



THE DOWNLEY SCHOOL

"Learning, Growing and Succeeding Together"



Appointment of class teacher Information for Candidates

2024/25

The Downley School

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Interim Headteacher: Ms Leanne Dandridge

Chair of Governors: Mrs Sally Perkins





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This document provides candidates with information about the appointment of a class teacher at The Downley School.

Job Title:	Class teacher
Start Date:	April 2025
Salary:	M1-M6
Hours:	Full-time (part-time applications will be considered)
Contract Status:	Permanent

ODBST is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment. Post holders are subject to appropriate vetting procedures and a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced check.

ODBST is an Equal Opportunities Employer.



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Welcome from the Chair of Governors and Chief Executive of ODBST

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the post of class teacher at The Downley School. This recruitment pack aims to give you a flavour of the school and our ethos and values, as well as further details about the role.

The Oxford Diocesan Bucks School Trust (ODBST) and the Governors of this school seek a dynamic and inspirational teacher to build on the successes achieved by the current leadership team during a programme of school improvement. We are looking for someone with high aspirations, a child-centred approach and a drive to implement the vision for the school through quality-first teaching and exemplary practice.

Our children are lively and inquisitive with a strong sense of personal responsibility linked to our values and ethos. They take pride in the school and its achievements. Supporting them are a dedicated and developing staff team who have real aspirations for the children they teach and for their own professional development.

The ODBST and Governors have high expectations of the class teachers and will work hard to support them in providing a safe, caring and highly effective learning environment for all children.

You are strongly encouraged to visit the school prior to making your application and we will be pleased to arrange a tour and a chat with a member of the senior leadership team - please contact the school office on 01494527033 or email sbm@thedownleyschool.co.uk

Sulina Piesse
Chief Executive Officer
ODBST

Sally Perkin
Chair of Governors
The Downley School



A message from the Interim Headteacher

The first time that I came to The Downley School, I could tell that it was a magical place to be. I knew that I wanted to work here because the sense of community was so strong. The children were so enthusiastic and questioned the world around them. They welcomed me warmly and talked excitedly about their learning.

I wasn't wrong, and since joining the team in April 2023 I have seen the strength of community and relationships here. The Downley School is a two-form entry primary school with a big heart. Our children come from truly diverse backgrounds and speak many different languages. It is a happy and lively school where both children and adults work together as a strong, nurturing team.

The staff are amazing and all work incredibly hard to give children the best opportunities available. The Downley School is developing into an inspiring school that will develop happy, well-rounded children with a love for learning, underpinned by our values: Teamwork, Inclusion, Resilience, Respect, Responsibility and Integrity.

Our school joined ODBST in September 2023. Being one of 12 schools offers all staff the unique opportunity to be part of a community of committed teachers and leaders who regularly share best practice and support each other. The Trust has allowed us to grow as a school but still maintain our distinct and unique identity. Our Academy Improvement Board (AIB) ensures that The Downley School makes decisions that are best for the school and its community. Although we are part of a Christian Trust we remain a non-faith school.





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This is an exciting opportunity for an inspirational, highly motivated, ambitious and dynamic teacher to join our team. We are very excited about the future and ready to embrace new challenges as we embark on the next stage of our school improvement journey. We are looking for a confident class teacher with excellent communication skills and a strong motivation to continue to inspire our children and engage positively with members of our school community.

We hope this pack supports you in finding out more about our school. The pack includes background information about the school and our Trust, ODBST. It also includes information about the application process and the job description.

Please do come to visit and get a feel for the school in person.

Yours sincerely,

Ms Leanne Dandridge

Interim Headteacher





About Us

The Downley School is a two-form entry primary school. The community is culturally and ethnically diverse and we pride ourselves on being an inclusive school. Our age range is from 4 to 11 years old and we currently have 388 children on roll (February 2024). There are two classes in each year group with a maximum of 30 pupils in each class. Our children come from a wide range of backgrounds and approximately 21% of pupils speak English as an additional language. This figure is not representative of the culturally rich and diverse community we serve, where children are encouraged to embrace and celebrate their backgrounds.

- 11% of children are entitled to Free School Meals
- 14% of children are eligible for the Pupil Premium grant.
- 10% of pupils are on the SEND register, and 2% of pupils have an Education Care Plan





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Learning, Growing and Succeeding Together

We believe in providing a safe and happy **learning** environment where children and adults are valued, **nurtured** and empowered to **succeed**.

We believe **learning** is the foundation on which **our** children's futures are built and equips them for a **successful** life ahead.

We aim for children to develop and **grow** through a diverse and culturally rich curriculum.

We are committed to providing an excellent education through helping children to **succeed**, by **growing** enquiring minds, instilling the motivation to **learn** and the ability to work both independently and **together**.

For more information please visit the school website www.thedownleyschool.co.uk





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Our Facilities

We are very lucky at TDS to have a wonderful outdoor setting with very spacious grounds and a large diversity of tree species. EYFS have their own outdoor spaces, in addition to our playground and vast field. Our wooded Forest School area, pond and yurt add to our curriculum offering to make learning special for our children. We have an onsite Breakfast and Afterschool Club.

As we have recently joined the ODBST we will soon be seeing exciting improvements to our site, including a new playing area, developments to our Forest School area and outside spaces to further enhance the outside learning environments. Extensive redecoration projects are planned to complement our already exciting learning environment and showcase our curriculum.





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Working with partners

We aim to encourage and develop relationships with our local community so that there is a close liaison between the community and the children in our school. The school is an integral and important part of Downley and the surrounding area.

With TDS Governing Body

At TDS we have an Academy Improvement Board. This currently consists of 4 governors. We are looking to appoint more governors.

With parents and families

We know that the most successful education takes place when parents/carers, staff and governors all work together. Parents and carers are involved with the whole school community in a variety of ways:

- Parent Teacher Association
- Helping with visits & in class
- Supporting with fund raising events
- Attending curriculum evenings

The school's PTA, is a thriving group of parents that organises numerous events throughout the year. It provides an important link between parents, the school and the local community, and raises significant funds to support the school.



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The PTA are currently supporting the school to furnish a parent room, purchase new reading books to support our phonics programme (Little Wandle) and sport equipment required for us to be able to participate in local netball and football leagues.



With secondary schools

The move to secondary school is an important step for pupils and parents. We work in partnership with our local secondary schools and Bucks Council to ensure our children and their families are well-informed about the transfer process. The children participate in visits to local schools

With Chiltern Hills Montessori

We work closely with Chiltern Hills Montessori who rent space from our additional building, TDS+. The Reception team and the Montessori work together to ensure that the Montessori curriculum supports our curriculum and they participate in Forest School learning activities together.

With Chiltern Wood School

We have started working closer with Chiltern Wood, a specialist school that adjoins our site. Children have read to children, sung songs to them and invited them to watch their performances.





In the words of our parents....

The happiness and productivity of both the children and the teachers has been very positive and noticeable since Ofsted and particularly since the arrival of Ms W who has already made a massive positive difference. We have had a lot of support from Mr X/Miss Y and Miss Z has been very appreciated during my child's struggles with anxiety: they have all gone above and beyond. TDS is a great school now!!

My child looks forward to going to school everyday, which is the main thing we are happy about!

I can definitely see an overall improvement in the school and my children's learning. I am ever so pleased as I know my children are in good hands.

We have seen the school go from strength to strength and the quality of the teaching has excelled. Our children have come on leaps and bounds which we are so pleased about. TDS community has gone from strength to strength, from children - Teachers - Parents, it feels like one team and everyone seems supported. The communication is clear and consistent. Finally, it really does feel like the lovely village school we have been wanting for so long. We are confident in the leadership and feel as though a new and positive chapter at TDS really has begun.



About the Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST)

ODBST is a Diocesan Multi Academy Trust (MAT) established by the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education (ODBE) in September 2017 to provide an organisation for schools seeking to become an academy within a MAT within the Buckingham episcopal area (which covers Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes). It is a mixed MAT; any school is able to apply to join:

- ☐ voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, academy or community;
- ☐ primary or secondary;
- ☐ mainstream or special;
- ☐ self-converter and sponsored;
- ☐ free Schools

ODBST supports its unique schools to excel. The vision is for our schools to be afforded as much autonomy as possible, with maximum devolved powers from the Board of Trustees. Each academy is supported to strive for excellence, with a dedicated core team in partnership with the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education.

Our Vision and Values

"Empowering our unique schools to excel"



We aspire for every pupil and adult to 'experience life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). Each of our schools has a unique character of its own and we will work to ensure that this vision embraces all our pupils and adults, regardless of background and belief.

We empower our schools to deliver a broad, enriched and exciting curriculum, coupled with a shared zest for life and learning.

We have identified 4 core values: Inclusivity, Community, Service, Empowerment that resonate with what we believe the ODBST Learner and Leader should follow. They reflect the values that are central to our schools and the diocese. Through our values, we aim for excellence for everyone in our Trust. Building on the uniqueness of our pupils, families and school communities, we strive to enable everyone to develop and thrive intellectually, socially, culturally and spiritually.



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At ODBST this means that everyone is accepted and supported, regardless of faith or culture. We will strive for everyone to be given every opportunity to reach their potential. We believe everyone is unique and everyone matters.

Many pupils and staff in our schools will come from diverse home backgrounds and our pupils will be at different stages of their own academic and spiritual journey during their time in school. All pupils will receive support, guidance and challenge so that they are motivated, ambitious and courageous individuals who seek to be the best they can be. We embody the experience of an inclusive community, where we share our gifts, where the emphasis is on what we can contribute, rather than on what we might receive and where we give to each according to need.

"Our differences are our strength as a species and as a world community" Nelson Mandela
their talents to their fullest potential. We believe by encouraging, inspiring and building each other up we secure the best outcomes for every member of our community.

We believe quality relationships and partnerships are a central element of interdependence: all are needed and valued and each person is important. We will work together to support each other so that everyone can make a contribution and their

At ODBST we work in unison with all our families. Together we learn, love, achieve and flourish. Within our family of schools, each individual is encouraged to discover and grow talents to their fullest potential. We encourage everyone to have a sense of pride in their community and the wider world.

"The minute we become an integrated whole, we look through the same eyes and we see a whole different world together"
Azizah Al-Hibri





service



We encourage everyone to look after themselves and others around them. We encourage children in our schools to seek the common good in all that they do through acts of kindness. ODBST believes that our gifts and talents are to be used in ways that will improve the lives of themselves and others. We help children to develop skills that will allow them to participate fully and contribute positively to the social and cultural life of modern Britain, maximising opportunities for our children to serve their school and local community. We create a culture where serving one another and the wider community is celebrated and seen as an important mark of character development. We regularly invite visitors to our schools who are making a difference to society through their service and courageous advocacy, to inform and inspire us and to present positive role models with ethical and moral integrity for us to follow.

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others" Mahatma Gandhi

At ODBST we will encourage everyone to trust in their own capabilities and to recognise their potential. We want to challenge ourselves to be the best we can be – even when this becomes hard. We will do this by leading by example, supporting and guiding one another, celebrating accomplishments, providing opportunities for all, developing confidence, resilience and perseverance in both our children and our adults. We will encourage curiosity with a mindset of continuous improvement and personal growth. We want our pupils to be able to say, 'I am special because..... and I am learning to excel at.....'

"There is no gate, no lock, no bolt that you can set upon the freedom of my mind" Virginia Woolf





Our ODBST values in action

Our inclusivity value will be seen in action when our differences become our strength and achievement.

Our community value will be seen in action when pupils and adults are learning, loving, achieving and flourishing together.

Our service value will be seen in action when pupils are seeking the common good in all that they do.

Our empowerment value will be seen in action when our pupils are

able to say, 'I am special because..... and I am learning to excel

at.....'



ODBST Shared Services

Shared services are funded through a service charge from each school's General Annual Grant (GAG) to provide the ongoing support for ODBST schools to run effectively. Being part of the ODBST means schools have access to a dedicated team of professionals providing expertise in all of the following areas:

- School Improvement
- Governance
- Finance & Operations
- Human Resources
- Data Protection
- Health and Safety
- Admissions
- Capital Projects



Why join the ODBST Team?

As an employee of the Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust you will work with inspirational colleagues who are focused on delivering a broad, enriched and exciting curriculum, coupled with a shared zest for life and learning. We are an inclusive employer that embraces diversity and encourages everyone to discover and grow their talents to be the best they can be.

Training Opportunities

To support your development, we offer a highly regarded Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme which includes training and network meetings to support governors, leaders, teachers and support staff across our Trust. We hold an annual ODBST conference for senior leaders and work with our sister Trust, the ODST, for an annual conference with them also. In addition, as a member of staff you will have access to online training that covers areas such as Health and Safety and Data Protection.

Our CPD programme is constantly evolving based on feedback received, with new events being added all the time.

Career Development

We have established an "Aspirant Leaders" programme for those aiming to be our school leaders of tomorrow. The programme is facilitated by experienced leaders and provides a forum to explore the types of topics and scenarios that senior leaders face on a daily basis.

As a growing Multi-Academy Trust, we have an increasing number of opportunities for staff to grow and experience different school settings as they progress their career, whilst remaining within the ODBST family.



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Health and Well-being

The health and well-being of our staff is of paramount importance to us, and we are committed to a healthy work life balance for our employees. To demonstrate our commitment, we are proud to have signed up to the Department for Education's Staff Wellbeing Charter and established a well-being ambassador group with the primary aim of enhancing staff well-being across the trust. We have open channels of communication to ensure our employees know where to turn for support. We encourage well-being suggestions from our staff and ensure all ideas are listened to and considered.

We have a monthly well-being newsletter for staff and an Employee Assistance Programme in place which offers staff a 24-hour confidential telephone line with support on a range of different topics, including health, bereavement and finances. In addition, we provide access to a well-being app and web portal where employees can access a range of resources, such as a mood tracker, mini health checks and healthy eating advice.

Pension Scheme

As an ODBST employee, support staff have access to the Local Government Pension Scheme and teaching staff have access to the Teachers' Pension Scheme. You don't pay tax or national insurance on your contributions and the ODBST adds a generous employer contribution. All staff are entitled to opt-out of the pension scheme should they wish to do so.





Class teacher Job Description and Person Specification

The DfE's 'Teaching Standards' give details of the professional responsibilities of a teacher. You should be familiar with these. In addition, the school's Local Governing Body and the ODBST are seeking a candidate that demonstrates the detail in the next few pages.

The appointment is subject to the current School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document and the required Teacher's Standards and any other current legislation. This job description may be amended following discussion with the Head teacher. It will be reviewed annually. The functions and specific responsibilities below are to be undertaken in conjunction with the duties of a class teacher as defined in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

Planning, Teaching and Class management

- Under the direction of the Head teacher, and other Senior Leaders
- Build effective and strong relationships with pupils
- Create a purposeful, supportive and nurturing learning environment
- Identify clear teaching objectives and specify how they will be taught and addressed
- Set tasks which will challenge pupils and sustain their interest
- Set clear targets building on prior attainment
- Identify and plan for children with special educational needs
- Provide clear structures for lessons, maintaining pace, motivation and challenge
- Make effective use of assessment and ensure coverage of programs of study
- Lead a curriculum area either individually or as part of a team
- Ensure there are high expectations of children's work and behaviour.
- Show an awareness of different learning styles and use them in the classroom
- Evaluate own teaching critically to improve effectiveness
- Manage parents and other adults in the classroom



Monitoring, Assessment, Reporting and recording

- Assess how well learning objectives have been achieved and use them to improve specific aspects of teaching
- Assess and record pupils progress systematically and keep records to check work is understood and completed
- Use knowledge of pupil's strength and weaknesses to inform planning
- Prepare and present information to parents in line with school policy
- Mark and monitor pupils work and set targets for progress according to the school's policy
- Take part in feedback to Parents Consultation Evenings ensuring information provided is clear, well prepared and supportive
- Meet with Parents as requested to support the children both academically and emotionally

Review, Induction, Further Training and Development

- Participate in school Performance Management procedures
- Participate in school self-evaluation
- Complete induction process where appropriate
- Participate in arrangements for CPD to meet needs identified in the school improvement plan
- Engage in both formal and informal coaching and peer to peer development

Other professional Requirements

- Establish effective working relationships and set a good example through personal and professional conduct
- Ensure every child has equality of opportunity to reach their potential
- Contribute to school life through participation in meetings, educational visits and school PA events as part of directed time
- Liaise effectively with parents, governors and other stakeholders
- Ensure that children's health and safety is safeguarded both when they are authorised to be on the school premises and when they are engaged in authorised school activities elsewhere
- Understand and adhere to child protection procedures and policies and maintain up to date training in this area



Other duties

- Build strong relationships with staff, Local Advisory Committee, Trust, pupils and parents
- Contribute to whole school vision, values and Christian ethos
- Take responsibility for own professional development
- Contribute to wider life of the school
- Place a high emphasis on the safeguarding and pastoral welfare of all pupils

Please note that this is illustrative of the general nature and level of responsibility of the role. It is not a comprehensive list of all tasks that the teacher will carry out. The postholder may be required to do other duties appropriate to the level of the role, as directed by the headteacher or line manager.



PERSON SPECIFICATION – PRIMARY CLASS TEACHER

These criteria will be the basis for the short-listing and interview process. Applicants are requested to take account of them when applying.

A = Application

I = Interview

R = Reference

T=Task

Category	Essential	Desirable	
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Qualified teacher status ▪ Experience of teaching the primary curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence of ongoing personal professional development ▪ Experience of teaching in KS2/KS1 	A/I
Professional Knowledge and Understanding	<p>A sound understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How children learn ▪ What constitutes excellent classroom practice needed to promote high quality teaching and learning ▪ The educational needs of the whole range of pupils in KS1/2 ▪ Approaches to planning, assessing, monitoring and evaluating the curriculum in KS2 ▪ Provision for most able children and for those with special educational needs ▪ The importance of forming and maintaining appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understanding of the role and responsibilities of a curriculum / subject leader ▪ Have an up to date knowledge of current teaching and wider curriculum developments 	A/I/R
Teaching Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Excellent teaching skills with high expectations of self and pupils ▪ A reflective and creative practitioner ▪ Ability to use a range of teaching styles and strategies ▪ High levels of pupil learning and achievement ▪ Ability to motivate and enthuse all pupils so they make at least good progress ▪ Ability to ensure full inclusion of all pupils ▪ Excellent ICT skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experience of making a significant impact and progress in children's learning ▪ Ability to positively influence the practice of others ▪ Evidence of teaching at a good+ level (or evidence of the potential to do so) 	A/I/R/T



Category	Essential	Desirable	
Communication and Team Working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communicate effectively in speech and in writing when working with children, and when communicating with parents, other staff and governors where appropriate ▪ Able to inspire trust and confidence amongst others ▪ Able to work effectively as a member of a team 		A/I/R/T
Management and Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ability to prioritise and meet whole school deadlines ▪ Ability to plan and organise effectively to meet the needs of children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Involvement in out-of-school activities ▪ Awareness of links between the school and local community 	A/I/R
Professional Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have the confidence to act upon one's own initiative and to be proactive ▪ Confidently and calmly deal with a range of situations employing diplomacy and confidentiality, when appropriate ▪ Recognise when to seek advice and support where necessary. ▪ Commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ability to think creatively and to be able to anticipate and solve problems 	A/I/R
Personal Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A commitment to putting children first ▪ Enthusiastic, resilient and positive thinking ▪ Open-minded to change ▪ Hard-working and able to keep to deadlines 		A/I/R



Selection Process

Guidance for Applicants

These notes are intended to help you make the best application possible.

1. Please read the application pack carefully. This pack contains the class teacher job description and criteria we are looking for, alongside the expected duties.
2. Complete the application form on My New Term. You must include your complete work history in your application, including any times where you were not working and the reasons for this.
3. Applicants are required to complete a supporting statement. Please make sure you address the criteria outlined in this pack when writing your personal supporting statement.
4. If you are able to do so please visit our school before applying. Please contact the school office on 01494 527033 to organise a visit
5. Should you have any queries about the application process please contact Leah Ovens
6. Completed applications must be uploaded to My New Term

The information you provide will help us understand how you meet the requirements of the role and so helps us to short-list candidates for interview. Our shortlisting decisions are based solely on the information you supply in your application so that we can ensure fairness.

Safeguarding

The Downley School provides a safe and secure environment for pupils to learn. The school, its Governors and the Trust are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and safety of children and young people and operates a strict Safeguarding Policy, with procedures being rigorously and consistently applied. The Assistant Headteacher will be required to demonstrate a commitment to promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people.



DBS Checks

In line with our safeguarding and child protection policy, all employees and volunteers working in specific roles at ODBST will be subject to satisfactory clearance being obtained from the Disclosure and Barring Service. The check will be undertaken as part of the appointment process with the successful candidate.

Equal Opportunities

ODBST is a fair employer promoting equal opportunities, which do not disadvantage any person on the grounds of a protected characteristic. We are committed to providing clear and transparent guidelines and complying with our legal obligations under the Equality Act (2010).

We will use the information provided by you in the Equality and Diversity section of your application form to monitor our equal opportunities policy and practices. This part of the form will be separated from the main application form and will not be taken into account in the selection process.

Background Checks

Applicants are asked to provide the name and contact details of two referees on their application form. References will normally be taken up for short-listed candidates prior to interview. If you do not wish us to contact your current employer before interview, please indicate this clearly on your form. Any offer of employment is subject to receipt of at least two satisfactory references.

The Trust will carry out online searches on short listed candidates. Searches carried out will be done so in accordance with current data protection legislation on the basis of public task for the purposes of safeguarding. Information which is found to suggest the person is unqualified for the role, poses a safeguarding risk or risks damaging the reputation of the Trust will be investigated through discussion with the applicant and will form part of the overall information on which to base the hiring decision.

We are required to check that anyone taking up employment with us has the legal right to work in the UK. Short-listed applicants will normally be asked to provide documentary evidence to support their entitlement to work in the UK prior to any offer of employment being made.



This post is covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions) Order 1975 because it is a post which involves working directly with children or young people and the applicant is required to declare any criminal convictions (or cautions or bind-overs) including those which are "spent". The amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013, 2020) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected' and are not subject to disclosure to employers, and cannot be taken into account. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found on the Disclosure and Barring Service website.

In addition, the successful candidate will be asked to complete a range of safer recruitment checks including a health assessment; proof of qualifications and professional memberships; identity and address checks and if the role requires, a driving check.

Data Protection

The information you provide as part of your application will be used in the recruitment process. We will hold your data securely with access restricted to those involved in dealing with your application and in the recruitment process. Once this process is completed the data relating to unsuccessful applicants will be destroyed after six months. If you are the successful candidate, your application form will be retained and form the basis of your personnel record.

Applications and Closing Date

Applications should be made using our online application process via My New Term by Thursday 16th May 2024

Applications that come through alternative channels or in alternative formats will not be considered.

Interview and Selection Day

Shortlisting Friday 17th January 2025

Interview date week commencing 20th January 2025

Shortlisted candidates will be advised of the range of tasks and activities that will make up the selection process. You will be asked when invited to interview to confirm your availability to attend the interview day.



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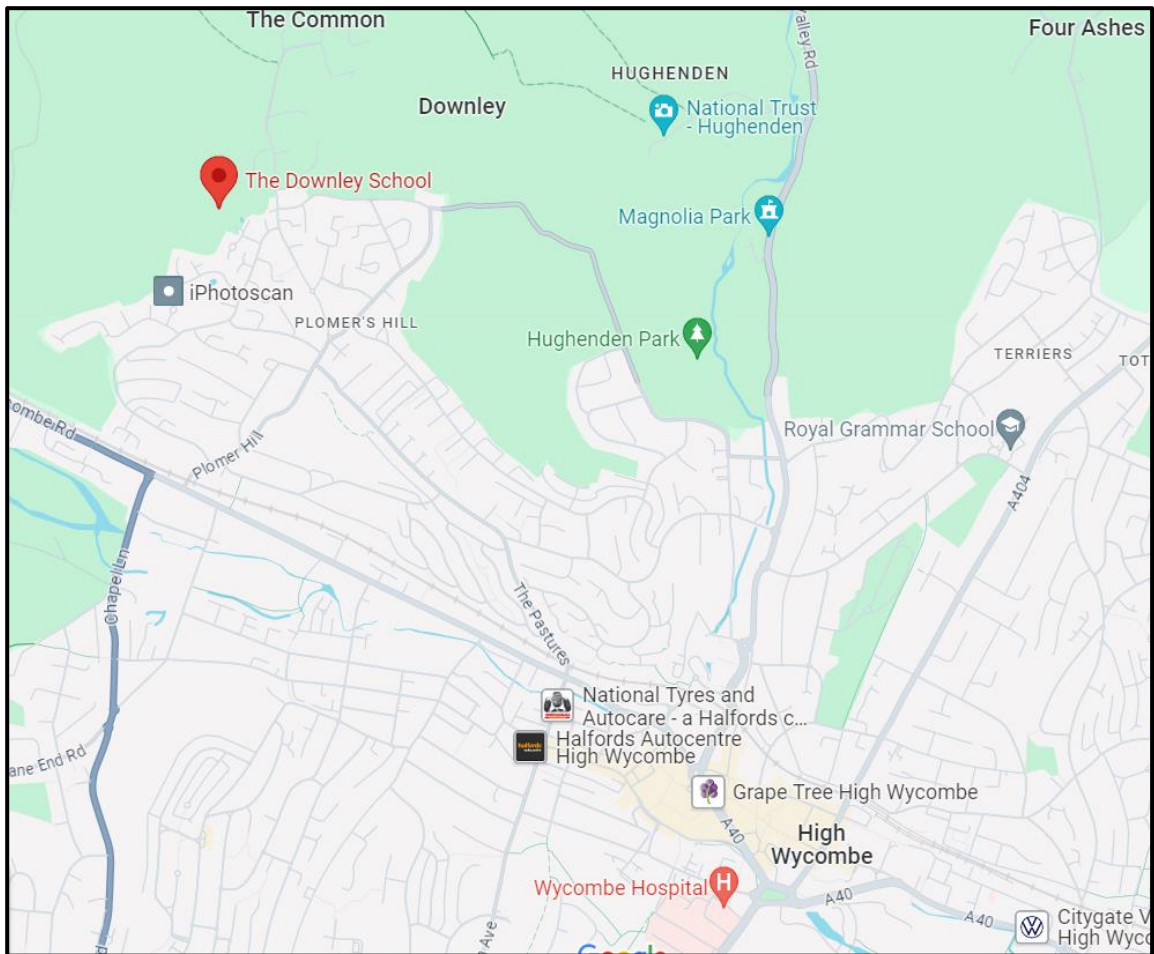
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Thank you for your interest in The Downley School

and the Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust