



Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in Ashdon Primary School. In the attached pack you will find all the information you need about our wonderful school. Do visit the school website (www.ashdon.essex.sch.uk). On behalf of the Governing Body, I can promise you our wholehearted support. As our Head, you will be leading a school that has established a reputation that is greatly appreciated in the local village community of Ashdon, Saffron Walden and the surrounding villages.

Please do read our OFSTED report from last year, we believe the inspector was insightful recognising the quality of the school.

We are confident that the strengths of Ashdon Primary School will carry us forward to a bright future. In particular, we know that all the staff will continue to provide to the children with an exceptional educational opportunities. The depth of support provided by the PTA, the Friends and the Governing Body is second-to-none. The ethos of the school, as evidenced by the children themselves, is a precious legacy to future intakes.

We are working collaboratively with our neighbouring schools. The Headteachers of our two nearest schools wrote the following, and the Governors of Ashdon Primary School endorse their words:

The three schools of Ashdon, Radwinter and Great Sampford work together in a triad.

We pride ourselves on our collaboration and are building on our many strengths.

We would welcome an individual who would embrace and engage in this style of working.'

Please do contact me or the school office to arrange an informal visit. You will be able to experience for yourself the great learning environment that Ashdon Primary School provides for our children.

Yours faithfully

Rev. Richard Spencer

Chair, Governing Body, Ashdon Primary School

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Ashdon Primary School challenges our children, celebrates our children and cares for our children.

We are a community school for four to eleven year-olds, based in North West Essex near Saffron Walden, and close to the county boundaries of both Cambridgeshire and Suffolk.

Our school is at the heart of a thriving rural community and for over 100 years has welcomed children from Ashdon, Hadstock and the surrounding villages.

We are a small school with all the benefits that brings, and currently have four classes: one for Early Years and the remaining three each have a mixed two year grouping. Our shared aim is to provide an excellent education for all our children by offering a stimulating, challenging and inclusive curriculum whilst recognising the importance of their social and emotional welfare.



As a community we welcome the work and support of our families, other professionals and services so that we can nurture and educate our children in a rounded way, ensuring a combination of academic, social and emotional learning. Volunteers from the parent body and local community come in to share expertise in areas such as gardening, music, drama, computer programming and citizenship.

We are well supported by a very active PTA who organise both fund-raising and social activities and deliver huge benefits to the school.

An annual donation by Friends of Ashdon School currently funds our Music and Drama Specialist provision, enabling us to immerse the children in an Arts education so often missing. This year the children focussed on *Peter and the Wolf* for their Spring Music Festival, involving instrumentalists at all levels from the pupils, ex-pupils and parents.

The Parish Council are also very supportive and recently funded a clay poppy making day to complement our teaching about the First World War and Armistice.

Ministers from three local churches regularly take turns to lead assemblies. We warmly welcome parents into the school and our weekly Friday sharing assembly celebrates achievements in both school and external activities.

We have a successful breakfast and after school club which also operates activities during the summer holidays at various venues.

We are very fortunate to have two excellent secondary schools nearby, Saffron Walden County High and Linton Village College. The three schools of Ashdon, Radwinter and Great Sampford work together in a triad. Our governors are open minded as to the best way of evolving these sorts of relationships and would welcome the incoming Headteacher's direction on the best way of ensuring Ashdon's continuing success.





At Ashdon, we take great pride in the relationships the children develop and the friendships they forge. We asked some of the children what they enjoyed most about life at Ashdon School.

*"We are not just a school,
we are a family"*

Community is at the heart of all the work that goes on... each child, pupil, adult and parent is a member of your small school "family". *OFSTED, Sept 2017*



*"We like what we
learn about"*

Pupils love to learn at your school and receive a rich curriculum often personalised to their needs and interests. *OFSTED, Sept 2017*



"We are a helpful school"

Pupils leave the school thoughtful, articulate and caring young people, well-prepared for their secondary education. *OFSTED, Sept 2017*



*"It's a community
where everyone
is welcome"*

Pupils with the most complex needs have highly personalised support that is starting to make a profound difference to their confidence and progress. *OFSTED, Sept 2017*



3.



We are fortunate to have an extremely proactive and supportive PTA at Ashdon, who work really hard to enable the children to enjoy a range of extra activities.

Over the past year, through events such as our long-established Fun Run, or our new Arts Festival 'Ashstock', the PTA subsidised transport costs to sports and arts events, and to the biennial residential trip to Almyerton in North Norfolk, funded several theatre trips, purchased a new library of books to support this year's drive to encourage a love of reading, and supplied each class in the school with a new, interactive smart board.

It has enabled every child in the school to continue weekly swimming tuition through Years 3 and 4, and to generally support the ambition to provide as varied and inclusive a curriculum and extra-curricular experience as our small school can.

In addition to fundraising events, and propelled by a love of the school and strong bonds with the children and adults that work there, parents and friends get together twice a year to help 'fix' the school, scrubbing, weeding, and trying to keep the school grounds presentable!

They lend a hand in other ways too, such as showing prospective parents around the school on open days, reading with the children, accompanying KS1 on village "safari" and science walks, and to support extra-curricular activities such as our recent clay poppy making day to commemorate the centenary of First World War Armistice.

***"Community is at the heart of all the work that goes on at Ashdon Primary School.
Each child, pupil, adult and parent is a member of your small school 'family'". OFSTED, 2017***





Headteacher Job Description - Ashdon Primary School

Core Purpose

The Headteacher will be responsible for the internal organisation, management and control of the school in accordance with applicable legislation, the policies of the governing body (including its annual budget) and the instrument and articles of governance of the school.

The headteacher, working with the governing body, senior leadership team and school staff, will provide overall strategic leadership for the school. The Headteacher will:

- Lead, develop and support, within the school budget, the direction, vision, values and priorities of the school
- Develop, implement and evaluate the schools policies, practices and procedures
- Lead and manage assessment teaching and learning throughout the school
- Ensure accurate school self-evaluation to inform school improvement planning
- Have overall responsibility and accountability for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils and staff within the school
- Lead inclusion throughout the school in accordance with the Essex Inclusion Statement
- Be prepared to teach as required

The job description should be read in conjunction with the contractual requirements and responsibilities of Headteachers set out in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

Principle accountabilities:

Safeguarding

Fulfil personal responsibilities, and secure compliance by those working in school, for safeguarding as set out in the Children's Act, Statutory Guidance and by the Local Children's Safeguarding Board. These include:

- Operating a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and the development of services
- Operating clear whistleblowing procedures
- Sharing information, with other professionals
- Take responsibility as the designated professional lead for Safeguarding
- Operating safe recruitment practices
- Ensuring appropriate supervision and support for staff, including undertaking Induction, safeguarding training and reviews of practice
- Establish, operate and monitor clear policies for dealing with allegations against people who work with children.



Qualities and Knowledge

1. Be a visible presence in the school and the community. Hold and articulate clear values and moral purpose, focused on providing a world-class education for all pupils.
2. Demonstrate optimistic personal behaviour, positive relationships and attitudes towards their pupils and staff, and towards parents, governors and members of the local community.
3. Lead by example - with integrity, creativity, resilience, and clarity - drawing on their own scholarship, expertise and skills, and that of those around them.
4. Sustain wide, current knowledge and understanding of education and school systems locally, nationally and globally, and pursue continuous professional development.
5. Work with political and financial astuteness, within a clear set of principles centred on the school's vision, ably translating local and national policy into the school's context.
6. Communicate compellingly the school's vision and empower all pupils and staff, through your drive and leadership, to excel.

Pupils and Staff

1. Demand ambitious standards for all pupils, overcoming disadvantage and advancing equality, instilling a strong sense of accountability in all staff for the impact of their work on pupils' outcomes.
2. Secure excellent teaching through an analytical understanding of how pupils learn and of the core features of successful classroom practice and curriculum design, leading to rich curriculum opportunities and pupils' well-being.
3. Establish an educational culture of 'open classrooms' as a basis for sharing best practice within and between schools, drawing on and conducting relevant research and robust data analysis.
4. Create an ethos within which all staff are motivated and supported to develop their own skills and subject knowledge, and to support each other.
5. Identify emerging talents, coaching current and aspiring leaders in a climate where excellence is the standard, leading to clear succession planning.
6. Hold all staff to account for their professional conduct and practice.
7. Lead and manage all staff with a proper regard for their well-being and legitimate expectations, including the expectation of a healthy balance between work and other commitments.



Systems and Process

1. Ensure that the school's systems, organisation and processes are well considered, efficient and fit for purpose, upholding the principles of transparency, integrity and probity.
2. Provide a safe, calm and well-ordered environment for all pupils and staff, focused on safeguarding pupils and developing their exemplary behaviour in school and in the wider society.
3. Establish rigorous, fair and transparent systems and measures for managing the performance of all staff, addressing any under-performance, supporting staff to improve and valuing excellent practice.
4. Welcome strong governance and actively support the governing board to understand its role and deliver its functions effectively – in particular its functions to set school strategy and hold the headteacher to account for pupil, staff and financial performance.
5. Exercise strategic, curriculum-led financial planning to ensure the equitable deployment of budgets and resources, including Sports and Pupil Premium, in the best interests of pupils' achievements and the school's sustainability.
6. Distribute leadership throughout the organisation, forging teams of colleagues who have distinct roles and responsibilities and hold each other to account for their decision making.
7. Develop clear arrangements for linking appraisal to pay progression and advise the relevant body on pay recommendations for teachers.
8. Consult and communicate with the governing body, staff, pupils, parents and carers.
9. Lead and manage / be responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

The Self-improving School System

1. Create outward-facing schools which collaborate with other schools and organisations, including Kids Club - in a climate of mutual challenge - to champion best practice and secure excellent achievements for all pupils.
2. Develop effective relationships and collaborate effectively with fellow professionals and colleagues in other public services to improve academic and social outcomes for all pupils.
3. Challenge educational orthodoxies in the best interests of achieving excellence, harnessing the findings of well evidenced research to frame self-regulating and self-improving schools.
4. Shape the current and future quality of the teaching profession through high quality training and sustained professional development for all staff.
5. Model entrepreneurial and innovative approaches to school improvement, leadership and governance, confident of the vital contribution of internal and external accountability.
6. Inspire and influence others - within and beyond schools - to believe in the fundamental importance of education in young people's lives and to promote the value of education.
7. Participate in arrangements for their own further training and professional development and appraisal and review of own performance.

7.



Requirement	Essential	Desirable
Qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If NPQH not held alternative suitable academic and professional qualifications Evidence of continuing professional development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPQH
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience across the range of KS2 A high regard for the personal achievement of each child Experience of working with pupils with SEN needs Proven record of successful classroom teaching Proven record of successful leadership and management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of KS1 and EYFS Liaison with external agencies Experience of working collaboratively with other schools.
Leadership and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A clear vision of what outstanding means in terms of primary education A proven ability to raise educational standards and a commitment to high standards of achievement Be able to write a strategic plan and work effectively with the governing body to deliver it Understanding of school improvement planning and subsequent budget planning Ability to delegate, monitor and evaluate information Evidence of good working relationships with all parents and wider school community Commitment to the continuing professional development of all staff Ability to lead by example and inspire others to achieve positive results Ability to initiate and manage change sensitively to achieve positive results A commitment to the protection and safeguarding of young people and an up to date knowledge of Child Protection procedures Knowledge of current regulations, e.g. Health & Safety, finance and environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of project management and dealing with finance and premises Proven record of using IT to promote excellence in learning in schools Experience of Performance Management of both teaching and support staff.



Requirement	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge and Skills/Teaching and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A high regard for the personal achievement of each child Ability to demonstrate knowledge of current curricular and educational issues/relevant legislation• Clear knowledge and understanding of assessment and monitoring procedures and ability to implement these• Significant experience of successfully implementing consistent whole school approaches to positive behaviour management• Clear understanding of what is effective teaching and learning• Commitment to inclusion and equality of access to educational provision for all children• Innovative and creative approach to teaching and learning	
Personal Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong interpersonal and communication skills• Adaptable and flexible approach to change• An commitment to promoting respect between children, staff, parents and governors• A well organised person able to manage time effectively, to delegate, to prioritise and to meet deadlines• Ability to recognise and utilise the strengths of all staff• Ability to build, support, motivate and work as part of a high performing team• Ability to inspire children	

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9 October 2017

Mr Gary Brown
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Brown

Short inspection of Ashdon Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 21 September 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in October 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Community is at the heart of all of the work that goes on in Ashdon Primary School. Each child, pupil, adult and parent is a member of your small school 'family'. You lead the school by setting the highest example; that you will 'go the extra mile' for children and pupils in your care. Your dedicated and skilled governing body shares this passion for the education of children in your community, and works alongside you diligently to continue to secure the future of the school.

You constantly look at the school's provision with a 'glass half full' as you truly believe that you can always improve pupils' experiences in some way. You, ably supported by your senior teacher and governors, refuse to resort to quick fixes as you want every action to make meaningful and genuine differences to pupils. This ethos is wholeheartedly shared by staff. Consequently, staff are highly competent, dedicated and passionate about their work. This means that children and pupils



receive a consistently high standard of education across the school, leading to very high standards of attainment in the early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2, with some exceptional provision in Years 5 and 6.

Pupils love to learn at your school. The youngest children from Reception onwards settle quickly because adults establish routines and get to know children and pupils as individuals. Pupils receive a rich curriculum which is often personalised to their needs and interests. Pupils speak highly of their school experience. By the time that pupils leave the school, they are thoughtful, articulate and caring young people, who are well prepared for their secondary education.

Most parents are incredibly happy with the school's provision. Parents who spoke to me during my visit, and almost all parents on Parent View, were glowing in their praise for you as headteacher, and your team. This is because your team listen to parents and care about their views. Through an active parent-teacher association and a proactive and skilled governing body, there are also lots of opportunities for parents to voice their opinions and engage with the school community, through events like the 3k and 10k fun runs.

Refusing to ever stand still, you have identified that there is still further work to embed the improvements you have brought to the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. You also acknowledge that although the provision in Reception is good, the outdoor area is not yet providing a stimulating enough learning environment for children.

Safeguarding is effective.

You, as the designated safeguarding leader, ensure that your staff are well trained in identifying and reporting any concerns about the well-being of pupils. Written records are kept studiously, and act as a good record of the actions taken by you and others in keeping children and pupils safe, over the course of time.

You and your staff work effectively with external agencies to support pupils, including specialist teams for social, emotional and mental health needs. You work closely with the professionals from these services to ensure that pupils receive joined-up support from you all. The communication between yourselves and these professionals is making a positive difference in the care that you give to your pupils.

Your monitoring of attendance is meticulous and consequently, the attendance of all pupils, including different groups of pupils, is consistently better than the national average. Your home-school liaison worker liaises with parents to help build positive relationships and give support to pupils and their families. This is making a real difference in helping get pupils into school frequently, and subsequently engage with their learning.

- My first line of enquiry was around understanding the impact of the significant increase in the numbers of pupils identified at the school as having special educational needs and/or disabilities since the previous inspection, including the numbers of pupils who require an education, health and care plan.
- You have faced numerous challenges since the previous inspection in securing the appropriate provision and support for these vulnerable pupils. You have used a broad range of specialist external advice and, on occasion, trial and error, to implement and review this provision, to get it right. You have also tailored pupils' curriculum, so that it meets not only their needs, but also their aspirations and interests.
- You have refused to give up on pupils, even when, in a few instances, they have exhibited the most challenging behaviours. For example, you have re-written and trained staff in a reviewed behaviour policy that you have developed so that it is more inclusive of all pupils. This is making a real difference to helping pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, where they need support to communicate with others effectively.
- As a result, pupils with the most complex needs have highly personalised support that is starting to make a profound difference to their confidence and progress. Getting this provision right for pupils has required significant professional development for all staff, but they have exhibited remarkable resilience and willingness to develop and apply their skills.
- Staff are now embedding these strategies even further to help pupils acquire independence in their learning and development. You also identify that there are a number of pupils who potentially require more specialist provision, although there is little in the locality on offer. The future for these pupils remains a concern for you, and you continue to work with the local authority and parents to tenaciously chase the right next placement for these pupils.
- Through the inspection we also identified that there needs to be more precise review of some pupils' assessment, throughout their time at the school, to see whether their needs are still significant and additional or that they simply require catch-up support.
- My second line of enquiry was to review the provision in mathematics. This is because this was identified as an area for improvement in 2013 when you were last visited by inspectors.
- The provision for mathematics is a real strength in the school. The collective planning and support between your staff means that pupils get a consistently good and personalised experience in all year groups. For example, you and the team have worked hard on developing assessment in mathematics that makes a real difference to pupils' understanding and teachers' planning. As a result, mathematics outcomes are very high year on year, especially in key stage 2, and pupils develop a delight in attempting harder challenges in the subject.

- My final line of enquiry was to review your wider curriculum throughout the school, and how you develop writing within this. This was because your website did not give a detailed overview of the curriculum provision for pupils. Moreover, most pupils in your smaller-than-average-sized school have relatively limited opportunities to engage with classmates from different backgrounds, countries, cultures and faiths in the school. I was keen to see how you were preparing pupils for their roles as citizens in the wider world.
- Your team ensure that every activity to support pupils to embrace the diversity in British society is undertaken meaningfully. Pupils speak highly of the curriculum which teaches them the importance of valuing people's differences, and welcoming people from varied backgrounds. Your 'challenge' assemblies have also provided creative opportunities for your children and pupils of all ages, and their parents, to engage in wider understanding of themselves, and the wider society in modern Britain.
- A display board in your assembly hall typifies the experience that pupils get in the wider curriculum in your school. It shows how pupils have engaged with the democratic process through studying different political ideas. Pupils' interest with this activity is demonstrated in the high-quality written work that they have produced, which reflects an empathy with people and a deep-rooted understanding of the importance of humanity and kindness to everyone.
- Inspection evidence confirms that the quality of pupils' writing is securely good across the curriculum and exemplary in Years 5 and 6, especially in history and geography. Pupils enjoy their writing experiences, where teachers cleverly interweave the wider curriculum, and essential rules around spelling, punctuation and grammar. For those few pupils who do not reach the expected standards, teachers ensure that they monitor progress from their various starting points. As a result, these pupils make securely good progress from much lower starting points than their peers.
- You ensure that pupils access a broad curriculum, including art, French, individual music tuition, forest school, and a range of sporting activities. Pupils speak highly of the multi-use games area and the outdoor gym, as well as the breaktime and lunchtime games which encourage them to engage with sport and build confidence among some of your most vulnerable pupils. You use your additional sport funding with real impact. Your new subject leader for physical education (PE) has made a quick start of further widening pupils' participation and enthusiasm for sport and fitness.
- As part of our review of the wider curriculum, we looked at the outdoor provision in the early years. We identified many strengths in the early years curriculum, including the forest school activities. However, you acknowledge that the outdoor environment is not as well-resourced or as stimulating for children to learn creatively as it should be.

- The location of your small school and the changing demographics in the local area mean that it is becoming increasingly difficult to ensure that pupils get access to the nearest secondary school when they leave you. In response to this, you and your governing body have secured good working relationships with feeder secondary schools so that pupils get effective transition support when they are about to leave you to move into Year 7.



Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they further embed the specialist skills that they have developed to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and that leaders continue to work with the local authority to find these pupils specialist next-step provisions when they require them
- they develop the outdoor area and associated learning activities in the early years, so that this enhances the provision for pupils to further learn and develop in a creative and stimulating outdoor environment.

I am copying this letter to the joint chairs of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Essex. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Kim Pigram
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I spoke with you, the senior teacher, the special educational needs coordinator, and all teachers. All teachers take responsibility for an aspect of the school's work, so I also was able to review the wider curriculum work in history, geography, science, art, and PE. I also met with members of the governing body, including the joint chairs. I also met with a representative from the local authority. You and I visited all classes, including the Reception class. We looked at pupils' work while we were in some of those lessons. I also undertook a work scrutiny of pupils' work separately. I spoke with pupils throughout the day, and met with a small group of pupils formally. I took account of the Ofsted's online questionnaire responses from 37 parents, as well as 15 staff responses and 22 pupil responses. I reviewed a range of school documentation, including information related to safeguarding and pupils' progress.