a strong sense of accountability in staff for the impact of their work on pupil outcomes
- Ensure excellent teaching in the school, including through training and development for staff



- Establish a culture of 'open classrooms' as a basis for sharing best practice
- Create an ethos within which all staff are motivated and supported to develop their skills and knowledge
- Identify emerging talents, coaching current and aspiring leaders
- Hold all staff to account for their professional conduct and practice

Systems and processes

- Ensure that the school's systems, organisation and processes are well considered, efficient and fit for purpose
- Provide a safe, calm and well-ordered environment for all pupils and staff, focused on safeguarding pupils and developing exemplary behaviour
- Implement systems for managing the performance of all staff, addressing any underperformance, supporting staff to improve and valuing excellent practice
- Welcome and work with the governing board as appropriate, providing the information it needs to govern effectively
- Support strategic, curriculum-led financial planning to ensure effective use of budgets and resources
- Support distribution of leadership throughout the school

The self-improving school system

- Create an outward-facing school which works with other schools and organisations to secure excellent outcomes for all pupils
- Develop effective relationships with fellow professionals
- Model entrepreneurial and innovative approaches to school improvement and leadership
- Inspire and influence others to believe in the fundamental importance of education in young people's lives and to promote the value of education

The headteacher will be required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and follow school policies and the staff code of conduct.

Please note that this is illustrative of the general nature and level of responsibility of the role. It is not a comprehensive list of all tasks that the headteacher will carry out. The postholder may be required to do other duties appropriate to the level of the role.

Notes:

This job description may be amended at any time in consultation with the postholder.



Person Specification

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Qualities</u>
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified teacher status • Degree • National professional qualification for headship (NPQH) or a willingness to undertake this
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful leadership and management experience in a school • Teaching experience • Involvement in school self-evaluation and development planning • Demonstrable experience of successful line management and staff development
Skills and knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data analysis skills, and the ability to use data to set targets and identify weaknesses • Understanding of high-quality teaching, and the ability to model this for others and support others to improve • Understanding of school finances and financial management • Effective communication and interpersonal skills • Ability to communicate a vision and inspire others • Ability to build effective working relationships
Personal qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be inspirational, visionary, stable and supportive. • A commitment to getting the best outcomes for all pupils and promoting the ethos and values of the school • Ability to work under pressure and prioritise effectively • Commitment to maintaining confidentiality at all times • Commitment to safeguarding and equality • Demonstrate the ability to effectively address priority issues, and to be adaptable and responsive to circumstances. • Demonstrate the ability to gain and maintain the confidence and respect of colleagues, pupils and parents.
Management of Staff & Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence significant experience and a proven record of achievement as a senior manager in an educational setting. • Evidence the ability to address problems and resolve conflict by applying skills of leadership, arbitration, and reconciliation, handling difficult situations effectively with subtlety and sensitivity. • Evidence the ability to lead by example, inspire high levels of performance in others, and maintain high levels of morale.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence the ability to work as part of a successful team, motivating others to achieve shared goals. • Demonstrate the capacity for development and improvement, and evidence continuous professional development at senior leadership level.
<p>Teaching & Management of Curriculum and Pupils</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence substantial successful teaching experience across a range of ages. • Evidence in-depth knowledge of the National Curriculum and sound experience of curriculum delivery, monitoring and assessment. • Evidence the ability to analyse complex curriculum issues, and to develop effective and creative responses or solutions. • Evidence the skills necessary to communicate effectively about curriculum, both within the school and in the community, for example to parents. • Demonstrate regard for personal achievement for each pupil within the school community, and an understanding of different and diverse individual needs. • Evidence the ability to inspire high levels of performance in pupils. • Evidence the ability to analyse complex issues relating to pupils' attainment and progress, and to develop effective and creative responses or solutions.

Notes:

This job description may be amended at any time in consultation with the postholder.

If you don't have all of the experience listed above, but are interested in applying, contact the Chair of governors via the school's School Business Manager on finance@st-helens.cambs.sch.uk.

