March 2018

Dear colleague

Thank you for your interest in the post of Vice-Principal at Witchford Village College (or WVC as it tends to be known locally). I very much hope that from reading all the details, you would like to apply for the role, which we believe will offer an excellent opportunity for an experienced senior leader looking to have significant impact and to develop their career further towards headship. In return you will be strongly supported by a multi-academy trust that has as its core vision the drive to ‘build a better world through education’.

I became Interim Principal of WVC in January (and still am CEO of MET alongside too) following the difficult decision by the previous Principal, Chris Terry, to stand down because of personal reasons. During his four years at the college, Chris made a difference and led WVC to its strongest GCSE results and a ‘Good’ judgement by Ofsted in 2016. The Trust considered securing an external interim appointment for the two terms, but we felt that this would disrupt the college too greatly and I agreed to step in as Interim Principal (alongside my ‘day’ job as CEO). I know the college and its community very well, having served as Vice-Principal myself here a few years ago (2000-2003) and having chosen WVC as first choice of schooling for my three children when we relocated back to the area in 2007. It’s a village college, I care deeply about and I view the opportunity to be Principal for two terms with real pleasure and honour.

Earlier this term, we advertised for the post of Principal and secured an outstanding appointment in Dan Baxby, who currently works at the Wrenn Academy in Wellingborough, Northants. This appointment will be his first as Principal and we believe it is a great opportunity to secure a like-minded individual to join a new team of senior leaders for whom the sky is literally the limit. We are both very excited by this opportunity.

In the pages that follow, you should hopefully have all the information you need to inform your application. I have tried to reflect on what I thought would be useful (when I was applying for teaching positions). Of course there may be further information you find useful and I would welcome contact from you. I can be reached on my mobile (07963405269) or via email at rcampbell@tmet.org.uk. We will also welcome visits from any prospective applicant and these can be booked via my PA, Trudy John, on tjohn@wvc.tmet.org.uk.

If you would like to apply, please complete the application form and a letter (certainly not more than 2 sides of A4) outlining:

• your reasons for applying

• what you will bring to the role

• why you believe you might be suited to this particular role and opportunity.

Applications close at Noon on Tuesday 17 April 2018. Please ensure your form and letter is returned to Laurinda Quinn, HR Manager at WVC: lquinn@wvc.tmet.org.uk

I look forward to receiving and reading your application. If you decide not to apply, I wish you every success with the next step in your career.

Yours sincerely

Robert Campbell

Interim Principal, WVC, and CEO, Morris Education Trust

**Welcome from Sandra Thompson (Chair of the LGB)**

I have been a governor for seven years and Chair of the LGB for six years, since just after we became an academy. I was previously a governor of the local primary school for twelve years. I became interested in the governorship of schools as a way of understanding the education my children were enjoying. It is vital that the community are involved so that schools are in touch with the needs and characteristics of the children who come to the school. I hope that my voice has been representative of many other families. My own four children have benefitted from the quality of Witchford Village College, my youngest left in 2017.

Witchford Village College serves a catchment area of rural villages near Ely. We have seven feeder primary schools and also attract families from Ely, so many pupils have to travel us by bus. We do have a number of traveller families in the catchment. Overall we largely comprise families that have lived in the area for a very long time or those that have arrived more recently and work in Cambridge or London. We value being able to provide a quality education to every child who chooses to come to our College. Development in the area means that all villages will have growth in the coming years and this will impact on our increasing roll. We are both excited and a little daunted by the challenge of further building on our (compact) site! We were judged “Good” by OFSTED in 2016 and have since joined the Morris Education Trust because it is local and has a shared ethos of education for the whole community. We are benefitting from the drive and experience this has brought to us. We are aiming to be “Outstanding”.

The Local Governing Body is adjusting to working as part of the Trust and enjoying being able to concentrate on the education of our young people. We operate a Scheme of Delegation which clearly lays out where the responsibility lies for each area of activity affecting the College. There is work to be done on improving the teaching and learning and the curriculum and we anticipate challenging, exciting and rewarding times ahead. We have many experienced staff who can offer positive support to enable the successful candidate to thrive. We are looking forward to welcoming new staff and supporting them in the development of our College.

Sandra Thompson

Chair of the LGB, Witchford Village College

**About the school**

The internet age provides us with a wealth of information about schools and I hope you have already found out much about WVC. I hope this short addition from me adds flavour to the facts and figures. WVC is a smaller than average secondary and this means you will get to know all the staff and students very well indeed. It has additional practical benefits as you can get around the (compact) site inside a lesson - always a benefit for headteachers! It is a close-knit community and some of the recent demographic changes that have affected other parts of the region are yet to impact as fully on WVC.

Most children live in one of the eight villages that comprise its catchment and it’s not untypical to discover that parents (or even grandparents!) once attended WVC. This means transport can be an issue and the college runs ‘Late Buses’ at 4.15pm on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoon to accommodate its varied additional curricular provision. A good number of children come to WVC from Ely and parents fund a bus to enable transport from the city.

WVC is in East Cambridgeshire, identified by the Government as one of its 12 ‘Opportunity Areas’. The challenge of raising aspirations and achievement is one that is common to aspects of WVC, particularly in the light of disappointing GCSE outcomes in 2017. However, the college is unified and committed to addressing this and the trajectory is an upward one. The new incoming Vice-Principal should arrive at a school that has achieved stronger progress (our aim for 2018 is for 0.0 using Progress 8) and with a new curriculum and academic/pastoral system in place, alongside a reviewed and re-developed staffing structure. Our new Assistant Principal is energizing the staff by leading on Teaching and Learning.

The priorities for WVC remain those which were developed last June and which form the basis of the three-year College Development Plan:

* Develop Excellence as Standard for Teaching & Learning
* Develop and value staff so:
1. Teaching is stronger
2. Outcomes are improved
* Review and develop the provision for students for 2018 that enables WVC to become an excellent school (by 2022)

You would therefore be joining a school at an exciting time in its development.

**Staffing**

Last summer, we started work on restructuring the senior and middle leadership team, to enable it to be more focused on improving teaching and learning and raising outcomes for all students. This led to the appointment of Lead Practitioners in English, Maths and Science (internally) and these have just been joined by one in Humanities (January 2018). An Assistant Principal for Teaching & Learning was also appointed during the Autumn Term and Bessie Owen started here this term. She was most recently Head of Year 11 at Soham Village College. We are progressing to Vertical Tutoring from September 2018 (which has had such a positive impact at the other school in the Trust, Impington Village College) and this will ensure an excellent pastoral system is in place, which all teaching staff support as tutors. Teachers are placed in Faculty and Department teams and these are all conveniently located across the College. Collegiality and collaboration are very important here at WVC.

**About the Trust**

The Morris Education Trust (MET) was formed during 2016 by the Trustees of Impington Village College (IVC). Like many a (single) academy trust, it contemplated the benefits of either forming or joining a multi-academy trust. I had been Principal of IVC since 2007 and there is a strong and distinctive ethos which pervades that college which we felt might be lost in joining an existing trust. Being inclusive, international and inspirational were three key features which have become incorporated in the new trust. Importantly reflecting its origins within a proud village college (IVC was the 4th of these to be built, opening in 1939), the new trust should also embrace the vision of Henry Morris whose memorandum in 1925 gave rise to these unique institutions. In that memorandum, Morris describes the village college as being a place ‘where life is lived itself’ and which should work alongside the family to create flourishing communities. We happen to believe this is as important today as it was when written over 90 years ago.

The Trustees of WVC began discussions with MET during 2016 and they recognised in our trust values and a vision which resonated with their own outlook. WVC formally joined MET on 1 April 2017. Later that month, the DfE gave approval for MET to open a special free school for children with autism spectrum condition (aged 7 to 19) which should be built and opened on the site at Impington in September 2019. The Trust is also in discussion with other schools about prospectively joining MET and our aim is to create a strong local multi-phase/setting MAT rich in our distinctive values. Naturally we want new staff at WVC to share those and wish to play a contributing in WVC and MET’s development as a really strong and distinctive partnership of schools.

In addition to the Trust, Impington and Witchford are strategic partners in a recently founded teaching school alliance, also called Morris. This collaboration will see the two schools working with others on the ‘Big Three’ areas of responsibility:

* Initial Teacher Training
* Continuous Professional Development
* School to School Support

Therefore staff can expect to have many opportunities to develop their practice and careers as part of the Trust and Alliance.

**What we can offer you**

You will be joining a relatively new MAT at an exciting stage of its growth and development. We are passionate about the environment we create and how we look after our staff. We try to ensure we abide by the excellent principles in Mary Myatt’s wonderful book, *High Challenge, Low Threat*, where we are ‘human first, professional second’.

We can provide you with:

* a supportive and newly developed Senior Leadership Team
* mentoring by experienced Leaders
* bespoke professional development linked to your identified needs
* access to the Trust’s links with the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge
* preferential rates for access to the excellent sports/leisure facilities within MET-L

Robert Campbell

Interim Principal, WVC, and CEO, Morris Education Trust