

February 2018

Dear Colleague,

**Assistant Headteacher, Head of Sixth Form  
L13 – L20 (starting point dependent on experience)**

We are excited at the prospect of appointing a new head of sixth form to the school for September 2018. Chances such as these come along only fleetingly – Michael Seeley, the present incumbent, was appointed in 2007 and has overseen the growth from a middling sized sixth form to one of the largest in Wiltshire.

Sheldon is a large comprehensive school approaching 1800 pupils, 360 of whom are in the sixth form. It is a high-performing school with ambitions to go even further; specifically at the end of Year 13, value-added results are regularly ALPS 3 and it is our aim to make this stronger. There are currently 40 A Level, BTec, and Cambridge Technical options available, reflecting the needs of a large and diverse sixth form cohort. Students enter the sixth form with a minimum of five grade 4s and students can follow one of four pathways. The highest can see many students successfully progressing to Russell Group and other leading universities, including Oxford and Cambridge, four students doing so in 2017. Higher level apprenticeships are increasingly becoming a preferred route for some.

The sixth form team comprises 20 tutors, two heads of year for each of Years 12 and 13 – and the head of sixth form. The head of sixth form is also a member of the school's senior management team, so in addition to specific sixth form responsibilities, we expect the appointed candidate to play a significant role across the whole of the school right down to Year 7.

We are therefore looking to appoint someone who is an outstanding classroom practitioner who will lead the work within the sixth form, but who will also play a pivotal role in helping shape the whole school over the next five years. He or she will enjoy working with young people, and will understand the needs of 16-18 year olds in particular. The successful candidate will be a credible practitioner and will have a major part to play in the quality of teaching and learning within the sixth form, will understand the role of data in students' learning and will be able to work comfortably with it to ensure very good outcomes for students. We want to see a visible leader, someone who is out and about as far as possible, despite obvious demands on their time, and we want a colleague who will give willingly to wider whole-school events.

I believe that this is a fantastic place to work – it genuinely is a pleasure to come to school each day. The environment is extremely appealing, the site being very well-maintained through significant regular investment and the working space for the sixth form team is certainly very pleasant. However, it is the staff and students who make the school very special. Students are proud of their school and Ofsted commented in the recent inspection in June 2017 that "pupils are keen to share their enthusiasm and enjoyment of school, reflecting the principles that we have instilled." Moreover, "the all-pervading caring ethos ensures that pupils are happy and able to thrive from the moment they arrive at school."

Hardenhuish Lane, Chippenham, Wilts. SN14 6HJ

**Headteacher:** Neil Spurdell BSc (Hons)

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There is a continual focus on staff development and wellbeing, both of which rated very highly in the most recent survey conducted in the summer of 2017. Staff morale, in what are challenging educational times, is high, born out of there being a real sense of community. We work hard, but the effort is worth it and the students certainly appreciate it. You will see lots of laughter and you will also have a lot of fun.

I hope, having read the information available to you, that you will decide to apply. Whilst we believe that we have a strong viable proposition for the successful candidate, the appointed person has massive scope to develop the sixth form. We want someone with a vision for the sixth form as an outstanding centre of excellence but very much part of the whole school. The appointed person will also have ambition – for the students, the school, the sixth form and him or herself; someone who is a confident communicator working well with staff, students, parents and external providers; and someone who has a passion for teaching.

To apply, please complete the application form and provide a letter of application (of no more than two sides). In addition, in a separate document using no more than 750 words, we would like you to describe an initiative you have managed which has had a positive impact in your school. We are particularly interested in the process you used to manage the change successfully.

Good luck with your application. I look forward to receiving it and to perhaps meeting you at interview. The closing date for applications is Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February at noon, with interviews scheduled for Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> March.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Neil Spurdell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large 'N' and a long, sweeping underline.

Neil Spurdell  
**Headteacher**