



SWING GATE INFANT SCHOOL AND NURSERY

Headteacher Recruitment Pack

May 2025



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Welcome letter from the Chair of Governors

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the Headteacher role at Swing Gate Infant School and Nursery. We are delighted that you see Swing Gate as a school where you can make an impact and we hope that you find this information pack a useful introduction to our school.

Swing Gate is at the heart of the Berkhamsted community, and we believe that a key part of our success has been the strong links and relationships that have been developed between staff, pupils, parents, and the broader school community.

We have a passion for making learning an adventure, focussing on experiential learning, and ensuring that every child is happy, active and inspired. This ethos permeates through the school. In December 2022 Ofsted judged our school to be 'good' and noted that 'pupils flourish in the school's nurturing environment', are 'keen to have new opportunities to learn and explore' and are 'well prepared for the next stage of their education'.

In recruiting a new Headteacher we are seeking someone who shares our vision and will embrace and promote it whilst driving the school forward through the next stage of its development.

The closing date for applications is Tuesday 10th June 2025. Shortlisting will be taking place on Tuesday 17th June 2025. For further information about our school, please visit our website at www.swinggate.herts.sch.uk.

If you wish to discuss the role or arrange a visit please contact Chair of Governors, Katy Hall, at khall@swinggate.herts.sch.uk to arrange a time.

Thank you for your interest in Swing Gate Infant School and Nursery. My colleagues and I look forward to meeting and interviewing motivated candidates interested in taking on this important and exciting new challenge. We wish you the best with your application.

Katy Hall

Chair of Governors

About our school

We are an infant specialist school for children aged 3 – 7 years situated in Berkhamsted. As a caring and cohesive two form entry school our mission is to make every child HAPPY, ACTIVE AND INSPIRED. These three pillars define our commitment to fostering an environment where children thrive and embrace the spirit of adventure.

Our vision and ethos drive our curriculum and we believe in preparing children for a life full of learning. We are a nurturing and inclusive school and have created strong relationships within the community to enhance and give our children experiences they would not gain elsewhere. Our curriculum is broad and balanced with its foundations set in developing our pupils' love for reading, phonics skills and maths mastery. However, we also passionately believe that education should be about experiences, enjoyment, and imaginative learning. That's why we invest time, money, and energy into 'experiential learning,' placing it at the heart of our curriculum. Through a carefully planned and sequenced approach, with input from our pupils, our curriculum builds not only knowledge and skills but also the confidence that children need to succeed in life.

Our teachers are catalysts for growth, constantly reflecting on the 'why' behind what is taught to guide our pedagogy. We encourage children to

learn by 'having a go,' embracing mistakes as valuable learning opportunities and we tailor 'next steps' learning opportunities to support their growth, ensuring no child is left behind.

Pupils leave Swing Gate well equipped for the next stage of their educational journey - eager to continue to learn and develop and well positioned to take on the challenges ahead.

Our school has seven classes, with fabulous facilities which make learning fun. Our grounds are widely used and provide many different environments where our children can explore and participate in discovery learning and include a dedicated EYFS space, open grass and playgrounds with a trim trail and an activity area. We have a new adventure trail, and the funds were kindly raised by the fantastic Friends of Swing Gate Committee.



Our Values & Ethos

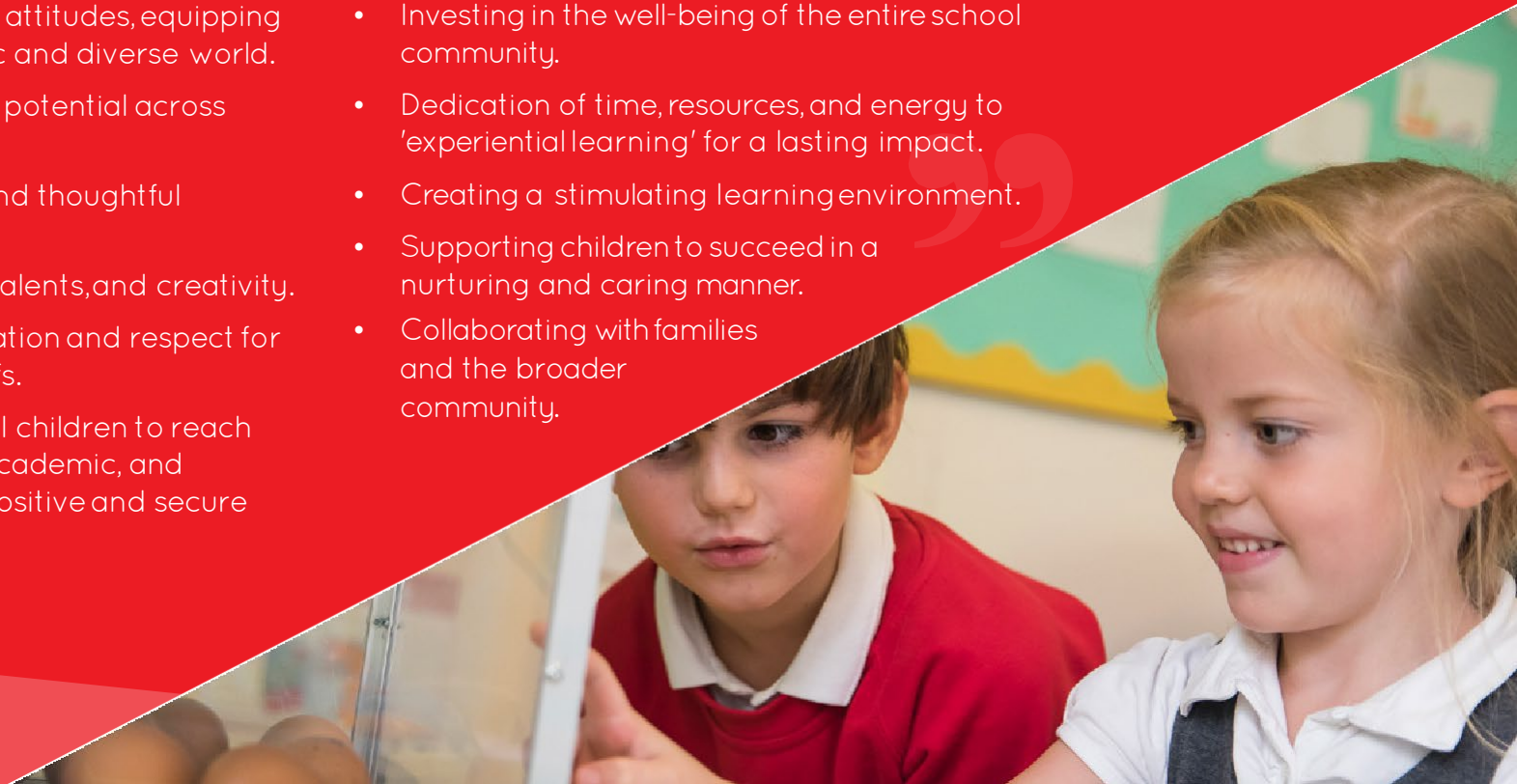
At Swing Gate Infant School and Nursery, we advocate for 'experiential learning' as the cornerstone for fostering happy, active, and inspired children.

Our objectives are to:

- Cultivate inquisitive minds and a sense of adventure.
- Nurture confident children who embrace new skills and experiences with enthusiasm.
- Deepen knowledge and broaden attitudes, equipping children for a future in a dynamic and diverse world.
- Empower children to realise their potential across various subjects.
- Encourage active participation and thoughtful reflection in learning.
- Acknowledge individual efforts, talents, and creativity.
- Foster an environment of celebration and respect for diverse characteristics and beliefs.
- Promote behaviour that allows all children to reach their potential, fostering social, academic, and personal development within a positive and secure setting.

We achieve these goals by:

- Instilling a spirit of adventure.
- Bringing learning to life in a more profound, engaging, and active manner.
- Investing in the well-being of the entire school community.
- Dedication of time, resources, and energy to 'experiential learning' for a lasting impact.
- Creating a stimulating learning environment.
- Supporting children to succeed in a nurturing and caring manner.
- Collaborating with families and the broader community.

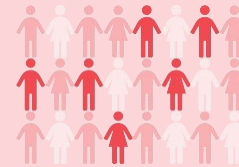


Key facts and statistics

Type of School:

**Maintained Infants 3-7yrs
and Nursery**

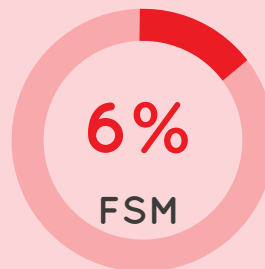
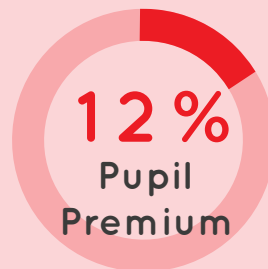
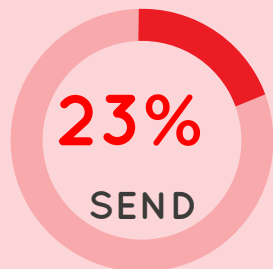
158
Number
on
Roll



Rated

Good

DECEMBER 2022



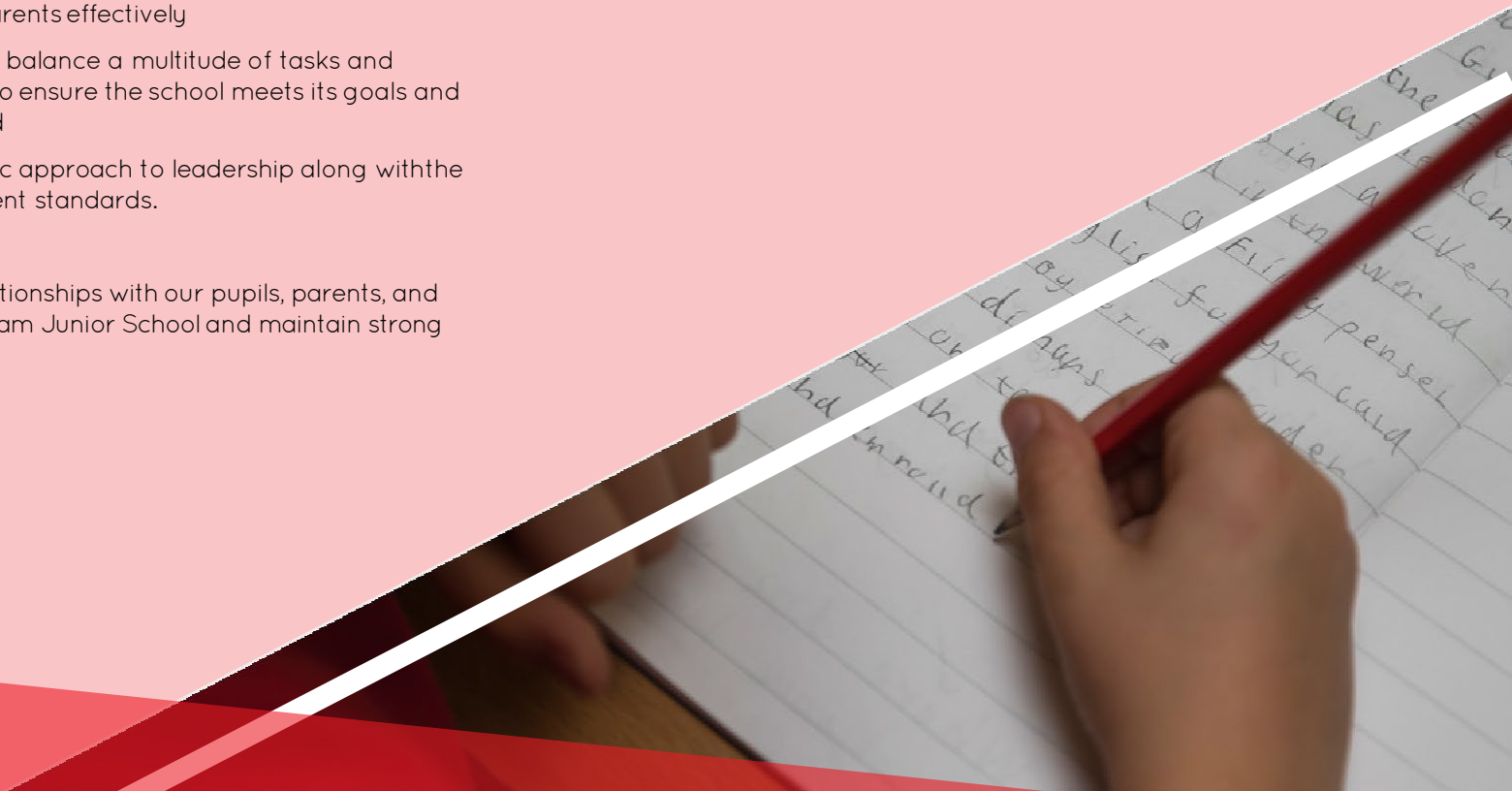
Our new Headteacher

We are seeking a warm and dynamic headteacher who has the leadership skills and energy to steer our school through the next stage of its development; someone who can think strategically, creatively and lead our school with positivity and enthusiasm. Our new headteacher should be someone who will embrace, promote, and maintain our ethos whilst driving the school forward. Who will act as an advocate of inclusive and child-centred education to meet the needs of every child in our care.

You will have:

- strong communication skills - able to engage, inspire, support and work as part of a team and manage relationships with parents effectively
- good project management skills - able to balance a multitude of tasks and requests, prioritising accordingly in order to ensure the school meets its goals and the wellbeing of the staff is protected; and
- a collaborative, supportive and empathetic approach to leadership along with the skills and abilities to build upon our excellent standards.

You will also continue to develop strong relationships with our pupils, parents, and staff, build on existing links with Thomas Coram Junior School and maintain strong links within the community.



What we can offer

- Happy and caring children who are actively involved in their learning.
- Positive and established relationships with our parents and the wider community, including the highly active Friends of Swing Gate Committee.
- A dedicated, engaged and passionate staff team, many of which have worked in the school for sometime.
- An enthusiastic and highly supportive governing body.
- The opportunity to use commercial acumen and creativity to drive the school forward.
- Opportunities for CPD.
- An Ofsted rated 'Good' school, with a focus on making learning an adventure. As one of our reception parents has said *"It feels like there's a new funactivity every day for the children and it's never anything I could predict!"*.



Person specification

A candidate will only be considered for shortlisting and move forward in the remaining person specification criteria if they meet the initial **essential** criteria under qualifications, knowledge and experience.

It is important to provide examples using the STAR acronym (**s**ituation, **t**ask, **a**ction, **r**esult) relating to the person specification criteria.

Qualifications, knowledge and experience	Essential / Desirable	Application form	Assessment stage
Degree and qualified teacher status	E	✓	✓
Experience of teaching Early Years Foundation Stage/ KS1 pupils and working with EYFS/ KS1 staff.	E	✓	✓
Recent successful leadership experience as a Headteacher, Deputy headteacher, Assistant headteacher.	E	✓	✓
Thorough understanding of Child Protection and Safeguarding and commitment to safeguarding as part of the duty of care.	E	✓	✓
Experience of leading safeguarding in a school.	D	✓	
School culture	Essential / Desirable	Application form	Assessment stage
Demonstrates an awareness of the wider education context.	E	✓	✓
Ability to articulate a clear vision for the future and provide strategic direction for staff, pupils and the community.	E		✓
Proven record of inspiring, enabling and motivating others, promoting positive and respectful relationships across the school.	E		✓
Ensures a culture of high staff professionalism, holds others to account.	E		✓
Upholds ambitious educational standards for all pupils.	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 pupils including those with SEND and higher attainers.	E	✓	✓
Knowledge and experience of working with children with SEND across the EYFS and primary phase	E	✓	✓
Able to understand the needs of children with challenging behaviours and develop strategies to successfully manage this.	E		✓
Experience of deploying and managing staff to deliver effective outcomes.	E		✓

Professional development	Essential / Desirable	Application form	Assessment stage
Evidence of appropriate and recent professional career development for the role of headteacher.	D	✓	
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.	D	✓	✓
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.	D	✓	✓
Have had responsibility for whole school policy development and implementation.	D	✓	✓
Experience of leading change effectively and successfully.	D		✓
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	Essential / Desirable	Application form	Assessment stage
Experience of working with stakeholders including governors, school improvement partners, other schools and organisations to improve outcomes for pupils.	D	✓	✓
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 pupil outcomes.	D		✓

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	✓	✓
Visible and approachable, empathetic and enjoys engaging and inspiring children and 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		✓



Job description - Headteacher

The headteacher has overall responsibility for providing leadership to the entire school community to secure its success and continuous improvement, ensuring high quality education for all its pupils and improved standards of teaching and learning by going above and beyond the statutory requirements.

To target and pursue this working ethos our new Headteacher must be able to:

- Demonstrate consistently high standards of principled and professional conduct both within and outside school.
- Uphold fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Always serve in the best interests of the school's pupils.
- Establish high quality education by effectively managing teaching and learning to realise the potential of all students.
- Forge a compelling vision to guide the school to its next stage of development.
- Develop a strategy with our community to provide clear educational pathways for our pupils as they grow older.
- Ensure sustainable growth and financial security for the school.

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, as detailed on the following pages.

Section 1: Ethics and 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, pupils' vulnerability or might lead pupils to break the law.

As leaders of their school community and profession, headteachers:

- Serve in the best interests of the school's pupils.
- 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.



Section 2: Headteachers' standards

1. School culture

- Establish and 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 pupils experience a positive and enriching school life, providing an equal opportunity for all learners, whatever their ethnicity, background, ability or gender.
- Uphold ambitious educational standards which prepare pupils 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 pupils 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 pupils' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum.



4. Behaviour

- Establish and sustain high expectations of behaviour for all pupils, built upon relationships, rules and routines, which are understood clearly by all staff and pupils.
- Ensure high standards of pupil 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 pupils with additional and special educational needs and disabilities.
- Establish and sustain culture and practices that enable pupils 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 pupils, providing support and adaptation where appropriate.
- Ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties with regard to 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 pupils 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 the 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 pupils.

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

10. Governance, accountability and working in partnership

- Welcome strong governance and actively support the governing body to understand its role and deliver its functions effectively – in particular its functions to set school strategy and hold the headteacher to account for pupil, staff, and financial performance.
- Ensure that staff 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
- Work successfully with other schools and organisations
- Develop effective relationships with fellow professionals, colleagues in other public services, parents/car



Important information

Whilst this is advertised as a full time role, we would welcome joint applications for co-headship and may also consider a four day week for the right candidate(s).	
Pay range:	L12 – L18 Fringe. (£66,665 - £77,051)
Start date:	January 2026 or sooner
Closing date:	Tuesday 10 th June 2025 @ 9am
Shortlisting date:	Tuesday 17 th June 2025
Interview date:	Thursday 26 th June 2025
Visit to the school:	Contact Katy Hall, Chair of Governor via email chairofgovs@swinggate.herts.sch.uk
School website link:	www.swinggate.herts.sch.uk
Send your completed application form to:	leadership.recruitment@hfleducation.org

Swing Gate Infant School and Nursery is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Appointment to this post is subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check as well as other pre-appointment checks, including an online check, as 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. We expect all our staff to demonstrate a commitment to advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations.

Application process

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.

Application Form

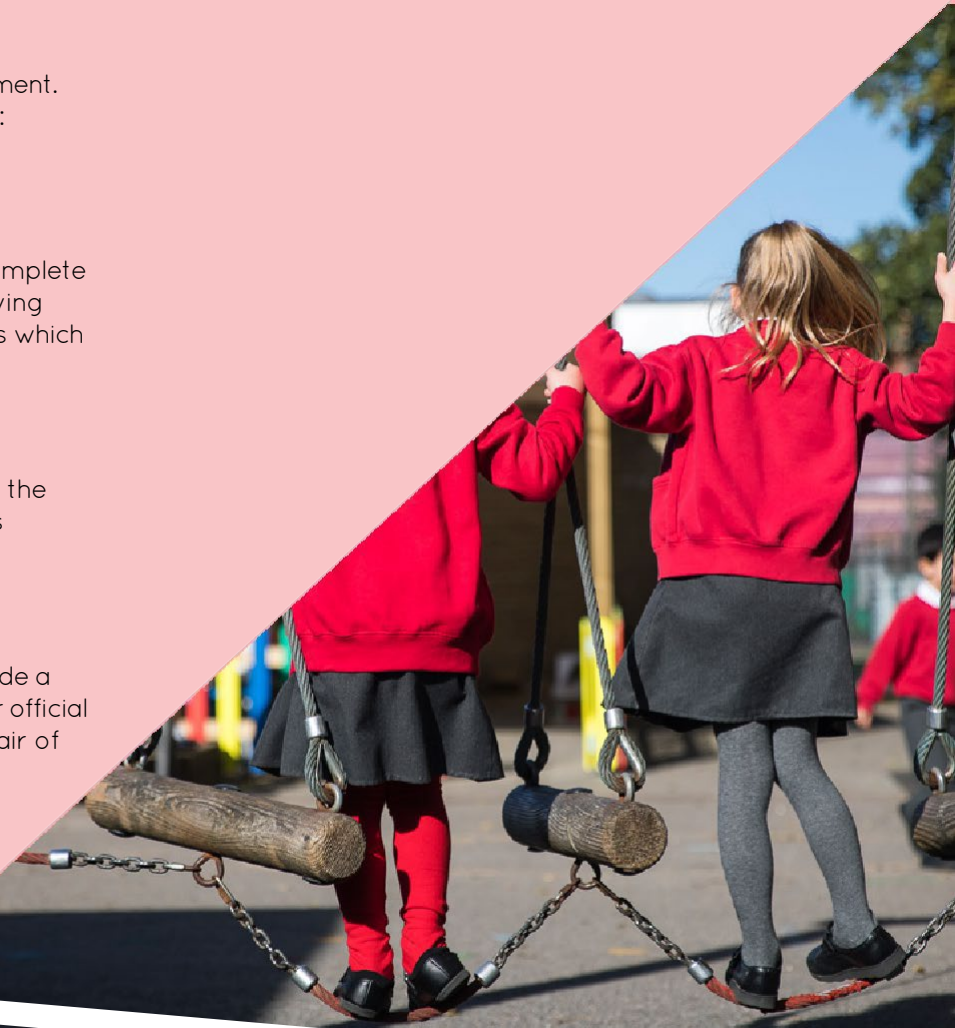
Applicants must use the standard application form provided (CVs are not accepted). Please complete all aspects of the form fully. Include your full work history with no unexplained gaps since leaving school education. Include all the training you have completed, particularly those in recent years which 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

Please make sure your referees are aware of your application and that they are able to provide a swift turn around. 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.





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