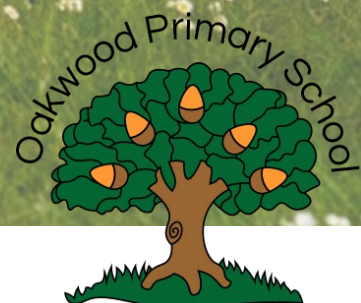


OAKWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Headteacher Recruitment Pack
October 2026





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WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the Headteacher role at Oakwood Primary School. I hope you find this information pack a useful introduction to our school.

The vacancy has arisen because our current Headteacher wishes to relocate after five years of successful leadership, having previously served as Deputy Head.

Oakwood Primary School is a 1.5-form-entry school in St Albans. At Oakwood, every individual is valued for who they are and what they contribute to the school. Our shared values reflect our holistic approach and provide a foundation on which children can grow and prosper. We put **Kindness, Curiosity** and **Ambition** at the heart of everything we do — for ourselves, our school, our community and beyond.

The Governors are proud to be part of a school rated good by Ofsted in July 2024. We believe a key part of this success is the strong links and relationships developed between staff, pupils, parents and the wider school community

As we recruit our new Headteacher, we are seeking someone who can shape and share our vision, values and ethos, and who has the enthusiasm, drive and energy to move our school forward.

The closing date for applications is 9 November 2026, with shortlisting taking place on 17 November 2026. For further information about our school, please visit www.oakwood.herts.sch.uk.

If you would like to discuss the role, please contact the Chair of Governors, Mrs Jacky Elliott, at chairofgovs@oakwood.herts.sch.uk to arrange a suitable time. To arrange a visit to the school, please contact admin@oakwood.herts.sch.uk.

Thank you again for your interest in Oakwood Primary School. My colleagues and I look forward to meeting and interviewing motivated candidates who are interested in taking on this important and exciting challenge.

Yours sincerely,

Jacky Elliott (Mrs)
Chair of Governors

WELCOME FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Dear Applicant,

Congratulations! You have found an amazing school community, and this could be the perfect opportunity you are looking for. As the outgoing headteacher, I will feel a deep sense of sadness at saying goodbye to the children, staff, families and governors at Oakwood when I relocate out of the area.

Over the past few years, I, along with the rest of the Oakwood team, have worked incredibly hard to establish a strong, happy and dedicated staff team, where everyone feels valued, supported and united by a clear, child-centred ethos rooted in unconditional positive regard. This shared culture, vision and commitment – summarised in our core values of kindness, curiosity and ambition - has enabled us to create a school environment where children feel happy, inspired and able to flourish.

Together, we have continued to develop and strengthen our curriculum across all subjects, ensuring that it is broad, balanced and enriched by creative opportunities. We have been immensely proud of the children's progress and achievements, which are consistently above the national average. We have also placed great importance on ensuring that children have access to clubs, enrichment and wider opportunities from the very start of their school life. We have been pioneers of the OPAL lunchtime approach for schools across the district, making the most of our fabulous and spacious grounds. I am proud that we were the first school in the area to receive the OPAL Platinum award. We continue to explore ways to ensure that learning is creative and engaging in a rapidly changing world.

We have made, and continue to make, significant improvements to our SEND provision including the introduction of our internal alternative provision and more structured support in classes. Alongside this, we have made important developments to the school building and classrooms (including a new roof, and air conditioning in all classrooms) helping to create spaces that support both learning and wellbeing.

Oakwood has benefitted from becoming increasingly collaborative, and we are fortunate to be based in an area with a strong and supportive Headteacher Consortium which also arranges cluster groups for teachers and other leaders across St Albans.

Should you be successful in your application, you will be supported by a team of dedicated staff, engaged parents and insightful and empathetic governors. Most importantly, you will be nurturing a cohort of absolutely wonderful children, who ooze curiosity and eagerness to learn.

I wish you the very best of luck in your application, and I look forward to supporting in any way I can to ensure a smooth and positive transition.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Anna Thompson

Headteacher

SCHOOL STATISTICS



301
pupils on
roll



4 – 11
age range



95.7% attendance



Maintained
school located
in St Albans



Rated Good in
July 2024

17%

of children
speak English
as an
additional
language

9%

of children
with SEND

14%

of pupils
receive Free
School Meals

9%

of pupils in
receipt of
pupil
premium.

ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

At Oakwood, **kindness** comes first. Together with **curiosity** and **ambition**, it shapes how we understand children, support one another and pursue the best possible outcomes. Our approach combines genuine nurture with high expectations: we look beyond behaviour, consider what each child needs and act with determination to help every pupil thrive.

Over recent years, Oakwood has become a happier, more unified school. Our staff work collaboratively within and across teams, supported by visible leadership, clear expectations and a shared commitment to children. Colleagues know where to turn for support and trust that concerns will be listened to and addressed. This balance of care and accountability has created a positive professional culture that the next Headteacher will inherit and continue to develop.

Our pupils benefit from a school that is ambitious, forward-thinking and willing to explore approaches that strengthen learning and wellbeing. We are proud to have achieved the OPAL Platinum Award, the highest available level, after transforming opportunities for play across our grounds and woodland. Children are encouraged to explore, create, assess risk and build confidence.

Oakwood is supported by an engaged parent community. Families volunteer for visits, contribute through the PTA and have helped shape initiatives such as OPAL. Parent feedback has become increasingly positive as the school has listened and responded. We recognise that an involved community brings strong views as well as valuable expertise, and we value the contribution parents make to school life.

What visitors notice is the warmth of relationships and the school's values in everyday interactions. Children are happier to come to school, staff share a common purpose, and families are increasingly positive about the changes they have seen. The atmosphere is nurturing and supportive, with a clear sense of direction and determination to keep improving.

Our ambition is to deepen this culture across the whole community so that every child feels understood, safe and able to achieve. We want to continue learning, listening and responding, while preserving the kindness and high expectations that make Oakwood distinctive.



SCHOOL VISION AND VALUES

At Oakwood every individual is valued for who they are and what they contribute to the school. We, the Oakwood community, have developed and agreed values that encompass our holistic approach and provide a foundation on which children can grow and prosper.

The result is a set of values and behaviours that are possible to put into practice every day so that together, we put Kindness, Curiosity and Ambition at the heart of everything we do for ourselves, our school, our community and beyond.

Our Values Are:

Kindness

Curiosity

Ambition

Through our values we aim to:

- provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment where children feel safe and enjoy their learning
- provide a broad curriculum and enriching experiences which promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, and intellectual development of each child
- nurture the emotional, social, physical development and wellbeing of each individual
- nurture the positive attitudes and skills necessary to prosper in a changing society, including self-confidence, self-discipline, adaptability, creativity and determination
- encourage each child to show respect, care and consideration for all members of their community and to take responsibility for their actions
- encourage each child to recognise the importance of responsible use of the earth's resources and develop an understanding of how we can all contribute to creating a more sustainable society



OUR NEW HEADTEACHER

We are looking for a leader who will embrace everything that makes Oakwood special while bringing fresh perspective and energy to help us move forward. We are a happy school with a nurturing ethos, high-achieving pupils and staff who share a clear commitment to doing their best for every child. You will inherit strong foundations and have the opportunity to shape the next stage of our journey with care, confidence and ambition.

Relationships will be central to your leadership. You will take time to know our pupils, staff, families and wider community, listening carefully and building the trust that enables people to flourish. Visible and approachable, you will value the openness, collaboration and mutual support that have become important features of our school culture.

You will combine warmth with professional clarity, supporting others while maintaining clear expectations and a shared focus on pupils. Kindness is at the heart of Oakwood, and our positive culture has grown through leadership that listens, acts and provides a clear sense of direction. We need a Headteacher who will preserve this balance, helping colleagues feel valued while ensuring that everyone understands their part in the school's continued success.

Your approach to change will be thoughtful and considered. You will recognise and value the progress already made while remaining curious about what could be even better. By asking thoughtful questions, listening to different perspectives and using evidence, you will identify what should be protected, strengthened or approached differently. In doing so, you will bring people with you and ensure that improvement is purposeful, sustainable and rooted in the needs of our pupils.

Working alongside staff, you will continue to strengthen teaching, learning and inclusive practice across the school. You will support colleagues to develop greater consistency, share effective practice and create positive experiences for every pupil. With high expectations and a strong understanding of individual needs, you will promote positive behaviour, good attendance and strong achievement, ensuring that pupils with SEND and those receiving pupil premium are understood, supported and able to make the most of everything Oakwood offers.

We are looking for someone who is positive, resilient and calm. You will inspire confidence, sustain morale and bring people together around a shared purpose. Above all, you will keep our community focused on what matters most: children who feel known and supported, staff who work successfully together and high-quality learning that enables every pupil to thrive.



WHAT WE CAN OFFER

Joining Oakwood means stepping into a school with strong foundations. You will inherit a staff team whose members support one another, work across phases and share a clear commitment to their pupils. Expectations are well established, relationships matter and colleagues know that their voices will be heard.

You will be supported by a governing board that understands both the opportunities and responsibilities of school leadership. Governors bring a range of skills, backgrounds and experience, including financial expertise, and are committed to working constructively with the Headteacher. For those moving into their first headship, access to HFL Education's Moving to New to Headship Programme can be provided, including structured support from a professional partner and mentor.

Beyond the school, you will become part of an established and supportive local network. Oakwood works collaboratively with other schools, has positive links with neighbouring secondary school - Beaumont School and benefits from the St Albans headteacher consortium. These relationships provide opportunities to exchange ideas, learn from other leaders and draw on the support of colleagues who understand the local context.

Oakwood is in a strong financial position, providing a secure platform from which to plan for the future. The school also benefits from extensive grounds, a recently completed roof and air conditioning in every classroom. The successful candidate will therefore inherit a well-maintained environment with further potential to make creative use of the site for the benefit of pupils and the wider school community.

Wellbeing matters at Oakwood. Staff views are listened to through regular surveys, and colleagues, including the Headteacher, can access a governor-supported wellbeing day. You will also join a highly engaged parent community whose volunteers, expertise and active PTA make a valuable contribution to school life and its continued success.

Above all, Oakwood offers the opportunity to lead a school that has made meaningful progress and is ready to take its next steps. You will be supported by committed colleagues, engaged governors, strong professional networks and a community that cares deeply about its school. This is a place where you can build on secure foundations, continue to grow as a leader and make a lasting difference to children and families..



PERSON SPECIFICATION

To be considered for shortlisting, candidates must clearly demonstrate how they meet the essential - and where possible, the desirable criteria outlined in the Person Specification below.

Please structure your statement using the **STAR format** (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to provide **clear, evidence-based examples of your experience and impact**.

If shortlisted, we will assess additional aspects of school leadership - including alignment with the **Headteacher Standards (2020)** and the **specific needs of our school** - through a series of tasks and a formal interview on the assessment day.

Qualifications	Essential/ Desirable	Application form	Assessment stage
Degree and qualified teacher status	E	*	
Recent successful leadership experience as a Headteacher, Deputy headteacher, Assistant headteacher or School Improvement Lead	D	*	
Recent training and development for school leadership (e.g. NPQH or equivalent)	D	*	
Strategic leadership and school improvement	Essential/ Desirable	Application form	Assessment stage
Establish and sustain a culture of high expectations and professional integrity, ensuring accountability for staff and promoting pupil success academically, personally, and socially.	E	*	*
Demonstrate expertise in school self-evaluation, development planning, and using data to implement evidence-based strategies for continuous improvement.	E	*	*
Prioritise and lead the professional growth of all staff, maintaining a proven track record in effective performance management.	E	*	*
Successfully lead whole-school policy development and drive change initiatives that improve outcomes for pupils and staff.	D	*	*
Show unwavering commitment to safeguarding and promoting the health, safety, and wellbeing of children and staff.	E	*	*
Implement strategies that reduce staff workload, enhance wellbeing, and improve retention across the school.	D		*

Teaching, learning and curriculum	Essential/ Desirable	Application form	Assessment stage
Experience of designing and implementing a broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum, with assessment strategies that support progress for all learners	D	*	*
Deep understanding of high-quality teaching and learning across the EYFS/KS1/KS2	E	*	*
Absolute commitment to inclusion and high expectations for all pupils, underpinned by knowledge and experience of supporting children with SEND, disadvantaged pupils, and higher attainers	E	*	*
Understands the needs of children with challenging behaviours and develop strategies to successfully manage this	D	*	*
Experience of aligning staff expertise with pupil needs to deliver effective outcomes	D		*
Understands the strategic role of technology in teaching and learning and experience of embedding edtech to improve outcomes	D		*
Accountability, governance and working in partnership	Essential/ Desirable	Application form	Assessment stage
Experience of managing school finances effectively, understanding their contribution to school development and pupil outcomes	D		*
Able to assimilate and manage financial and other data to achieve sound financial decision-making	D	*	*
Proven ability to build strong relationships and manage expectations across diverse stakeholders, including governors, partners, and the wider community	E	*	*
Understands and welcomes the role of effective governance, upholds their obligation to give account and accept responsibility	E		*
Demonstrates ability to engage positively with parents, carers, and the wider community to support pupil outcomes	E	*	*

Personal Qualities/ Ethics and professional conduct	Essential/ Desirable	Application form	Assessment stage
Demonstrates a deep commitment to education, underpinned by integrity, resilience, and emotional intelligence.	E		*
Maintains clarity of thought and makes effective decisions in challenging circumstances.	E		*
Exhibits excellent communication skills, both written and verbal, and builds positive relationships with all stakeholders.	E	*	*
Actively promotes equality, diversity, and inclusion across all aspects of school life.	E	*	*
Visible and approachable, with empathy and genuine enthusiasm for engaging and inspiring children and colleagues.	E		*
Demonstrates a flexible leadership style; hands-on when required, while knowing when to delegate effectively.	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

Main purpose:

The core purpose of the Headteacher is to provide professional leadership and management of the school. This will promote a secure foundation from which to achieve high standards in all areas of the school's work.

To gain this success, the Headteacher must

- Establish high-quality education by effectively managing teaching and learning and using personalised learning to realise the potential of all students.
- Develop a strategy with our community and other schools in order to provide clear educational pathways for our students as they grow older.
- Ensure sustainable growth and financial security for the school.
- Meet the expectations set out in the National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers and School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD).
- Have responsibility, as with all staff, to promote and safeguard the safety and welfare of children and young people.

Key responsibilities:

- Understand, contribute to and promote the school's vision and values through personal work and teaching practice.
- Secure the understanding and commitment of all members of the school community to the direction of travel and particularly those holding posts of responsibility.
- Work with colleagues to promote creativity, innovation and appropriate use of technologies to achieve excellence.
- Develop and implement the agreed School Improvement and Development Plan.
- Ensure that curriculum intent and implementation is of the highest possible standard and leads to strong outcomes for all pupils.
- Support the operational efficiency, effectiveness and safety of the school on a day-to-day basis, including arrangements for behaviour, safeguarding, SEND and vulnerable learners.
- Lead the school effectively through periods of change.
- Build upon the school's strong foundations and reputation within local networks and partnerships.



Leading Teaching and Learning:

- Manage and develop the curriculum in accordance with the policies applicable to the school and taking account of relevant advice given by national bodies.
- Maintain a strong focus on high-quality teaching and learning for all pupils.
- Encourage the development of teaching methods which promote effective learning by all.
- Prepare efficient arrangements for the timetabling of staff so that the requirements of the curriculum may be adequately met.
- Ensure the progress of pupils is monitored, recorded and reported to parents and others who have a right to know.
- Ensure the development and implementation of strategic policies of the school, for example, in relation to equal opportunities.
- Demonstrate the principles and practice of effective learning and teaching to an exceptional standard.

Health and Safety:

- Oversee the development and implementation of policies and procedures relating to child protection, health and safety, confidentiality, security, data protection; and ensure that all concerns are recorded and reported appropriately
- Promote the safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff.
- Maintain good order and discipline among pupils, managing behaviour effectively to ensure a safe and successful learning environment.

Management of resources and communication:

- Ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for the management of the school budget and school finances including proper procedures to account for these.
- Implement policies for the procurement, use and protection of all resources, including teaching material, equipment and accommodation.
- Establish effective channels of communication among all staff and users of the school.
- Consult and communicate with parents about the school and the progress of their children, in particular by arranging regular meetings between parents and teachers to assist such communication.
- Be the school's official correspondent with the Local Authority, external agencies, other schools, parents and the wider community.
- Contribute to the recruitment, selection, appointment and professional development of teaching and support staff.



Working with colleagues and professional development:

- Maintain effective working relationships with all members of the school community, with other schools, external agencies and the wider community.
- Work with governors and stakeholders to develop a long-term vision that balances excellence with inclusion and sustainability.
- Work with governors to ensure resources are used efficiently and aligned with strategic priorities.
- Take part in the school's appraisal procedures.
- Take part in further training and development in order to improve overall performance.
- Take part in the appraisal and professional development of others.

Additional Notes:

The Headteacher is expected to operate within the parameters of the National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers and School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) and HCC's contractual and financial frameworks.

The role is defined as Regulated Activity and subject to an enhanced DBS, children's barred list check and satisfactory references.

The duties listed are not an exhaustive list of requirements. The specific nature and balance of these responsibilities will vary according to the needs of the school.

This job description will be reviewed annually as part of the performance management programme.

The headteacher will have access to a range of professional development activities, including conferences, support groups and appropriate training courses.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Pay range:	L14 – L20 fringe (£75,310 - £87,036)
Start date:	September 2027
Closing date:	Monday 9 th November 2026 at 9am
Shortlisting date:	Tuesday 17 th November 2026
Interview date:	Monday 23 rd November 2026
Visits to the school:	To make an appointment, please contact the school office on 01727 753930 or email us at admin@oakwood.herts.sch.uk
School website:	oakwood.herts.sch.uk
School address:	Oakwood Drive, St Albans. Hertfordshire. AL4 0XA

Oakwood Primary School 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 2025).

We believe that a diverse team leads to better outcomes and a more enriching workplace. We are committed to fostering a culture where everyone feels they belong.



APPLICATION PROCESS

How to apply:

This recruitment is managed by HFL Education, in line with the latest guidance on safer recruitment. Please apply on the Teach in Herts website, using the standard online application form. CVs will not be considered. Should you need support, please contact leadership.recruitment@hfleducation.org. 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.

You should use the **STAR format** (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to provide **clear, evidence-based examples of experience and impact**.

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.





OAKWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

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