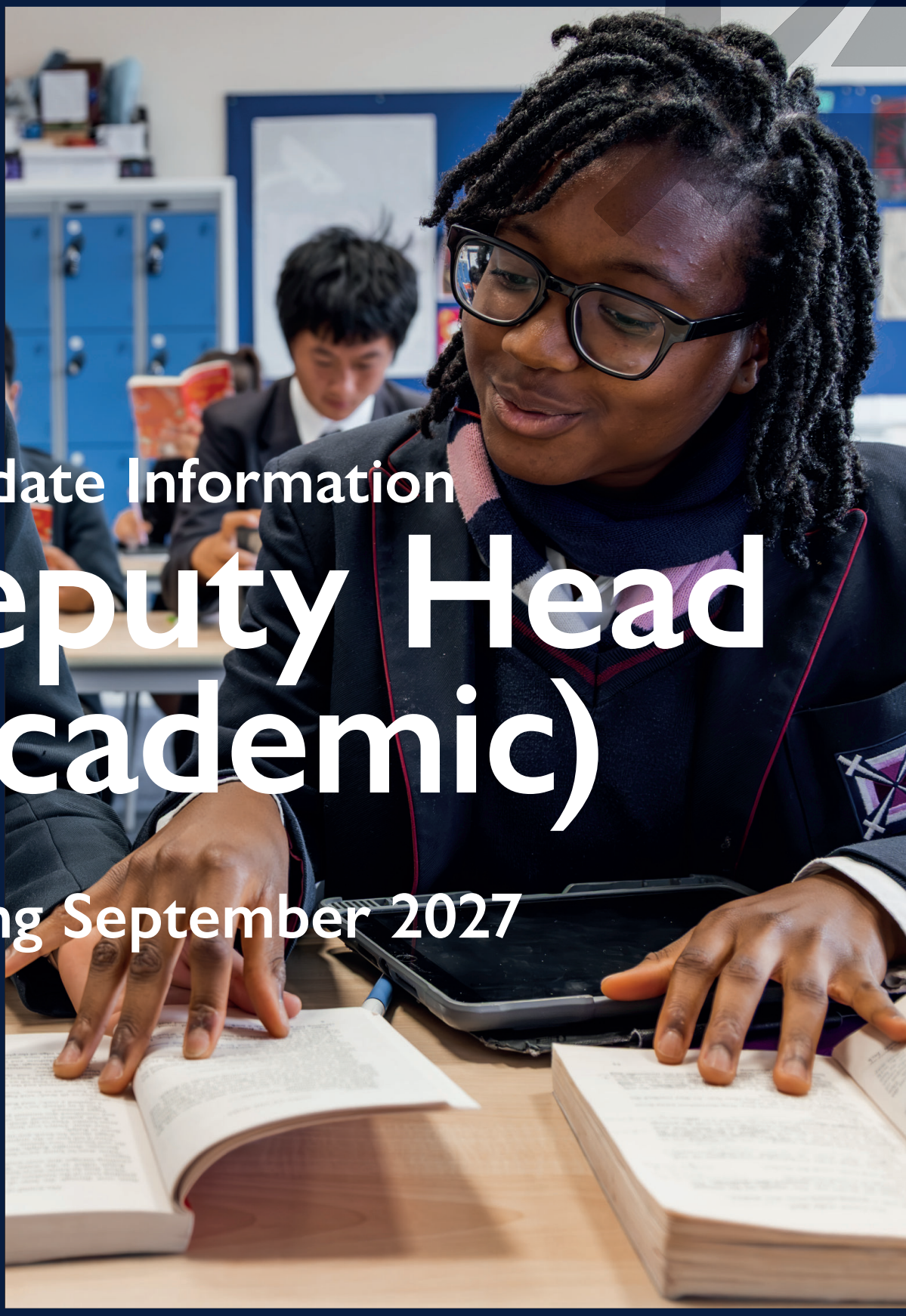


Candidate Information

Deputy Head (Academic)

Starting September 2027

Exeter School

A School of Great Character

Exeter School
Victoria Park Road
Exeter, Devon
EX2 4NS

01392 307080
www.exeterschool.org.uk
@ExeterSchoolUK

A message from the Head



Dear candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the post of Deputy Head (Academic) at Exeter School. I am delighted to introduce the school to you and hope this pack gives you a clear sense of who we are and what matters to us.

At Exeter School, academic achievement matters greatly. We are academically ambitious for our pupils and proud of the outcomes they achieve, and we expect high standards of teaching and learning in every classroom. However, we firmly believe that the best results come from children who are happy, secure and genuinely enjoy learning. Curiosity, intellectual confidence and a love of the subject are as important to us as examination grades, and we want our pupils to leave us with both.

That same belief shapes our wider school life. Our co-curricular programme in music, drama, sport, outdoor education and service is central to the experience we offer, and our character education framework, rooted in virtue ethics, runs through everything we do. We are a community rooted in kindness, character and ambition, and we see these qualities as complementary rather than competing.

The Deputy Head (Academic) will play a central role in leading this vision. You will shape the academic direction of the school, support and develop an excellent teaching staff, and ensure that rigour and enjoyment sit comfortably side by side. You will join a collegiate senior leadership team at an exciting point in the school's development, including our new role as the educational home of the Exeter Cathedral choristers.

We are also fortunate in our setting. Exeter is a vibrant and well-connected cathedral city, and Devon offers an exceptional quality of life, with Dartmoor, the coast and the countryside on our doorstep. Many colleagues tell us it is a place where work and life are in genuine balance.

If you are an inspiring educator I would be very pleased to receive your application. I very much look forward to hearing from you.



Yours sincerely,
Dr Adrian Rainbow
Head, Exeter School

"Small class sizes, excellent facilities and highly qualified, passionate subject specialists"



Exeter School has a proud academic heritage spanning almost 400 years, combining a long-standing tradition of academic excellence with a progressive and ambitious approach to learning and teaching. Small class sizes, excellent facilities and highly qualified, passionate subject specialists provide an environment in which pupils are known as individuals, inspired to think deeply and encouraged to develop their potential. Our broad and balanced curriculum celebrates academic breadth, offering exceptional opportunities across the humanities, sciences, mathematics and computing, three modern foreign languages (French, German and Spanish), Latin and classical civilisation, alongside thriving provision in art, music, drama and design technology. We value intellectual curiosity, creativity and independent thought, ensuring that pupils are both challenged and supported throughout their academic journey.

Our approach to learning and teaching is rooted in educational research, informed by evidence-based pedagogy and a commitment to continuous improvement. We embrace innovation, including the purposeful and responsible integration of digital technologies and artificial intelligence, where these can enrich teaching, deepen understanding and enhance pupil learning. Effective assessment, meaningful feedback and a focus on metacognition help pupils develop confidence, resilience and increasing independence as learners. Equally central to our ethos is a commitment to inclusion and equity: through strong relationships, adaptive teaching and carefully tailored learning support, we seek to understand and respond to the individual needs of every pupil, ensuring that all have the opportunity to aspire and flourish.

Our academic outcomes are consistently excellent, with A Level results typically exceeding 80% A*–B, including more than 50% A*–A, while approximately 75% of GCSE grades are awarded at 9–7, including around 25% at grade 9. These achievements underpin a strong culture of aspiration, with pupils securing places at leading universities, including regular success at Oxford and Cambridge, alongside increasingly competitive degree apprenticeships with organisations such as Dyson, Airbus, JP Morgan and Bird & Bird. Yet academic success at Exeter School is about more than examination results. Guided by our distinctive virtues-based approach to character education, we aim to nurture thoughtful, articulate, compassionate and intellectually curious young people, equipped with the knowledge, skills and strength of character to embrace opportunities, navigate challenges and make a positive contribution to the world beyond Exeter School.

Graham Bone
Senior Deputy Head



Introducing Exeter School

Exeter School is a co-educational independent day school educating pupils from the early years through to the sixth form. Founded in 1633, it has a long history of academic achievement and service to the city and region, and it is today one of the leading independent schools in the South West.

The School occupies an attractive green 26 acre campus close to Exeter city centre, combining historic buildings with modern facilities for teaching, science, the arts and sport. Exeter School is known for strong academic outcomes, achieved alongside a broad co-curricular programme in music, drama, sport, outdoor education and service. Academic ambition, however, is only part of its purpose.

Character education

Exeter School is a community rooted in kindness, character and ambition, and character education shapes everything it does. Drawing on Aristotle's virtue ethics, the School's ethos rests on the belief that every pupil should have the opportunity to flourish, and it treats character as equal in importance to strong academic outcomes. This is not a stand-alone programme confined to assemblies or PSHE lessons. Character education runs through teaching, sport, music, drama, outdoor education and pastoral care, from pre-prep to the sixth form, so pupils encounter it every day. Its central aim is to develop practical wisdom: the judgement young people need to make good decisions under pressure and to treat others with respect and kindness, both in school and beyond it.

The school's approach values individuality. Each pupil brings something different to the community, and the aim is to nurture each one's talents. Pupils take part in music, sport, art and leadership opportunities, and many join the Combined Cadet Force, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award or the Ten Tors expedition on Dartmoor. Each builds resilience and develops particular virtues. For colleagues, this provides a coherent, well-established framework for school life. It offers a clear philosophical foundation and the opportunity to lead an approach in which personal development and academic achievement reinforce each other.



The chorister programme

From September 2026, Exeter School became the educational home of the Exeter Cathedral choristers. This is a significant development in the life of the school, which reflects its standing in the city and its commitment to music. The Cathedral continues to lead the choristers' musical training and commitments, while the school provides their education and pastoral care.

The Cathedral choir includes boys and girls, usually from Years 3 to 8. During term time they sing around eight services each week alongside the Lay Vicars and Choral Scholars, sustaining a choral tradition that goes back centuries. Combining this level of musical commitment with a full academic education demands discipline, teamwork and resilience, the qualities the school seeks to develop in all its pupils. The school worked closely with chorister families during the transition, taking time to understand each child's needs so that every chorister could join a community in which they would thrive.

Living in Exeter and Devon

Exeter is a historic cathedral city with a population of around 130,000 and a growing regional economy. It is home to the University of Exeter, the Met Office headquarters and a major NHS teaching hospital, and it supports a substantial professional community and a wide range of cultural, sporting and educational amenities.

The city is well connected. Direct rail services from Exeter St Davids reach London Paddington in around two to two and a half hours, the M5 provides straightforward road access to Bristol and the Midlands, and Exeter Airport operates domestic and European routes. Daily life within the city is convenient, with most amenities within easy reach.

Housing options are varied, from period properties in the city centre to modern developments and established villages within comfortable commuting distance. Many staff find that Devon offers a quality of life and value that compare favourably with London and the South East. Exeter's location gives ready access to Dartmoor, the East Devon coast and the Exe Estuary, so outdoor pursuits are part of everyday life rather than an occasional escape. For colleagues and their families, Exeter offers a rare combination: a stable, well-connected professional base and an environment in which to settle for the long term.



Deputy Head (Academic)

Job Description

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment

Role: Deputy Head (Academic)
Reporting to: Head
Summary role: The Deputy Head (Academic) plays a central role in shaping and delivering the school's academic vision. Working closely with the Head and Senior Deputy Head, this senior leader ensures the highest standards of teaching, learning, and academic achievement across all key stages, supporting both pupils and staff in developing their potential. They will be an innovative teacher, a creative thinker, a confident leader and an able organiser who will carry out their duties with professionalism and a caring attitude towards pupils and staff.

Senior leadership

The role sits within the School's strategic leadership group, which consists of the Head, Bursar, Head of Junior School, Senior Deputy Head, three senior school deputies, Head of HR and Director of External Relations. As part of this group the post holder's senior leadership responsibilities include ensuring delivery of school's strategic plan, decision making with respect to finance and strategy and understanding the strategic environment in which the school operates, including responding to strategic choices facing the school, analysing threats and identifying and responding to new opportunities. There is considerable opportunity to work at strategic level with governors.



Individual management duties

1. Chair committees, task and finish groups and working parties as required.
2. Maintain high standards of communication with parents and coordinate the organisation of parent events and parent forums.
3. Compose, review and edit communications to parents as required that are disseminated via a variety of channels.
4. Contribute actively towards the recruitment of staff members and the process of staff appraisals, including appraisal meetings with members of the teaching staff, lesson observations and preparation of documentation
5. Participate in and, where appropriate, lead investigations in respect of staff or pupil matters.
6. Formulate, develop and update policies as appropriate for the role of Deputy Head (Academic), including the learning and teaching framework, learning-related policies, and policies as required by JCQ.
7. Manage budgets allocated to the role, including oversight of departmental budgets.

Academic

The successful candidate will have strategic oversight of the academic programme, leading innovations in teaching, and initiatives that inspire pupils to develop a of love of learning and alongside lifelong skills. They will manage the academic team, guiding and supporting staff to deliver a vibrant and inclusive academic programme that nurtures creativity and expression across the school.

1. Leadership of the academic programmes within the school:

    a. Responsibility for:

        i. curriculum planning, review, and innovation across all departments
        ii. academic outcomes in external examinations
        iii. ensuring high standards of learning and teaching
        iv. the school's approach to the use of technology for learning, including the use of mobile devices in the classroom and developments in AI



b. Line management of the Assistant Head (Learning and Teaching), and the five academic subject team leaders (creative arts, cultures and communications, humanities, mathematics and computing, and science).

2. Ensuring the School's virtues and ethos of character education is embedded and developed throughout the school's academic activities.

3. Management of pupil academic data and pupil tracking. This includes the provision and strategic use of data to HODs, STLs, heads of section, heads of year, form tutors and the senior leadership team to monitor and support groups and individual pupils, then acting together, as needed, to ensure all pupils continue to flourish.

   a. This includes processing and analysing data for school admissions processes, completion of the annual census for the DfE and ISC, and managing the senior school online testing programmes.

4. Line manage and support the Timetable Manager to ensure the academic timetable and options processes are fit for purpose and responsive to curriculum and wider school needs.

5. Line management of the exams office and Examinations Officer. Serving as the school's deputy head of centre for examination purposes (including holding the role of the BTEC Quality Nominee).

6. Keep up to date with the latest pedagogy and educational research to inform practice, alongside national academic trends and a knowledge of the work of other leading schools in both the maintained and independent sectors.

7. Contribute to events, activities and enrichment trips (including residential visits) as needed.



Teaching responsibilities

The post holder will teach a reduced timetable in their subject and must be able to teach at senior school level (Y7 to sixth form).

1. Teaching, according to their educational need, the pupils assigned; setting and marking work (including examinations) to be carried out by the pupils in School or elsewhere.
2. Assessing, recording and reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils.

General responsibilities

- ensure all duties are carried out in accordance with Health and Safety regulations and with due regard to child protection and safeguarding.
- undertake any training and development for the better fulfilment of the post.
- undertake any ad hoc duties or projects as requested.
- undertake any other duties and responsibilities as determined by the Head.
- carry out a share of supervisory duties and detentions in accordance with published schedules.
- participate in appropriate meetings with colleagues and parents relative to the above duties.
- attend and contribute to whole school events e.g., open days, Speech Day etc.
- provide cover and examination assistance as required.

Safeguarding

This role will require regular interaction with pupils which equates to regulated activity with children. The post holder must at all times act with due regard to the school's child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures and the school's code of conduct.

The following duties will be deemed to be included in the duties which you may be required to perform:

- child protection
- promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons for whom you are responsible and with whom you come into contact.

Person Specification

CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	EVIDENCE/ ASSESSED BY
Qualifications and experience	Honours degree in a suitable subject PGCE (Secondary) and QTS status Experience of working in different schools	Experience in a whole school senior leadership role	Application form
Personal skills	Understand the unique needs of pupils across different year groups to foster a sense of belonging and pride Able to work collaboratively building strong working relationships others and facilitating cohesive leadership Remain calm under pressure and able to troubleshoot issues as they arise, balancing immediate priorities with long-term planning Be a champion for character education and the benefits of a holistic education		Interview Presentation
Leadership	Ability to lead discussions effectively, ensuring all voices are heard while maintaining focus and achieving clear outcomes Capacity to steer groups towards alignment with the school's goals and priorities Skilled in mediating differing opinions and building consensus among diverse stakeholders		Application form, references
Teaching and Learning	An inspirational teacher; a lead practitioner in the classroom Flexibility to teach across the range of subject areas, ages, abilities High level subject knowledge		Qualifications in teaching, references, CPD record, interview lesson
Co-curricular and community	Provide skills in delivering a rich and balanced co-curricular strategy that enhances pupil development Be able to establish and maintain strong connections with external organisations and local communities, aligning community initiatives with the School's values and long-term strategic objectives Provide strategic lead on ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils during challenging activities whilst promoting resilience, teamwork, and self-confidence		Application form, interview, lesson observation
Pastoral Care	Skilled at mediating disputes sensitively and fairly between pupils, or between pupils and staff Experienced at promoting a restorative approach to resolving conflicts and building positive relationships		Interview

Person Specification continued

CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	EVIDENCE/ ASSESSED BY
Communication	Excellent interpersonal communication skills with pupils, colleagues, parents and governors, verbal and written The ability to produce clear and timely written communications and strategy documents An awareness of the importance of marketing and social media to inform and to promote the department and the school Diplomacy skills; an ability to advocate for Exeter School when engaging with partner and feeder organisations	A keen awareness of and engagement with digital social media platforms	Interview, written task and application letter, references
ICT skills, administrative experience and knowledge	Highly computer literate with a good knowledge of Microsoft Office and Microsoft Teams Proven administration and organisational skills including logistics of large on and off-site events Experience of working to tight deadlines in a busy organisation A high degree of initiative and the ability to prioritise own work and that of others	Knowledge of specialised software both for teaching and management duties Experience of leading innovative technology for learning programmes, including the effective use of AI and mobile devices	Application form and interview
Personal Qualities	Can lead with authenticity, inspire confidence, and foster a school culture rooted in growth, community, and excellence Demonstrates reflective practice to evaluate and improve personal and institutional performance Has presence and charisma		Interview, references

Exeter School is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from any appropriately qualified person.

Exeter School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. All applicants should read the school's safeguarding policy before applying. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.



We seek applications from experienced strategic leaders, who will be able to work as part of our senior team to deliver the school's vision and engage with governors, staff, pupils and parents. Teaching a reduced timetable, candidates will be inspirational educators with high-level subject knowledge and the flexibility to engage across year groups and abilities.

Candidates should possess proven leadership experience, excellent communication and organisational skills, and a passion for both high academic standards and holistic education. Experience in academic leadership is essential, alongside the ability to inspire pupils and staff alike. This is an opportunity to make a significant impact within a vibrant and ambitious school community.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Friday 20 November 2026**. Long list interview will take place online, week-commencing 3 or 4 December with short listed applicants attending an in-person selection process on either 7 or 8 December. Applications must include a completed Exeter School application form. For safeguarding purposes, a CV alone is not sufficient. To arrange a discussion about the role please contact hr@exeterschool.org.uk.

The roles will attract a competitive salary as well as generous benefits including employer pension contribution, free school lunch during term time, free on-site parking, discretionary staff discount on school fees and use of indoor swimming pool and fitness suite. Help with relocation costs may be offered for the right candidate.

Exeter School is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from any appropriately qualified person. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening, appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service. Employment is subject to the receipt of two satisfactory references provided specifically for this post and addressed to the school, and to satisfactory DBS clearance.

This post falls into the category of Regulated Activity. Exeter School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service

Closing date	**20 November**
Longlist interviews	**3 and 4 December**
Interview date	**9 December**



The school lives up to its local academic reputation with excellent results and, according to one parent, 'consistently strong, impressively engaging teaching in every subject'.

– The Good Schools Guide

Exeter School

A School of Great Character

THE GOOD SCHOOLS GUIDE Exeter School

THE GOOD SCHOOLS GUIDE Exeter Junior School

Choir Schools' Association

ISBA INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS' BURSARS ASSOCIATION

Leading Independent Schools HMC

AGBIS / LEADERS IN GOVERNANCE

Muddy Stilettos

aps Excellence in Education The Independent Association of Prep Schools

independent schools council