

Recruitment of Head

At Ackworth School from April 2024



Ackworth School



Welcome

I am looking forward to welcoming you to Ackworth School, a wonderfully-historic and rural location for the next stage of your career in education.

The setting of the Grade 1 listed campus combined with the positive impact of the Quaker ethos and beliefs that underpin the life of the school, provide a stimulating and caring atmosphere for our pupils to establish their character as they prepare to face the challenges of the adult world. Their learning is so important and is reliant on the quality of teaching that is provided by the enthusiastic and dedicated staff at Ackworth.

Anton Maree has been our inspirational Head for the past nine years and it is his decision to retire in April 2024 that has created the opportunity for a new Head to lead Ackworth School to its 250th anniversary in 2029, and beyond. Anton will be leaving a huge legacy for the right candidate to build on, to further develop the school as a centre of excellence, with a reputation for pastoral care as well as academic rigour, and providing the opportunity for everyone to shine.

Like most schools in the independent sector, Ackworth faces challenges, both internal and external, but the school has met the crises around the pandemic and the current economic pressures with a high level of resilience. This provides a platform for a new Head to influence how the school can confidently approach the future. It is remarkable how the school community demonstrates how it is attentive to the needs of others and how Quaker values permeate

everyday lives. This is not just an internal act but is equally applied to those in need in the local and wider communities.

At Ackworth we are realistic enough to know that increasing revenue from the campus and developing collaborative relationships with our wider community and strategic partners are crucial for a sustainable future. We will be interested in hearing how you would develop a business approach that underpins our charitable purpose of providing a Quaker education to all, and especially to those who are 'not in affluence'. Whilst Ackworth is a non-selective school, and has always been a fee-paying school, a sustainable future will include broadening the scope of bursaries and scholarships.

ISI has very recently completed a full inspection. While we are compliant, it is too early to know what the final report will say. However there were complimentary words said about the impact of the Quaker ethos on the manner and wellbeing of our students of all ages and abilities, and how they show the benefit of reflection on the spiritual life of the school.

If this welcome excites your professional interest and presents a broad intellectual challenge as part of your calling as a leader in education, then please do apply without delay.

Together with my colleagues I look forward to meeting you and hope that in due course you will become the inspirational leader of this school community for years to come.

David Bunney
Clerk to the School Committee (Chair of Governors)



Our Heritage

For over 240 years we have maintained a passion for exceptional learning and teaching that is non-selective and without judgement of the individual.

Quaker values underpin all that happens on a daily basis in our school community, with an emphasis on acceptance and quiet reflection. 'Non sibi sed omnibus', meaning 'not for oneself but for all', lies at the heart of school life alongside the Quaker testimonies of simplicity, truth, equality, peace and sustainability. An inherent respect for others and honesty at all times creates a calm, friendly school atmosphere which is supportive and reassuring for young people. Students are encouraged to think creatively, act ethically and with responsibility.



Ethos and Values

What makes us different?

Set in the beautiful heart of Yorkshire, within easy reach of major UK cities and transport routes, Ackworth School is a place for:

Growth

Ackworth is an all-through school for children, aged two and a half to 19 years old. This stability throughout their educational journey gives pupils outstanding continuity and the opportunity to forge lifelong friendships, creating an environment for increased academic focus and confidence.

Achievement

With an emphasis on individual goal setting and encouragement, the learning journey at Ackworth School enables students to realise outstanding results – often beyond expectation – while remaining attentive to the needs of others. When they leave, they are equipped to lead a fulfilled and responsible adult life.

Support

We devote equal time to supporting pupils' growth and emotional development as to their academic development. We believe that happiness and fulfilment are an integral part of a child's educational progression.

Peace

Peace is one of the Quaker testimonies; part of everything we do. While most in our community, whether staff or pupils, are from a non-Quaker background, these relevant principles set the foundations for a life based on the belief that every member of the community has equal value.



Leadership and Governance

The current Head, Anton Maree joined the school in 2014 and will retire at Easter 2024. Anton leads the Senior Leadership Team that includes the Head of Junior School, the Bursar, Senior Deputy Head, Deputy Head Strategic Development and Digital Learning, Head of Sixth Form and the Director of Marketing, Admissions and Communications.

The Leadership Team reports to the school's governing body, the School Committee. There are currently 14 members of that Committee who meet six times per year and are led by the Clerk to the Committee (Chair of Governors).

There are five Subcommittees: Planning; Finance; Education and Pastoral; Estates and Domestic; and Compliance and Policies.

In addition, the Clerk of the Estate and Domestic Subcommittee is part of the Health and Safety Committee.

The School had its last ISI EQI in 2014 and a RCI in 2018. We recently had an EQI in late February 2023 and the results of this should be available to view by interested candidates before the

closing date. While we cannot confirm the details as yet, the school was satisfied with the outcome.

The Junior School, Coram House, has seen significant growth in recent years through the expansion of the Nursery as well as a growing reputation. The benefits of using the campus facilities are seen when pupils make the seamless transition 'across the car park' to Senior School.

Ackworth is one of the seven Quaker schools in England, with three of them in Yorkshire. We seek to work collaboratively with them as well as more formally as part of the Friends' Schools' Council which meets termly.





Admissions

Pupils can join our Nursery from the age of two and a half. For entry to Coram House, we offer taster mornings/days, meetings with the Head, and a review from the child's present school to assess their suitability for the school.

Entry to our Senior School is generally at Year 7, Year 9 and Sixth Form; however we do admit children into Year 8 and Year 10 where spaces are available. Children and their families are warmly encouraged to visit the school for a taster day and meeting with the Head, as well as attend one of our Open Mornings, which are held each year. Those seeking to enter the Senior School take an entrance assessment. For Sixth Form, the entry requirement is currently a minimum of five GCSEs, of which three must be at Grade 6 or higher. Places are offered on the basis of predicted grades and confirmed after GCSE results are published.



“Children and their families are warmly encouraged to visit the school for a taster day”

Academic

First-class learning is at the heart of Ackworth School life and pupils benefit from the high quality and experience of our teaching staff.

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, whilst taking advantage of the flexibility we enjoy as an independent school. We encourage pupils to make curriculum choices which suit them best, with advice and guidance to help them.

Nursery

Ackworth School Nursery is set within our modern, purpose-built Junior School, Coram House. It is a warm, safe, loving and stimulating environment, promoting all areas of child development. The Nursery features large play and learning spaces, both indoors and outside, with access to varied active learning opportunities within the school grounds, including our Forest School. Nursery education is led by a professional, friendly team of Early Years specialists with an open-door approach and excellent relationships with parents. Educational activities are planned with an emphasis on fun, enjoyment and challenge and our children adopt a positive attitude towards learning, creating a solid foundation for their future education.

Coram House

Coram House provides a supportive, gradual introduction to school life and structured learning. Teaching is according to each child's needs and supported by outstanding levels of care and regular communication with parents. Our experienced teaching team fosters enthusiasm and initiative, nurturing children's emerging personalities and talents, building self-esteem, resilience, and confidence along the way. Our happy, inquisitive children are taught in mixed-ability classes and can recognise and understand their individual targets. We are passionate about extending learning outside the classroom, with children regularly encouraged to explore, discover, build, and play in our onsite Forest School setting and the wider facilities the school has to offer.

Senior School

Ackworth provides a broad Senior School curriculum, designed to give young people solid academic foundations to discover and develop their interests and talents. Our expert teachers introduce new ideas with infectious enthusiasm that inspire a genuine interest



Academic

in subjects and provide the best footing for learning with understanding. Ackworth School is extremely well resourced with our pupils enjoying the advantages of spacious, well-equipped science laboratories, outstanding facilities for the arts, a first-class library, exceptional sports facilities and specialist ICT, design and technology suites. Throughout their Senior School life, pupils receive positive encouragement, and every student is celebrated for their individual achievements. Ackworth School has embraced digital learning and all Senior School and Sixth Form pupils receive an Apple iPad and Apple Pencil in support of their studies.

Sixth Form

In the Sixth Form, our exceptional teaching team believes in inspiring our young people to develop their own views, opinions and aspirations. Students are well prepared for life beyond school and given the skills to become resilient, confident, respectful individuals, ready to make a positive contribution to society. Ackworth Sixth Form offers a range of academic A-Level courses alongside BTEC Sport, with almost all Sixth Formers choosing to apply to university to continue their education. Students are guided, with careers and university entrance in mind, towards choosing a sound platform of subjects to realise their potential. Although academic

achievement is our primary concern, an extensive co-curricular and super-curricular programme encourages students to explore other interests and strike a healthy work-life balance.

Autism Resource

At Ackworth, we consider ourselves fortunate to have a group of young people with autism in both the junior and senior age ranges. They bring huge insights and skills into our learning and social community. Sensory and cognitive differences can mean that a young person might struggle with the demands of their environment, and in the Autism Resource we aim to offer calm surroundings in a quiet area of school. Each young person has their own work area with IT facilities. With a core team around the young person, one-to-one specialist support is offered for individual or small group teaching within the Resource, and for supported inclusion into Coram House or the Senior School as appropriate for each pupil's individual academic, sporting, practical or social needs.



Wellbeing

Wellbeing is central to everything we do at Ackworth School; happy children flourish and helping young people to maintain their wellbeing is the first step on the road to success.

We have a layered approach to our wellbeing, understanding and responding to the individual needs of our children. Positive relationships and the Quaker ethos underpin our pastoral care; we listen to children, their voices are valued and heard, and influence our decision-making. We encourage the pupils to develop honest and equal relationships with others.

Pastoral support

There is a clear pastoral structure in place, and pupils know where to go for support. On arrival at Ackworth School, pupils become part of a House, as well as a year group and a small tutor group. This helps cement a sense of belonging and community and enables pupils to have access to advice and support from the Head of House, Head of Year and their Tutor. Tutors meet with pupils

daily and play a key role in ensuring pupils' social and emotional development as well as monitoring academic progress, overseen by the Head of Year and Senior Deputy Head.

The pastoral team is adept at supporting children through challenge, and there is a strong emphasis on reflective and restorative approaches towards resolving issues as they arise, working alongside pupils and families.

To ensure our pupils thrive and are well prepared for the future, they follow thorough and relevant PSHE (personal social and health education), RSE (relationships and sex education) and careers programmes, where they learn about keeping themselves safe, healthy and happy, and where they are prepared for the future. These messages are reinforced through assemblies, active tutorial time, and visiting speakers.





Wellbeing

Emotional and physical wellbeing

There are times when children require more support. At Ackworth, pupils can access a range of additional support including mindfulness sessions, counselling, the nurture room and peer mentors, in addition to external support where appropriate.

“I have been regularly using the pastoral support, they are amazing at understanding, helping me and just being there to talk to. Talking to someone who isn't a teacher made it so much easier to talk about what I was feeling without having to worry how it may impact their view on me in lessons or otherwise. I'm so grateful for the pastoral care, because I've really needed the support this year.”

Sixth Form Student

“I really enjoy and am very thankful for the opportunity to access mindfulness classes at school. I find that mindfulness helps in a lot of stressful situations and gives us the skills to remain calm if we come across a difficult situation in our lives. I think it's amazing that the school is willing to put aside time to teach us something this useful and I really enjoy it, I'm thankful for the skills I have and the ability I have to use mindfulness tasks to help me cope in life.”

Fifth Form Pupil

The school has its own Health Centre and a visiting GP holds a surgery at the school once a week.



“I find that mindfulness helps in a lot of stressful situations and gives us the skills to remain calm”

Fifth Form Pupil

Enrichment

Ackworth School has a full academic, co-curricular and extra-curricular calendar, with a wide choice of clubs and societies on offer. This includes a large range of sporting opportunities, including our elite academies for football, squash and table tennis, as well as clubs for art, music and drama, the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme plus many more.

In addition, we have a Visiting Friend, who is there to listen to any member of the community, with a focus on Quakerism and encouraging young people to be involved in activities that have a flavour of spiritual life and/or Quakerism.



Community

In line with our Quaker heritage and values, a key component of teaching at Ackworth School is demonstrating to children how they can make a positive contribution to society.

We support children to participate in various initiatives, but also run a number of our own outreach programmes. We want to be at the heart of our community, removing barriers and creating opportunities, with the ambition to help raise hopes and aspirations for all in Ackworth as well as further afield.

Charity week

Charity Week is organised by members of the Sixth Form and, each year, large sums of money are raised for two charities chosen by the pupils. The Charity Week student committee must operate as a functioning charitable organisation with a variety of roles.

Community initiatives

Various community initiatives enable Ackworth pupils to make a tangible difference in the community, to increase confidence and to gain employability and life skills.

This may be local (supporting pupils in the school's Autism Resource Unit, national (volunteering for the Wakefield Christmas Hamper appeal), or international (raising money to take part in charity projects in Ghana). These voluntary activities form an integral part of a wider education and provide invaluable experiences.

Projects abroad

This initiative enables Ackworth Sixth Form students to participate in youth volunteering opportunities overseas. Trips are tailor-made to suit the needs of the students and the school and fit in with the chosen group, whether it is working on a care and community project in rural Africa or on a conservation programme in South America. Each trip provides an educational travel experience to develop student confidence, self-awareness and a global perspective.





Boarding

An established, international boarding community has a marked influence on the diversity and culture of our school.

Ackworth School was designed from the outset to be a mixed boarding school. This is reflected in the fact that around one fifth of our Senior School are boarders, of whom 80% are from overseas. Our flexible approach means that some students choose to board full time throughout their school career, while others board for a year or two. Boarding helps students to focus on study, with access to the school's excellent facilities late into the evening and at weekends.

Perhaps the most rewarding aspect of boarding at Ackworth School can be seen in the strong and lasting friendships developed among our global community of students.

Every student instantly becomes an integral part of that ready-made international community, enriched by its multiple languages, cultures and experiences.

Joining together to flourish in sporting, artistic, and academic pursuits creates relationships that last beyond school days, to form the foundations of lifelong global networks.



“Our flexible approach means that some students choose to board full time throughout their school career”

The Opportunity

Ackworth is a very different school and a number of aspects set us apart. Yes, we are a Quaker school and the ethos that emanates from this provides the firm basis from which we develop our distinct identity.

Visitors to the school never fail to comment on this 'feel'. It's not always something you can put your finger on, but we always seem to exude an air of calm. Everyone is encouraged to be an individual and whilst we all play our part we are not expected to 'fit in' but instead be a distinct, individual part of something that fits together to make a whole.

- A growing appreciation and open mind as to how the Quaker values and practices can create a secure foundation for educating children in the 21st century.
- You appreciate why parents choose an independent education at Ackworth and how to deliver on this commitment consistently.
- You value and understand the contribution that everyone brings to the school and the part they play.
- You lead from the top and set the standard and direction. From this you take others with you on a clear journey.
- You don't make promises on exam outcomes, but you do promise to make the children who experience Ackworth to be the best they can be.
- You see challenge and push back as a learning opportunity and a chance to change and improve.
- Provide the environment whereby pupils can flourish and staff are free to contribute positively.
- You appreciate that independent schools are commercial operations and that their sustainability and investment in facilities and resources provides a return on this investment through the positive experiences and outcomes for our pupils.



Job Description and Person Specification

Purpose of the role

Lead the Ackworth School community providing first-class opportunities and a supportive environment for young people to acquire the skills and values they will need to make a positive contribution to the well-being of those around them.

Provide management and leadership across the whole school in line with our ethos and values. The Head should drive and support the school's commercial aims, in order to achieve a prosperous position to guarantee future development.

The post-holder will constantly have their finger on the pulse and work with key personnel to deliver academic success, provide superior pastoral guidance and ensure that every child achieves their best.

Main tasks and responsibilities

Strategic Direction and Development of the School

Shape, develop and deliver a realistic-but-ambitious vision and strategic plan for the school in conjunction with the school Committee and Senior Leadership team.

Ensure that the school's management, finance, marketing and human resources are an integral part of the strategic plan and that the Quaker ethos and values, together with diversity and inclusion, run through all aspects.

Lead by example, provide inspiration and motivation and uphold the values and principles of the school to pupils, staff and parents.

Achieve a culture of high aspiration and achievement in both students and staff.

Ensure that pupils progress to diverse and appropriate destinations that build on their academic attainment, life skills, personal development and ambitions.

Lead, develop, support and empower all staff in order to secure continuous improvement in teaching, learning and development for the school community to drive a culture of academic rigour, personal growth and success to thrive.

Continue to develop a collaboration culture to share best practice, develop continuity but also to create opportunities for cross-school teaching and learning.

Create an open culture where staff, pupils and parents feel listened to, able to give feedback and contribute with confidence that it will be considered.



Learning, Teaching and Pastoral Care

Promote a learning and teaching environment which advances the academic, spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students and prepares them for future opportunities and responsibilities.

Foster resilience, respect and positive relationships throughout the school and ensure that pupils' pastoral needs are met. Implement and monitor policies to promote this aim and have whole school responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.

Maintain a deep understanding of current educational thinking and practice that will inform pedagogy and continually improve our provision.

Uphold high expectations for achievement and good behaviour and promote equality of opportunity.

Monitor and evaluate the work of staff and pupils, using appropriate benchmarks to set targets for improvement.

Lead the implementation of a broad curriculum relevant to all pupils, including those with Special Educational Needs and members of the Autism Resource, and which provides a coherent and co-ordinated programme of study. Ensure this includes a wide range of extra-curricular activities in keeping with the educational aims of the school.

Champion a school environment where equality and diversity is celebrated and is always at the forefront of thinking.

Resource Management

Ensure prudent but forward-looking financial and business management. Work closely with the Bursar to drive the resources and income streams required to deliver a sound financial future.

Lead the School Leadership Team to manage, monitor and review the range, quality and use of all available resources in order to improve the quality of educational provision, ensure efficiency and secure value for money.

Lead the connection of the alumni community, Ackworth Old Scholars, to maximise opportunities for development.

Marketing, Recruitment and External Engagement

Promote and communicate the Quaker ethos and culture.

Be the dynamic ambassador for the school, explaining and marketing the aims, ethos and day and boarding facilities to visiting prospective parents, agents and others who are considering Ackworth as a school for their children.

Champion the school's academic results and build on the reputation for supporting a broad range of abilities.

Market and promote the school as an all through school from our Nursery to Sixth Form, together with the Autism Resource, and promoting the benefits of flexi boarding.

Ensure the school's marketing strategy takes into account the current education

environment and has the flexibility to respond to a changing market. All areas of the school will be involved in order to increase our income streams.

Support the growth of positive relationships with state schools and international agents and continue to promote the school on a local, national and international level.

Continue to positively develop Ackworth School as a key player in the local community whether this be through its extensive outreach efforts, use of facilities and immediate community events.

Promote a culture that encourages the involvement of parents and guardians and maintains a positive relationship based on open communication and feedback.

Leading and Managing Staff

Ensure that Ackworth employs, develops and retains the best people in the right roles. Provide high quality support, professional development and management for all staff, ensuring equal opportunity for all.

Develop a staffing structure which can deliver an exciting, challenging and diverse curriculum, meets resource demands and supports safeguarding requirements.

Promote a healthy and realistic working culture through communicating clear and robust plans that are executed and evaluated.

Lead a staff body that promotes and champions both individual and team successes, develops a robust succession plan

to enable effective progression in key roles and provides continuous development to enable everyone to be the best they can be.

Inspire staff and maximise their effectiveness by ensuring sound management practice, open and effective communication and constructive working relationships between staff and pupils.

Lead an effective SLT to achieve progress, challenge constructively and strive for positive change.

Person Specification

Educational Attainment and Qualifications

- Educated to degree level
- Professional qualification in leadership and management
- Evidence of CPD through career in education

Experience, Knowledge and Skills

Essential

- A genuine resonance with the Quaker principles of truth, peace, simplicity, equality and sustainability.
- A track record of strong strategic leadership experience with effective teambuilding skills.
- Experience of a rich range of educational establishments.
- A thirst for and evidence of continuous personal development showing how this has contributed to progression and success.
- An understanding of the financial, commercial and economic demands of leadership and management of an independent boarding school.
- Evidence of using marketing to increase the school roll.
- Experience of successfully leading and managing change processes involving staff and pupils.
- Able to act with honesty and integrity at all times.
- A visible leader and clear communicator who is able to articulate a vision that staff can be inspired by and adopt at all levels, not just in academic circles.
- Drive, stamina and decisiveness.

- Innovative and pedagogically astute with a clear view of how to lead 21st century education.
- Outstanding interpersonal skills and high levels of emotional intelligence with the ability to engage and inspire, whether with staff, pupils or parents.
- Dynamic and solution-focused, able to approach problems positively whilst understanding the need to mitigate – not avoid – risks.

Desirable

- Understanding of leadership in a boarding school environment, ideally with some direct experience of boarding.
- Knowledge or experience of an educational environment that provides a more specialist SEN provision or a higher than average cohort.
- Experience of delivering an education at primary level as a stand-alone or all-through setting.
- Knowledge of new and emerging technologies in education and how they can enhance the learning experience and support the progress of pupils.
- An understanding and appreciation of the power of silence and reflection and who can inspire this in others.

Ackworth School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All staff and volunteers are therefore expected to behave in such a way that supports this commitment. All staff are required to understand and adhere to the Schools Health and Safety policies.

Job descriptions may be subject to review from time to time and can be altered or amended to meet the changing requirements of the School. They are not designed to limit the extent of the role but instead to outline the main tasks and responsibilities.

Location

Yorkshire

Central UK location in the county of Yorkshire, the largest region in England, with an international reputation for business, manufacturing, major sporting events and sites of historic and natural beauty.

Leeds

The largest legal and financial city in England (outside London), just 25km, or 25 minutes, by car from Ackworth School.

York

A historically-important city just 45 minutes from Ackworth School.

Excellent transport links and airport transfers from Manchester Airport and Leeds Bradford Airport.



To Edinburgh

Newcastle upon Tyne

Yorkshire

Leeds Bradford Airport (LBA)
45 minutes to LBA

York

25 minutes to York or Leeds

Hull

Ackworth School

Manchester

1 hour to MAN

Manchester International Airport (MAN)

Sheffield

Lincoln

Nottingham

Birmingham

1 hour 40 minutes to London by train

Terms and Conditions

The School Committee seeks to appoint a Head who meets the current and future needs of our unique school. A suitable package will be offered that reflects the experience that an individual brings to the post, in conjunction with the size of the school.

An impressive five-bedroom house is available on site; inclusive of utilities. We offer a discount of 50% on school fees from our Reception class through to the Sixth Form.

Our pension scheme, APTIS, is provided by AEGON and this allows greater flexibility through salary sacrifice.



Application Process

Interested candidates are welcome to contact the school to arrange a confidential discussion. The application process is being managed in-house by the Head of HR, Joanne Colley and she can be contacted as follows:

Joanne.Colley@ackworthschool.com
01977 233600

Closing date: Wednesday 12th April 2023 at 10am UK time

Candidates are required to submit the following in pdf format.

- A completed Ackworth School application form that can be downloaded from the school's website.
- A covering letter, preferably of no more than two pages, addressed to David Bunney, Clerk to the School Committee. The letter should set out your reasons for applying for the role and what attracts you to being part of the Ackworth School community. In the letter you should address the requirements

of the role and draw on the relevance of your experience and skills to illustrate your suitability, paying particular attention to the person specification and overall job description.

Applications should be submitted electronically to the school to **jobs@ackworthschool.com**. If you have any questions about submitting your application, you can contact Joanne Colley whose details are provided.

Our process is as follows:

- All applications will be acknowledged, on receipt, by email. If you have not received this within two working days of submission, please email Joanne Colley.
- The panel will meet to shortlist after the closing date. Longlist interviews will take place on the **27th April 2023**.
- Shortlist interviews will take place with the panel on **12th/13th May 2023**.

Applicants should read carefully the Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy. Our Privacy Notice for Recruitment is also available on our website within Working For Us.

Ackworth School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and all applicants will undergo child protection screening, including checks with past employers and an enhanced DBS and Barred list check with Disclosure and Barring Service. Applicants should also be in sympathy with the School's Quaker ethos.





Ackworth School

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