



Farmor's School

The Park

Fairford

GL7 4JQ

Information Pack

for the vacancy of

Head of Science

September 2018

9th January 2018

Thank you for your interest in the post of Head of Science at Farmor's School, a full time permanent position, from September 2018.

I hope that you find the information contained in this pack informs you about our school, but I would encourage you to come and visit us to see for yourself.

The application process is outlined later in the pack. Should you decide to make an application, you can either post it, for my attention, to Farmor's School, The Park, Fairford, Gloucestershire, GL7 4JQ or email it to recruitment@farmors.gloucs.sch.uk. **All applications must be received by 12 noon on Monday 29th January 2018.** The interviews will take place **week commencing 5th February 2018.**

Please note that Farmor's School is committed to safeguarding and the post will be subject to satisfactory completion of enhanced checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service.

I fully appreciate the amount of time and effort it takes to prepare an application for a post such as this and I thank you in advance. In return I undertake that we will read every application very carefully, and to ensure that short-listed candidates have every opportunity to see the school in action, to meet as many colleagues as possible and to ask whatever they wish.

Please do not hesitate to contact Debbie Taylor, my PA, by telephoning 01285 712302, or emailing recruitment@farmors.gloucs.sch.uk should you wish to discuss the post further, or would like to arrange a visit.

I look forward to receiving your application.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Evans', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Matthew Evans
Headteacher

Note regarding our recent Ofsted inspection

Please note that the school is currently pursuing a formal complaint to appeal the outcome of our recent Ofsted inspection which took place in November 2017. The report has recently been published on the Ofsted website.

The inspection judged the school as 'requires improvement' due to inconsistencies in teaching, learning and assessment. We believe that this judgement is inaccurate and unjust, as do our parents and staff. In the report, the science department are identified for particular criticism which we feel is unfair given outcomes are in line with national expectations at GCSE. Whilst we accept, and are aware of, aspects of teaching and learning in the school which need to improve, we do not accept that these are as extensive as the report suggests or, indeed, any more significant than the vast majority of schools up and down the country.

Standards of education at Farmor's School have improved considerably in recent years, as is evident in our increasing examination results. What is more, we have achieved this success alongside significant improvements to staff morale and the reputation of the school in the community. Attendance levels are above national averages, the conduct of students is very good and 97% of our parents would recommend the school to a friend (Ofsted Parent View 2017). We act with integrity, treat our staff with respect and take great care of our students.

If we are unsuccessful in our appeal, we have a significant challenge ahead. However, our principle is that we never do anything 'for Ofsted' and, whilst I am headteacher at the school, we never will.

If you share these values and have the drive to help us continue the school's improvement then I look forward to receiving your application.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Evans', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

Matthew Evans
Headteacher

Farmor's School

Head of Science

September 2018



Introduction

The Science Department has undergone significant changes in recent years which have resulted in improving examination results at GCSE and considerable success at A Level. The department has an excellent track record of students progressing to study science at the most prestigious universities. The science team are experienced and well qualified in their fields of expertise. We have well-equipped, modern laboratories in a purpose-built science block. However, there is still much work to be done and this post is an excellent opportunity for an ambitious and forward-thinking individual.

The Role

Following the late departure of the previous Head of Department in the summer of 2017, we made the decision to delay recruitment until the 2018/19 academic year to ensure we would attract a strong field of applicants. In the interim, we appointed staff to enhanced responsibilities which have proven very successful in strengthening the team and continuing to improve the department.

This is an important appointment for the school and we are looking for a candidate who will bring a clear vision and direction to the department, whilst ensuring that the considerable expertise of our experienced science teachers is valued. The successful candidate will have the ability to build a strong team and lead them towards achieving exceptional success.

The School

Farmor's School is an 11-18 school in Fairford, a small town in the Cotswolds which is in easy commuting distance from Cirencester, Stroud, Swindon and Cheltenham. Most staff who work at the school live in the Cirencester area, Swindon and Cheltenham. Students who attend the school come mainly from eight feeder primary schools in Gloucestershire. We are also the school of choice for many parents in Cricklade and North Swindon.

Farmor's School was founded in 1738 with money left by Miss Elizabeth Farmor and Miss Mary Barker to educate fifty boys in Fairford. In 1815 girls were admitted into the school but they were kept separate from the boys. In 1922 the school became co-educational. The school moved to its present site in 1961 and became an 11-18 comprehensive school in 1966.

Farmor's school converted to an Academy in August 2011.

Farmor's School serves a predominantly rural area which includes some of the prettiest villages in the Cotswolds. We have close links with our Primary School in Bibury, Down Ampney, Fairford, Hatherop, Kempsford, Meysey Hamptrop and St Lawrence, Lechlade. We also have a significant intake from Sampson's, Ampney Crucis, Wiltshire and from the Independent sector.

The school is situated in beautiful parkland, within walking distance of the centre of Fairford. The eighteen acre grounds are well maintained by our site staff and include a modern and well-equipped Sports Centre. The school has a modern and 1960's build accommodation. We have been working hard over the last few years to improve the teaching and learning environment through a combination of grounds and building works. Since 2013, we have built a new Sixth Form Learning Resource Centre (opened 2014), refurbished all toilets, replaced roofing and windows, redecorated many parts of the school, created a covered outside dining area and increased outdoor seating around the site.



The Curriculum and Academic Success



The school maintains a broad and balanced curriculum which enables students to achieve academic success.

The Sixth Form is attended by over 200 students, some of whom come from other 11-16 schools nearby. We offer a wide range of A Level courses, alongside a rich programme of study and enrichment including the EPQ and Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award. In 2015, the school was placed as the fifth highest Sixth Form or college in the country for A Level value added. In 2016, the school was again in the top 2% nationally. The ethos in the Sixth Form is that students are treated as young adults and guided to make good choices, both academically and personally. This ethos, alongside excellent teaching and small class sizes, means that students from all backgrounds achieve success.

At GCSE, the school achieves consistently strong outcomes. In 2017, 79% of students achieved Grade 4 and above in both Maths and English, and 56% of students achieved Grade 5 and above in both Maths and English. Students also achieve a high proportion of A*/A grades or level 7 and above compared to national averages. We maintain a broad open-choice curriculum at KS4, choosing not to force students to take certain combination of subjects, such as the EBacc.

Pastoral Care

The school has a strong pastoral ethos where individuals are nurtured. The staffing structure is traditional, with five Heads of Year and teams of tutors.

Extra-curricular Activities

We enjoy a strong reputation for sporting success, competing at regional and national level with different age ranges and sports. Music, drama and the arts also flourish at the school. We provide an extensive programme of educational visits and take part in many competitive activities across schools, such as photography, languages and mathematics. Outdoor pursuit's activities, including Duke of Edinburgh Gold and Bronze Awards, are increasingly popular.

Classes



There are 43 x 35 minute lessons a week, most of which are taught in double lessons of 70 minutes. On Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays there are three afternoon lessons and school finishes at 3.35pm. On Mondays there are two afternoon lessons and school finishes at 2.00pm.

KS3 students are mainly taught in mixed ability tutor groups. Setting takes place in Maths (from Y7), Languages (from Y8) and Science (from Y9). English is taught in mixed ability groups throughout the school, although a small group is identified in KS4 which studies English Language only.

The Senior Leadership Team

The senior leadership team currently includes:

- Matthew Evans (Headteacher)
- Steve Shaw (Deputy Headteacher)
- Sue Dorey (Business Manager)
- Roger Eckersley (Assistant Head – Pastoral)
- Noelle Sturla (Assistant Head – Inclusion)
- Emma White (Assistant Head – Sixth Form)

The Governing Body

We have an effective governing body who work closely with the senior team. Our Chair of Governors, Tony Joslyn, has recently taken on the role. The governing body committees have been restructured by Tony to ensure that their work reflects the strategic priorities of the school, with a greater emphasis on the quality of teaching and student welfare.

Staff

We are fortunate to have hard working, experienced and friendly staff. Being a rural, community focussed school our staff are loyal and committed. Around a third of our staff have had children attend the school, many live locally and are themselves previous Farmor's students. Some teachers have committed a substantial part of their careers to the school and we value their experience. We also maintain a healthy turnover of staff, particularly as teachers seek promotion, so that there is a regular influx of fresh thinking and ideas. Our strength lies in the balance of continuity and change in our staffing profile.



Our staff like working at the school. Our annual staff survey indicates that staff feel the school is well led and managed and that they are listened to and supported in their work. Staff absence levels are very low and we have a generous 'family friendly' policy regarding compassionate leave. Our staff work hard and sometimes feel the stresses of the job, as in all schools. However, we strive to avoid making people's jobs more difficult than they need to be through excessive initiatives, directives and unreasonable accountability measures. As the enclosed information explains ("10 reasons to teach at Farmor's School"), we respect teachers' expertise and professional autonomy whilst expecting them to deliver excellent outcomes for our students.

Students

Students at Farmor's School achieve well academically. Staff and visitors comment upon the students' good manners, friendliness and positive attitudes. We are a comprehensive school and attract students from a range of academic and social backgrounds; however our strong ethos means that students understand that a calm, respectful approach is best. Where students do step over the line we have a clear system in place to ensure they get back on track.



There are many opportunities for students to take responsibility and participate in democratic processes, including Year 11 prefects, Head Boy and Girl, School Council, the Charities Committee and Student Ambassadors. Older students often mentor the younger children at the school. Our House System promotes participation in the wider life of the school and healthy competition.

Teaching Commitment

This post will be a permanent full time position. The postholder will have a significantly reduced teaching load to enable them to fulfil their leadership responsibilities.

Application Process

Applications should be in the form of a letter of application (maximum two sides of A4) and an application form.

In your letter, please address the following;

- Why do you want this post?
- What aspects of the school indicate that it is somewhere you would like to work?
- What relevant experiences have you had which prepare you for this post?
- What personal qualities will you draw upon to be successful in this post, and why?

Please be concise and include the most pertinent information in your letter. There will be an opportunity for candidates selected at interview to outline further their suitability for the post. You are advised to read the information carefully prior to writing your letter of application, including the job description and information about the school.



Visits

You are welcome to make a visit to the school - please contact Debbie Taylor, the Headteacher's P.A. to organise. This is not part of the selection process and those unable to attend will not be adversely affected.

Selection Process

The interviews will take place **week commencing 5th February 2018.**

10 Reasons to Teach at Farmor's School

1. **We won't prescribe a set way to teach.** We trust our teachers to judge how they should teach according to the needs of their students.
2. **We do not grade lessons.** Our observations focus on recognising effective practice and supporting teachers in building on this success.
3. **Our efforts to improve teaching and learning are based on the evidence of what works,** not on the latest fad or government whim.
4. **Our students are eminently teachable.** Teachers can impart their passion for their subject without an endless struggle to assert their authority.
5. **Over a fifth of our students are in the Sixth Form.** Teachers are able to teach the full range of age groups and teach to very high levels of ability.
6. **Departments have protected time to work collaboratively.**
7. **You will have access to a rich professional learning programme.**
8. **We take work-life balance seriously** and maintain generous arrangements for compassionate and parental/carer leave.
9. **We are located in beautiful, rural surroundings** with easy access to Cirencester, Cheltenham, Swindon, Oxford and Bristol.
10. **We are a friendly, supportive and professional community** where you will be able to develop your career.

"Every teacher is enthusiastic and seems to really enjoy teaching their lesson. This urges us to progress in that subject achieving the goals we set ourselves."

Student

"We very much doubt that our children would have excelled academically and developed as happy young adults if they had not had the dedication, support and enthusiasm of Farmor's teaching staff."

Parent