

Appointment of a Teacher of Religion, Philosophy & Ethics

Required: September 2021

Salary: MPS

Hours of work: Full time

Contract: Fixed Term – 1 year contract



Welcome from the Principal

We are delighted that you are interested in our Village College. Since opening as a secondary Village College in 1960, we have been true to our roots. We still seek to serve our community and to be at the heart of that community. The school has developed a very great deal, but our community ethos remains.



‘Excellence for All’ is our over-arching aim and it is the driving force behind all that we do at Comberton Village College. A long-standing national reputation for academic excellence and outstanding opportunities for all of our pupils does not mean that we rest on what has happened here. We always want every single one of our pupils to do his or her best and always seek to strengthen our work to enable this. Ofsted inspections consistently grade the overall effectiveness of our school (including the most recent inspection in February 2013) as ‘outstanding’. However, we continue to look for ways that we can improve and do more and do it better for the sake of all pupils and our local community. Our very high-quality and committed staff are at the heart of this and of all that we do.

We seek to ensure that all our pupils receive a broad and rounded education that enables each of them to become capable, caring and confident. The many opportunities available outside of the formal curriculum enable a whole range of talents and attributes to be developed in all of our pupils. These include exciting opportunities overseas in line with our aim to provide education with an international outlook.

The addition of a Sixth Form in September 2011 has enabled us to offer the same excellent standard of education now also to 16-19 year-olds. It was very gratifying that all aspects of our Sixth Form were also graded as ‘outstanding’ at the first time of asking in February 2013. Understandably, very many students are now choosing Comberton Sixth Form for their Sixth Form years.

As a village college, we remain committed to Henry Morris’s vision of the college at the heart of the local community. Our community provision is a central part of our role. We see ourselves very much as an “extended school”.

Comberton Village College is at a significant and exciting stage in its development as part of a multi-academy trust. When we set up the Comberton Academy Trust early in 2011, we were determined to have a Trust based on fundamental core values in keeping with the very best of Village College and community-based education in order to deliver excellence for all pupils across each of the Trust’s academies. As part of this focus on the future, we took the decision in September 2016 to rename the Trust to become The Cam Academy Trust.

The Cam Academy Trust now comprises 11 academies and we work closely with them to ensure mutual support and challenge for all of the pupils they serve.

In all cases, we see all of them as part of our over-arching remit to provide excellent educational opportunities and outcomes for all pupils in a comprehensive, community context. These core values are articulated in the values of our Academy trust. These values represent our unchanging guide through these very significant and exciting developments

We are absolutely committed to provide the very best education possible for all of our pupils and for our local community. We trust that this website helps to give you a helpful insight into that.

Peter Law FCCT

Principal of Comberton Village College

Overview of the School

THE COLLEGE

Comberton Village College was opened in 1960. As a Cambridgeshire Village College, it was designed to be a centre for the life of its community and to provide quality education for pupils aged between 11 and 16. This remains the case today.

In 1974, the school became fully comprehensive and, in April 1993, it became grant-maintained. It changed to a Foundation School and more recently became a Foundation School with a Trust: the Comberton Educational Trust. In February 2011 the school became an Academy overseen by the Cam Academy Trust. The pupil roll is around 1,800 while over 2,000 adults use the college for a wide range of continuing education and leisure activities. A £7 million building programme was completed in 2003 that has significantly enhanced a whole range of the school's facilities, including major new leisure facilities. A further £4 million building project provided further specialist teaching and learning facilities across a range of subject areas and has been in use since September 2009.

Our Sixth Form opened in September 2011 following the completion of a £9.5 million building project. It offers a strong suite of academic courses, across the subject areas as well as applied courses. This exciting development has enabled students from Comberton to complete their sixth-form studies with us as well as providing opportunities for students from other local schools. There are over 500 students in the Sixth Form who have achieved consistently high results year on year.

THE CAM ACADEMY TRUST

In 2011, The Cam Academy Trust (C.A.T.) was formed. It enabled **Comberton Village College** to convert to Academy status in 2011. Following this, the Cam Academy Trust has taken on further Academies:

- **Melbourn Village College**, an 11-16 Academy in Cambridgeshire. This Academy joined the C.A.T. in September 2013 following an agreement with the C.A.T. to do so.
- **Cambourne Village College**, an 11-16 Academy in Cambridgeshire, close to Comberton Village College. This has been opened as a new Free School by the C.A.T. from September 2013, initially with an intake of Year 7 students only. It serves the new and developing community of Cambourne that was formally in the catchment area of Comberton Village College. Numbers of staff are now teaching at both Cambourne and Comberton Village Colleges as both Academies work extremely closely together.
- **Gamlingay First School** and **St Peter's School, Huntingdon**, both joined the Trust in September 2016.
- Further primary schools include **Offord** primary school, **Thongsley Fields** primary and nursery school, **Hartford** Infant and Junior schools, **Jeavons Wood** primary school, **Gamlingay** Village primary, and **Everton Heath** primary. There is the possibility that the Cam Academy Trust could develop further, although this remains an open question. We are seeking to ensure that all Academies in the Trust work in effective partnership with each other and that there are opportunities for staff to share ideas and resources. For some staff, there will be opportunities to work in more than one Academy.

OUTWARD LOOKING

Comberton Village College has worked significantly with other schools and in outreach projects from 2001 onwards. This dates from various of the designations the school received between 2001 and 2007:

- Specialisms in Sport, Languages and Applied Learning
- Training School and Leading Edge Status

Associated with this, 15 teaching staff were designated as Advanced Skills Teachers and have worked in different ways with other schools.

In July 2011, Comberton Village College was designated as one of the first wave of Teaching Schools in the country. It now works with a number of other schools, including other designated Teaching Schools, as part of the Cambridge Teaching Schools Network in order to provide:

- Initial Teacher Training. We are significantly involved with ITT, including through partnership with the Faculty of Education, Cambridge and through our own SCITT.
- Continuing Professional Development. We provide a number of activities relating to CPD. Many staff in the CAM Academy Trust Schools are able to benefit from these.
- School-to-school support. Staff are involved with supporting achievement in other schools. This includes those designated as Specialist Leaders of Education.
- Research. Many staff are involved in research, including studying for higher level qualifications.

STANDARDS

Comberton Village College has received a full Ofsted inspection on three occasions since 2000: in 2004, 2007 and 2013. On each occasion, the overall effectiveness grade has been 'outstanding'. In the latest inspection in 2013, every aspect of the school's provision was judged to be 'outstanding'. This included the first ever judgement on Sixth Form provision where both teaching and achievement were both clearly deemed already to be 'outstanding'. The short summary was:

"Comberton Village College is a highly successful school which enables its pupils to achieve not only academic excellence but also to become mature, confident, thoughtful and rounded individuals with clear goals for their future lives".

Pupil achievement is consistently high. Typically at KS4, 80% of pupils achieve at least 5+ 9 - 4 grades, including English and Maths, at GCSE or equivalent with 40% of grades at 9-7. Value added measures indicate excellent progress for all types of students. Achievement has been excellent from the outset in the Sixth Form with the significant majority of all grades achieved by students being A*- B. University admissions are very strong including students gaining places on competitive courses at the most selective universities, including Oxbridge.

BROAD EDUCATION

The school's formal day runs from 8.30 a.m. to 2.50 p.m. with 6 timetabled lessons of 50 minutes each day. Pupils see their tutors daily and have a weekly assembly.

However, we believe that true education is broad and should develop character and individual interest. Given this, there is also a very full and wide-ranging extra-curricular programme that runs each day from 3.00 p.m. There are also over 200 school trips and visits each year, both national and international. We have significant school partnerships that involve exchanges in Europe, Peru, South Africa, Mozambique and Japan.

We consider the following as very important:

- Our major Duke of Edinburgh programme. Most pupils do the Bronze award with many continuing to Silver. Some now also progress to the Gold award in our Sixth Form.
- We have held the Arts Mark Gold Award for a number of years, a symbol of our commitment to excellence and breadth in Arts education and provision.
- We have been accredited as a British Council International School since 2002, a sign of our commitment to the international dimension of education.
- We continue to work hard to ensure that the Rights of the Child are promoted, encouraged and understood having been awarded the Rights Respecting Schools Gold award in July 2019.

AIMS AND VALUES

At the heart of what we do are fundamental aims and values relating to education. The Cam Academy Trust has six core principles that must be central to all Academies in the Trust. These have been at the heart of Comberton Village College for many years:

- The Excellence Principle - Education must be of highest of standards and lead to high achievement.
- The Comprehensive Principle - Excellent education must be for all pupils of all types and abilities.
- The Broad Education Principle – Education must incorporate a broad range of subject areas and personal development.
- The Henry Morris Principle - Education should be rooted in and serve its local community.
- The Partnership Principle - We should always look to work in effective partnership with others for mutual benefit.
- The International Principle. There must be a clear international dimension to education both inside and outside of the classroom.

Within these over-arching principles, we seek to ensure that all of our pupils reach their full, positive potential and become:

- **CAPABLE** in the skills relevant to their future lives and in having the knowledge which will increase their understanding, appreciation and interest in the world in which they live.
- **CARING** of others and considerate of the mutual dependence human beings have on each other.
- **CONFIDENT** of their worth because they have developed their strengths, understood their weaknesses and learnt that they can achieve success.

Overview of the Vacancy

THE RPE DEPARTMENT

The RPE Department is a dynamic, innovative and forward-looking one in which staff are dedicated to achieving excellent standards of pupil attainment and to fostering a high level of enthusiasm and motivation for learning. The department places a high value on enquiry-led learning and uses a diverse range of teaching and learning styles. Schemes of Work have been revised and fully resourced to reflect the enormous progress that has been made in recent years. We have used the Locally Agreed syllabus to think carefully about what we teach and the skills that we want students to learn in RPE.

Currently, at Key Stage 3 we work thematically. Through the three years, we look at several themes, including: sacred texts, equality, evil and suffering, life after death and prejudice. Alongside these thematic units, students have the opportunity to question and debate philosophically whilst studying world religions: in Year 7, students look at a range of religious sacred texts, Sikhism and Christianity; in Year 8, students look at Buddhism, Humanism and a range of religious attitudes towards money; Year 9 focuses on Islam through the lens of Islamophobia and Judaism through the lens of the Holocaust. At Key Stage 4 we currently follow the OCR exam board, with Christianity and Islam being the two religions studied in depth. The department consistently achieves outstanding exam results with 88% grades 4-9 and 50% grades 7-9 last year.

We are constantly developing strategies to maintain these standards. At Key Stage 5, we follow the OCR exam board which is split into the following units:

- Philosophy of Religion
- Religion and ethics
- Development in Christian thought

The department currently consists of two full-time and two part-time members of staff. There is a strong emphasis in the department on teamwork and collegiality. We are committed to the

development of original and innovative resources, which both challenge and stimulate. You will be joining a hugely supportive department, with a high degree of expertise. For example, teachers have contributed in national conferences, Farmington research projects and Cambridge PGCE and MEd courses. All members of the department embrace and share new ideas, which enhance the teaching and learning of pupils across the age and ability range. The department is involved in the mentoring of trainee teachers, and in this way we maintain very close links with the University of Cambridge's Department of Education, with which we frequently collaborate.

RPE classrooms are well equipped, with all classrooms having a data projector. All teachers are given a laptop which is connected to the projector. We also share an office with the History department, which helps when collaborating ideas and we partake in lively pedagogical debates.

THE VACANCY

We are looking for someone with the ability to ensure the further success of our outstanding RPE department from September 2021.

For this post we shall be looking for a person who has as many of the following skills and attributes as possible:

- The aptitude to contribute an experienced and growing team
- An interest in current national issues and debates about the teaching of RPE
- A good subject knowledge of Religion, Philosophy and Ethics
- The skills of an outstanding classroom practitioner
- The ability to teach effectively across Key Stages 3, 4 and 5
- High level communication skills
- A willingness to embrace innovative approaches to teaching, including the use of ICT, and a desire to learn from other subject departments and schools
- Ability to potentially teach A Level RPE (with the opportunity to teach Sociology)
- A commitment to contributing to the success of the whole College

The post would provide excellent opportunity for personal development within a well-organised and forward-looking department and a school that has professional development as a core value. The successful candidate will need to meet the requirements of the general teacher job description and person specification on the college website.

For further details and an application form please visit our website www.combertonvc.org/contact-us/current-vacancies.

HOW TO APPLY

Please complete and return the Teacher Application form located on our website. Your application should be supported by a letter of application (consisting of no more than 2 sides of A4 printed) which explains:

- The reason for your interest
- Your relevant track record that confirms you could fulfil the expectations of the role
- Your reflections on how you could contribute to the further development of Comberton Village College as a truly excellent school.

Applications should be submitted to: Mrs L Atherton, HR Manager via email to latherton@combertonvc.org, by **9.00am on Monday, 21st June 2021**.

If you wish to discuss the post further or visit us in advance, please contact Silouani Craveiro, Head of Department, via email scraveiro@combertonvc.org.

Please note: we do not accept CVs.

The Governing Body is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. An Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be carried out for the successful candidate.