

Brief for the appointment of **Head**



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Background

Oakham School is a vibrant and well-rounded community of over 800 pupils aged 11 to 18, with an equal balance of girls and boys, and boarders and day pupils.

Founded in 1584 by Archdeacon Robert Johnson, the School is located in the heart of the historic market town of Oakham, surrounded by the scenic Rutland countryside. Whilst remaining true to its heritage, the School prides itself on being a modern, innovative and forward-thinking learning environment.

The purpose of the School is to equip pupils with the knowledge, skills, and values they need to thrive and make confident, meaningful contributions – both within the Oakham School community and beyond. The four core values of **Care, Courage, Contribution, and Connection** reflect the qualities the School seeks to inspire in every pupil, guiding them throughout their lives.

Oakham is an inclusive and supportive community which provides a world-class education and exceptional learning resources and facilities. An Oakham education is deliberately and

distinctively holistic; with a carefully constructed Connected Curriculum, which flows through the School, teaching knowledge, skills and values across the academic, cocurricular and pastoral spheres. At Oakham, pupils not only perform well in their exams, but they develop an intellectual curiosity that will cultivate a lifelong love of learning. They are also offered multiple opportunities to participate beyond the classroom, to develop and pursue physical and mental well-being and to expand their interest in the creative arts and sport. In doing so, they exercise innovation, teamwork and leadership skills. Service to others is something that all Oakhamians also come to understand and value.

Oakham School is a special place with 440 years of experience and a bright vision for the future. The School motto says '*vitai lampada tradunt*' – they pass on the torch of life.





Learning at Oakham

Through an outstanding academic curriculum, Oakham encourages all pupils to become creative, critical and reflective thinkers who can make links across the different subjects they are taught. The School is distinctive for its genuinely holistic approach to education, with a Connected Curriculum that teaches pupils how to take their studies further and rise to the intellectual challenges that they will encounter in their later lives.

The School offers the choice of A Levels, BTECs or the IB Diploma Programme for Upper School pupils, and GCSEs and IGCSEs in the Middle School. There are 26 subjects on offer at A-Level, and the School has offered the IB diploma since 2000. In 2025, pupils achieved an average IB point score of 34, with 7 pupils gaining 40 points or more. The A-Level and BTEC results were equally impressive, with

45% of all exams awarded A*/A and an overall pass rate of 99%. Oakhamians move on to a wide range of excellent university destinations both across the UK and overseas. Pupils also benefit from exceptional learning resources: well-equipped classrooms, a university-standard library, state-of-the-art Science and Design Technology facilities, 40 acres of outstanding sports pitches, a theatre, a chapel (which is also used for concerts) and an art gallery. The School has benefited from significant investment in recent years which reflects Oakham's ongoing commitment to providing the very best learning environment for students. Recent improvements include a new classroom block for the Humanities, a stunning state-of-the-art Faculty of Social Sciences, redevelopment of Science facilities and expanded pupil social spaces.

Life at Oakham

Oakham is a caring community where pupils learn how to be independent, thoughtful and responsible young adults who are ready to take on the challenges of life beyond School. The comprehensive structure of pastoral care, at the heart of which is the supportive House system, is designed to provide support tailored to the age of pupils at every stage of their Oakham journey.

In the Lower School, pupils join one of the two Lower School Houses, situated on the dedicated Lower School area of the campus. In Year 9, pupils join one of ten Middle School Houses in the heart of the School. In Year 13, girls move to Round House and boys to School House, where they experience a more university-oriented lifestyle. Every pupil at Oakham, whether boarding or day, belongs to a House. Each House has a distinctive personality and there is a healthy level of enjoyable competition between them; playing for 'House Pride' and showing 'House Spirit' are familiar mantras that all pupils use.

Each pupil also has his or her own tutor, who works closely with Housemasters/Housemistresses and parents to help their tutees fulfil personal goals, develop strategies to manage their busy lives and feel both academically and socially stimulated. Small tutorial groups and regular tutorial meetings enable tutors to get to know their tutees very well. Tutors organise informal activities with their tutor groups to strengthen further the tutor-tutee relationship.

Oakham successfully combines the rhythm and benefits of a great boarding school with a diverse, dynamic and distinctive mix of day and boarding pupils. The School is focussed on a clear 11-18 journey, with pupils from Years 7 to 13 receiving all the benefits of a senior school education with suitably tailored pastoral structures and support. The well-established House System has seen greater integration of day and boarding pupils throughout the day and bespoke, modern boarding to suit all forms of boarding pupils and families.



Performing and Creative Arts

The arts have a strong tradition at Oakham, embracing excellence and enthusiasm, professionalism and participation. In Drama, House theatre productions sit alongside Edinburgh Festival plays; in Music, virtuoso musicians play concerts one day and novices take to the stage the next; and in Art and Design Technology, degree-standard exhibitions are on display while newcomers explore the challenges of ceramic sculpture, paint or electronics.

Art and Design Technology

The Richard Bull Centre is home to the Art Department with dedicated studios and workshops for Art, Sculpture, and Textiles. The Jerwood School of Design is a purpose-built facility that contains cutting edge equipment, including CREO 3.0 CAD software, a 3D Rapid Prototype Printer and an extensive range of CNC machinery. A stone building in Kilburn Courtyard has been transformed into the Wheelhouse Art Gallery, providing a dedicated space to host exhibitions by students and visiting artists, and is open to the public.

Music

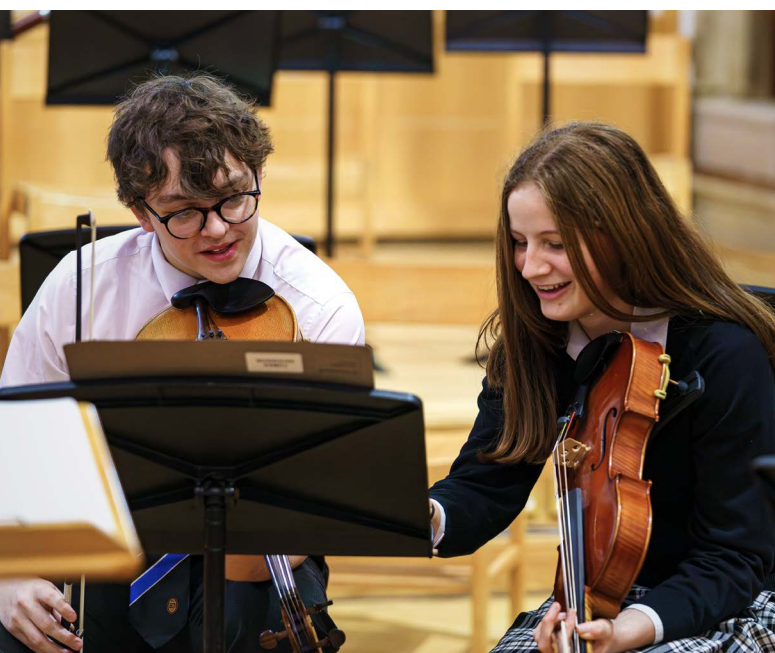
It would be difficult to rival Oakham's musical offering both in quality and breadth of opportunity. Some 40 full time and visiting musicians teach over

300 lessons per week, with a rich and diverse variety of musical ensembles, choirs, bands, orchestras and performances in musical theatre. Pupils take part in over 70 concerts each year in Rutland and prestigious venues around the UK, as well as attending professional concerts hosted at the School.

Drama

Drama is a cornerstone of life at Oakham. It is a popular subject in the academic curriculum and forms the backbone of co-curricular activity within the School. Now in its 41st year, the Queen Elizabeth Theatre and its surrounding rehearsal spaces host an eclectic line-up of productions, students' own experimental pieces, cutting edge drama, full-scale musicals and house drama and dance competitions each year.

Under the tutelage of dynamic and experienced staff, students learn all aspects of theatre work, including design, lighting, sound, stage management, wardrobe, make-up and front of house. Dance, an essential for any would-be actor, is part of the curriculum up to Year 9, is offered at GCSE and anyone can join the free weekly classes held on Wednesday evenings or experience Ballet Rambert as part of the Academic Enrichment programme.





Sport

Sport has always been an essential part of Oakham School life. There is a wide and varied sports programme on offer that provides competitive and recreational opportunities for pupils of all levels – from enthusiasts to elite athletes – to ensure that pupils lead healthy and fulfilling lives at School and beyond. The School is a recognised training ground for national squads, including football and cricket youth squads, and we have very strong links to a number of premier clubs including Leicester Tigers and Northampton Saints for rugby, Beeston, Peterborough, Leicester Women's Club and Nottingham University for hockey, Loughborough Lightning for netball and Leicestershire CCC for cricket. Sport is a popular academic subject and many pupils choose to study Sports Science at GCSE, and also post-16 at A-level, BTEC, or in the IB Diploma.

Oakham has an enviable reputation for excellent coaching and mentoring in a variety of sports. At any one time, around 60 pupils are representing their county or country in their chosen sport. Oakham have reached national finals in rugby, rugby 7s, hockey and netball in the past three years, and the School is very proud of the list of Old Oakhamians representing their country at national and international level.

The sports facilities at the School are outstanding and include more than 40 acres of some of the best grass playing pitches in the country, a multipurpose sports centre, an indoor pool, floodlit all-weather pitches for hockey, cricket and tennis, squash

courts, a shooting range, fives courts, a strength and conditioning room, and a fitness centre. The cricket square is first class standard and hosts county matches as well as school fixtures. There is also access to nearby Rutland Water for sailing and Luffenham Heath for golf.

Community and Partnerships

The Oakham community is warm and welcoming, and the School strongly believes in its duty to maintain an environment where pupils and adults belong, grow and flourish together.

Oakham School is committed to its status as an educational charity and to the original statutes, set down by the Founder in 1584, to provide an academic education to local pupils. Oakham is committed to extending its educational reach as far as possible by making the School accessible to those who could not otherwise afford an independent education and by making the expertise of leading teachers, as well as the outstanding facilities, available to young people who are not pupils at the School. Examples of such projects include: the sponsorship of Harington School, a Sixth Form Free School that opened in 2015 in Rutland; Oakham's Phab Club and Music in the Community.

Looking forward, Oakham wishes to strengthen its links with local schools and partners whilst also looking outwards to bring the wider world back into the community.

To read more about Oakham School, please visit the School's website: www.oakham.rutland.sch.uk

The Role

Reporting to the Trustees, the Head has overall responsibility for the leadership and management of Oakham School and its future direction. The Head chairs and leads the Senior Leadership Team which, in turn, holds responsibility for the management of Oakham School.

The Senior Leadership Team comprises the Head, Senior Deputy Head, Deputy Head (Academic), Deputy Head (Pastoral), Deputy Head (Co-Curriculum), Director of Admissions and Marketing, Chief Operating Officer and Clerk to the Trustees, Director of Safeguarding, Director of Development and Engagement, Director of People, Head of Upper School, Head of Middle School and Head of Lower School.

The key responsibilities for the Head are as follows:

Strategic Direction

- Develop and steward an ambitious and compelling vision for the future of the School, in consultation with the Trustees.
- Lead the delivery of the strategic plan to further strengthen Oakham's position and to enhance its profile, keeping the plan under constant review and translating it into clear and measurable targets for implementation and monitoring by the Trustees.

- Secure the commitment of the School's key constituents to the strategic vision and overall direction of the School, including staff, parents, alumni and the wider community.
- Ensure that the ethos and values of the School are sustained and that excellent relationships between staff, pupils and parents (both current and prospective) continue to be a priority.
- Be aware of, and respond to, the local, national and global external environment of the School and sector in the UK.
- Seek ways to improve and develop the School on an ongoing basis and make recommendations to the Trustees as appropriate.



Leadership and Management

- Provide overall leadership to all staff, developing amongst them a culture of excellence across all areas of School life and a deep commitment and sense of involvement as part of a high-achieving, academic community.
- Take overall responsibility for the delivery of excellent pastoral care including safeguarding and discipline. Work with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other senior members of staff to oversee all aspects of monitoring and safeguarding, working closely with outside agencies, as appropriate.
- Ensure excellent communication across the whole School community, in particular ensuring that staff are engaged and fully informed of all School matters, including the vision, strategic direction and financial position of the School.
- Continue the development of a strong, cohesive and proactive Senior Leadership Team, ensuring that roles and responsibilities are clear and that the highest standards of performance are set and maintained.
- Oversee the development and implementation of School policies and procedures and ensure that rigorous performance management is in place for the whole staff.
- Lead the School in such a way that the energies of all staff are harnessed by fostering a strong commitment to the ethos, standards and values of the School.
- Provide the highest level of care for the physical and mental health and well-being of all pupils and staff.
- Ensure that appropriate policies and procedures are in place to recruit, develop, reward and retain the best and most committed teaching and support staff to ensure that the School is effective in delivering its aims.
- Carry lead responsibility for all required Health & Safety Policies, ensuring that appropriate procedures and arrangements are in place and are kept under review.
- Build productive relationships with Trustees, enabling them to fulfil their duties and obligations.





Educational Leadership

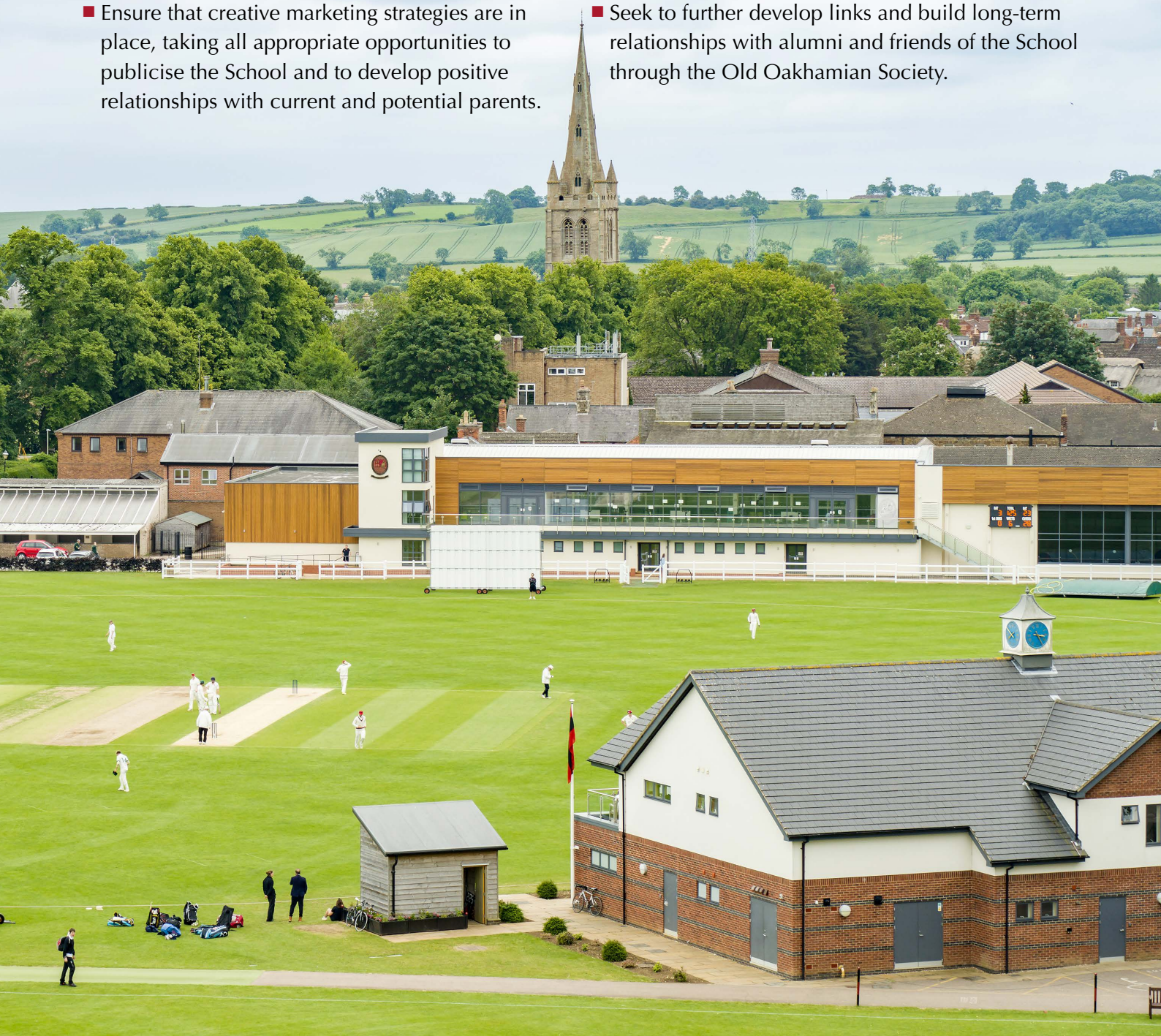
- Provide strong, visible and accessible leadership to the whole School community, overseeing the continual development of a challenging curriculum appropriate for a rapidly changing world and informed by high academic standards.
- Achieve academic excellence for all pupils, including those that might need learning support, and create an environment of continuous evaluation and innovation.
- Ensure that all required arrangements are in place to facilitate inspections, and provide guidance and leadership through the inspection process.
- Oversee procedures relating to assessment and regulation, reporting on pupil performance and progression.
- Ensure that lessons and activities delivered by staff across the School provide an appropriate level of educational challenge and set high expectations for all learners.
- Ensure that emerging technologies and AI are explored for their potential to enhance the learning environment.
- Actively support and develop as appropriate the offering of Oakham's broad and deep programme of co-curricular activities.
- Ensure that the safety, security and well-being of all pupils remain at the heart of the School's mission and day-to-day practices.
- Work in understanding with the Christian foundation and values of the School and play a leading part in the Chapel alongside the Senior Chaplain.

Business Management

- Work with the Chief Operating Officer and the Trustees to make a significant contribution to the strategic financial planning, ensuring the financial plans are fit for purpose and the School maintains and strengthens its financial position.
- Ensure appropriate deployment and overall management of all resources (financial, human and physical) in support of the overall mission, aims and strategic plans.
- Manage, monitor and review the range, quality and quantity of resources in order to improve the quality of learning and teaching at the School and secure efficiency and value for money.
- Work with the Director of Admissions and Marketing to support the strategic needs of the School; maximising pupil roll while maintaining the appropriate mix of pupils in line with the School's ethos and strategy.
- Work with the Director of Development and Engagement to play a pivotal role in the School's future fundraising activities, including working with the School's Foundation, engaging with donors, seeking philanthropic support and attending key events.
- With the Chief Operating Officer, identify new opportunities for the School to increase its non-fee income by fostering an environment of innovation in order to exploit the opportunities afforded by the School's assets.

External Engagement

- Play an active and visible role in the local community and across the wider region, encouraging strong commercial and public benefit collaborations and forging sustainable links with key partners.
- Foster and develop links with leading universities world-wide, being an ambassador for the School and representing it effectively across a broad range of relevant stakeholders.
- Ensure that creative marketing strategies are in place, taking all appropriate opportunities to publicise the School and to develop positive relationships with current and potential parents.
- Continue to build upon the strong relationships Oakham enjoys with its significant network of preparatory schools.
- Create a positive and proactive public relations programme, including developing beneficial relationships with the regional and national press, in order to promote the reputation and achievements of the School.
- Seek to further develop links and build long-term relationships with alumni and friends of the School through the Old Oakhamian Society.



The Person

The Head of Oakham School will be a visionary, courageous and inspirational leader who will be mindful and supportive of the School's traditions whilst being open to advancement through innovation.

The successful candidate is likely to have the following key skills, experience and attributes:

Qualifications and Experience

- A degree, with an additional post-graduate leadership and/or management qualification an advantage.
- A proven track record of outstanding success in academic leadership and management obtained as either Head or Deputy.
- The demonstrable ability to earn respect and to develop relationships with a broad range of stakeholders.
- Experience of building, developing and leading teams, ensuring they operate efficiently and effectively.
- Experience in managing human, financial and physical resources.
- Experience of teaching in a boarding environment.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Excellent and proactive strategic thinking and problem-solving skills, with the ability to formulate clear decisions that command support.

- The ability to prioritise and delegate wisely in a busy and demanding school.
- Significant ability to inspire, motivate, innovate and develop a clear vision to advance the School's ambitions.
- Commitment to the pursuit of academic excellence and to achieving the highest possible academic standards.
- Commitment to the delivery of a broad and far-reaching co-curricular programme which provides a wealth of sporting, artistic and cultural opportunities.
- Commitment to meaningful engagement and working in partnership with the wider community.
- Strong commercial and business acumen with robust financial management skills.
- Understanding of the importance of fundraising, PR and marketing and willingness to provide the necessary support for them.
- A track record of operating with openness and honesty and the ability to relate to all sections of the Oakham community with a strong commitment to equality and diversity.
- Excellent knowledge of and ability to manage financial matters, risk, regulatory and legal issues.



Personal Attributes

- Bright, confident, with highly developed intellectual capacity and emotional intelligence.
- Commitment to the ethos, values and objectives of Oakham.
- Strong commitment to the happiness, wellbeing and safeguarding of pupils.
- Passion for innovation in education and a leading voice in the sector.
- Perceptive and excellent judgement, decision making and problem-solving skills.
- Possessing a high degree of integrity.
- Open and collaborative.
- Outstanding communicator and a good listener, with the ability to inspire trust at all levels, inside and outside the School.
- Visible and approachable with excellent interpersonal skills.



How to Apply

Oakham School has engaged the services of Odgers to assist with the recruitment of the next Head.

The closing date for applications is **9.00am BST Friday 10 October.**

Shortlist interviews with the Selection Committee will take place on **Friday 7 November.** Candidates invited to the final stage will be invited to have a full briefing visit to the school during **week commencing 10 or 17 November** and final interviews will take place on **Tuesday 25 November.**

In order to apply, please submit a completed application form and CV, along with a covering letter which sets out your interest in the role and encapsulates the aspects of your experience relevant to the required criteria. Please include current salary details and the names and addresses of three referees. Referees will not be approached until the final stages and not without prior permission from candidates.

The preferred method of application is online at: www.odgers.com/94275,

All applications will receive an automated response.

For an initial discussion, please contact:

Freddie Dennis: +44 (0) 207 529 6366
freddie.dennis@odgers.com

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lydia.haldane@odgers.com

Personal data

In line with GDPR, we ask that you do NOT send us any information that can identify children or any of your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, data concerning health or sex life and sexual orientation, genetic and/or biometric data) in your CV and application documentation. Following this notice, any inclusion of your Sensitive Personal Data in your CV/ application documentation will be understood by us as your expressed consent to process this information going forward. Please also remember to not mention anyone's information or details (e.g. referees) who have not previously agreed to their inclusion. your CV and application documentation. Following this notice, any inclusion of your Sensitive Personal Data in your CV/application documentation will be understood by us as your express consent to process this information going forward. Please also remember to not mention anyone's information or details (e.g. referees) who have not previously agreed to their inclusion.

Oakham School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Oakham
SCHOOL

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