



Candidate Information Pack

Headteacher



Start date
September 2026

Salary
£105,595 – £119,350 (L30–L35)

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in becoming the next Headteacher of Chesterton Community College. This is a rare and exciting opportunity to lead an outstanding school at the heart of one of the region's highest-performing Trusts, and to drive the next stage of its journey towards becoming truly World Class.

Chesterton Community College in Cambridge is a high-performing secondary school with a strong reputation for academic excellence and inclusive education. Our vision is to provide an exceptional education for every student, regardless of background, and to prepare them for success in a global society.



Chesterton's World Class Vision

At Chesterton, being World Class is not simply about outstanding exam results, it is about creating a school where every individual thrives, belongs, and is prepared to lead in a rapidly changing world. Our ambition is rooted in a belief that education should empower, inspire, and transform lives.

We want every student to experience a rich, inclusive, and empowering education that nurtures curiosity and ambition. Students at Chesterton are not passive learners; they are active participants with real opportunities to develop leadership and agency. No one is left behind: those who struggle to engage are supported and uplifted with a view to every young person leaving us as a confident, compassionate, and globally aware citizen.

Our commitment extends equally to our staff. We believe that extraordinary teachers change lives, and so we invest in their growth, wellbeing, and professional development. Chesterton is a place where teachers and support staff are nurtured, challenged, and celebrated. Our culture is built on trust, ambition, and shared purpose, creating an environment where collaboration and innovation flourish.

Innovation is at the heart of our vision. We hold fast to our core values while embracing bold, new ideas. We aim to be agile, creative, and courageous, leading rather than following in pedagogy, technology, and educational vision. For us, innovation is not a buzzword: it is embedded in our curriculum, teaching practice, and leadership approach.

Finally, we are committed to fostering a deep sense of belonging and global citizenship. Chesterton is a community where every student and staff member feels valued and included. We cultivate global awareness and intercultural understanding through our curriculum and partnerships, and we encourage active citizenship within and beyond the school. Our vision is that students leave Chesterton ready not only to succeed but to make a positive impact on the world.

This is what World Class means at Chesterton: a school that empowers every learner, celebrates every member of staff, leads with innovation, and builds a community rooted in belonging and global responsibility.

Chesterton's Place in the Eastern Learning Alliance

Chesterton Community College is one of the flagship secondary schools within the Eastern Learning Alliance (ELA): a high-performing Trust spanning Cambridgeshire and Norfolk that includes primary, secondary, sixth form, and special schools. ELA's mission is to bring transformational education and enhanced life chances to communities across the region. ELA upholds four fundamental values that guide all activity across the Trust:

- **Education:** Delivering world-class education through dynamic, discussion-based, evidence-informed teaching.
- **Inclusivity:** Ensuring full access to curriculum, leadership, and enrichment, especially for disadvantaged or SEND students.
- **Experience:** Providing rich curricular and extracurricular experiences – trips, clubs, and pastoral support – for all learners.
- **Collaboration:** Encouraging staff movement, shared leadership, and collective innovation across schools in the Trust.

ELA's Executive Team is committed to striking the right balance between empowering schools with autonomy and innovation, and providing robust, centralised systems supported by expert resources. This approach ensures that headteachers and senior leaders receive daily, practical support with the most complex aspects of school leadership.

Centralised quality assurance and school improvement work covering safeguarding, SEND and inclusion, behaviour, attendance, and more, are led by Trust specialists who create strong, collaborative networks. These networks not only serve to celebrate success, but also offer targeted expertise and resource to drive improvement where needed.

Some centralised approaches have been key to ELA's success and continue to be championed across the Trust. These include the consistent use of devices in the classroom, the sharing of high-quality curriculum resources, and our feedback book approach, which enables incisive, impactful feedback for every learner. Strategies such as these ensure coherence, efficiency, and excellence across all schools.

At the same time, we recognise that every school has its own unique context. Beyond these core approaches, individual schools retain the freedom to make the right decisions for their community: allowing innovation and autonomy to flourish within a framework of trust-wide support.

ELA currently supports close to 6,000 learners across its schools and prides itself on excellence in outcomes, inclusivity, staff well-being, and collaboration.

As Headteacher of Chesterton, you will not only lead a top-performing school at the heart of an ambitious and collaborative Trust, but you will also have access to:

- Cross-school networks and professional development.
- An expert, responsive and supportive central team dedicated to equity, enrichment, and wellbeing.
- Opportunities to support in sharing best practice across ELA, influencing other schools and learning from other leaders.
- With this powerful combination of local excellence and trust-wide support, Chesterton offers a unique platform for a leader looking to drive world-class educational outcomes at scale: both within the school and across the wider ELA community.

Who are we looking for?

Our next Headteacher will:

- Be dedicated, ambitious, and committed to excellence;
- Champion equity and inclusion;
- Demonstrate intellectual rigour;
- Inspire through positivity and enthusiasm;
- Build strong relationships with students, staff, families, and the wider community.

Recruitment Process

Part 1: Research Visit

Purpose: To understand our context and evaluate our progress towards being World Class, leading to production of a written evaluation and action plan outlining your vision for Chesterton's next steps.

Activities: The candidate will be asked to submit a preferred agenda in advance (with a focus on e.g. observations, data review, SLT/executive team meetings etc. to allow them to gather the required information to complete their evaluation and action plan)

Part 2: Interview Day

A range of activities to include:

- Presentation of action plan derived from the Research Day to a panel comprised of members of the Local Governing Body, Trustees, and ELA Executive Team.
- Student and staff presentations
- Student panel
- Delivery of a staff CPD session
- Written task
- Formal panel interview

What can ELA offer you?

ELA offer a sector leading staff benefits offer alongside bespoke, high quality CPD programmes, cross-trust events, and exceptional opportunities for career development within our innovative family of schools.

ELA know that our strength is our people, so we prioritise staff wellbeing, retention and development. Over 95% of ELA staff say they're proud to work in their school.

ELA are firm believers in the power of recognising, celebrating, and rewarding talent: our track record in terms of retention, internal promotion opportunities and wider career development is excellent.

ELA staff enjoy a sector leading staff benefits package alongside bespoke, high quality CPD programmes, cross-trust events, and exceptional opportunities for career development within our innovative family of schools.

ELA staff benefits include:

- Reduced contact time to enable professional development;
- EAP with access to counselling & physiotherapy;
- Health care cash plan;
- Paid annual family day;
- Extensive discount club access;
- Cycle to work & electric car lease schemes;
- Enhanced parental leave;
- Flexible work practices;
- Laptop & mobile phone payment plans;
- Ticket ballots for high profile events;
- Generous annual leave allowance for support staff;
- Discounted gym membership for all staff.

Person Specification

Qualifications and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Degree (Essential)■ Qualified Teacher Status (Essential)■ National professional qualification for headship (NPQH) (Preferred)
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Proven track record of successful leadership and management in a secondary school setting.■ Demonstrated excellence in teaching, with evidence of impact on pupil outcomes.■ Experience in school self-evaluation and strategic development planning.■ Successful line management and staff development, including coaching and mentoring.■ Experience of leading whole-school improvement initiatives, particularly in areas such as equity, inclusion, and curriculum innovation.
Skills and knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Deep understanding of high-quality, evidence-informed teaching, and the ability to model and embed this across the school.■ Exceptional communication and interpersonal skills, able to engage and inspire diverse audiences including staff, students, parents, and trustees.■ Ability to articulate and deliver a compelling vision for a World Class school.■ Skilled at building effective, collaborative relationships within the school and across the Trust.■ Knowledge of school finances and resource management, ensuring efficient and sustainable use of funds.■ Strong data analysis skills, with the ability to use data to set ambitious targets and identify areas for improvement.
Personal qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Unwavering commitment to the 7 principles of public life (Nolan principles).■ Passion for equity of opportunity, ensuring the best outcomes for all pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged.■ Resilient and adaptable, with the ability to work under pressure and prioritise effectively.■ Commitment to confidentiality, safeguarding, and equality, ensuring personal beliefs never compromise professional integrity.■ A positive, enthusiastic, and courageous leader, ready to embrace innovation and lead change.

Appointment Process and How to Apply

How to apply

Eastern Learning Alliance is partnering with the executive search firm Perrett Laver and an executive search exercise is being undertaken alongside the public advertisement of this post. Perrett Laver will support Eastern Learning Alliance in identifying a wide and diverse field of suitable candidates and will assist in the assessment of candidates against the requirements for the role.

Candidates should submit a full Curriculum Vitae (including comprehensive details of key achievements and responsibilities) and a covering letter which fully addresses the competencies outlined in the job description and person specification.

To apply, please visit <https://plusportal.perrettlaver.com/> quoting reference number 8285. The closing date for applications is 08:30 GMT on Friday 27th February 2026.

Appointment Process

The shortlist of candidates will be determined on week commencing 2nd March 2026. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend first round interviews on week commencing 9th March 2026 and successful candidates will be selected to attend the final interview on week commencing 16th March 2026.

If you require any reasonable adjustments to assist you in the selection process, please advise us of these so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

Protecting your personal data is of the utmost importance to Perrett Laver and we take this responsibility very seriously. Any information obtained by our trading divisions is held and processed in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation. The data you provide us with is securely stored on our computerised database and transferred to our clients for the purposes of presenting you as a candidate and/or considering your suitability for a role you have registered interest in.

As defined under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Perrett Laver is a Data Controller and a Data Processor, and our legal basis for processing your personal data is 'Legitimate Interests'. You have the right to object to us processing your data in this way. For more information about this, your rights, and our approach to Data Protection and Privacy, please visit our website <http://www.perrettlaver.com/information/privacy/>



Find out more about Chesterton Community College
ccc.tela.org.uk

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