

Marling School

**Principal
Required for April 2026**
Candidate information pack



COTSWOLD BEACON
ACADEMY TRUST



MARLING
SCHOOL

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A message from CBAT's CEO

Thank you for your interest in leading Marling School. Marling School is the founding school of Cotswold Beacon Academy Trust (CBAT), and is located in the beautiful town of Stroud, nestled in Gloucestershire's Cotswolds.

Marling School has a rich and proud history educating young people since the school's formation in 1887. Our traditional school motto, seen on the school crest, is '*Abeunt Studia in Mores*' which translates as '*Let us go forward through study to character*'. Our aim for all Marlingtonians is that they each learn to be independent thinkers who take responsibility for their learning and behaviour and who believe in freedom and equity. We wish for our students to make a positive and meaningful impact on society, taking the spirit of Marling with them.

Marling School is an 11–18 selective boys' grammar school with a vibrant, co-educational sixth form. As a valued member of the G7 group of Gloucestershire grammar schools, Marling occupies an extensive site that offers real potential for future development. While some facilities are shared with our neighbouring girls' grammar school, there remains significant scope to enhance resources and make even better use of the space.

In recent years, Marling has experienced some change and transition. Despite this, the school has continued to achieve strong academic outcomes. We are now seeking an inspiring leader to guide the school into its next chapter - one focused on stability, ambition, and continued excellence. With a dedicated staff team, engaged students, and supportive families, this is a fantastic opportunity for someone to lead thoughtful and purposeful development, helping the school to fulfil its considerable potential.

As a trust, CBAT has also undergone a challenging period of transition with changes to some key leadership personnel. With an ever changing educational landscape nationally, the pressure on smaller trusts to adapt to changes in funding or policy is significant. In response to these challenges, over the past few months, trustees and leaders at CBAT, with guidance from the DfE have explored opportunities for partnership which would allow our schools to benefit from the security and capacity that a larger trust brings.



Duncan Cook
CBAT CEO

Having considered a number of different organisations, trustees at CBAT have now identified Lift Schools as our preferred future partner. We are now working alongside the DfE to explore the terms of transfer with the intention that, subject to the necessary approval from the DfE and Lift Schools' trustees, that all CBAT schools, including Marling will transfer to Lift Schools during the 2025/26 academic year. Whilst we work through this process, we have already begun working together formally, receiving school improvement support and operational support from the team at Lift.

Lift Schools is a national network of 57 schools, with schools across the primary, secondary and special education sectors. They have a strong focus on the identity of each school within their community. Marling School is located within Lift Schools' South West region, with the school benefiting from support from Lift's South West regional team. Collaboration with the other four secondary schools within the region is a cornerstone of this approach, meaning that colleagues at Marling share best practice and have opportunities to work together with staff across the region.

As we work towards a merger, our partners at Lift Schools will play a key role in supporting this recruitment process. We believe this partnership will be key to helping unlock the immense potential within our schools.

If you are inspired by the opportunity to lead a school with a rich and proud history, and to unlock its true potential, we warmly encourage you to apply.

Marling School

Marling School is a thriving 11–18 selective boys' grammar school, with a vibrant co-educational sixth form. The school currently has around 1,100 students on roll, including approximately 300 in the sixth form. The school continues to achieve strong academic outcomes, with excellent results this summer reflecting the high standards of teaching and learning.

Following a period of change in school leadership, we are now focused on re-establishing stability and strengthening confidence among students, parents, and the wider community. The school is currently led by CBAT's CEO, Duncan Cook, as Acting Principal, supported by an experienced Regional Executive Principal from Lift Schools. Together, they are working closely with staff to ensure Marling continues to develop exceptional foundations and offer a high-quality educational experience for all students.

Marling enjoys a strong reputation locally and draws students from Stroud, neighbouring towns and villages, and further afield, including from Swindon and Bristol. The school benefits from a loyal, experienced, and committed staff team and enjoys strong links with local teacher training providers, often welcoming trainees into permanent roles.

School profile at a glance

Number of pupils on roll	1,100
Number of pupils in sixth form	380
Boys / Girls on roll	976/109
Pupils with EHCP	4
Pupils with SEN support (K)	46
Pupils with EAL	101
Pupils in receipt of FSM	41



The school is set on a vast and well-positioned site, offering significant potential for future development. Some facilities are shared with the neighbouring girls' grammar school, which is not part of CBAT or Lift Schools. This relationship is important and holds real potential; it will need to be thoughtfully nurtured and effectively harnessed to ensure it continues to benefit all students in the years ahead.

CBAT is working closely with the Department for Education to secure further investment in the school estate. This funding will support the development of the wider site, helping to bring all facilities in line with the high standard set by the recently completed teaching block, a superb addition that reflects the school's aspirations for the future.

About Stroud

A buzzy market town, it offers a great blend of high street favourites and independent shops, from artisan coffee houses to well-known national brands.

Principal job description

Overview of the role

Job title	Principal
Responsible to:	CBAT CEO Lift Schools Regional Education Director (under Partnership Agreement)
Responsible for	Vice Principals / Assistant Principals
Location	Marling School, Stroud

The Principal is responsible for the strategic leadership and day-to-day management of the school. They will develop the school's strategic goals, ensuring that a plan is in place in order to achieve them, thereby driving improvement across the school. The Principal is accountable for the welfare and education of all students within the school, as well as for quality assurance, school staffing, student attainment, and curriculum design and implementation. The Principal will galvanise the people around them to follow them on a journey to ensure their school is happy, safe and successful: a place to which everyone is proud to belong. Core to the role, the Principal will also contribute to our network of schools, driving improvement and collaboration across the Trust.

Although Marling School is not currently part of Lift Schools, the successful candidate will be expected to embrace and align with the mission that every child receives an excellent education, in every classroom, every day.

Responsibilities

Leadership

- Behave with moral purpose - equity, integrity, and ethics - and in line with the Nolan Principles, to create trusting relationships and maintain a healthy academy.
- Create and lead a strategy that ensures the academy values and champions the richness and diversity of its community, connects and anchors the academy to the wider community, and advances its contribution to education locally and beyond.
- Ensure all staff can achieve their potential by engaging fully with the Leadership Excellence Framework and Performance and Professional Growth Conversations cycle, as well as the network learning and development offer.
- Be an ambassador for the children, the academy and for the Trust. Build trusting and effective relationships between students, staff, parents, the community, and wider partners (regional, national and international), in service of our mission.

Educational Provision

- Ensure all initiatives and policies are guided by clear Trust values, so that every child has entitlement to an excellent academic and co-curricular experience.
- Instil an ethos of high expectations for all pupils, regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, or SEND need. Ensure policies and systems for attendance, behaviour, personal development, and inclusion consistently live this ethos.
- Ensure a high quality, inclusive curriculum and instructional excellence through public leadership, developing others, and collaborating with network and other specialist support.

Organisational Management

- Safeguard and protect all children, in collaboration with central team colleagues and other agencies as appropriate.
- Working with the Executive leaders and central team, oversee the recruitment, training and coaching provision for all academy staff; ensuring induction, onboarding and development enable colleagues to thrive from day one.
- Co-ordinate the responsibilities amongst leaders in the school, in service of the children, mission and academy priorities. Ensure all accountabilities are clearly defined, understood and agreed, and subject to rigorous review, evaluation and recognition.
- Work with Executive leaders to ensure robust operational, financial, and HR systems and processes are in place that are effective, efficient and economic, and uphold transparency, integrity and probity.
- Develop and present a coherent, understandable and accurate account of the academy's performance and development plans for a range of audiences, including staff, parents, governors and visitors.

Developing the work of the Trust

- Develop strong, positive relationships with network colleagues, contribute to collaborative work to share best practice and innovation, and support other staff in participating in network projects for the benefit of all.
- Help shape, influence or lead network initiatives and policies, and promote the school and the network.
- Undertake any other reasonable duties deemed appropriate to the role of the Principal.

Other clauses

- The above responsibilities are subject to the general duties and responsibilities contained in the Statement of Teachers' Pay and Conditions. The postholder is expected to work to the best of their ability, to be diligent, honest and ethical in the performance of duties and to conduct their personal and professional life to the highest standard such that public confidence in their integrity is sustained.
- This job description does not form part of the contract of employment and is not a comprehensive definition of the post. The duties of this post may vary from time to time according to the needs of the school/Trust following consultation with the job holder. It will be reviewed periodically.
- The postholder is expected to participate and engage with workplace learning and development opportunities to continually improve their own performance.
- The postholder may deal with sensitive material and should maintain confidentiality in all school related matters as set out in their statement of terms and condition of employment.
- Information about how and why we collect your data can be found in the CBAT Schools Privacy Notice for Staff which you are required to comply with.
- You are expected to take reasonable care of your own health and safety and to be mindful of the safety of others, to cooperate with instructions, to minimise and mitigate potential hazards and risks to others and to appropriately report hazards, illnesses or injuries in accordance with our Health & Safety Policy.

Safeguarding

At Cotswold Beacon Academy Trust (CBAT), we are committed to the highest standards of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students. We expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Our recruitment process is robust, fair, and consistent with the guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education. This includes conducting online checks for all shortlisted candidates.

All offers of employment are subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks, including an Enhanced DBS check, references, and, where applicable, a prohibition from teaching check.

You will be required to complete these checks and must inform us immediately if you are subsequently convicted of any offence.

Equality, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

At CBAT, we want all of our employees to feel included, bringing their passion, creativity and individuality to work. We value all cultures, backgrounds and experiences, and we truly believe that diversity drives innovation.

Important information about the Trust Partnership

Marling School is part of the Cotswold Beacon Academy Trust (CBAT), which has signed a formal partnership agreement with Lift Schools. Through this partnership, the school is already benefiting from support and collaboration with the Lift Schools network. While discussions about a potential full integration are ongoing, no final decision has yet been made by the Department for Education and Lift Schools. The successful candidate will be expected to engage positively with all stakeholders and contribute to a smooth and well managed process, maintaining a clear focus on educational excellence and continuity.



Principal person specification

Qualifications

Essential

- Qualified to degree level or above
- Qualified to teach and work in the UK
- Qualified teacher status

Desirable

- Honours degree at 2:1 or above
- Good quality CPD qualifications eg. NPQSL / NPQH

Experience

Essential

- A strong classroom practitioner - with a proven track record of achieving excellent progress and outcomes for all children, regardless of their prior attainment, needs or background.
- Senior leadership experience - whether in a traditional sense e.g. an SLT position - or, for example, in working across groups of schools as a specialist practitioner.
- Experience of building and maintaining positive relationships and influence with a range of stakeholders - for example, across some of these groups: peers, superiors, direct reports, parents, community organisations, charities, government organisations, business partners, governors.

Desirable

- Teaching or leading successfully and with impact in a school of high deprivation or challenging circumstances.
- Teaching or leading in a high performing school - you will have first-hand experience of what 'excellence' looks like.
- Experienced Headteacher or Principal.
- Instructional coaching and deliberate practice.
- Impactful leadership of change management at senior leadership level or equivalent.
- Demonstrable track record of coalescing diverse groups of internal and external stakeholders around a goal or issue, with significant impact.

Technical skills and knowledge

Essential

- An understanding of the education system in the UK and have knowledge of current policy and practice, and the 'big picture' within which your phase operates.
- A good understanding of how pupils develop and learn - rooted in theory and research - with the ability to apply this judiciously to your practice, for impact.
- From your own classroom practice and/or from leading in this area, knowledge of what makes an outstanding curriculum, impactful instruction and useful assessment. You will have the ability to develop and maintain excellent practice and standards for pupils of all abilities and backgrounds.
- An understanding of the mechanisms for, and an ability to implement, effective, systematic behaviour management with clear boundaries and recognition.

Desirable

- Knowledge of different models of education, perhaps including international systems, or specialist knowledge and experience beyond your phase and sector.
- Understanding of how adults learn and improve their practice - rooted in theory and research.
- Good working knowledge of the business aspects of a school - e.g. HR, finance, operations, governance.



Non-technical, leadership skills and abilities

Essential

- An excellent communicator with strong interpersonal skills, concise and clear writing, and a confident public speaker.
- A solutions-focused problem-solver, with strength in both conceptual and analytical thinking; someone who relishes a challenge to be tackled, and is comfortable making tough decisions.
- A collaborator - able to identify needs and strengths in others, and understand how and when to adopt a team approach to problems or initiatives
- Ability to develop others - by having high expectations and clear goals, targeting support wisely and holding to account in a supportive but rigorous way.

Desirable

- Able to adeptly evaluate and then plan and prioritise accordingly - for example, the impact of employees, resources (like finance or time), provisions and interventions. You will use research and data to robustly inform strategic decisions.
- Able to develop and lead networks, for example within or between a school, wider organisation or community.
- Able to demonstrate inclusive leadership; with evidence of building a diverse workforce and/or empowering others to feel a sense of belonging and to be themselves.

Personal attributes and behaviours

Essential

- Driven by moral purpose and a restlessness to improve yourself, our network and the wider education system. Aligned to our values and mission and be able to talk about this in a tangible way.
- Intellectually curious - someone who is open-minded, outward-looking, forward-thinking and a seeker of knowledge. Ability to talk articulately about books, research, experiences or people that have influenced your thinking.
- Demonstrate accurate self-awareness - with the ability to reflect meaningfully on your own motivations, behaviours, reactions, strengths and areas for development.
- The resilience and personal drive to act thoughtfully (and also swiftly where needed) when under pressure, encountering setbacks, or receiving critique.
- Kind, warm, and brave. You will care about others and not be afraid to make yourself vulnerable or admit mistakes when needed.

Desirable

- Demonstrates the ability to reflect thoughtfully and critically, identifying personal strengths and areas for development using the following mindsets:
 - Share ideas early, often and honestly
 - Embrace constructive disagreement
 - Value ideas, not ego
 - Be curious and open to new ideas
 - Focus on facts and reason.

Special requirements

- Successful candidate will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Check.
- Right to work in the UK.
- Evidence of a commitment to promoting the welfare and safeguarding of children and young people.
- Show a commitment and proactive approach to drive forward equality, equity, diversity and inclusion and to own personal development along with a positive attitude towards legislative developments and the provision of equitable services.

Ready for your next challenge?

Cotswold Beacon Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will, in accordance with statutory guidance, be subject to a comprehensive pre-employment checking process, including references from current and previous employers, health, right to work in the UK, an enhanced DBS check and a further check against the appropriate barred list. This role involves work with students and provides regular access to children, therefore is a regulated activity. Please see our Recruitment and Selection Policy including Recruitment of Ex-Offenders on the CBAT website.

Application timeline

Stage 1 - Initial two-way conversation

After you have registered your interest, one of our team will contact you for an initial conversation to discuss the role.

Stage 2 - Discovering Marling School

Following the initial conversation, we will send our application form for you to complete. The closing date for applications is **19 November 2025, 12 noon.**

Stage 3 - Assessment Centre

This one day session will be held in person. You will be invited to the event at Marling School, which will take place on **2 December 2025.**

Stage 4 - Interview

If successful you will be invited back to Marling School in person to meet our CEO and colleagues. This will take place on **5 December 2025.**