

# Didcot Girls' School

Committed to Excellence

www.didcotgirls.oxon.sch.uk  
email: head.4139@didcotgirls.oxon.sch.uk  
tel: 01235 812092



Manor Crescent  
Didcot  
Oxon  
OX11 7AJ

Headteacher: Tom Goodenough  
Executive Headteacher: Rachael Warwick

6<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in this important and exciting post. Didcot Girls' School is an exceptional school and we are seeking a leader who will feel as passionately about it as we all do. Our current Headteacher, Tom Goodenough, has led the school superbly over the last two and a half years. He leaves us to explore new career opportunities outside education and whilst we will miss him greatly, we are extremely grateful for his contribution to our school community over this time.

Didcot Girls' School was judged as Outstanding by Ofsted in 2015, following a fast-paced period of school improvement over the previous five years. The school has continued to develop capacity and ambition since this time. We are now a Teaching School, a sponsor academy and a lead school and capacity-giver in Ridgeway Education Trust.

We are a values-driven school. Our core values are those of respect, inclusion and a commitment to high standards. We know that culture is paramount and we nurture a culture which supports individuals, develops teams, encourages innovation and finds every opportunity to celebrate our students, teachers and support staff. We are comprehensive by intake and mindset, seeking the very best outcomes for all of our students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. We see no limits for our students' potential. We do not seek a perfect leader but one who has potential, is prepared to work hard and to motivate others to become leaders too. We welcome applications from women and men, from experienced Headteachers and those seeking their first headship. Whilst we would prefer a May start, we are prepared to wait for September to appoint the right candidate.

This summer's GCSE results were superb: 83% of all students achieving 4+ in English and Maths, and 64% doing the same at 5+. Our Attainment 8 figure was significantly above national average at 54.53 and our Progress 8 of +0.72 places us the top 3% of schools nationally for the second consecutive year. Results at A level in Didcot Sixth Form are also strong and improving year on year.

Didcot Girls' School has an excellent reputation and is over-subscribed year after year. Didcot is a rapidly growing town close to Oxford and the internationally renowned science centres at Harwell and Culham. The town has a buoyant economy driven by research and development and science and technology-based businesses at Milton Park and other growing business parks. In response to this growth and significant residential development, a University Technical College, specialising in applied science and engineering, opened in the town in September 2015 and a new mixed 11 to 16 secondary school opened in September 2017.

In partnership with St Birinus School (judged Ofsted Good in March 2016), we have run the successful Didcot Sixth Form for more than 20 years. Building on the success of this relationship, and with a shared vision for the delivery of excellent education across Didcot, St Birinus School joined us in a multi-academy trust, Ridgeway Education Trust, in October



2015. The Trust has facilitated a deeply collaborative relationship between the two schools, creating a rich range of opportunities for staff to work across both schools and for professional development through the Teaching School. From last September the mixed Didcot Sixth Form moved predominantly to St Birinus, an exciting development. We were delighted to welcome the first primary school, Sutton Courtenay CofE Primary School (judged Ofsted Requires Improvement in November 2017) to join the Trust in April 2019. We are now sharing staffing, and collaborating on curriculum development and extra-curricular provision across the three schools. We look forward to the continued measured growth of the Trust.

The successful candidate will build strong and constructive partnerships both within the Trust and outside it and will be an effective ambassador for the school and for the Trust. In particular, he or she will work with the Executive Headteacher and CEO of the Trust, Rachael Warwick, who carries a line management responsibility for this post and is the previous Headteacher of Didcot Girls' School. Elected ASCL President for 2019-2020, Rachael is seconded to work for ASCL for two days per week this year. Key relationships will also involve members of the Trust Board and the Governing Body of Didcot Girls' School, with the Director of the Sixth Form, who has responsibility for the sixth form's curriculum, standards and quality assurance; with the Director of Teaching School; and with the Director of Finance and Services who leads the excellent support services teams across the Trust. He or she will develop good relationships with our partner primary schools and with local employers. The successful applicant will become a member of the RET Executive Leadership Group which comprises the Executive Headteacher, the Heads of all three schools, the Director of Didcot Sixth Form and the Director of Teaching School.

Visits to the school are welcomed prior to application. Please contact Frances Adley, Executive Headteacher's PA, on [fadley@didcotgirls.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:fadley@didcotgirls.oxon.sch.uk) to make an appointment.

To apply for this post, please complete the school's application form, available on the 'Join Us' section of the school website, paying particular attention to the 'relevant skills and experience' section. Candidates should also submit a two-page response to the following question: *'As Headteacher of Didcot Girls' School how would you lead the school community to ensure that an aspirational culture and ethos of challenge and support enables all students and staff to thrive?'*

Completed applications should be returned to Frances Adley by 9am on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January. Interviews are scheduled for Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January and Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January.

If you are excited by this opportunity and believe that you have the energy, motivation and values to be successful, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Best wishes



Ruth Elliot  
Chair of Governors

