

William Gilpin Church of England VA Primary School

Headteacher information
pack



Letter from the Chair of Governors

Dear Applicant,

Education is a child's gateway to the world and provides the foundation and knowledge they need to make the best of their lives. At William Gilpin we are ambitious for our children and aim to prepare them to be confident in themselves, and to achieve their full potential in life. Our Christian ethos is at the heart of all we do.

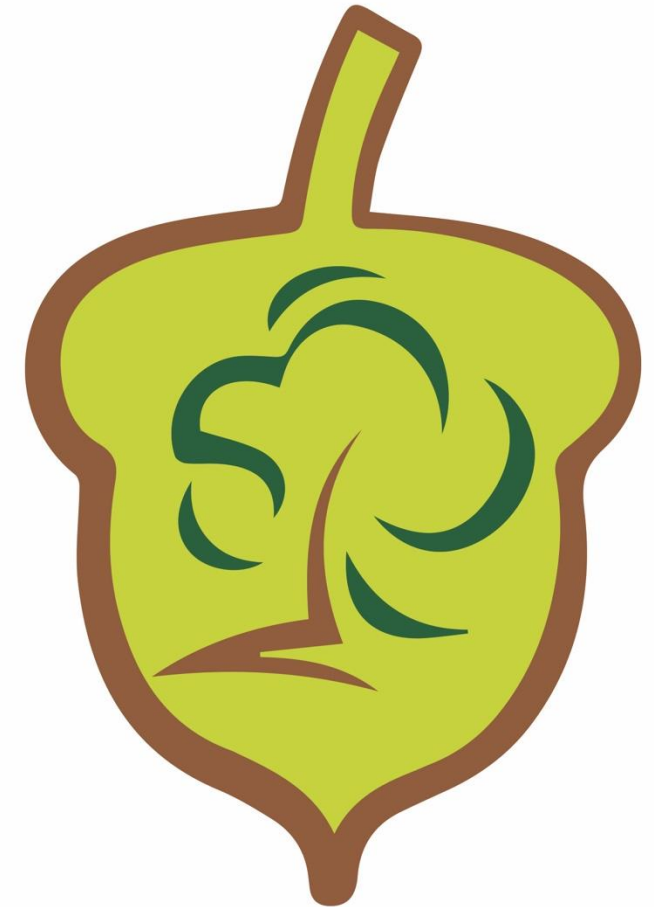
Teaching is obviously at the core and we aim to nurture the individual talents of every child. As a small school, each child is known by name to every member of staff and we foster a supportive and caring environment. With lovely grounds in an idyllic location, we have plenty of outdoor space, and we are able to offer enriching experiences such as forest school. We have easy access to both the New Forest and the Solent coastline and make full use of them.

We belong to an alliance with four other local schools with whom we collaborate, sharing resources and best practice to the benefit of both our children and the professional development of our staff. Our strong, close knit and dedicated staff team cares deeply about the welfare of the pupils and is committed to providing the very best for them. They are supported by a board of governors who are sensitive to the needs of children, staff and parents. The school enjoys close links to the village and to St John the Baptist, our parish church.

As you can see in our information pack, we are looking for a dynamic and inspiring head teacher, who will build on our strong foundations to enhance the culture of learning in our school and make it one of the finest in the country.

We look forward to meeting you.

Yours sincerely
Melissa Ashcombe



About our school

William Gilpin is a small Church of England primary school in the heart of The New Forest. We are a close-knit community comprising 79 children; 65% of our pupils are out of catchment and the school is the first choice for these parents.

The school has a long history of serving the community. It was founded by a pioneering artist and educationalist the Revd William Gilpin in 1791 “for the education of the sons and daughters of the day labourers of the parish”. The present building, built in 1875, was extended and refurbished in 2009, so that the children now enjoy a light and spacious, well-appointed modern environment with a large hall, library, music room and community room in addition to the classrooms. We also make full use of our extensive outdoor space with an area dedicated to outdoor early years play, creative play, gardening and forest school activities.

In addition, we work closely with an outstanding Church of England pre-school nursery housed in a yurt located in the grounds of the school. Many siblings attend the nursery and when ready, move to the school. It provides a great ‘one stop drop off’ for parents.

At our last Ofsted inspection in 2022 we were judged Good. We particularly pride ourselves on the behaviour of the children and this was recognised by Ofsted who judged our children to be ‘polite and courteous’. The staff team know the children well as individuals, and we are able to offer various support structures including ELSA and good SEN provision.



About our school

Christianity underpins the values of our school. We foster our links with the local church, St John the Baptist, Boldre. The vicar and a Children, Families and Schools worker regularly support the school through leading collective worship and contributing to the curriculum. The whole school attends services at the church for Easter, Christmas and the close of the school year and the children lead a Remembrance service at the village hall. At our latest SIAMS inspection in October 2021, William Gilpin was judged good for its distinctiveness and effectiveness as a Church of England school.

Our aim is to provide an education that gives rich and memorable learning opportunities that will inspire children to be full of curiosity and grow into successful and enthusiastic lifelong learners. Thus, we are looking for a dynamic, aspirational and inspirational Headteacher who will drive school improvement and uphold the Christian character of the school.

William Gilpin school is set on the south side of The New Forest, on the edge of the New Forest National Park, which combines heathland and woodland and is famous for its free-roaming ponies and deer. Pilley itself is a small village with a great community feel, with which the school enjoys strong links. Two miles away is the Georgian town of Lymington with its strong sailing tradition, popular high street and ferry link to the Isle of Wight. A short drive takes you to beaches or forest and the area offers a wealth of leisure facilities and good quality restaurants, pubs and hotels.



Our vision

Through our core Christian values of **Courage, Compassion** and **Community** we nurture, encourage and challenge each child to be kind, respectful of others and to be the best they can be. We aim to provide rich, memorable learning experiences which build character and a love of learning, and we encourage our children to become resilient learners with high aspirations who will strive to reach their full potential. Our strong Christian ethos helps to develop our children's spirituality, emotional, moral and social development and underpins all we do; we learn together to celebrate and respect each other's unique qualities. Through a wide range of enrichment activities, children develop their curiosity, positive emotional health and an understanding of their place in the wider world. Our engaging, rigorous and innovative curriculum ensures that children leave primary school with the knowledge and skills they need to achieve in the next steps of their educational lives.



Great oaks from little acorns grow...



Our Christian values

Worship underpins the values of our school and nourished by it we uphold the Christian ethos in all we do. Our values encompass **Courage**, **Compassion** and **Community**, through a love of Christ. Because Christ loves all people and all of creation, we are free to respect, serve and care for people of all faiths (or none), and study and care for the environment and all living creatures.

Courage enables and challenges us to:

- Stand up for what we believe in
- Be brave in our learning
- Be our authentic selves at all times
- Know and declare the difference between right and wrong
- Make sure that everyone feels safe

Compassion enables and challenges us to:

- Be charitable and understanding in our attitude to others
- Have a caring attitude to others and the world around us
- Do something for others simply because you can

Community enables and challenges us to:

- Engage with and support each other at all times
- Have trust and confidence in our school community
- Respect and enjoy not only our teachers and fellow pupils but also the wider community outside the school



The Dioceses of Portsmouth & Winchester

Diocesan Board of Education

Within the Dioceses of Portsmouth and Winchester there are 153 schools with links to the Church of England. Consisting of 86 Voluntary Controlled, 49 Voluntary Aided, 1 Foundation, 2 Joint Anglican and Roman Catholic, 6 Academies, 11 Affiliated, 7 Federated Schools and 32 Independent Church Schools. These are spread across six local authority areas, Bournemouth, Dorset, Hampshire, Southampton, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight.

The Bishops of Portsmouth and Winchester encourage Church school Headteachers and governing bodies to consider carefully, with parish clergy and parochial church councils, matters relating to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, ethos, worship, religious education and the partnership between school and parish.

The Diocesan Board of Education and its staff support church schools in these matters as well as working alongside Local Authorities with general support, advice and training for church schools and their governing bodies. The education staff also support parishes and clergy in developing their work with schools.

New Headteachers are encouraged to attend leadership training courses provided by the Diocese as part of their induction process. The Diocese also offers courses and events for school staff on all aspects of church school leadership and management.

The diocesan representative involved in the appointment process at the school you are applying to will be:

Richard Wharton

Church Schools Advisor

If you are successful in the post you are applying for, the Diocesan Director of Education and his staff will be pleased to offer you whatever support they can during your time in the school.



Letter from the Vicar

Dear Applicant

I hope you will be as inspired as we have been, researching the life of William Gilpin for his tri-centenary this time last year, by the work of this extraordinary man. Some decades before the Church of England began to offer primary education in England (and a century before the State became involved in the provision of primary education), the vicar of Boldre founded and funded a school for the children of his parish. This was far-sighted enough, but his Christian faith made it obvious to him that the education should be for girls as well as boys (at a time when only girls in wealthy families might hope for any formal education, which would have been provided by tutors at home).

Even more revolutionary, and inspired by his faith, William Gilpin discouraged the use of corporal punishment and pioneered a broad education. He turned round a failing school in Cheam (now Cheam Preparatory School, once attended by King Charles) by his Christian approach to education. In that spirit, he held himself to the same standards as he demanded of his pupils. He created a school council to decide on appropriate punishments – even submitting himself to their judgement on occasion. It was one of his appreciative Cheam ‘old boys’ who offered Gilpin the living of Boldre in 1777 where, shocked by the rural poverty and apathy he encountered, he designed a different kind of school to give day-labourers’ children a chance to flourish.

Three hundred years later, the challenges that face our children are different, but we have the same desire to protect and help them fulfill their potential, and to share the love, joy and peaceful confidence in Christ with them. We love learning about the world, and want to offer compassion to others in need, because we appreciate kindness and compassion when we need it ourselves. We enjoy learning about the Forest and appreciate the generosity of ‘Foresters’ who share their unique way of life and knowledge. When it comes to schools, we think small is beautiful. When it comes to William Gilpin School, we are proud to follow in our founder’s footsteps, though he has large shoes to fill.

St John the Baptist is a long way for 21st century children to walk to regularly, but they are pleased to come and worship in its 1000+ old building at the end of each term, and to learn about the famous people buried or commemorated here. We have visitors from all over the world, including Canadians visiting the war graves, and Australians who are interested in Richard Johnson, William Gilpin’s curate, who sailed to Sydney with the First Fleet and built the first church in Australia.

The churchyard is managed as a wildflower meadow and contains more species of mosses and lichens than you can shake a stick at. All this makes St John’s a rich resource for local and national history, geography, ecology, social issues and music, as well as Christian knowledge and faith.

Each week Mel Osborne, our appointed Children, Families and Schools worker, represents us in school, encouraging the children to explore God for themselves. Occasionally she takes groups of children to visit the church and learn about the building and artefacts and the faith they represent. Her ‘Church-School Vision Group’ draws representatives from every class, and they help to lead worship. David Woodgates has started an after-school choir which, it is hoped, will also include parents, and enable all the singers who wish it to join the church choir.

I’m delighted to lead assemblies and worked with the Head Teacher and local historians to create the William Gilpin Tri-centenary festival last year. I’ve also been running an after-school maypole dancing group, to revive the tradition of a school maypole dance at the church fête.

The PCC has just approved the purchase of a shed to house equipment for our forest school initiative. We are currently exploring the work of a Christian charity called *Transforming Lives for Good*, which trains and equips people in churches to offer pastoral support to children and families in their local school context. This approach complements the ‘Growing Faith’ programme offered by the diocese, which encourages schools, families and communities to meet one another’s needs by offering the skills and resources we have.

Children are great teachers and enormously fun to be with, so we’re privileged to have a church school in our village. I’m hoping that you will want to join us in William Gilpin’s generous spirit, to preserve his school for new generations of children to flourish in and enjoy.

Terence
Revd Terence Handley MacMath



Our new headteacher

What the staff would like from their new headteacher:

Leads by example

The ability to lead staff in a collegiate way

Compassionate, understanding, decisive, effective communication

Someone who instils confidence in others

Someone who has a clear, purposeful and achievable vision

Someone who is committed to making our school one we can all be proud of

Has Christian principles and values

What the children would like their new headteacher to be:

The Best!

Helpful, kind and fun

Thoughtful

Loves art, a little sporty and loves handwriting

Respectful

Good at listening, funny, likes football

Kind, fair and makes things fun

Kind, funny, joyful and supportive

Someone willing to wear an inflatable dinosaur costume!



What the parents would like to see in a new headteacher:

Promotes a healthy school culture: valued staff, happy children.

Make sure any unacceptable behaviour is dealt with in a way that reflects really good standards.

Enthusiasm, kindness, rapport with children and parents, focus on engaging curriculum

Energy, vision for growth and a strong understanding of the values of the school

Strong leadership, passion for education and the benefits of outdoor learning / forest school, good communicator with parents and children



Ofsted

Our school was inspected in January 2022 and judged good.

Here are some comments from the report:

Pupils are eager to share what they believe to be special about their school community

One parent described, 'The school is a rare gem hiding in the forest.'

The headteacher, his staff and the governing body are ambitious for every single pupil in their care

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is a strength of the school.

Pupils demonstrate a strong understanding of how to be a respectful and responsible citizen

Pupils are encouraged to be curious as soon as they join Reception

Staff have high expectations of both pupils' academic achievement and behaviour

Governors work closely with leaders to provide effective challenge and support



Key tasks

The governors have identified key strategic priorities (KSP) they would like the new Headteacher to focus on:

- **KSP 1 – To ensure strong leadership and governance to drive school improvement**
- **KSP 2 – To lead and develop excellent teaching and learning for all children**
- **KSP 3 – To develop a rich, broad and ambitious curriculum with high expectations for all children**



Job description - **Head teacher** - Responsible to: Governing Board

Purpose, Main Duties and Responsibilities

Core Purpose:

- To provide professional leadership and management of the school, staff, children and stakeholders in order to deliver outstanding outcomes for pupils.

A. Strategic Direction and Development of the School

The Head teacher will:

- Have a strategic view of successfully developing and improving an already thriving school
- Consult staff, pupils, parents and governors to create a strategic plan (the School Development Plan – SDP). Manage the implementation of the SDP and monitor its impact.
- Advise the governing body on the formulation of its policies and their implementation, and attend meetings of the governing body and its committees as requested
- Create an outward-facing school which works with other schools and organisations – in a climate of mutual challenge – to champion best practice and secure excellent achievements for all pupils

B. Teaching and Learning

The Head teacher will assist the Governing Body by:

- Ensuring that the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum are met
- Overseeing the curriculum, pastoral care and the administration of the school to ensure that they are delivered to meet the needs of all pupils
- Monitoring and evaluating the curriculum for both quality and value for money
- Promoting the effective management of pupil behaviour and ensure a sense of calmness through the effective management of pupil behaviour
- Demanding ambitious standards for all pupils, overcoming disadvantage and advancing equality, instilling a strong sense of accountability in staff for the impact of their work on pupils' outcomes
- Securing excellent teaching through an analytical understanding of how pupils learn and of the core features of successful classroom practice and curriculum design, leading to rich curriculum opportunities and pupils' well-being
- Establishing an educational culture of 'open classrooms' as a basis for sharing best practice within and between schools, drawing on and conducting relevant research and robust data analysis



C. Leading and Managing Staff

The Head teacher will:

- Promote the school's ethos and create and maintain good working relationships among all members of the school community
- Maximise the contributions of all staff to improve the quality of education provided and standards achieved through effective deployment and delivery of the performance management process
- Hold all staff to account for their professional conduct and practice, addressing any under-performance, supporting staff to improve and valuing excellent practice
- Ensure that professional duties are fulfilled as specified in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions document
- Liaise with representatives of teacher organisations
- Sustain their own motivation and that of their staff, and have a duty of care regarding staff welfare
- Identify emerging talents, coaching current and aspiring leaders in a climate where excellence is the standard, leading to clear succession planning
- Distribute leadership throughout the organisation, forging teams of colleagues who have distinct roles and responsibilities and hold each other to account for their decision making
- Shape the current and future quality of the teaching profession through high quality training and sustained professional development for all staff

D. Efficient and Effective Use of Staff and Resources

The Head teacher will:

- Advise the governing body on the formulation of the annual budget in order that the school secures its objectives and ensure the regular monitoring of the budget and the oversight of the use of resources
- Plan, manage and monitor the curriculum within the agreed budget, setting appropriate priorities for expenditure, allocating funds and ensuring effective administration and control
- Manage and organise accommodation efficiently and effectively to ensure that it meets the needs of the curriculum, and health and safety requirements
- Seek to secure adequate resources for the school in the present and in the foreseeable future and ensure value for money throughout
- Ensure that the school's systems, organisation and processes are well considered, efficient and fit for purpose, upholding the principles of transparency, integrity and probity



E. Accountability

The Head teacher will:

- Work closely with the Governing Body and its sub-committees and secure a positive working relationship with all Governors
- Provide information, objective advice and support to the Governing Body to enable it to meet its responsibilities – in particular its functions to set school strategy and hold the Head teacher to account for pupil, staff and financial performance - recognising that the Governing Body is accountable for the success of the school
- Create and develop an organisation in which staff recognise that they are accountable for the success of the school
- Ensure that parents and pupils are well informed about curriculum attainment and progress and are able to understand targets for improvement
- To be the designated Safeguarding lead and be accountable for all elements of this role

F. Professional Development

- The Head teacher will:
- Sustain wide, current knowledge and understanding of education and school systems locally, nationally and globally, and pursue continuous professional development
- Develop effective relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues in other public services to improve academic and social outcomes for all pupils
- Inspire and influence others – within and beyond the school – to believe in the fundamental importance of education in young people's lives and to promote the value of education



Person specification

Qualifications & training	• Qualified teacher status • Evidence of continuous professional development
Experience	• At least senior leadership responsibilities • Outstanding classroom teaching across the primary sector
Qualities	• Is dynamic, aspirational, innovative and creative • Is enthusiastic and inspires enthusiasm in others • Leads by example, demonstrating integrity, resilience, emotional intelligence and clarity • Upholds and articulates Christian values and moral purpose • Draws on own experience, research, expertise and skills and that of those around them to drive school improvement • Is decisive, with appropriate self-belief and confidence but is willing to ask for and accept advice • Is an effective communicator, able to articulate his/her vision • Demonstrate a passion for learning and teaching • Is approachable, reflective and compassionate • Is curious and instills curiosity • Has a sense of fun
Promoting & safeguarding the welfare of children	• Provides a safe, calm and well-ordered environment for all pupils and staff • Ensures that the highest safeguarding practices and pastoral care for pupils are maintained • A thorough knowledge of child protection principles and the skills to handle complex situations • Good knowledge and understanding of behaviour management strategies and the ability to set high standards for the behaviour of children in school • Is mindful of pupil wellbeing

Pupils & staff	• Consistently sets and requires high standards from staff and pupils and develops an aspirational culture • Secures excellent teaching and learning leading to the best outcomes for all pupils. • Proven ability to drive high standards for all children, including those with SEND and those working at greater depth. • Is able to motivate, and build a cohesive team and promote appropriate CPD for all staff • Inspires trust and builds confidence in others • Makes learning enjoyable, stimulating and rewarding • Shares a passion for the well-being of staff and children • Secures a broad and balanced curriculum with the all-round development of the child at its heart • Requires rigour and fosters resilience in others • Inspires children and adults to take on new experiences • Is mindful of staff workload and wellbeing
Systems & processes	• Will uphold and lead the school's vision and values • An approachable and inspirational leader, who communicates effectively and transparently to stimulate confidence and trust in the school community • Foster positive relationships with the local community, other professionals in the school and local authority • Will build on and respect the links and relationship with the parish church and the wider diocese. • Ensures that the school's systems, organisation and processes are well considered, efficient and fit for purpose • To foster the highest standards of behaviour for learning • Operate the rigorous, fair and transparent systems and measures for managing the performance of all staff • Effectively uses knowledge of the school's context in school improvement • Is fair and open-minded • Is committed to providing acts of Christian worship and developing the distinctively Christian character of the school

The self-improving school system	• Continue to support the effective relationships with other professionals to improve academic and social outcomes for all pupils • To ensure a culture of improvement and refinement including in teaching learning and assessment. • Has experience of using effectively a range of monitoring and evaluation tools to contribute to school self-evaluation and improvement
Desirable Criteria	• Other relevant qualifications, for example a degree • Is able to work with other schools and organisations to champion best practice • Has worked in more than one school • Has experience of a small school • Other relevant experience outside education • Exercises strategic financial planning to ensure the school's sustainability • Evidence of leading and managing teams of colleagues, demonstrating effective distributive leadership and accountability. • Evidence of building and maintaining effective relationships with the governing body • Current DSL training or experience of being DSL or DDSL • Experience of Ofsted at senior leadership level • Up to date knowledge and understanding of all 3 primary key stages • Knowledge of the SIAMS process and framework.



Education in Hampshire

Why Choose to Teach in Hampshire?

- Make your best career move and choose to teach in Hampshire!
- Hampshire is committed to excellence in education and will continue to strive for the best possible outcomes for [each and every](#) child.
- As one of the largest authorities in the country, we offer an incredible variety of teaching opportunities. Whether you're drawn to the challenges of urban and city schools or the close-knit community of rural primary schools, you'll find a vibrant setting for your next career move.

Inclusive workforce

- Hampshire schools are committed to on-going partnership working across the Authority to ensure our communities are represented.
- Our schools are dedicated to being diverse and inclusive employers and aim to recruit the best people from a wide range of backgrounds and talents.
- Please click here for more information:
- [Inclusion and Diversity Plan](#)

Community and Diversity

- Our schools are dedicated to serving their local communities and reflecting the rich cultural diversity of Hampshire. We believe in local management, with the Local Authority providing support wherever needed, ensuring each school can thrive

A Place for Every Student

- Hampshire is home to over 170,000 school-age children across approximately 438 primary, 71 secondary, and 26 special schools. While most are community schools, we have strong partnerships with Diocesan Bodies to maintain places in Church schools. Our 26 special schools and 42 units in mainstream schools offer tailored education and support for children with various needs, including learning difficulties, physical and sensory disabilities, and emotional and behavioural issues.

Support and Collaboration

- We foster a strong ethos of collaboration and communication, with regular meetings of Headteachers in various groupings to facilitate effective working relationships between the Local Authority and schools. Hampshire Authority maintains an established network of advisors providing responsive and flexible support.

Professional Development

- We pride ourselves on offering first-class learning opportunities for our teachers, both internally and through external course providers.
- For new Headteachers, we offer a structured induction development programme in partnership with governors, helping to build close working relationships with other Headteachers and Local Authority colleagues.

Discover more about what Hampshire has to offer by visiting our website at

[Education and learning | Education and learning | Hampshire County Council](#)

Hampshire has so much to offer, and we hope you will join us!



Application procedure

Closing date for applications: noon on 17 November 2025

Please either return your completed application via email to htrecruitment@hants.gov.uk.

Interview dates: **Monday 1 & Tuesday 2 December 2025**

You should provide a full statement in support of your application, which should not exceed two sides of A4 paper, and should take account of the key focus areas in the job description and person specification. Please do not restate the factual details already included elsewhere on the application form.

Selection procedure

The shortlist will be drawn up on **19 November 2025** and references will be requested.

Applicants will be advised soon after the shortlisting date whether they have been successful or not. Failure to send your application form to the above email address may invalidate your application.

The selection process will take place on **1 & 2 December 2025**. Further details will be sent to those candidates called for interview.

Equality Monitoring

All applications will be required to complete and Equality Monitoring form.

Visits to the school are warmly welcomed.

Please contact with the school office on 01590 673460 or email schooloffice@williamgilpin.hants.sch.uk to arrange an appointment.

