



BRIEFING FOR CANDIDATES

Appointment for Head

START DATE JANUARY 2027



WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

I'll never forget my first visit to Feltonfleet School, nearly 10 years ago. I was immediately struck by the smiles, the confidence, and the courtesy which the Year 8 pupils showed me and my family around the school. They were the perfect illustration of the benefits of a Feltonfleet education, alongside the obvious enthusiasm and warmth of all the staff we met.

Our twin boys have both benefitted from being educated at Feltonfleet and I still see that same warmth and joy in the pupils today. I have the immense privilege of being Chair of Governors of this outstanding school and now have the rare opportunity to help choose a new Head to lead Feltonfleet into the next stage in its own development.

Feltonfleet is a secure, stable school with strong financial management and a robust balance sheet. It has an outstanding reputation amongst its parents and staff. In a recent all-staff survey, 99% of staff reported they are proud or very proud of working at Feltonfleet.

In this brochure, we'll give you a flavour for our school: our history of innovation and achievement, our clear ethos and objectives, our leadership team and our collective desire to remain a thriving, successful, independent prep (and pre-prep) school – in short, a winner in these challenging times.

We're looking for an outstanding human, an experienced leader who will build on the incredible legacy they will inherit from our current Head of the last seven years, Shelley Lance. That leader will be confident yet humble, and collaborative yet decisive, a true team player while acting as Feltonfleet's key leader within the school and highly visible role model with parents in the wider community.

Feltonfleet is very well placed to thrive at a time of challenge for the independent prep school sector. We have not only retained robust pupil numbers through three years of very major roadworks at the A3/M25 junction, but also now have enhanced transport links and our own dedicated access road to our attractive and impressive campus with genuine "wow" factor. There couldn't be a more exciting time to join the school.

Keith Harrington Chair of Governors



THE OPPORTUNITY

Feltonfleet is a truly exceptional school, now offering an outstanding opportunity for an inspiring leader to step into its Headship and drive it forward. This represents a first-class career move for someone ready to embrace a demanding yet highly rewarding role, taking the reins of a top-tier Surrey prep school.

As Head of one of the country's healthiest standalone prep schools, you will benefit from the independence that only a fully independent school can offer—both in terms of professional autonomy and the breadth of educational opportunities available to our pupils.

If you are committed to shaping an exceptional prep school experience, Feltonfleet provides the ideal environment for your leadership.



THE SCHOOL

Introduction to the School

Founded in 1903 Feltonfleet is a thriving, popular co-educational independent Pre-Prep and Prep school with the additional differentiator of 45 beds which are available for very flexible boarding and overnight stays (often at short notice, subject to availability).

Located near the A3 in Cobham, Surrey, just inside the M25 the school sits in an idyllic campus of 25 acres of grounds, woodlands and sports pitches, complete with state of the art on-campus facilities for sport, music, drama, dance, art and design technology.

These include the Ashbee performing arts centre (capacity 200), a dedicated dance studio, indoor sports centre and climbing wall, indoor heated swimming pool and dedicated buildings for Music, Art and Design Technology. Many of these first-class facilities are regularly hired out for use by the local community.

Widely recognised as one of the leading Prep schools in Surrey, its catchment extends from southwest London (for example Putney and Wimbledon) to south of Guildford, supported by excellent transport links and an extensive school minibus service.

The school is owned by a Charitable Trust and is governed by an experienced Board of Governors.



VISION & ETHOS

Guided by its core values of Respect, Kindness, Responsibility, and Honesty, the school fosters a supportive and friendly culture where pupils and staff are encouraged to try new things, achieve their best, and embrace success and learning with pride.

Our core belief is that "every individual matters" and this shapes our key aims.

Our key aims are:



To provide an outstanding all round education from ages 3 to 13 embracing diversity and promoting a culture of equity and inclusion.



To ensure that every child is nurtured, supported and challenged, relative to their ability, to make excellent personal and academic progress.



To provide an exceptional pastoral care framework to ensure every child has dignity, purpose and opportunity.



To empower children to reach Destination 13 as well-rounded individuals and equipped to make lasting contributions within their community and beyond.



To create and invest in an optimal school environment so every child can excel on their journey.

LOCATION & ROUTINE

Location, Size and Structure

Feltonfleet operates on a secure dedicated campus, with specific sections for the Prep school and a modern Pre-Prep building known as, Calvi House.

There are 150 children in the Pre-Prep, spread across Calvi House and our Year 2 Learning House. Calvi House, provides the opportunity for the youngest members of our community to have their own, age appropriate fully self-contained site complete with hall, play areas, library, forest school and woodwork space.

The learning in these early years is based on the Froebel method. The main school car park is next to Calvi House so that access is as easy as possible for parents with babies and toddlers.

The Prep School has some 280 pupils with year groups typically 45+ divided into three forms in each year group from Year 3 onwards.

Pupils are in learning groups for Maths and English.

The main campus consists of the original house, now used for offices, dining and boarding, along with a wide range of modern buildings spaced out around a large lawn and garden area, overlooking the sports fields. This creates an atmosphere that is attractive, reassuring and inspiring. As well as a number of modern classroom blocks, there are extensive specialist facilities including a performing arts centre, sports centre and indoor swimming pool.



The School Routine

Feltonfleet follows a Monday to Friday routine, with sports matches on Saturday mornings for pupils in Year 5 onwards.

Day pupils arrive in school from 7.30am onwards and can, if they wish, join the boarders for breakfast. Registration takes place at 8.15am. Pre-Prep pupils' day finishes at 3.30pm. For Years 3 to 8 the school day finishes at 4.15pm, though children can stay for co-curricular clubs, prep, supper and evening activities.

Feltonfleet operates a flexi-boarding model Monday to Friday (a key differentiator from other Surrey Prep Schools) giving parents and children a variety of helpful options. Boarding is very popular and evening programmes are vibrant.



PUPIL EXPERIENCE

At the heart of Feltonfleet is its exceptional pastoral care and sense of belonging.

Pupils, parents and staff share pride in being part of a community that values teamwork, open communication and mutual respect. The boarding house adds a special dimension to school life, offering children a caring, home-from-home experience that fosters independence and lifelong friendships and is an excellent preparation for those moving to boarding senior schools.

The approach to teaching and learning at Feltonfleet is exciting, progressive, and challenging. Change is eagerly embraced by colleagues and pupils, who share a passion for learning and discovering new and better ways of doing things. Standards and expectations are high in all we do.

Creativity, thinking skills, agility of thought, and the application of knowledge through a skills-based approach are at the heart of our pedagogy, fostering a genuine thirst for independent learning.

Senior Schools

Most pupils leave Feltonfleet at the end of Year 8 (Destination 13), with a significant number going on to board at their senior schools. Years 7 and 8 are very popular and the pupil numbers remain strong although this takes careful management; we have a number of Year 6 leavers each year, many of whom are replaced by children joining from 11+ schools.

Feltonfleet prides itself on matching children to the right senior schools. We have exceptional relationships with many of our destination schools. Popular local schools include Bradfield, Brighton College, Charterhouse, Claremont Fan Court, Cranleigh, Epsom, Eton, Guildford High School, Reed's, RGS Guildford, St George's Weybridge, St John's Leatherhead, Tonbridge, Tormead, Wellington College and Whitgift.

On average one in three departing pupils earns a senior school scholarship for their individual talents, including Music, DT and Drama and in 2025 eleven prestigious academic scholarships were awarded.



GOVERNANCE

Feltonfleet is a school defined by its thriving culture and strong values. Since 2018, under its current leadership, the school has flourished and evolved, strengthening its academic and pastoral provision while remaining true to its ethos - a place where every child is known, nurtured, and inspired to flourish.

The school has enhanced its reputation for excellence in both academic and personal development, while continuing to foster a vibrant community where kindness, creativity, and curiosity thrive. Feltonfleet's culture ensures that pupils are supported to reach their full potential and develop as confident, capable, and well-rounded individuals.

The Feltonfleet community, including dedicated governors, talented and committed staff, and a loyal parent body, shares a common goal: helping every child to grow, achieve, and thrive.

The school now looks forward to welcoming a new Head, who will build on the enduring legacy of its current leadership and drive Feltonfleet into its next exciting chapter, continuing to nurture an environment where every pupil can flourish.

Governance

Feltonfleet was founded in 1903 and is a registered charity with a sensibly-sized Board of Governors. Governance is good and the Governors have a broad range of business, professional and academic backgrounds, and many are also past parents. The Board is active and supportive and Governors contribute expertise to a high level. Sub-committees focused on Education and Safeguarding, and Finance, General Purposes and Risk, are effective and administration is efficient. The Bursar serves as Clerk to the Governors.



Governor Objectives

The Governors' main objectives are that Feltonfleet should continue to be a happy and successful school and that it should retain and enhance its position within the market.

Although the local market for independent education remains strong, there is a recognition of the changing landscape for independent schools, including the sector-wide impact of VAT on school fees and the effects of a declining birth rate. The ongoing challenge is to ensure that Feltonfleet remains competitive, continues to deliver outstanding education, and provides exceptional value for money while maintaining high levels of parental satisfaction. Regular research is used to monitor satisfaction, and a particularly encouraging indicator of success is that families continue to move out of London to the local area specifically to join Feltonfleet.

Feltonfleet is exceptionally well placed for a highly successful future, with a vision and pace that require ongoing oversight. As a large and complex organisation, it demands passionate and capable leadership. The incoming Head will inherit a school that is already in excellent shape, academically, culturally, financially and operationally, while Governors are seeking someone with the vision, intellect, and drive to take it to the next level.

LEADERSHIP & STAFF

Leadership Team

There is a very strong, collaborative and effective Senior Leadership Team (SLT) which consists of the Head, Senior Deputy Head, Bursar, two Deputy Heads (Academic and Pastoral), two Assistant Heads, the Heads of each school area (Pre-Prep, Lower, Middle, Upper and Boarding) and the Deputy Head of Pre-Prep.



Staff

Feltonfleet has about 65 teaching staff and a large support team, both in classroom and specialist areas. There are some 25 peripatetic teachers for music, sports and other activities. The school provides an excellent framework for professional development, offering an extensive INSET programme and a wide range of training opportunities. Collegiality is a notable strength of the school, reflected in the fact that 99% of staff in a recent survey described themselves as "proud" or "very proud" to work at Feltonfleet.

Staff are supported through a Line Management and Appraisal process which encourages colleagues to pursue personal development courses that help continually raise standards. Feltonfleet is forward-facing in its use of digital technology and AI to enhance learning outcomes and support innovative, adaptive teaching practices.

FACILITIES & RESOURCES

The school has outstanding facilities including modern classroom buildings and specialist facilities including very well-equipped science and DT labs, and a stunning Art studio. It also boasts a purpose built Performing Arts Centre incorporating a 200-seat hall, Dance Studio and drama space.

Sports facilities include extensive playing fields, an indoor swimming pool, floodlit Astroturf pitch, Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), cricket nets, two rifle ranges and an indoor climbing wall. Within the grounds there is a forest school, adventure play area and even a large treehouse.

Feltonfleet has excellent ICT facilities, with digital learning and the use of iPads being embedded in our curriculum in every year group. Years 5 - 8 are provided with their own individual iPad and use Google Classroom to complete both in-school and at-home work.



JOB DESCRIPTION

The Role

The Head is responsible for the management and welfare of staff and pupils throughout the school and reports directly to the Governing Body. They are accountable, together with the Bursar, for all aspects of the school's performance.

The essence of Feltonfleet is the core belief that 'every individual matters'. Commitment to this belief means core values emerge that create a values driven culture.

Success in the role will require a deep and passionate interest in the intellectual, pastoral, spiritual, co-curricular development and well-being for each and every child.

With an exceptional ability to encourage and support pupils, staff, and parents the Head is the heart, soul and champion of the school's ethos and its ambition for each pupil and staff member.



Key areas of responsibility

- To oversee the leadership and management across the school and to be an outstanding role model for colleagues and pupils.
- To raise standards for all, in the pursuit of excellence. Develop the academic, extra-curricular and pastoral life of the school and ensure the highest standards of teaching, learning, care and encouragement.
- To shape the future. Understand the changing market for prep education and new developments and advances in teaching and learning. Refine the school's vision and create strategies to achieve it.
- To plan and provide: inspire, challenge, motivate and empower others to carry the vision forward.
- To promote and market Feltonfleet including the recruitment and retention of pupils.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Other Areas of Responsibility

- Appoint, manage, motivate, and develop teaching staff.
- Work closely with the Bursar to ensure judicious spending and sound financial management, the smooth running of the school, and effective management of non-teaching staff.
- Keep the Board of Governors informed of the School's progress and all relevant issues, providing timely professional guidance and well-considered recommendations on vision, strategy, policies, and decisions.
- Oversee and lead school operating policies, ensuring regulatory compliance.
- Be accountable for health and safety, safeguarding of pupils, and crisis and contingency planning.
- Lead the spiritual, moral, social, and personal development of each pupil.
- Promote the school in the wider community, ensuring excellent relations with parents and key external stakeholders, including senior schools.
- Support other aspects of school leadership as required by the Governing Body to ensure the smooth running and well-being of the school.
- Attend all meetings as required by the Governors.
- Stay up to date with current curriculum developments and professional practice through regular attendance at courses and conferences.
- Play a full and active part in all aspects of the life of the school.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

The Governors of Feltonfleet are seeking an inspiring Head to lead the school with compassion, vision and drive - an emotionally intelligent leader who will understand and value the school's core belief that "every individual matters". The new Head will be encouraged to develop the school's ethos and core values whilst building on its many achievements to date in order to continue the school's success into the future.

It is expected that the successful candidate will have an understated confidence in their leadership and knowledge of both prep and pre-prep education. Prior experience of boarding and/or proven relationships with some of Feltonfleet's destination (senior) schools may be an advantage but are not essential.

The new Head is likely to set high standards for themselves and others but balance this with a humble, "low ego" style of leadership to empower the talented and committed staff team.

The new Head will be expected to immerse themselves fully in the life and activities of the school, to be a very visible and present leader with a selfless focus on the success of the school and the colleagues and pupils in it.

The ideal candidate should be able to demonstrate some or most of the following:

Education and Professional Background

- A strong academic background and/or strong relevant educational leadership qualifications.
- A clear and compelling vision for the future of a successful prep school.
- Proven experience in headship, senior leadership, or senior house leadership.
- A deep understanding of prep school boarding and its unique demands.

Business and Management Skills

- Strong financial and commercial awareness, able to think strategically and pragmatically to balance educational priorities and business considerations.
- Capacity to engage with Governors on broad strategic issues, providing sound guidance and engaging in respectful debate.
- Ability to work collaboratively with, and maximize the expertise of, an outstanding, experienced school Bursar.
- Empathy for administrative and support staff, fostering a positive and collaborative working environment across the whole community.
- Confident and effective use of ICT in school leadership and management.

Skills and Leadership

- Skilled in developing and clearly communicating a coherent and compelling vision.
- Sound judgment in evaluating people and situations.
- Understanding of, and ability to contribute effectively to school marketing and promotion.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Interpersonal & Communication

- Inspirational and dynamic team player and leader.
- Excellent communication skills: be a good listener with empathy who is able to build strong relationships across the school community and also able to convey ideas clearly, effectively, and engagingly to pupils, parents, staff, Governors, and other stakeholders.
- A natural and charismatic marketer with a gift for public speaking.
- Able to forge strong links with other schools, locally and nationally.
- Enjoys encouraging and celebrating the achievements of pupils and staff.
- Committed to inspiring confidence in colleagues, pupils, and parents alike.
- Skilled in managing others effectively and sensitively, combining gentle guidance with firm direction.
- Capable of managing both detail and the broader strategic picture.
- A decisive leader who demonstrates understanding and sensitivity when resolving conflicts.
- Able and willing to deploy a range of leadership and management techniques as required.

Personal Characteristics

- An inspiring, confident, friendly, and approachable personality.
- A deep passion for young people's education and fostering compassion for others.
- A real desire to be outstanding and a commitment to excellence and continuous improvement, tempered by pragmatism.
- Drive, energy, reliability, and resilience.
- Adaptable, flexible, and willing to embrace new developments with a "can-do" attitude.
- A healthy resistance to complacency and an aversion to resting on laurels, coupled with a willingness to challenge the status quo.
- A strong sense of community. Able to do a serious job without taking themselves too seriously.
- Commitment to the busy day and flexible boarding ethos of the school, while maintaining and promoting a healthy work-life balance.
- Fully embraces and champions the core belief, the ethos and the values of the school.



PACKAGE

A very comprehensive reward package will be offered to reflect the experience and qualifications of the successful candidate. The Governors are happy to tailor the salary and benefits to suit individual circumstances and preferences.

The main elements are:

- an excellent salary.
- housing (provided if required).
- full contributions to Royal London DC scheme (or a personal pension if preferred).
- private health insurance.
- a discount on children's fees (if applicable).
- ongoing investment in personal training and development.
- relocation support (if required).

A detailed contract will be agreed with the successful candidate, under terms usual to a headship. We use the standard IAPS contract with the appropriate amendments to reflect the individual's package.

There will be a probationary period of one year during which either party can terminate the employment on one term's notice. Thereafter, one year's notice will apply to either party.

The Head of Feltonfleet is expected to be, or become, a member of IAPS.

Terms of Employment

The Head's appointment is dependent on:

- a satisfactory medical examination.
- three satisfactory references including one from your current or most recent employer in compliance with Safer Recruitment practices
- proof of qualifications.
- enhanced DBS check including barred list and section 128 checks.
- proof of your entitlement to work in the UK.



APPLICATION & ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Potentially interested candidates are encouraged in the first instance to contact our recruitment partner, Joining The Dots (JTD), for an initial informal and confidential discussion of their suitability for this role.

The consultants handling this assignment are

David Stephens 07739 457000 david@JTDrecruitment.com
Michael Stephens 07565 919299 michael@JTDrecruitment.com

After initial chats with JTD, applicants are requested to complete an application form and prepare a covering letter addressed to the Chair of Governors, Mr Keith Harrington outlining their motivations and suitability for the role.

Please send both documents in PDF format to feltonfleet@JTDrecruitment.com.

The deadline for applications is 10am on Tuesday 27th January 2026.

Screening interviews will take place with JTD via Teams in the week commencing Monday 2nd February

Longlist Interviews (including a tour of the school) will be conducted on Wednesday 11th and Thursday 12th February, 2026.

Candidates invited to final stage Shortlist Interviews will be invited to visit the school during February half term with their families and any dependents to discuss accommodation and other practical matters required with the potential move.

Shortlist Interviews (including several team member meetings and a presentation to the Governing Body) will take place on Wednesday 25th February 2026

Please ensure you read the job information pack carefully, as well as the relevant policies on our website. Please note that we reserve the right to conduct interviews prior to the closing date. References will only be requested at short-list stage, and we will let you know before we approach referees.



SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION

The successful candidate will be expected to commit to the following: The post-holder's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people for whom they are responsible, or with whom they come into contact, will be to adhere to and ensure compliance with the School's Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Statement at all times. If, in the course of carrying out the duties of the post, the post-holder becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children in the School, they must report any concerns to the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The successful candidate will be required to provide an enhanced DBS check.

In seeking references on short-listed candidates, the School may approach previous employers for information to verify particular experience or qualifications before interview.

Any relevant issues arising from references will be taken up at the interview. It is an offence for any person barred from working with children to apply for this post.

Thank you for your interest in this post. We look forward to hearing from you and hopefully, to meeting you in person.

Feltonfleet School is committed to safeguarding and the welfare of children and expects the same from its employees. All new employees will be subject to an enhanced DBS clearance, checks of identity, qualifications and employment history, including exploring any gaps in employment and two satisfactory references.

Feltonfleet is an equal opportunities employer. If you would like any further information, please visit our website at www.feltonfleet.co.uk

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST



Feltonfleet
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

WHERE EVERY INDIVIDUAL MATTERS