



Dorchester Middle School **Recruitment pack**

Headteacher



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Welcome



Thank you for taking the time to consider an application to the Wessex MAT.

The Wessex Multi-Academy Trust was originally formed in 2015 but truly came to life in 2022 when we grew from 4 schools to 12 schools in a period of rapid expansion. Several of the schools who joined were sponsored or in need of significant support. Since then, the position has been transformed and the trust is a leading force in education in this part of Dorset, working closely with Dorset Council and other partners to bring about system-wide improvement. For example, we offer the full suite of national professional qualifications delivered at our training base in Poundbury, with some headteachers acting as tutors.

We have an extensive teacher training operation for both primary and secondary and we lead on a programme of post-16 education attended by all Dorset sixth forms. The successful candidate will be expected to support the mission to improve education for all children not just those who attend Wessex schools.

We are financially secure and stable thanks to expert support and efficient and lean central services. We maximise the amount of resource we delegate to schools so we can support leaders and provide pupils with what they need to achieve. All of this underpinned by outstanding systems for trust governance and leadership.

We work with national leaders of education such as Mary Myatt and Dylan Wiliam - we want our most senior leaders to be fully prepared for the future and for progression in their own careers. We believe in mutual support so leaders in Wessex work collaboratively, meeting at least once every half-term to celebrate success and, on the more difficult days, to bolster morale.

We offer plenty of opportunity for growth and development. You will benefit from an extensive programme of induction and the opportunity to work alongside colleagues from all phases, giving you a broad and informed picture of the education landscape. We are committed to looking after all of our staff, and part of your training will prepare you to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

I understand the time and effort that goes into making an application so please accept my thanks in advance if you decide to proceed beyond this initial interest. If you decide not to, thank you for your interest and I wish you well with your career and any future applications.

To apply you will need to:

- Complete the application form on: www.jobs.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
- Provide a cover letter detailing why you are applying for the post (max one side of A4)
- Submit a 150 word (max) statement about yourself that can be shared with staff. You might want to say a little more about your interests and your life outside school.

Supporting documents should be sent to: Debbie Shutts, COO dshutts@wessex.ac

Choosing the right trust to apply to is an important responsibility. It is difficult to summarise our trust in a brief letter so please visit the website for more information www.wessex.ac

If you would like to have an informal discussion about the post, or you would like to arrange a visit, please contact Mike Foley at Wessex MAT: mfoley@wessex.ac.

I look forward very much to hearing from you.

With all best wishes

Mike Foley
CEO

More
info on
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Applications close:
**Wednesday 16th
September
2026 (noon)**

About us

MISSION

Our mission is for every child in our care to have the best possible learning opportunities in a safe and caring environment where they can achieve their full potential.

VISION

Our vision is to work in partnership with our schools and staff to deliver outstanding contemporary learning opportunities that prepare every child to live a happy, healthy and fulfilling life.

VALUES

The Wessex Multi-Academy Trust believes that at the heart of a successful organisation that is focused on education, the following values are important:

Accountability

Collaboration

Respect

Excellence

Care

For more information

Visit our website



Our schools



Bere Regis School is a happy, friendly, community school with a family atmosphere, where children and adults are encouraged to achieve their potential in a creative and supportive learning environment.



At **Damers First School** children are at the heart of everything we do and our school is a vibrant place in which to learn, work and play. As an inclusive school we are passionate about meeting all children's needs, both emotionally and academically.



At **Dorchester Middle School** we believe that every child is extraordinary and that education has the capacity and the possibility to change lives for the better. We are committed to providing children with the best possible educational experience.



The Purbeck School is a vibrant and exciting school community where everyone matters. Our approach to learning promotes and embeds our core values of respect, aspiration and perseverance.

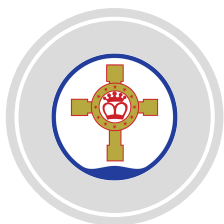


St Osmunds CE School is a school built upon the Christian values of hope, community, respect and love. Children come first. We stand together and support each other.



At **The Thomas Hardy School** we believe in the power of learning as a means to transform lives and that every young person has a talent that can be nurtured through relentless optimism.

Our schools: cont.



St Marys CE School is a 9-13 middle school situated on the outskirts of Puddletown. We are a church school with an ethos built on Christian values of respect, forgiveness, justice, uniqueness, equality, acceptance and kindness.



Frome Valley CE First School aims to nurture all children as individuals, enabling them to achieve their full potential. At the heart of our school is the belief that we all share a vision and values that help us to be responsible, respectful and caring members of society. We are proud of the Christian ethos of our school and our belief that citizenship and a sense of community are as important as academic achievements.



Milborne St Andrew First School is committed to providing an inclusive environment where children and adults can all flourish as part of a learning community, rooted in mutual respect for all. We have high expectations of ourselves and our pupils and we nurture every unique child and adult.



Piddle Valley CE First School is founded on Christian values, principles and beliefs. We are a small, happy school in which pupils work hard and learn well, within a nurturing and safe environment. We recognise that our school community is unique and valued for the contribution they make.



At **Puddletown CE First School**, we are proud of the church heritage and the community we serve. We aim to inspire our children to learn and to see themselves as active learners with an infinite capacity to improve. We do this in a safe and caring environment based on Christian principles where individual progress is celebrated.



At **Manor Park CE School**, we are working together to provide an inclusive and nurturing environment where everyone has the opportunity to flourish. Our community is built upon the Christian foundations of compassion, trust, collaboration, creativity and resilience whilst embracing diversity and demonstrating mutual respect.

Job description

Headteacher

Job type	Full time	Responsible for	All staff, volunteers and children within the school
Responsible to	CEO, Wessex MAT	Closing date	Wednesday 16 September, noon

Main Purpose: To carry out the duties of Head of School in accordance with the Teachers' Pay and Conditions Act and are built upon The Headteachers' Standards (2020) and the Teachers' Standards (2011).

ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Demonstrate consistently high standards of principles and professional conduct; meet the teachers' standards and support providing the conditions in which teachers can fulfil them; uphold and demonstrate the seven Nolan principles of public life.

THE HEADTEACHER WILL:

- Demonstrate the school's vision and values in everyday work and practice
- Serve in the best interests of the school's pupils
- Conduct themselves in a manner compatible with their influential position in society by behaving ethically, fulfilling their professional responsibilities and modelling the behaviour of a good citizen
- Uphold their obligation to give account and accept responsibility
- Know, understand, and act within the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities
- Take responsibility for their own continued professional development, engaging critically with educational research
- Make a positive contribution to the wider education system and to the family of schools in the Wessex MAT

KEY AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

1. School Culture

Working with the Wessex MAT and other leaders, create a shared vision and strategic plan which inspires and motivates pupils, staff and all other members of the school community. This vision should express the trust's core educational values and moral purpose and be inclusive of stakeholders' values and beliefs. The strategic planning process is critical to sustaining school improvement and ensuring that the school moves forward for the benefit of its pupils, providing a world class education for pupils it serves.

The Headteacher will:

- Establish and sustain the trust's values, ethos and strategic direction in partnership with those responsible for governance and through consultation with the school community
- Create a culture where pupils experience a positive and enriching school life
- Uphold ambitious educational standards which prepare pupils from all backgrounds for their next phase of education and life
- Promote positive and respectful relationships across the school community and a safe, orderly and inclusive environment
- Ensure a culture of high staff professionalism

2. Teaching and Learning

Take a central responsibility for raising the quality of teaching and learning. This involves high expectations, maintaining and evaluating outcomes and establishing a successful learning culture which will enable pupils to become effective, enthusiastic, independent learners, committed to life-long learning.

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure high-quality, expert teaching across all subjects and phases reflecting the vision and values of the trust in order that pupils flourish as learners and achieve the highest possible standards.
- Establish and sustain high-quality, expert teaching across all subjects and phases, built on an evidence-informed understanding of effective teaching and how pupils learn
- Ensure teaching is underpinned by high levels of subject expertise and approaches which respect the distinct nature of subject disciplines or specialist domain
- Ensure effective use is made of formative assessment

3. Curriculum and assessment

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure teaching and learning reflects the vision and values of the trust in order that pupils flourish as learners and achieve the highest possible standards.
- Ensure a consistent and continuous school-wide focus on pupils' achievement, using data and benchmarks to monitor progress in learning and use a robust system of assessment of pupil achievement in order to set ambitious but realistic targets for all children.
- Ensure a broad, structured and coherent curriculum entitlement in line with the expectations of the trust, which sets out the knowledge, skills and values that will be taught
- Establish effective curricular leadership, developing subject leaders with high levels of relevant expertise with access to professional networks and communities
- Ensure that all pupils are taught to read through the provision of evidence-informed approaches to reading, particularly the use of systematic synthetic phonics.
- Ensure valid, reliable and proportionate approaches are used when assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum

4. Behaviour

Create and maintain an environment and implement a behaviour policy that reflects the trust's ethos and promotes development and learning and secures safety and discipline. Provide a safe and calm and well-ordered environment for all pupils and staff, focused on safeguarding pupils and developing their exemplary behaviour in school and in wider society.

The Headteacher will:

- Establish and sustain high expectations of behaviour for all pupils, built upon relationships, rules and routines, which are understood clearly by all staff, pupils and parents.
- Ensure high standards of pupil behaviour and courteous conduct in accordance with the trust's expectations
- Implement consistent, fair and respectful approaches to managing behaviour
- Ensure that adults within the school model and teach the behaviour of a good citizen

5. Additional and special educational needs and disabilities

Take responsibility for a professional community which enables all children to flourish ensuring that the curriculum is accessible and relevant to all children.

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure the school holds ambitious expectations for all pupils with additional and special educational needs and disabilities
- Establish and sustain culture and practices that enable pupils to access the curriculum and learn effectively
- Ensure the school works effectively in partnership with parents, carers and professionals, to identify the additional needs and special educational needs and disabilities of pupils, providing support and adaptation where appropriate
- Ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties with regard to the SEND code of practice

6. Professional Development

Build a professional learning community which enables all to flourish. Manage the complexity of a school team and be committed to their own professional learning, including attending training and development as appropriate.

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure staff have access to high-quality, sustained professional learning opportunities, aligned to balance the trust priorities of whole-school improvement, team and individual needs
- Prioritise the professional learning of staff, ensuring effective planning, delivery and evaluation which is consistent with the approaches laid out in the standard for teachers' professional development
- Ensure that professional learning opportunities draw on expert provision from beyond the school, as well as within it, including nationally recognised career and professional frameworks and programmes to build capacity and support succession planning

7. Organisational Management

Provides effective management of the school and continuously seeks to improve organisational structures based on self-evaluation. Lead by example, modelling the professional conduct and practice of teachers in a way that minimises unnecessary teacher workload and leaves room for high quality continuous professional learning for all staff.

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure that the trust's ethos is evidenced in how all work and learn.
- Create an organisational structure which reflects the trust's values, and enables the management systems, structures and processes to work effectively in line with legal requirements.
- Ensure the protection and safety of pupils and staff through effective approaches to safeguarding as part of the duty of care
- Prioritise and allocate delegated financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and probity in the use of public funds
- Ensure staff are deployed and managed well with due attention paid to workload
- Establish and oversee systems, processes and policies that enable the school to operate effectively and efficiently
- Ensure rigorous approaches to identify, manage and mitigate risk

8. Continuous school improvement

Actively contribute to a trust shared vision and a trust strategic plan which inspires and motivates pupils, staff and all other members of the school community.

The strategic planning process is critical to sustaining school improvement and to ensure all trust schools move forward for the benefit of pupils, providing a world class education for all.

The Headteacher will:

- make use of effective and proportional processes of evaluation to identify and analyse complex or persistent problems and barriers which limit school effectiveness, and identify priority areas for improvement
- develop appropriate evidence-informed strategies for improvement as part of well-targeted plans which are realistic, timely, appropriately sequenced and suited to the school's context
- ensure careful and effective implementation of improvement strategies, which lead to sustained school improvement over time

9. Working in partnership

Engage with the internal and external school community. Work collaboratively at both strategic and operational levels with parents and carers and across multiple agencies for the well-being of all children.

Share responsibility for leadership of the wider educational system and be aware that school improvement and community development are interdependent.

The Headteacher will:

- Forge constructive relationships beyond the school, working in partnership with parents, carers and the local community
- Commit their school to work successfully with other schools and organisations in a climate of mutual challenge and support, especially other schools in the family of schools.
- Establish and maintain working relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues across other public services to improve educational outcomes for all pupils

10. Governance and accountability

Accept responsibility to the whole school community and be accountable to a range of groups, in particular: pupils, parents, carers, trustees and governors. The Headteacher will:

- Understand and welcome the role of effective governance, upholding their obligation to give account and accept responsibility
 - Establish and sustain professional working relationship with those responsible for governance
 - Ensure that staff know and understand their professional responsibilities and are held to account
 - Ensure the school effectively and efficiently operates within the required regulatory frameworks and meets all statutory duties
 - Welcome strong governance and provide information, objective advice and support to actively support trustees and governors to meet their responsibilities. These include the securing of effective teaching and learning; the highest standards of attainment and for achieving efficiency and value for money.
 - Develop and present a coherent, understandable and accurate account of the school's performance to a range of audiences including trustees, governors, parents and carers.
- Support the trust in fulfil its functions to set strategy and for holding the headteacher to account for pupil, staff and financial performance.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

This job description outlines the key responsibilities for the role of Headteacher but it will be necessary to undertake additional duties as required. This job description will be reviewed at least annually as part of the Headteacher's performance management programme.

Dated: September 2026

We will seek to ensure that all existing and potential employees are given equal opportunities. We are committed to diversity and equality of opportunity in our employment policies and practices. Our aim is to promote diversity so that no employee or potential employee will be subject to unlawful or unfair discrimination because of gender, age, marital or civil partnership status, colour, race, nationality or other ethnic or national origin, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity or membership or non-membership of a trade union or political beliefs. We will seek to ensure that no applicant for employment is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be justified.

Person specification

Headteacher

	Essential	Desirable
Professional Qualifications	• Qualified Teaching Status • Evidence of professional development in preparation for school leadership, gained within the last two years	• Hold, or be working towards, NPQH or equivalent qualification • Evidence of further professional development (eg MA)
Knowledge and Experience	• Recent experience of senior leadership • Evidence of driving up standards of teaching and learning to ensure excellent outcomes for pupils, especially vulnerable pupils • Evidence of developing, and successfully implementing, whole school strategies to raise standards • Experience of tackling underperformance, with an appropriate outcome • Outstanding classroom practitioner with the ability to inspire others • Knowledge of SEND and effective provision for pupils with complex needs	• Experience of Inspection and detailed knowledge of the inspection framework • A good knowledge and understanding of Key Stage 2 and/or Key Stage 3 • Successful teaching experience in different schools • Experience of adhering to financial procedures and managing a significant delegated budget

	Essential	Desirable
Leadership and Management	• A leader with presence and visibility who inspires, motivates and empowers others. • The ability to develop others through inspirational leadership, managing teamwork. • A person who sets high standards and holds others to account • The ability to motivate and inspire the next generation of school leaders • Proven track record of leading and developing a team of professionals, delegating effectively and managing change • A strategic thinker with the ability to analyse, prioritise, operationalise and meet deadlines • Well organised and able to anticipate and manage in a complex and changing environment, whilst remaining measured and calm • Evidence of working in partnership with parents. • The ability to implement and evaluate appropriate evidence based improvement plans and policies • The ability to get the most from every member of staff whilst at the same time taking care of their health and well-being • Articulate and approachable with excellent communication skills	• Evidence of successful working with local governors and/or Trustees • Evidence of working with other schools, multi-academy trust or LA and commitment to collaborative working
Teaching and Learning	• A comprehensive understanding of national changes within education	

	Essential	Desirable
Teaching and Learning	• Experience of successful implementation of the curriculum at scale with evidence of impact • Expertise in securing high standards of behaviour and attendance so that all learners can flourish. • Belief in an inclusive learning environment where difference is celebrated and protected.	
Safeguarding	• A good knowledge of child protection strategies and how to keep children safe in education. • The ability to promote and safeguard the welfare of all the children within the care of our school in a 'culture of vigilance' • Knowledge and understanding of safer recruitment practice.	
Personal Qualities and Attributes	• A person with energy, initiative and a passion for education and for children's learning and development • Caring, approachable and empathetic with a clear commitment to the wellbeing of staff and pupils. • <i>A collegiate approach and a belief that we are strongest when we are together.</i> • <i>Exude confidence and have the ability to negotiate areas of conflict and influence change by pursuing collective goals</i> •	



Dorchester Middle School

ROARS – we are **Ready, Original, Ambitious, Respectful and Safe.**

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