



The Priory School Headteacher Recruitment Pack





Contents

Welcome from the Chair of Governors	Page 3
Key Facts and Statistics	Page 4
About Our School	Page 5
Culture and Values	Page 6
Our New Headteacher	Page 7
Our Strategic Priorities	Page 8
What We Can Offer	Page 9
Job Description	Page 10
Person Specification	Page 15
Important Information	Page 19
How to Apply	Page 20





Welcome from the Chair of Governors

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the Headteacher position at The Priory School, Hitchin.

The Priory School is a vibrant, inclusive school and strives to provide an excellent standard of education for all students, regardless of ability or background. We offer outstanding pastoral care, a compassionate learning environment and a broad and balanced education that prepares our young people to be successful and confident citizens.

In July 2016, following appropriate consultation, the Governors unanimously voted for the school to become a Foundation School. This enables us to both utilise links and funding via the Local Education Authority, whilst additionally granting us greater control of the school's resources and autonomy to shape an overall strategy that best meets the needs of the students, staff and the wider community.

This vacancy has arisen due to the retirement of our Headteacher of 12 years, Geraint Edwards. During Geraint's tenure the school has made continued progress across a whole range of key areas, resulting in a positive school community that students and staff are proud to be a part of.

The Governors are equally proud to be part of a 'good' school as rated by Ofsted in 2022. We believe that a key part of this success are the strong links and relationships that have been developed between staff, students, parents/carers and the broader school community.

In recruiting a new Headteacher we are seeking someone who shares our vision and ethos with the enthusiasm, drive and energy to move our school forward. The successful candidate will not only have the relevant skills, knowledge and experience to move our school to the next stage of its development, but most importantly possess the leadership qualities to work collaboratively with our valued senior leadership team, teaching and support staff and the Governing Board.

The closing date for applications is Wednesday 20th November 2024. For further information about our school, please visit our website at www.priory.herts.sch.uk

Interview dates are set for Wednesday 4th and Thursday 5th December.

If you wish to discuss any aspects of the role, please contact me as Chair of Governors, ChairOfGovernors@priory.herts.sch.uk to arrange a time. We would also encourage interested applicants to visit the school. Visits will be scheduled from Tuesday 5th through to Monday 18th November. Please contact Emma Sangster, Executive Assistant ESangster@priory.herts.sch.uk to arrange a time.

We wish you the best with your application and look forward to meeting you.

David McIntosh,
Chair of Governors
e: ChairOfGovernors@priory.herts.sch.uk
m: 07775 505898



Key Facts and Statistics

Location:

Hitchin

Age range:

11-18 yrs

Number on roll:

1231

21.8%
SEND

19.3%
Pupil
Premium

19.7%
Free School
Meals

4.4%
English as an
Additional
Language

Leadership structure:

Headteacher

2 Deputy Heads

5 Assistant Heads



Good October 2022





About Our School

The Priory School is a popular 11-18 co-educational Foundation School. The school is fully staffed and occupies a spacious 27-acre site on the edge of Hitchin, a highly sought-after market town with excellent local amenities and transport links.

Our site includes spacious playing fields, excellent sports facilities and ample parking, which we are pleased to share with various community groups outside of school hours, including the prestigious Hitchin Belles football club, which many of our students are also members of.

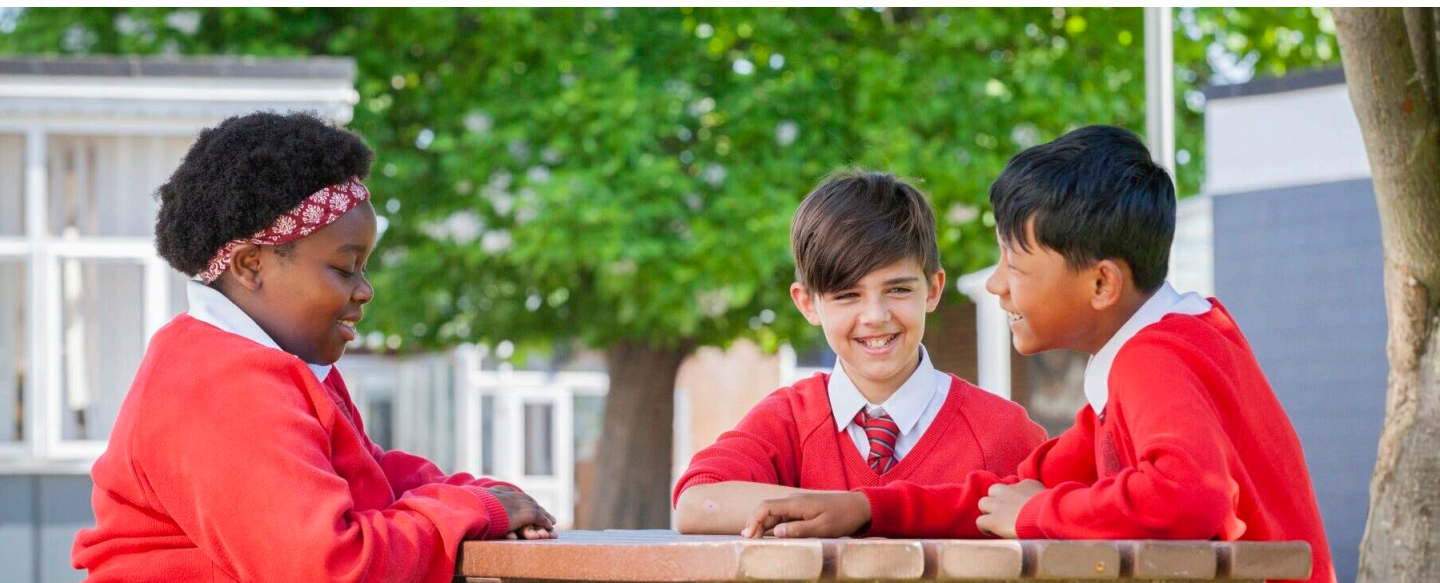
We are a vibrant, inclusive school and strive to provide an excellent standard of education for all students regardless of ability or background. We offer outstanding pastoral care, a compassionate learning environment and a broad and balanced education that prepares our young people to be successful and confident citizens.

Whilst we are focused on achieving the best results and academic progress for our students, we also believe developing happy, well rounded, community active students.

In our last Ofsted inspection in 2022, the school was praised for creating *"an inclusive school where students, including students in the sixth form are supported to be successful"*. We have created a learning environment that raises students' aspirations and promotes academic achievement where *"students are polite and friendly and engage with adults well"*.

We have a funded SEND specialism, housed in a new, dedicated centre and are proud to share our excellent SEND practice with other local schools.

We are also part of the Post-16 Hitchin Consortium, alongside Hitchin Girls' and Hitchin Boys' Schools, with a cohort of nearly 800 students. Our brand new sixth form centre is another key strength, and we are keen to develop our school's unique and inclusive identity within the consortium. We are immensely proud of our sixth formers, who are true ambassadors and role models for the rest of the school community, demonstrating our key school values of responsibility, respect and resilience.





Culture and Values

Our Ethos

The Priory School is an inclusive, community, co-educational school. We provide our students with a rounded education, focused on both progress and attainment, whilst promoting the values of responsibility, respect and resilience.

Our Values

- Responsibility – supporting students to become life-long learners who are motivated, self-regulating, reflective, civic-minded and effective leaders.
- Respect – encouraging students to be inclusive, tolerant and able to demonstrate democratic values.
- Resilience – equipping our students with the skills to meet the challenges and demands of 21st century life.

Our Vision

To empower every student to develop and meet their aspirations, to be self-confident, inspirational and active members of their community.

Community Work

We believe that encouraging students to engage in charity and community work is an invaluable part of the wider curriculum. Charity work is a way for students to demonstrate our school values of respect and responsibility. We encourage our students to be active citizens through volunteering, charity work and working with the local community. This has been shown in many forms, from litter picking locally to singing in a local care home. We also maintain a focus on supporting local charities, which the students research and learn about to understand exactly how their money makes an impact.





Our New Headteacher

We are looking for an experienced leader, who is excited to take on a new challenge and will be proud to lead this inclusive, community, co-educational school.

The Priory School is above all else a community school. It is important to us that our new headteacher should share and represent our core values as a visible and active member of the community, both inside school and out.

You will have the experience and skills to build on existing good practice and the confidence to work collaboratively with our diverse, talented and dedicated team of staff and governors to develop and implement a strategic and ambitious vision.

You will have strong communication skills, enabling you to engage successfully with staff, students and parents and to lead the school in a friendly, positive manner, empowering staff and ensuring that they continue to feel valued and that the school remains a great place to work.

We are looking to appoint a headteacher who can lead (not just run) the school and manage and be good at leading change effectively.

Our new headteacher will be progressive, forward-looking and visionary, with the enthusiasm and energy to inspire staff and students.

You will need to be bold, able to challenge preconceptions to drive change and innovation, working increasingly to lead improvement in teaching and learning and set the school apart from others in the local community.

You will continue to offer a broad, varied range of activities and (curriculum) options for students, delivering a diverse, broad school experience for learners.

You will have a good understanding of school budgets and be able to identify cost effective solutions and maximise opportunities to increase resources for the school.





Our Strategic Priorities

Areas for focus at the school include:

- Delivering excellent teaching and learning – driving for progress as well as results.
- Continuing to support and develop our focus on staff and student wellbeing and inclusion.
- Developing our regional/local lead for SEND provision and the SEND hub's status.
- Improving progress for disadvantaged students.
- Developing our sixth form provision, collectively offered in association with two other local secondary schools in the Hitchin Consortium.
- Increasing accountability within the school.
- Maintaining financial stability in light of the national trend towards falling numbers and challenging budgets.
- Maintaining and improving upon parental and community engagement.
- Harnessing technology to improve teaching and learning and exploring positive use of AI.





What We Can Offer

The Priory School is a strong, inclusive Foundation school rooted in the local community, and a genuinely nice place to work, with a talented and dedicated team of staff and governors.

This is an exciting opportunity for the right person to develop our thriving school, in line with our shared ethos and values.

We can offer:

- Students who are keen to learn and take part.
- A dedicated and experienced teaching team, SLT and middle leaders.
- A professional and experienced support team.
- A modern and well-resourced school, equipped with fantastic facilities on an expansive and well-maintained site.
- A strong and engaged Governing Board who are passionate about the school and bring a wide range of expertise.
- Excellent links with a wide range of local community groups as well as other local schools.
- A competitive remuneration package.
- Extensive CPD and support to meet your individual needs.





Job Description

The headteacher has overall responsibility for providing leadership to the school to secure its success and continuous improvement, ensuring high quality education for all its students and improved standards of teaching and learning in line with statutory requirements.

To gain this success, the headteacher will:

- Establish high quality education by effectively managing teaching and learning to realise the potential of all students.
- Demonstrate consistently high standards of principled and professional conduct both within and outside school.
- Always serve in the best interests of the school's staff and students, with safeguarding front and centre of all we do.
- Share and represent our core values.
- Be a visible and active member of the community, both inside and outside of school.
- Lead (not just run) the school and manage change effectively, to build on existing good practice.
- Exhibit a friendly, positive manner with all stakeholders.
- Empower the SLT and staff, ensuring they continue to feel valued.
- Forge a compelling vision alongside the Governing Board, to guide the school to its next stage of development.
- Develop a strategy with our community and other schools in the consortium to provide clear educational pathways for our students as they grow older.
- Proactively manage school budgets and ensure financial security, identifying cost-effective solutions to increase resources for the school.
- Focus on staff and student wellbeing and engage well with parents.
- Be equally supportive of all student groups (including PP, SEND, HA and all others).

Appointment is subject to the current conditions of employment of headteachers, contained in the [School Teachers' Pay and Conditions document](#), the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#) and all other current education, employment and health and safety legislation.

The post holder is expected to have regard to the [National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers](#) at all times.



Section 1: Ethics & professional conduct

Headteachers are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of principled and professional conduct. They are expected to meet the teachers' standards and be responsible for providing the conditions in which teachers can fulfil them.

Headteachers should uphold and demonstrate the Seven Principles of Public Life at all times:

Selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, leadership.

Headteachers uphold public trust in school leadership and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour both within and outside school:

- Build relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observe proper boundaries appropriate to their professional position.
- Show tolerance of and respect for the rights of others, recognising differences and respecting cultural diversity within contemporary Britain.
- Uphold fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Ensure that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit their position, students' vulnerability or might lead students to break the law.

As leaders of their school community and profession, headteachers:

- Serve in the best interests of the school's students.
- Uphold their obligation to give account and accept responsibility.
- Know, understand, and act within the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.
- Take responsibility for their own continued professional development, engaging critically with educational research.
- Make a positive contribution to the wider education system.



1. School culture

- Sustain the school's ethos and strategic direction in partnership with those responsible for governance and through consultation with the school community.
- Create a culture where students experience a positive and enriching school life.
- Uphold ambitious educational standards which prepare students from all backgrounds for their next phase of education and life.
- Promote positive and respectful relationships across the school community and a safe, orderly, and inclusive environment.
- Ensure a culture of high staff professionalism.

2. Teaching

- Establish and sustain high-quality, expert teaching across all subjects and phases.
- Ensure teaching is underpinned by high levels of subject expertise and approaches which respect the distinct nature of subject disciplines or specialist domains.
- Ensure effective use is made of formative assessment.

3. Curriculum and assessment

- Ensure a broad, structured, and coherent curriculum entitlement which sets out the knowledge, skills and values that will be taught.
- Establish effective curricular leadership, developing subject leaders with high levels of relevant expertise with access to professional networks and communities.
- Ensure that all students are taught to read through the provision of evidence-informed approaches to reading, particularly the use of systematic synthetic phonics in schools that teach early reading.
- Ensure valid, reliable, and proportionate approaches are used when assessing students' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum.

4. Behaviour

- Establish and sustain high expectations of behaviour for all students, built upon relationships, rules and routines, which are understood clearly by all staff and students.
- Ensure high standards of student behaviour and courteous conduct in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.
- Implement consistent, fair, and respectful approaches to managing behaviour.
- Ensure that adults within the school model and teach the behaviour of a good citizen.



5. Additional and special educational needs and disabilities

- Ensure the school holds ambitious expectations for all students with additional and special educational needs and disabilities.
- Establish and sustain culture and practices that enable students to access the curriculum and learn effectively.
- Ensure the school works effectively in partnership with parents, carers, and professionals, to identify the additional needs and special educational needs and disabilities of students, providing support and adaptation where appropriate.
- Ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties regarding the SEND code of practice.

6. Professional development

- Ensure staff have access to professional development opportunities, aligned to balance the priorities of whole-school improvement, team, and individual needs.
- Prioritise the professional development of staff, which is consistent with the approaches laid out in the standard for teachers' professional development.
- Ensure that professional development opportunities draw on expert provision from beyond the school.

7. Organisational management

- Ensure the protection and safety of students and staff through effective approaches to safeguarding.
- Prioritise and allocate financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness, and probity in the use of public funds.
- Ensure staff are deployed and managed well with due attention paid to workload.
- Establish and oversee systems, processes and policies that enable the school to operate effectively and efficiently.
- Ensure rigorous approaches to identifying, managing, and mitigating risk.

8. Continuous school improvement

- Make use of effective processes of evaluation to identify and analyse problems and barriers which limit school effectiveness and identify priority areas for improvement.
- Develop appropriate evidence-informed strategies for improvement as part of well-targeted plans which are realistic, timely, appropriately sequenced and suited to the school's context.
- Ensure careful and effective implementation of improvement strategies, which lead to sustained school improvement over time.



9. Working in partnership

- Forge constructive relationships beyond school, working in partnership with parents, carers and the local community.
- Commit their school to work successfully with other schools and organisations in a climate of mutual challenge and support.
- Establish and maintain working relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues across other public services to improve educational outcomes for all students.

10. Governance and accountability

- Understand and welcome the role of effective governance, upholding their obligation to give account and accept responsibility.
- Establish and sustain professional working relationships with those responsible for governance.
- Ensure that staff know and understand their professional responsibilities and are held to account.
- Ensure the school effectively and efficiently operates within the required regulatory frameworks and meets all statutory duties.





Person specification

It is important to provide examples using the STAR acronym (situation, task, action, result) to demonstrate how you meet the following criteria.

Please note that these essential criteria will be used by the panel for shortlisting.

Qualifications, knowledge and experience	Essential/ Desirable	Application form	Assessment stage
Degree and qualified teacher status.	E	*	
Appropriate training for senior leadership	E	*	
Experience of working with KS3, KS4 and KS5 students.	E	*	
Recent experience of senior leadership as a Headteacher, Deputy headteacher or School Improvement Lead with a proven track record of continuous improvement and outstanding impact.	E	*	*
Thorough understanding of Child Protection and Safeguarding and commitment to safeguarding as part of the duty of care.	E	*	*
School culture			
Demonstrates an awareness of the wider education context.	E	*	*
Ability to articulate a clear vision for the future and provide strategic direction for staff, students, and the community.	E	*	*
Proven record of inspiring, enabling and motivating others, promoting positive and respectful relationships.	E		*
Ensures a culture of high staff professionalism, holding others to account.	E		*
Upholds ambitious educational standards for all students.	E		*



Teaching, curriculum & assessment	Essential/ Desirable	Application form	Assessment stage
Clear understanding of the curriculum and how to ensure this can be effectively accessed by all.	E		*
Reviews and monitors progress against agreed, measurable targets.	E		*
Absolute commitment to inclusion and to ambitious expectations for all students including those with SEND and higher attainers.	E	*	*
Knowledge and experience of working with children with SEND across the secondary phase.	E	*	*
Able to understand the needs of children with challenging behaviours and develop successful management strategies.	E	*	*
Experience of deploying and managing staff to deliver effective outcomes.	E		*
Professional development			
Evidence of appropriate and recent professional career development for the role of Headteacher.	E	*	*
Has successfully undertaken approved safer recruitment training.	D	*	*
Commitment to prioritising the continued professional development of all staff (including themselves) in the best interests of the individual, the team and the school.	E	*	*
Successful track record of developing staff through effective performance management.	D		*



Organisational management/ continuous school improvement	Essential/ Desirable	Application form	Assessment stage
Have had active involvement in effective school self-evaluation and development planning.	E	*	*
Have had responsibility for whole school policy development and implementation.	E	*	*
Experience of leading change effectively and successfully.	E		*
Clear commitment to promoting health and safety and the wellbeing of children and staff.	E	*	*
Ability to review and analyse key data to develop evidence-informed strategies for school improvement.	E		*
Working in partnership/ Governance & accountability			
Experience of working effectively with stakeholders including governors, school improvement partners, other schools and organisations to improve outcomes for students.	E	*	*
Understands and welcomes the role of effective governance, upholds their obligation to give account and accept responsibility.	E		*
Experience of managing school finances effectively, understanding their contribution to school development and student outcomes.	D		*
Able to assimilate and manage financial and other data to achieve sound financial decision-making.	E		*



Personal Qualities/ Ethics and professional conduct	Essential/ Desirable	Application form	Assessment stage
Passion for education, coupled with ability and enthusiasm to see every child fulfil their potential.	E		*
Excellent communication skills, including written communication.	E	*	*
Belief in school improvement through objective self-evaluation.	E		*
Visible and approachable, empathetic and enjoys engaging and inspiring others.	E		*
Adaptable leadership style, 'hands on' when required, balanced with knowing when to delegate.	E		*
Capacity for sustained hard work with energy and enthusiasm.	E		*
Able to take a dynamic approach to the changing needs of the school population.	E		*
Demonstrates consistently high standards of principled and professional conduct both within and outside school, upholding the Seven Principles of Public Life at all times.	E		*
Upholds fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.	E		*



Important information

Salary:	L31-L38 (£98,616-£117,067)
Start Date:	September 2025
Closing Date:	Monday 20 th November 2024, 09:00
Shortlisting Date:	Wednesday 27 th November 2024
Interview Date:	Wednesday 4 th and Thursday 5 th December 2024
Visits to our school:	Please contact Emma Sangster, Executive Assistant, to arrange a time to visit the school: 01462 622 300/ emma.sangster@priory.herts.sch.uk
To discuss the role:	Please contact David McIntosh, Chair of Governors, on ChairOfGovernors@priory.herts.sch.uk

The Priory School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and visitors to share this commitment. Appointment to this post is subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS) as well as other pre-appointment checks outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2024).

To help us meet our high standards and aspirations of a fully diverse and inclusive workplace, we strongly encourage suitably qualified applicants from all backgrounds to apply and to join us.





How to apply

This recruitment is managed by HFL Education, in line with the latest guidance on safer recruitment. Please apply online at www.teachinherts.com or send your completed application form to: leadership.recruitment@hfleducation.org. You can also contact us on 01438 544476.

Please ask us if you require information about this vacancy in an alternative format.

Application Form

Applicants must use the standard application form provided (CVs are not accepted). Please complete all aspects of the form fully. Include your full work history, explaining any gaps since leaving school education, and include any relevant training you have completed, particularly those in recent years which have helped to prepare you for headship.

Person Specification and Personal Statement

When writing your personal statement, it is important you address each of the requirements in the person specification. Be sure to evidence additional aspects such as training and qualifications together with your background and experience.

References

In line with safer recruitment guidance, we normally request references after shortlisting. Please make sure your referees are aware of your application and are able to provide a swift turn around if needed. Preferred referees are your last two employers, and you should provide their official organisation email address for us to contact. One referee will be your last Headteacher or Chair of Governors.





The Priory School

Bedford Road
Hitchin
Hertfordshire
SG5 2UR

admin@priory.herts.sch.uk
01462 622 300
www.priory.herts.sch.uk

