

Candidate Information

Deputy Head (Pastoral)

Starting September 2027

Exeter School

A School of Great Character

Exeter School
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A message from the Head



Dear candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the post of Deputy Head (Pastoral) 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 we hope to achieve.

At Exeter School, academic achievement matters greatly. We are academically ambitious for our pupils and proud of the outcomes they achieve. However, we firmly believe that children do their best work when they are happy, secure and known as individuals. Wellbeing is the foundation of everything else we do, and we want every pupil to feel valued, supported and able to enjoy their time with us.

That belief shapes our whole community. Our character education framework, rooted in virtue ethics, runs through lessons, pastoral care and co-curricular life, from pre-prep to the sixth form. We are a community rooted in kindness, character and ambition, and our programme in music, drama, sport, outdoor education and service gives every pupil the chance to discover their strengths, build resilience and grow in confidence.

The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will play a central role in leading this vision. You will oversee pastoral care, wellbeing and safeguarding across the school, lead and support a committed team of pastoral staff, and help ensure that our values are lived out in the daily experience of every pupil. 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. Welcoming them and supporting them in balancing their musical and academic commitments is an important part of that work.

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 a caring and inspiring leader who shares our belief that happiness and achievement go hand in hand, 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



With a proud heritage of supporting pupils spanning almost 400 years, Exeter School places the individual child at the heart of our pastoral ethos. We are fully committed to ensuring that every pupil feels safe, known, heard and valued, with their wellbeing and best interests guiding each and every decision we make.

Through strong relationships between pupils, staff and families, and a culture of rigorous safeguarding, kindness and mutual respect, we create a happy, supportive environment in which children feel a genuine sense of belonging and pride. We believe that every pupil success is founded upon emotional security and wellbeing: when pupils feel safe, confident and supported, they are empowered to embrace challenges, take risks in their learning, and extend their potential.

Underpinned by our distinctive virtues-based approach to character education, our outstanding pastoral care nurtures resilience, compassion, independence and integrity, preparing young people not only to flourish at school but to lead happy, purposeful and fulfilling lives beyond Exeter School.

Graham Bone
Senior Deputy Head

"We are very lucky to have such a strong pastoral team at Exeter School, with pupils' wellbeing at the heart of everything we do. As a pastoral assistant, it is incredibly rewarding to see the difference we make in helping pupils feel understood, grow in confidence and navigate life's challenges. This culture of care comes from the top and is central to the ethos of our school."

– Becky Glanville, Pastoral Assistant



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 (Pastoral)

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 (Pastoral)
Reporting to: Head
Summary role: The Deputy Head (Pastoral) plays a central role in shaping and delivering the school's pastoral vision. Working closely with the Head and Senior Deputy Head, this senior leader ensures the highest standards of safeguarding, attendance, wellbeing and pastoral care across the school. They will serve as the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead, online safety lead, Attendance Champion and Allergy Lead, leading the school's safeguarding culture and pastoral systems so that every pupil is known, supported and able to flourish.

They will be an innovative teacher, a confident leader, a calm decision-maker 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 (SLG), 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 the 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 linked to pastoral matters.
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 (Pastoral), including safeguarding and child protection, behaviour management, anti-bullying, attendance, online safety, first aid, rewards and sanctions, and other pastoral policies as required.
7. Manage budgets allocated to the role.



Pastoral

The successful candidate will have strategic oversight of the school's pastoral programme, leading initiatives that promote safety, belonging, positive behaviour, strong attendance and pupil wellbeing.

They will manage the pastoral teams, guiding and supporting staff to deliver a coherent and inclusive pastoral programme across Years 7 to 13.

Leadership of the pastoral programmes within the school with responsibility for:

a. safeguarding and child protection across the school, including leadership of online safety
b. pupil attendance and punctuality, acting as the school's Attendance Champion
c. pupil wellbeing, mental health and wider pastoral care
d. first aid and medical/health provision, including vaccinations and serving as the school's Allergy Lead
e. induction, transition and taster days for new pupils

1. Serving as the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead, with overall responsibility for safeguarding practice, referrals, annual staff safeguarding training (including safeguarding induction for all new staff), liaison with external agencies, case oversight, record keeping and reporting to the Head and governors. Due to the nature of this work some of it will be outside of typical hours including evenings, weekends and school holiday period. Ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are compliant, well understood by staff and consistently implemented across the school.

2. Leading the school's strategic approach to online safety, ensuring that online safeguarding is fully embedded within the school's child protection culture and practice. This includes overseeing the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring systems on school devices and networks, reviewing relevant reports, responding appropriately to safeguarding concerns identified through those systems, and providing assurance to the Head and governors that online safety arrangements are effective and regularly reviewed.



a. Working with the Head of IT Services, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will ensure that staff receive regular training and updates in online safety, including their responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, and working with the Deputy Head (Enrichment, Character and Community) ensure that pupils are taught how to stay safe and behave responsibly online.

3. Leading the school's attendance strategy, monitoring attendance patterns and punctuality, identifying pupils or groups causing concern, and ensuring timely intervention and effective liaison with families and relevant agencies. Serving as the school's 'Attendance Champion'.
4. Working with the Senior Deputy Head to oversee the day-to-day implementation of the school's behaviour systems, setting clear expectations for pupils and ensuring that standards of conduct are maintained through clear policies and a visible presence around the school. Monitoring and acting upon pupil concerns as raised by staff, pupils or parents, and ensuring that appropriate support, intervention and follow-up are put in place.
5. Ensuring the School's virtues and ethos of character education is embedded and developed throughout the school's pastoral systems and activities.
6. Line management of the safeguarding and pastoral leadership teams, including: Head of Safeguarding, the School Nurse, the Assistant Head (Lower School) and the Assistant Head (Middle School).
7. Working closely with the Assistant Head (Sixth Form) and Deputy Head (Junior School) to ensure continuity of pastoral care, safeguarding and pupil support across Years 3 to 13.
8. Providing support for pastoral colleagues in their dealings with pupils and families by dealing directly with pupils, meeting with parents and providing advice, guidance and support to staff.
9. Leading pupil wellbeing and mental health initiatives and ensuring that pastoral care is proactive, joined-up and responsive to pupil need.
10. Overseeing the school's first aid and medical provision, including liaison with the School



Nurse, oversight of vaccination arrangements, and ensuring appropriate systems, care plans and communication are in place for pupils' health needs. Including serving as the school's 'Allergy Lead'.

11. Overseeing induction and transition arrangements for pupils joining the school, including taster days, familiarisation events, new parent induction and other transition activity as required.

12. Contributing 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 (year 7 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 statement

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 pastoral 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	**8 December**



Of particular note was 'Room 3', a safe space where any pupil can pop in for social, emotional or personal support – and pop in they do.

– 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

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