

Assistant Headteacher

Recruitment Pack



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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the position of Assistant Headteacher at Oxfordshire Hospital School (OHS). We hope the information in this pack will be helpful to you and that it conveys exactly what we are looking for in an Assistant Headteacher - a leader who shares our vision and is fully committed to excellence in all aspects of teaching and learning for the benefit of all our pupils and their families.

As a Hospital School (we are officially designated by DfE as a Special School) our priority is to support every pupil and their family by providing excellent, personalised education during their time with us, and subsequently helping to ensure their successful return to their mainstream or enrolled school when they are well enough. The OHS is a local authority maintained school with staff employed by the OCC under the usual pay and conditions arrangements for schools.

OHS is commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council to meet its duties as set out in Section 19 of the Education Act 1996.

We were recognised as an Outstanding school in July 2017 and more recently in June 2023; we work hard to sustain and improve on this achievement. Our leaders, teachers and support staff aspire for excellence in everything they do and are open and committed to exploring new and innovative ways of delivering our outstanding provision.

“Parents and carers praise the teaching staff for their compassionate, nurturing approach. One parent said the school was the answer to her prayers.”

Ofsted - 2023

Oxfordshire Hospital School delivers education in diverse settings and is structured to adapt quickly to the specific needs of each pupil. They may be taught in their beds, in classrooms, or in their homes and many will be taught alongside pupils of different ages and abilities and with a variety of medical needs. In every case, our key aim is to identify each pupil’s unique needs and to respond with a bespoke programme of teaching that delivers the most engaging, stimulating and fulfilling learning experiences.

OHS is a progressive organisation with a growing culture of research and development designed to promote understanding of our field. We place great emphasis on the importance of engaging and collaborating with our partners, including professionals in the NHS and in other schools. This approach enables us to share our specialist knowledge and collaborate on new initiatives that support the wider education system and enrich our pupils’ learning experiences.



We are looking for a highly motivated individual to help us take the OHS forward; someone who can inspire and enhance the learning of our pupils, as well as lead and develop a staff team.

Applications are invited from individuals with a proven track record of successful leadership. Candidates should have experience in the field of special education in either mainstream, hospital schools, alternative provision or special schools.

We are looking for:

- An ambitious leader who is committed to improving outcomes for vulnerable pupils and has a proven track record working with pupils with mental health needs
- A leader who has deep knowledge of SEND and can demonstrate excellent skills working with young people and families in challenging circumstances
- A leader with knowledge of a variety of educational pathways at KS4 and KS5 and the ability to guide young people toward the best possible route progression
- A highly resilient and inspirational professional with the skills and personality to take this outstanding school further on its journey.
- A leader who can build positive relationships with the whole school community and wider stakeholders.
- A leader who is able to demonstrate the vision and values of the school in their everyday work and practice.
- A leader committed to exciting and innovative approaches in all aspects of the school's work.
- A leader with excellent communication skills, who will have an open and supportive approach to inspire, support and develop a staff team.
- A leader who is committed to the principles of ethical school leadership.

We can offer:

- The opportunity to work with children and young people across all phases of education who are unique and inspiring individuals with specific health needs;
- A highly committed and skilled team of staff;
- Outstanding teaching in an exciting and challenging learning environment;
- Continued support for personal and professional development;
- Passionate and highly committed Board of Governors, staff and parents.

The school's Governing Board is a forward-looking and supportive body of experienced professionals. This is a challenging role that will present the successful candidate with an exciting and rewarding opportunity to demonstrate their strategic thinking in regard to the future of the School, the progress of our pupils, support for other schools in the county and the continued development and support of our staff.



This is a rare opportunity for the right leader and we would encourage candidates looking to visit the school to contact us directly for more information. To learn more about the school, follow this link and discover more about the individual settings with the school community

<https://ohs.oxon.sch.uk/about-us/where-we-teach/>

About Our School

Oxfordshire Hospital School (OHS) is an Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) maintained Hospital School based across a number of settings throughout the county of Oxfordshire. The school serves children and young people aged 5-18 who are unable to attend their enrolled school due to a wide range of medical and mental health needs.

Pupils may access education through the hospital school for varied periods of time. OHS is the main Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) provision for meeting the requirements of 'Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs' (DfE Dec 2023).

The OHS staff work very closely with Oxfordshire County Council and a range of other professional service providers; relationships are particularly strong with the 2 local NHS Trusts of The Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust and Oxford Health NHS Trust.

The OHS is committed to:

- Offering an exceptional quality educational provision and support to pupils with long term or recurrent illnesses and mental health issues aged between 5 and 18 years;
- Enabling pupils to access as much education as their medical and/or mental health condition allows;
- Maintaining the momentum and continuity of education for all pupils;
- Supporting pupils to reintegrate into school or college as soon as practically possible and supporting discharge to ensure successful outcomes;
- Working in partnership with parents, medical and educational professionals, outside agencies and stakeholders, to minimise interruption and disruption to the education of pupils;
- Promoting high quality outcomes and raising aspirations for all pupils.



Where we teach:

The Highfield and Meadow Setting



The Highfield Adolescent Unit (HAU) is a Tier 4 general adolescent inpatient psychiatric unit with 18 beds plus 2 high dependency beds (Age range: 11-18). Admissions to Highfield are arranged by the NHS by the Thames Valley Collaborative with patients from Oxfordshire and the surrounding counties. The Highfield serves young people with a range of mental health issues including psychosis, eating disorders, severe depression, bi-polar disorder, and OCD. The unit has 2 dedicated classrooms.

The Meadow, a psychiatric intensive care unit (PICU), is adjacent to the Highfield and opened in October 2023; it provides specialist psychiatric support for up to 8 young people in the most acutely disturbed phase of mental ill health.

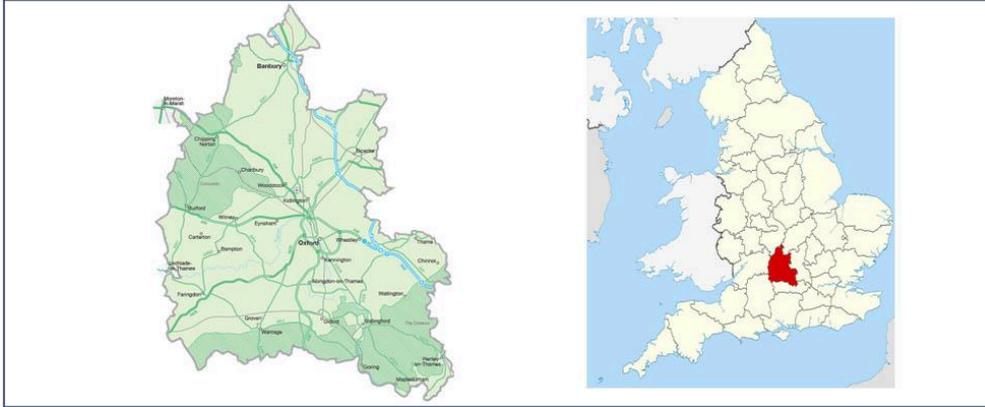
Children's Hospital Teaching Setting



The Children's Hospital Teaching Setting (CHTS) provides teaching at three sites; The Children's Hospital (an 84 bedded acute hospital) where there are a number of paediatric specialties including cancer, cystic fibrosis and neurology. The hospital also has paediatric high dependency and intensive care facilities. The CHTS teaches across 10 wards, each of which has a specialty focus and has 3 classrooms. Helen House Hospice (an eight bedded hospice providing respite and end of life care for children with life limiting and life shortening conditions). Douglas House (an outpatient unit for the management of chronic pain and support of children undergoing intensive neuro-rehabilitation).



The Outreach Teaching Service



The Outreach Teaching Service (OTS) provides teaching for children and young people across Oxfordshire. These pupils have been signed off by a medical professional as unable to attend school because of their current health needs. The OTS works with pupils with mental and/or medical health needs. Referrals to Outreach are ongoing throughout the year.

For more information, please visit our website: <https://ohs.oxon.sch.uk/>

About the Job

This is a rare and exciting opportunity for the right person to join our ambitious Leadership Team. The successful candidate will provide day to day leadership for a small team of highly motivated teachers and HLTAs in our setting based at the Highfield Adolescent Tier 4 CAMHS Unit and the Meadow Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit. They will also have the opportunity to actively contribute to the leadership of the whole school through the Leadership Team's strategic work.

The role of the Assistant Headteacher (AHT) is to be a positive and calm influence, providing a daily sense of purpose, enabling autonomy and supporting the team to work with a spirit of fierce compassion.

Daily timetables and schedules are dynamic, and an important part of the AHT role is to work with the medical team to determine the most appropriate educational provision for each young person at any one time. Liaising with parents, carers and professionals on and off the ward is an integral part of the AHT's work. Knowing what information is needed and when it needs to be shared requires high levels of emotional intelligence, sound judgement and an excellent understanding of professional boundaries.

The AHT plays an important role in supporting OHS staff in their work to secure robust and effective communication pathways with each pupil's enrolled school in order to ensure collaborative working on the continuity of the curriculum. Their leadership of an effective



reintegration plan for pupils is a key part of the role as many will need a very tailored approach from their enrolled school on their return. Schools are often understandably nervous when it comes to reintegrating a previously hospitalised pupil and they need confident and appropriate reassurance from OHS staff.

“Leaders’ attention to detail helps the school to meet their high ambitions for pupils’ academic achievement and emotional and social well-being. One example of the school’s achievement is the very high proportion of pupils who successfully reintegrate back into a school when they are well enough to do so.”

Ofsted - 2023

Safeguarding pupils is an important part of the day to work for the AHT. Making the right judgements in line with school policy and practice, maintaining the high profile of safeguarding amongst the staff and supporting them with concerns is an integral part of the AHT’s skill set. From time to time, staff will need the calming presence of the AHT to help them navigate the emotional challenges of working in an adolescent mental health unit. The AHT is, in turn, supported by a strong leadership network in the OHS and by colleagues from the NHS on site.

The AHT at the Highfield works closely with their colleague AHTs leading the other 2 settings. They will also line manage the Lead Teacher for the Meadow Psychiatric intensive care unit. The AHT also plays a vital role in leading the quality assurance processes at the setting in line with whole school systems and with the support of the Deputy Headteacher. There is a regular meeting structure to discuss innovations and challenges and to provide real time opportunities to share and learn. The AHT’s day to day work is line managed by the Deputy Headteacher.

This is a leadership role where you can see, every day, the difference that you and your team are making.

“As a parent it is very apparent why these wonderful people are doing the job they are, throughout the short time they worked with my child they were always calm, positive and supportive and very aware of their needs. On days when she was not feeling 100% they knew exactly how to adapt lessons and being able to gradually add lessons made a real difference to her not feeling overwhelmed. As a family we know that her reintegration to school will be slow but I’m sure the time spent with the teachers at OHS will do nothing but help. Thanks again for everything you did in front and behind the scenes.”

From a parent - 2025



Our Partners

Our positive relationships with a wide range of local, regional, national and international partners including community, education, health, world of work and services have a significant impact on the ongoing improvement of our provision and drive our continuous improvement.

Whilst actively participating in many partnerships, OHS sits on a number of professional committees which provide links for moderation, scrutiny, and forward planning. OHS sits on the following committees and organisations:

- National Association of Hospital Education [NAHE];
- National Committee for PRUs and Alternative Provision (PRUsAP);
- Partners in Excellence [PiXL];
- School Business Managers' Forum;
- Oxfordshire County Council;
- Oxfordshire Secondary School Headteachers Association [OSSHTA];
- Oxfordshire Special School Headteachers Association;
- Oxfordshire Teaching School Alliance [OSTA];
- Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust;
- Helen and Douglas House Hospice;
- Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust.

Our Values & Ethos

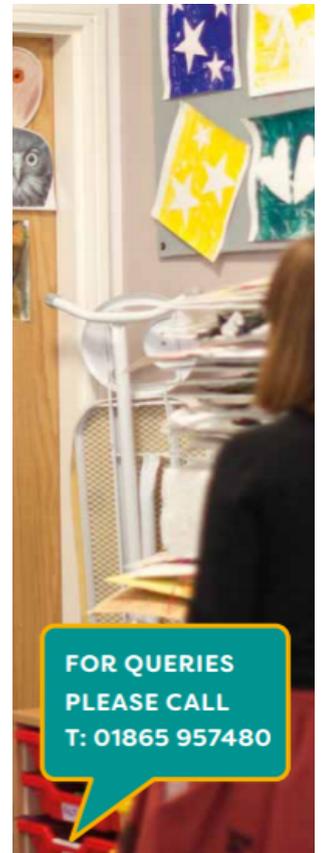
Our school is a place where we make sure every individual feels safe and supported.

We recognise and value the fact that we are all unique individuals with different strengths and talents.

We treat each other fairly, with respect, dignity and kindness. We work together because we all have a role to play – pupils, parents, staff, governors – in accepting each other, aspiring to become confident, independent adults and inspiring each other to achieve our dreams.

Our whole school values, selected by our school community, embrace the **six key values of: resilience, curiosity, hope, kindness, equality and respect**. These values are principles that guide our thinking and behaviour.

We recognise that Values Education is vital in creating an approach to teaching that not only nurtures a strong learning environment and enhances academic attainment, but also continues to develop pupils' social, emotional and relationship skills that will last throughout their lives.



Our Mission

At OHS we believe in putting pupils at the heart of everything we do.

Personalisation is the cornerstone of our pedagogy; the curriculum is bespoke and programmes are carefully crafted to meet individual needs which demands a totally flexible and adaptable approach to teaching and learning from all involved.

Our primary focus remains ensuring the best educational outcomes for young people experiencing periods of ill health.

We work hard to give all our young people the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to progress and achieve academically, socially and emotionally. All of our teaching takes place in the context of safe and nurturing environments where each young person is known, and each individual's learning journey is unique to them. Within this framework we strive to secure safety and high standards for all. We aim to give our young people the necessary skills to prepare them for life in modern society, promoting teaching about freedom, tolerance and respect for the rule of law within a meaningful context that the pupils can understand and experience for themselves.

“Teaching staff are highly trained in hospital education. This includes knowing how to adapt learning to meet medical needs and the needs of any pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They adeptly respond to pupils’ changing needs, adapting the curriculum and recapping on prior teaching to help pupils learn extremely well.”

Ofsted - 2023



Job Description

Post title:	Assistant Headteacher
Pay range:	L 6-10
Line manager:	Deputy Headteacher
Supervisory responsibilities:	Staff deployed within the setting
Role	Permanent - Full Time (casual car user)
Teaching Commitment	0.4
Key Purpose of the post:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Under the overall direction of the Headteacher: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Play a significant role in formulating the aims and objectives of the team and establishing the policies through which they are to be achieved ○ To work effectively as a member of the Leadership Team in supporting colleagues and contributing to team improvement ○ Have overall responsibility and accountability for the setting, ensuring curriculum continuity, consistency, balance, match and progression ○ Have an impact on personal, social, emotional and educational progress of the pupils educated at the provision ○ Take responsibility for <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. promoting a safe and healthy learning environment, ii. managing safeguarding issues in collaboration with partnership staff and the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the OHS, iii. promoting a safeguarding culture; 2. Give direction and guidance to staff across the setting by providing an environment that facilitates and encourages high standards of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Leadership and management ○ Teaching, learning and assessment ○ Outcomes and quality assurance 3. Act as a role model to staff by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Carrying out the duties of this post in line with the remit outlined in the current School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document and the OHS own specific policies ○ Being an excellent classroom practitioner and act as a role model for other teaching staff and support staff with planning, delivery, assessment and reporting ○ Having an impact on educational progress beyond your assigned pupils ○ Working as part of the Leadership team in contributing to team and whole school improvement ○ Assisting in the smooth running of OHS at all times. 	
Specific roles/responsibilities of the post:	



The AHT is responsible for the day to day provision delivered across their setting:

1. **Quality of Education** including:
 - (a) Ensuring high quality curriculum offer and implementation across the setting;
 - (b) To support the DHT Q of E in the implementation of the OHS T&L Monitoring Cycle;
 - (c) Ensuring that pupils are placed on an appropriate, bespoke learning pathway on admission to the setting which is reviewed regularly;
2. **Leadership & Management** including:
 - (a) To draw up an Annual Action Plan that outlines the areas for development in the setting;
 - (b) With the DHT Q of E, create a timetable that ensures teachers and HLTAs are deployed effectively to meet the needs of the pupils;
 - (c) Implement agreed setting specific routines and practice alongside agreed OHS policies and practices ensuring staff compliance;
 - (a) Lead on quality assurance mechanisms across the setting with regards to pupil and parent feedback;
3. **Personal Development & Wellbeing, Behaviour & Attitudes** including:
 - (a) Ensuring that pupils are prepared for the next steps in their learning journey when discharged from the OHS;
 - (b) To lead the design and implementation of the personal development curriculum including values based PSHE across the setting;
 - (c) Lead on managing relationships with parents and carers in order to improve outcomes for their child(ren).

In addition, each AHT will have specific responsibilities that compliment their role that will be agreed at time of appointment. Additional responsibilities will reflect the needs of the schools and skills of the postholder.

Duties and responsibilities

Shaping the Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Support the Headteacher in establishing an ambitious vision and ethos for the future of OHS (b) Play a major role in team development by participating in the Leadership Team activities, taking responsibility for actions and self-evaluation / planning processes through agreed priorities. (c) Play a major role in the service improvement by participating in the Multi-Disciplinary Team activities through agreed priorities. (d) Contribute to the development, implementation and monitoring of action plans and other policy developments where appropriate. (e) Lead by example to motivate and work with others. (f) In partnership with the Head teacher and leadership team, lead by example when implementing and managing change initiatives. (g) Promote a culture of inclusion within the OHS community where all views are valued and taken into account.
Leading teaching and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Be an excellent role model, exemplifying a high standard of teaching and promoting high expectations for all members of the team. (b) Assist with the development and delivery of training and support for staff in the areas of teaching and learning. (c) Assist with the development and delivery of training and support for staff. (d) Assist with the development and review of agreed aspects of the curriculum including planning, recording, reporting, assessment for learning and the development of a creative and appropriate curriculum for all pupils.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (e) Assist the leadership team in managing the team through strategic planning and the formulation of policy and delivery of the strategy, ensuring management decisions are implemented. (f) Support the leadership team with the processes involved in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning taking place throughout the team, to ensure a consistently high quality. (g) Ensure the systematic teaching of basic skills and the recording of impact, is consistently high across the team. (h) Ensure robust evaluation of OHS performance indicators, progress data and actions to secure improvements comparable to appropriate national standards. (i) Ensure through leading by example the active involvement of pupils and staff in their own learning.
Developing self and others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Support the development of collaborative approaches to learning within the setting team and beyond. (b) Support the induction of setting staff new to OHS and those being trained within the team as appropriate. (c) Participate in the selection and appointment of teaching and support staff as appropriate. (d) Be an excellent role model for both staff and pupils in terms of being reflective and demonstrating a desire to improve and learn. (e) Take responsibility and accountability for identified areas of leadership, including statistical analysis of pupil groups, progress data and target setting in the teaching base. (f) Take responsibility and accountability for attendance of pupils and strategies for improving attendance where appropriate. (g) Work with the leadership team in ensuring an appropriate programme of professional development for staff, in line with the team improvement plan and performance management including coaching and mentoring as appropriate. (h) Lead the annual appraisal process for identified staff. (i) Participate in the teacher's performance management process.
Managing the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Contribute to regular reviews of the OHS systems to ensure statutory requirements are being met. (b) Ensure the effective dissemination of information and the maintenance of agreed systems for internal communication. (c) As appropriate and under the leadership of the Headteacher, undertake activities related to professional, personnel/HR issues. (d) Manage HR and other leadership processes as appropriate e.g. sickness absence, disciplinary, capability according to OHS procedures (e) Ensure a consistent approach to standards of behaviour, attendance and punctuality are implemented across the team. (f) Liaise effectively with the other Leaders of Learning to ensure consistency and sustainability of provision across the settings (g) Be a proactive and effective member of the Leaders of Learning in contributing to team improvement. (h) Contribute to the day-to-day effective organisation and running of OHS. (i) To undertake any professional duties, reasonably delegated by the Headteacher.
Securing accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Support the Headteacher, Leadership Team colleagues and staff in fulfilling their responsibilities with regard to OHS performance. (b) Contribute to the reporting of the team's performance to the OHS stakeholders. (c) Promote and protect the health and safety welfare of pupils and staff.



	(d) Take responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people within OHS.
Strengthening community	<p>(a) Assist the leadership team in developing the policies and practice, which promote inclusion, equality and the extended services that OHS offers.</p> <p>(b) Develop and maintain contact with all specialist support services and other agencies and schools as appropriate</p> <p>(c) Promote positive relationships and work with colleagues in other schools, colleges, teams, and external agencies.</p> <p>(d) Organise and conduct meetings where appropriate with parents and carers to ensure positive outcomes for all parties.</p> <p>(e) Attend meetings with provision staff, schools, parents and carers as appropriate to ensure positive outcomes for all parties.</p> <p>(f) Strengthen partnership and community working.</p>
In addition to the specific responsibilities outlined above, the Assistant Headteacher will be expected to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Treat people fairly, equitably, and with dignity and respect to create and maintain a positive school culture ● Support the aims and ethos of the school ● Set a good example in terms of dress, punctuality and attendance ● Take on any additional responsibilities which might from time to time be agreed with the Headteacher ● Build strong links with parents and carers ● Uphold the school's behaviour code ● Participate in and where appropriate lead staff training ● Attend and where appropriate lead team, SLT and staff meetings ● Develop strong links with governors, LA support teams, outside agencies, and neighbouring schools ● Take appropriate responsibility for own health, safety and welfare 	



Person Specification

Assistant Headteacher Person Specification

Criteria assessed by:

Application form - A | Letter of Application - L | References - R | Interview - I

Qualifications	Evidenced by
Qualified teacher status	A
Relevant degree at second class honours or higher	A
Leadership qualification [eg: NPQSL, NPQML, Masters, NASENCo, NPQSEN], or a willingness to complete the appropriate qualification within 3 years of appointment.	A

Professional Development	Evidenced by
Evidence of appropriate professional development commensurate with the role of Assistant Headteacher	A
Up to date safeguarding training and knowledge of legislation for the protection of young people	A, I
Evidence and impact of wider professional reading and engagement in pedagogy and research	L

School Leadership & Management	Evidenced by
Proven experience in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and its impact on learning	L, R, I
Be able to demonstrate the impact of successful, perceptive and effective leadership on pupil outcomes	L, R, I
Be able to demonstrate an active involvement in self evaluation and development planning and be able to use data to produce reports for school leaders that demonstrate the impact of your work	R, I
To have implemented and developed successfully a whole school initiative and be able to articulate the impact	I
To be able to describe how you have contributed to motivating and inspiring staff development (e.g. coaching, mentoring, inset for staff)	I
Have an ability to hold others to account for their performance and to bring about improvements where needed. Have a track record of success in engaging those who are reluctant to improve	I



Be committed to supporting & promoting the principles of Ethical Leadership in education	I
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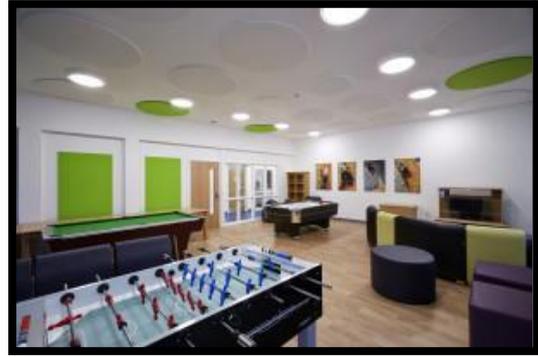
Experience & knowledge of inclusion	Evidenced by
Be a consistently outstanding teacher who has achieved excellent outcomes by showing a sound understanding of how students learn best	R
Have successful experience of working with closely vulnerable pupils, young people with mental health problems and those with SEND	A, L, I
Be able to demonstrate how you have been ambitious in your leadership showing how you have improved engagement and outcomes of vulnerable pupils	I
Be able to demonstrate your commitment to the principles of Keeping Children Safe on Education	L, I
Knowledge and understanding of a range of curriculum pathways at KS4 and post 16 levels.	L, I

Professional attributes	Evidenced by
Ability to support and develop the vision, aims and ethos of the school	I
Have excellent written and verbal communication skills, and be articulate amongst your colleagues	A, L, I
A proven track record in the successful leadership of teams	L, R, I

Personal Qualities	Evidenced by
Inspire, challenge, motivate and empower teams and individuals to achieve high standards	R, I
Think analytically and creatively and demonstrate initiative in problem solving	R, I
Be honest and transparent with great personal integrity	R, I
Demonstrate courage and resilience and be positive	R, I
Be aware of your own strengths and areas for development. Listen to and reflect constructively and act upon appropriate feedback from others	R, I
Have a relentless commitment to inclusion raising standards and aspirations of vulnerable pupils	R, I



The Recruitment Process



<p>Further discussion</p>	<p>For further discussion about this post please contact Tom Hilton, Headteacher via email at tom.hilton@ohs.oxon.sch.uk</p>
<p>Applications</p>	<p>Please apply via the MyNewTerm link on our website at https://ohs.oxon.sch.uk/about-us/vacancies/ by 5pm on Monday 16th March 2026.</p>
<p>Visits - by appointment</p>	<p>Wednesday - 11/03/26 18.00 - 19.00</p> <p>Saturday -14/03/26 10.00 - 11.00</p> <p>Please complete this form to register your attendance.</p>
<p>Application timeline</p>	<p>Advertisement date 24/02/26</p> <p>Advert closing date 16/03/26</p> <p>Shortlisting date 17/03/26</p> <p>Interviews w/c 23/03/26</p>

