



Exeter School

APPOINTMENT OF HEAD





WELCOME TO EXETER SCHOOL

Dear candidate,

I am delighted that you are interested in the post of Head at Exeter School, an exceptional independent day school which has a strong and successful reputation in educating generations of families across Devon and beyond, for almost 400 years.

Whilst the school has a long and established history, it has continually embraced change in the educational landscape, including recently adding a pre-prep and now offering an academic journey for children from three years through to 18 years of age. Working closely with a deeply committed teaching body, an exceptional operations and professional services team and a hugely supportive parental community, the new Head will need to continue to consolidate the many recent innovations that have reinforced the school's position as a leader in southwest education, ensuring stability and preparing to drive and achieve further success.

This provides a very exciting opportunity for an outstanding, charismatic and energetic leader to build on its academic excellence, whilst ensuring pupils receive our character education that prepares them well for the future. Instilling strong values, integrity and resilience are key attributes for our pupils and our well-rounded

educational and co-curricular offering allows pupils to unlock their full potential in a nurturing, kind, respectful and inclusive environment.

We are looking for a dynamic strategic leader with a genuine passion for education, who has the ability to foster creative and collaborative relationships, within the school community and beyond. At a time of considerable challenge for the independent sector, the successful candidate needs to be visionary in their thinking and have the foresight and business acumen to seek out developmental opportunities which ensure the long-term financial sustainability and prosperity of the school.

I hope this information pack provides you with the detail you are looking for and if you believe you have exemplary skills to become the next Head of Exeter School, we will be delighted to consider your application.

Gillian Hodgetts

Chair of Governors



ABOUT EXETER SCHOOL

At Exeter School, we believe that education is not just about academic excellence but also about nurturing the character and potential of each individual. Located in the beautiful southwest county of Devon, Exeter School is an independent day school with a rich history spanning nearly four hundred years. Throughout this time, we have remained dedicated to providing a holistic and well-rounded educational experience to our pupils.

With a dedicated team of passionate educators, we strive to create a supportive and inclusive environment that fosters the growth and development of our pupils. Our emphasis on character education is what sets us apart. We believe in instilling strong values, integrity, and resilience in our pupils, preparing them to become responsible global citizens.

Academic excellence forms the cornerstone of our educational philosophy. Our dynamic and forward-thinking curriculum, combined with innovative teaching methods, encourages critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. We empower our pupils to explore their passions and discover and develop their unique strengths, helping them excel academically and beyond.

Beyond the classroom, our extensive co-curricular activities provide opportunities for pupils to develop leadership skills, teamwork, and a healthy competitive spirit. Whether it's through participating in our renowned music and drama programmes, engaging in community service, or excelling on the sports field, our pupils learn valuable life lessons that shape their character.



CHARACTER EDUCATION

At Exeter School our commitment to developing the character of our pupils underpins all that we do. Drawing on the ideas of Aristotle, our school ethos is rooted in virtue ethics and promotes aspiration and flourishing in all. Our aim is to equip pupils with the practical wisdom they will require to navigate the challenges and opportunities of our fast-paced and ever-changing world, whilst celebrating their unique talents and individuality. Our expectation is for pupils to embody the school virtues through their time at Exeter School, embracing the rich and varied opportunities on offer.

Character education is both an implicit and explicit part of school life, influencing our approach to learning and teaching, our pastoral care, and our co-curricular programme. Pupils are taught about character through allocated time in the curriculum, exploring the origins of virtue ethics and using role models and moral

dilemmas to enhance their understanding of our school virtues.

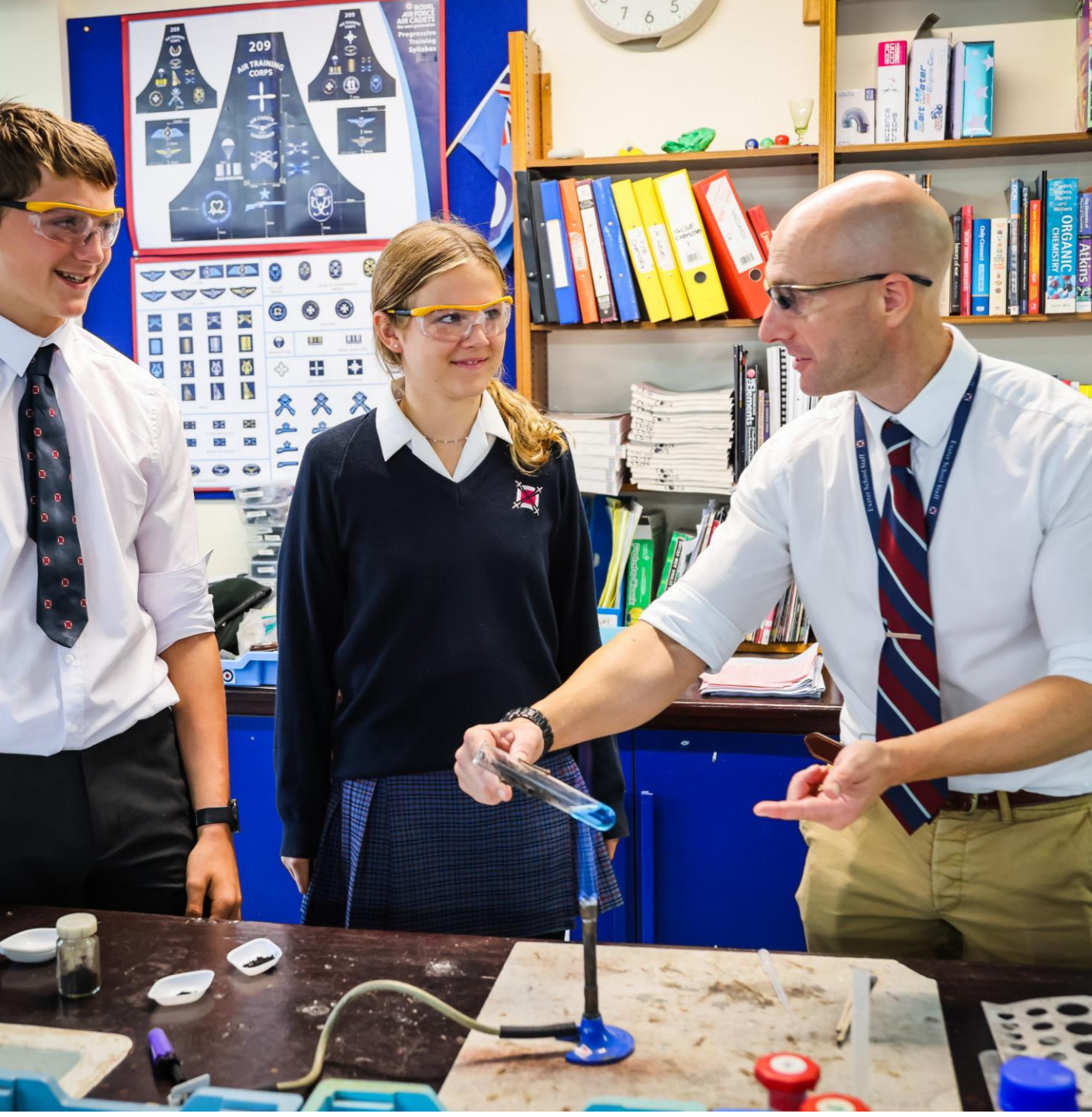
Each half term sees a focus on a different school virtue, with assemblies, form time and house meetings considering this theme with pupils. We also take time to celebrate the character development of pupils regularly, both within house meetings and assemblies. As a school of great character, it is our hope for every pupil that they will aspire and flourish, both in their time at Exeter School and throughout their life.

Our virtues are:

- Inspire and challenge
- Kindness and integrity
- Welcome and serve
- Endeavour and collaborate

Read more [here](#)





ACADEMIC SUCCESS

At Exeter School we are proud of the many academic achievements of our pupils and the progress that they continue to make beyond school, in higher education and the wider world. These achievements are a result of their hard work, their love of learning, and high levels of independent thought.

Pupils aspire to learn and achieve in a variety of academic challenges and assessments. Character education fosters qualities that positively influence academic achievement, such as perseverance and fairness, and when combined with our broad curriculum and co-curricular

academic enrichment opportunities, together with the expert support of teachers and pastoral staff, our pupils have great success in GCSEs, A Levels and university admissions.

In 2024 at A-level:

- 25% A*
- 86% A*AB

In 2024 at GCSE:

- 34 pupils gained 10 or over 9-7 grades
- 67% of all grades were 9-7

A full list of results and university destinations can be found [here](#)



BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Exeter School places a strong emphasis on character education, firmly believing that the journey of learning extends far beyond the confines of traditional classrooms and strict timetables. Our commitment to holistic education revolves around instilling values, fostering personal growth, and nurturing well-rounded individuals.

Within the vibrant tapestry of our educational experience, sports, music, art, and drama serve as invaluable tools for character development. These pursuits allow our pupils to cultivate qualities such as discipline, teamwork, creativity, and resilience. They provide opportunities to explore the depths of their passions, unlock their potential, and discover new dimensions of themselves.

While the 40-period academic week forms the foundation of our educational structure, we are passionate about offering abundant opportunities for curriculum enrichment. Our school brims with thriving clubs and activities that operate throughout the year, both in our junior and senior schools. These co-curricular pursuits are designed to nurture the character of our students.

Imagine a typical term filled with clubs that cater to diverse interests – from art, chess, and coding to the Christian Union, dance, and debate. These activities not only broaden horizons but also cultivate virtues like critical thinking, compassion, and dedication. Pupils can explore fields such as design, electronics, and even lifesaving, instilling a sense of responsibility and empathy.





THE ROLE

The Head is appointed by and accountable to the Governing Body, responsible for providing inspirational, strategic leadership across Exeter School, Exeter Junior School, and Exeter Pre-Prep School (together referred to as "the School"). In collaboration with the Governors, the Head will set and implement the School's aims, values, and long-term vision.

Strategic leadership:

- Lead the development and delivery of the School's strategic plan in alignment with its ethos and educational mission.
- Work closely with the Chair of Governors and Bursar to ensure effective evaluation of institutional performance against the strategic objectives in the strategic plan, and to bring forward recommendations to ensure consistent delivery against these objectives and indicators.
- Sustain and enhance the School's position as a leader in academic, cultural, and pastoral provision.
- Stay abreast of developments in education and respond proactively to changes in the educational landscape.
- Continue the consolidation of recent changes while ensuring stability and building thoughtfully on existing foundations.

Educational excellence

- Ensure the delivery of a dynamic, forward-thinking curriculum that fosters academic excellence, intellectual curiosity, moral virtue, and a lifelong love of learning.
- Promote an environment of academic challenge and excellence across all age groups and one which prepares pupils for the life beyond the School.
- Inspire innovative teaching practices that not only respond to the needs of individual learners but also nurture empathy, resilience, and ethical decision-making.
- Ensure the provision of relevant and appropriate support for pupils with special educational needs.
- Maintain high expectations for both pupils and staff and monitor teaching standards through effective review systems.
- Foster a culture of debate, reflection, and intellectual exploration in the classroom.
- Ensure the curriculum is rigorous, inclusive, and responsive to global trends.
- Oversee the School's distinctive character education program which forms a key part of our educational approach.

Pastoral and community culture

- Champion and sustain a safe, inclusive, and supportive community that nurtures personal growth, well-being, and mutual respect.
- Foster a culture that celebrates diversity, character development, and emotional well-being.
- Promote a warm, welcoming atmosphere where all pupils feel confident to be themselves.
- Support behaviour, discipline, and well-being strategies through appropriate policies and staff training.
- Foster a culture that welcomes and supports the families of staff and pupils.

Staff development

- Recruit, support, and develop an outstanding team committed to the School's mission.
- Lead a high-performing and cohesive staff team, supporting teacher career progression and morale.
- Embed a culture of continual professional development, pedagogy, mentorship, and reflective practice.
- Lead on the consistent application of a clear and robust system of performance management and appraisal, ensuring it supports staff development, recognises achievement, and aligns with the school's strategic priorities.
- Encourage open communication and staff engagement.
- Plan for long-term succession and leadership development.

Operational and financial oversight

- In partnership with the Bursar and Governors, ensure the effective and efficient operation of the School, both with daily operations and long-term planning.
- Jointly manage the School's budget with the Bursar, ensuring financial sustainability and transparency.
- Identify funding opportunities and lead capital development initiatives.
- Ensure appropriate resources are allocated to meet educational and strategic goals.
- Be alive to opportunities to work collaboratively with other schools and groups

THE ROLE

Communication and external relations

- Be a compelling ambassador for the School, maintaining and building strong relationships with pupils, parents, alumni, partners, and the wider community.
- Work with the Bursar and Director of External Relations to support recruitment and admissions processes, maintaining levels of pupil recruitment in a changing marketplace; proposing changes to scholarships and bursaries to support admissions strategies; and contributing to pupil recruitment visit/open days across all age ranges to attract high-calibre pupils from diverse backgrounds.
- Strengthen connections with local, national, and international partners, who align with the School's ambitions, ethos and values.
- Actively participate in School events, co-curricular programmes, and community engagement activities.
- Actively engage with the civic life of Exeter, building strategic partnerships with the local community that enhance the School's position in the southwest as a distinctive academically selective day school.

Safeguarding and compliance

- Ensure full compliance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and all relevant statutory requirements.
- Maintain a culture of vigilance through regular training and evaluation of safeguarding procedures.
- Promote safer recruitment and ensure appropriate staff training is in place.
- Work jointly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Bursar to review safeguarding and health and safety procedures.

Personal and professional development

- Demonstrate and promote a culture of good citizenship by fostering generous, respectful, and supportive working relationships with all staff and the wider school community.
- Lead by example in actively engaging with principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion, and ensure full adherence to school, trust, and statutory policies and codes of conduct.
- Set clear expectations that all interactions reflect the values of mutual respect, integrity, and collaboration.
- Model a healthy work-life balance and encourage sustainable leadership practices.
- Undergo regular performance management and respond constructively to feedback.



THE PERSON

The Head will be an inspiring, dynamic, and reflective leader who combines a strong track record of educational leadership with excellent interpersonal, strategic, and operational capabilities. They will demonstrate a clear commitment to academic excellence, pupil welfare, and staff development, alongside commercial and financial acumen to ensure long-term success in a competitive educational landscape.

Qualifications and experience

- Degree educated with a postgraduate qualification or other relevant knowledge and experience in education or leadership.
- Extensive, successful and sustained track record in senior leadership, ideally as Head or Deputy Head, in an academic, independent setting.
- Experience of successfully leading and seeing through the delivery of high-performing teams, including during periods of change and strategic development, with a strong focus on follow-through, accountability, and achieving measurable outcomes.
- Demonstrable academic success and commitment to teaching excellence.
- Experience in overseeing financial, human, and physical resources with commercial and business acumen.
- Familiarity with the regulatory frameworks governing independent, including safeguarding, health and safety, safer recruitment, and governance.
- A leading educator, with a sustained record of leading innovative and successful education activity and influencing practice externally.

Skills and knowledge

- A strategic thinker with a clear, innovative, and well-communicated educational philosophy.
- Exceptional leadership, organisational, and problem-solving skills with a collaborative and empowering style.
- High emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills with the ability to inspire and build trust among pupils, staff, parents, governors, and the wider community.
- Outstanding verbal and written communication skills with the ability to deliver clear, confident messaging, even under pressure.
- Deep understanding of best practices in 21st-century education, including curriculum innovation, co-curricular enrichment, and inclusive practices.
- Financially literate and commercially astute with the ability to balance educational ideals with pragmatic business sense.

- Have had a significant role in both originating and delivering commercial projects e.g. creation of new stakeholder or commercial relationships for the School or generation of new revenue opportunities within existing stakeholder relationships.
- Knowledge of and interest in marketing, public relations, and fundraising.
- Technologically literate and forward-thinking in the use of digital tools to support teaching, learning, and leadership.

Leadership style and personal attributes

- A visible, approachable, and compassionate presence within the School and wider community.
- A resilient, authentic, and decisive leader with sound judgment and integrity who leads with heart whilst maintaining high standards.
- Passionate about the holistic development of young people—including intellectual, pastoral, moral, spiritual, and co-curricular dimensions.
- Commitment to the safeguarding and wellbeing of all pupils and the professional development of all staff.
- A dynamic and charismatic communicator with the ability to engage and inspire confidence across all stakeholders.
- A strong sense of personal drive, ambition, and stamina to lead a vibrant, forward-looking school.
- Actively able to contribute to the wider educational community through meaningful engagement in local and national networks, representation on external committees or working groups, and visible leadership in whole school initiatives.
- Politically astute with the ability to handle complex situations with sensitivity, adaptability, and diplomacy.
- A proactive commitment to fostering a positive, inclusive culture beyond the immediate school environment, supporting sector collaboration and shared best practice.
- A genuine commitment to the School's values, with a global outlook and an enthusiasm for innovation and continuous improvement.



HOW TO APPLY

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is partnering with Exeter School on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role via www.saxbam.com/appointments using code LBTLA. Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application

The closing date for applications is 9am on Tuesday 6th May.

Key dates for the process:

- First round panel interviews: 13th June
- School visit for final round candidates which will include various activities: w/c 16th June (a full day will be needed)
- Final round panel interviews: 26th June

Safeguarding:

Exeter School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young persons at all times. The Head will be responsible for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of all children with whom they come into contact. The post holder is required to hold a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).



Saxton Bampfylde