



Upton Court Grammar School, Slough, Berkshire

Candidate Application Pack



preparing the way for others to follow

# Contents

Thank you for your interest in our position at Upton Court Grammar School within Pioneer Educational Trust.

This pack contains:

- An introduction from our Co-CEOs
- Details about Upton Court Grammar School
- Benefits of working at the Trust

We hope that you find the pack informative and useful. If you do have any further questions, then please contact Mrs Bhamini Lynn, HR Manager:

[blynn@pioneereducationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:blynn@pioneereducationaltrust.org.uk)

You can also visit our school's website at:

[www.uptoncourtgrammar.org.uk](http://www.uptoncourtgrammar.org.uk) or the Trust's website at:

[www.pioneereducationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.pioneereducationaltrust.org.uk)



# An introduction to Pioneer Educational Trust

Welcome to Pioneer Educational Trust. As CEO, I am proud to lead our family of schools and would like here to provide you with a short history of our organisation, our school improvement model and our ambitions for the future.

## Our journey

Pioneer Educational Trust is a small multi-academy trust in Berkshire serving children and young people aged 3 to 18.

Pioneer Educational Trust (then Upton Court Educational Trust) was first established in January 2014 when Upton Court Grammar School in Slough sponsored Foxborough Primary School. Foxborough Primary School had, in June 2013, been put in special measures by Ofsted. In November 2016, Trevelyan Middle School joined our MAT. Following a school improvement journey in both schools Foxborough Primary School was judged as a Good school by Ofsted in May 2019 and Trevelyan Middle School judged Good with Outstanding for Behaviour and Attitudes and Personal Development in October 2019 following twenty years of Requires Improvement judgements. Upton Court Grammar School continues to perform in the top 3% nationally for P8. Most recently, Desborough College in Maidenhead has joined our trust.

We are a cohesively diverse family of schools serving varying contexts. We are incredibly proud of our schools' achievements and the strong relationships that exist between them.

*"Trustees of the multi-academy trust (MAT) have a clear vision for the school. They work closely with governors and leaders to ensure that teachers' workload is manageable. Leaders enable subject leaders and teachers to work with others from across the trust to develop expertise. The chief executive officers of the MAT support leaders well to ensure that high standards are maintained." (Ofsted report, Nov 2019, Trevelyan Middle School)*

*"The MAT has played an instrumental role in supporting the school's improvement. The MAT has also wisely given the well-being and professional development of staff a high priority. This has helped to stabilise staffing after a period of some turbulence. Collaborative working with other schools within the MAT, and the provision of high quality professional training and support, have led to sustained improvement." (Ofsted report, May 2019, Foxborough Primary School)*

## Who are we?

We are a values-led, evidence-informed organisation that acts in line with our commitment to provide all pupils with equal access to an exceptional education. Driving equality and celebrating diversity is at the heart of what we do - our schools are diverse learning communities with their own unique contexts and needs, which we celebrate and draw strength from.

Pioneer Educational Trust is outward-facing demonstrating a commitment to both the local and educational communities. Upton Court Grammar School is a partner of the Teaching School Hub Berkshire with responsibility for Initial Teacher Training. We partner with Voice 21, Whole Education and Lyfta and colleagues lead or engage in a wide range of networks locally and nationally, for example, Whole Education, DiverseEd, WomenEd, LGBTed, DisabilityEd and BAMEed, and local subject networks.

Pioneer seeks to shape the educational landscape and is unapologetic in promoting its core aims more widely.

## Leadership development

Leadership development is a significant strength of our Trust and feature of our professional development offer. We see all members of staff, irrespective of job title or role, as leaders – and develop them accordingly. Every member of staff undertakes our flagship Pioneering Leadership Programme, a bespoke course designed by staff for staff, creating a common language and approach to leadership development. In addition, we provide:

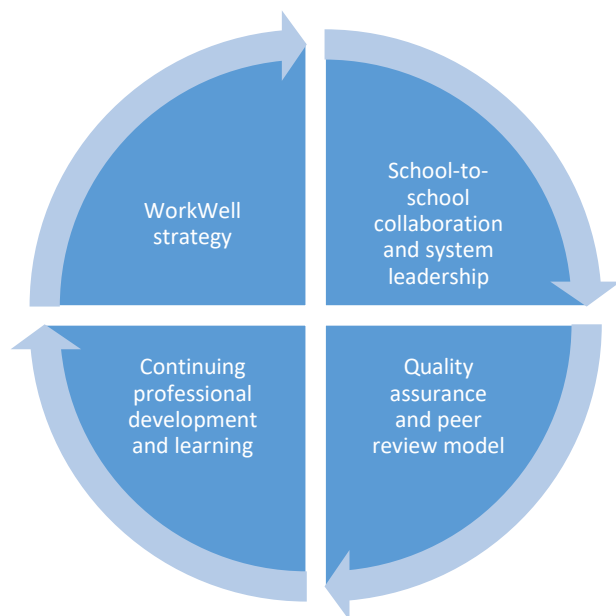
- a leadership programme for those underrepresented in school leadership called 'Working Title.'
- the development of self and team awareness through the use of a behavioural insights tool called C-ME and access to C-ME trained coaches.

- a universal coaching offer through accredited Growth Coaching International coaches
- support for staff to undertake National Professional Qualifications and other leadership-related accredited qualifications.

Our conception of leadership development starts with the individual, including their identity, stories, values, and aspirations, and we aim to develop them in line with our Pioneering Leadership Framework, which supports leaders at every level.

### School improvement

We invest in our workforce so that, in turn, the workforce invests in our learners. We seek to add value, not just act as another layer of monitoring and accountability. As such, our school improvement model is underpinned by a commitment to: inspire collaboration within, between and beyond its schools; provide exceptional system leadership; and, deliver wide-ranging, high-quality professional development opportunities that enable all colleagues to grow professionally and personally. Our systems for monitoring and accountability are both humane and robust; they ensure that high standards are set and maintained, and treat professionals as professionals. We adopt a coaching 'way of being' and apply the principles of vertical leadership development through our policies, procedures and practices.



#### Our school improvement model is based on four facets:

- Our **pioneering model for excellence in CPDL** is underpinned by the Trust's four values Providing excellent CPDL is at the heart of our school improvement model and we aim to provide personalised, meaningful, high-quality growth opportunities for all.
- Pioneer's **WorkWell strategy** seeks to reduce unnecessary workload and promote staff wellbeing. We believe in treating our colleagues as professional adults who are encouraged to make positive choices in identifying how to manage their workload, how to achieve work-life balance and how to support their own wellbeing.
- Pioneer believes firmly in the power of collaboration and partnership working enabling all colleagues to contribute meaningfully to school improvement. Our approach to **school-to-school collaboration and system leadership** enables engage to work constructively and productively in partnership with one another and drive school improvement in all its guises.
- Pioneer sees itself as providing more than just another layer of accountability. Our systems for **quality assurance and peer review** are both humane and robust, ensuring that high standards are set and maintained and that professionals are treated as professionals.

### Continuing professional development

Pioneer Educational Trust aims to be the employer of choice as a result of its commitment to professional development for all staff, a positive and enriching working environment and outstanding leadership development opportunities. We invest heavily in professional development for all colleagues and seek to provide the 'proper conditions' through which 'unimagined resources of creative human energy'<sup>1</sup> can be released strengthening the culture of self-responsibility<sup>2</sup>. Key components of our CPDL model include:

- Our **appraisal** policy that provides a lynchpin to other structures and systems, including our QA / QI model, programme of CPDL, etc. Through rebalancing appraisal on development rather than accountability and applying a coaching approach, we create a deliberately developmental organization in which all can thrive.
- **CPDL Wednesday**. The school day at all Pioneer schools finishes one hour early each Wednesday providing departments and teams with increased opportunity for collaboration and professional development.

<sup>1</sup> Douglas McGregor, 'The Human Side of Enterprise', Leadership and Motivation, Essays of Douglas McGregor, 2, no.1 (1966), pp.6-15

<sup>2</sup> John Campbell and Christian van Nieuwerburgh, The Leader's Guide to Coaching in Schools: Creating Conditions for Effective Learning, (London: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2018).

- **QI entitlement.** Our QA system is complemented by personalised and bespoke development opportunities for every member of staff including an 'entitlement' to Quality Improvement the purpose of which is to provide teachers, TAs and HLTAs with the opportunity to engage in coaching, reflect on and debate the ways they teach, and feel deeply involved in their own professional learning.

## What we offer

Pioneer Educational Trust provides a number of operational services to each of our academies. Managed centrally, by our Central Team, these are designed to help ensure the smooth running and operation of each of our academies. These services include Facilities, Health & Safety, Finance, IT and HR. Centralising core operational functions allows the leaders in our academies to focus on the teaching and learning environment, all the while knowing that there is team of specialists on hand to support and lead with the 'back-office' functions. Sharing these services across our Trust provides financial security for our academies and while the Director of Finance has the overview of all financial matters and is expected to provide savings through procurement, income generation and efficiency, at local level, schools still make decisions about how they spend their own budget.

## Where next?

This is an incredibly exciting time to be joining our organisation! We are a strong trust that is pioneering, sector-leading and ambitious. If successful, you will be instrumental in realising these ambitions alongside us.

If you believe in driving equality, usualising diversity and championing inclusion, if you want to challenge socio-economic disadvantage and make a lasting difference to our community, if you believe in the power of collaboration and seek to invest in your own and other's continuing professional growth, then Pioneer Educational Trust may very well be the MAT for you.



Antonia Spinks  
Chief Executive Officer  
Pioneer Educational Trust



## Our School

Upton Court Grammar School is a selective secondary school with just over 1100 students aged 11-18. The school is proud of its history and upholds the traditions associated with grammar schools: expectations of the highest possible attainment, hard work, commitment and behaviour which will allow effective teaching and learning to take place. Our students achieve the highest grades at all levels, with attainment and progress at GCSE and A' level being exceptional and making it one of the top grammar schools in England.

At Upton Court Grammar School we aim for clarity in all things and can articulate our mission in one sentence:

*Upton Court Grammar School ensured all students fulfilled their academic and personal aspirations and thrived as successful and engaged citizens.*

Our mission is written in the past tense so we can hold ourselves to account for making it a reality. In addition, all staff and students have their own mission-sentence, which connects our present to the future and gives meaning to our work and study.

At Upton Court Grammar School we have four core values that our staff and students live by: *Unity, Curiosity, Growth* and *Service*. These UCGS values inform our decision-making and guide us in our actions every day.

## Our Vision for the Future

Upton Court Grammar School seeks to:

- become a centre of excellence and creativity in learning and teaching;
- equip students with the ability to articulate their ideas with confidence in an increasingly competitive international work environment;
- encourage the belief that it is not enough to do *well*, but that we must also do *good*; everyone has the potential and opportunities to make our world a better place.

Within the school we resolve to:

- promote the highest academic standards and enable all students to be successful at every level;
- be concerned for the education of the whole person, delivering exceptional personal development;
- seek to produce self-reliant, conscientious and inquiring people who will go on actively learning for the rest of their lives;
- value all young people and get to know them well.

At the end of their education at Upton Court Grammar School, young people will have been prepared for life in a modern, multicultural democracy and will promote British values through working constructively with the local neighbourhood and wider communities.

## Our Team

At Upton Court Grammar School we have energetic and dedicated teachers, middle and senior leaders and are committed to the principle of 'teachers as leaders of learning'. Our commitment to high quality professional development seeks to provide the highest standards in all aspects of our practice. The school supports the training of PGCE students from Brunel University, Reading University and others, as well as being the ITT lead school for schools direct 'Teach Slough.' Teachers new to the profession are supported by an Induction Tutor, an ECT Coordinator and undertake an innovative programme to help them thrive.

Teachers and support staff take ownership of their own professional development. The school has supported a number of teachers who have undertaken Masters degrees, and the full suite of National Professional Qualifications, including NPQSL and NPQH programmes. In addition, the school has also supported and funded unqualified teachers who wish to secure Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). A number of support staff have also been supported by the school in achieving recognised qualifications in HR, Finance, Accounting and Catering.

Full time teachers engage in 18 hours of CPDL through the course of the academic year and the school has dedicated time each week to CPDL. A proportion of CPDL time is self-directed to give teachers the autonomy to direct their own development. We plan additional development opportunities through our 'Pioneer Presents...' evenings with guest speakers, as well as a vast array of professional learning and development opportunities provided by Pioneer Educational Trust.

## **Our Partnerships**

Through our membership of the Slough Association of Secondary Heads (SASH) and our designation as lead school for ITT/Schools Direct, Upton Court Grammar School has strong relationships with all of the local secondary and primary schools and partner schools in Slough as well as wider relationships with the University of Reading, Brunel University and UCL Institute of Education. In addition, the school is a member of a number of national networks including Whole Education, PiXL, WomenEd, LGBTed, and BAMEed. As a partner in Pioneer Educational Trust, we work closely with the central team and staff and students from Foxborough Primary School, Trevelyan Middle School and Desborough College.

## **Our Successes**

The most recent OFSTED inspection (November 2023) graded the school as "Outstanding" in all areas. The school has a national reputation for excellence and achievement and secures some of the highest outcomes for students in the country. The school is also a directly licenced centre for the Duke of Edinburgh Award and an increasing number of students have successfully completed their Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards. Over the years, a number of students have also been successful in securing places at Oxford, Cambridge and Russell Group universities. The school has been nationally recognised by the British Science Association for our work with CREST, we have the Music Mark and are a Trinity Champion Status for our commitment to the Arts Award.

## **Our Facilities and Benefits**

The original school building dates back to 1936. The school has already made significant changes to our facilities through a multi-million-pound government investment under the Growth Fund and The Academies Capital Maintenance Fund. So far, improvements have included a new building for the English Department in 2012, a new state of the art Restaurant and Sixth Form Centre in 2013 and new classrooms, science laboratories and performing arts facilities in 2017. The building programme finished in Summer 2019 with a brand-new purpose built 4 Court



Sports Hall and two Multi Use Games Areas (MUGA). The level of investment in the school means that we enjoy some of the best educational facilities in the south-east.

The school offers free refreshments to staff during the school day, complimentary lunches at Christmas and at the end of the school year. The Trust also provides an Employee Assistance Programme to all staff within the Trust Schools. Through this, staff can access support and advice on any number of things such as wellbeing, work-related issues, housing, family, financial and legal support. There is also an employee benefit scheme which offers savings and discounts across a number of well-known retailers and services. Staff across the Trust can also receive a free, annual flu vaccination. The Trustees are also active in recognising years of service for staff. Service is designed to reward loyalty to the school and recognises those who have accrued between 3 and 30 years of service. We have active Trust-wide Employee Affinity Groups, including Women in Leadership, the LGBT+ affinity group and others.

## Our Location

Upton Court Grammar School is located just outside of West London. There are direct bus and rail links to Windsor, Maidenhead, Reading and London. The school is also very close to the M4 and M25 motorways and Heathrow Airport providing national and global connections. Furthermore, due to improvements being carried out by Network Rail, Crossrail links now provide quicker direct access to Central London.

### 2021 - 2022 Key School Facts

Type of School	Selective Secondary Academy Converter (MAT: Pioneer Educational Trust)
Age Range	11-18
Number of Students	1111
Gender	Mixed
Ebacc Entry	100%
Progress 8 score	+0.51
Attainment 8	74.9
Students achieving 5+ A*-C GCSEs (inc. English & Maths)	100%
A-Level average points and grade	43.28 (B+)





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## Why work with Pioneer Educational Trust?

Through our WorkWell Pledges, we place workload and wellbeing is at the centre of Pioneer Educational Trust.

We offer our staff the following benefits:

- Excellent ongoing CPDL
- Priority admission for children of staff
- Cross phase opportunities for career progression
- Free on-site car parking
- Interest free travel to work loans
- Free counselling and legal advice for all staff through an Employee Assistance Programme
- Enhanced employer pension contributions via excellent Defined Benefit Pension Schemes
- Enhanced leave of absence including maternity / paternity / adoption leave schemes and leave for religious observance
- Enhanced parental bereavement pay
- Corporate eye care scheme
- Lunch for staff at cost price
- Complementary tea, coffee, milk and sugar throughout the school day
- Free annual seasonal flu vaccination
- Reward gateway with access to savings and discounts across a number of retailers and services
- Long service recognition; first milestone being 3 years
- Additional time during the school day to facilitate professional development
- Pay policy for support staff which is linked to teaching staff to ensure all staff are treated equitably
- Annual calendar of events shared with all staff at the start of the year which includes calendared 'No Meeting Weeks' and two-week October half term
- No gradings of lessons or individuals
- Annual charity challenge providing staff with an opportunity to challenge themselves while raising money for charity
- Generous, flexible approach to family commitments such as children's assemblies, sports days etc
- Email protocol to protect time outside of the school day
- Early finish for teaching and non-teaching staff at the end of each long term