

Appointment of a Teacher of Biology

Required: January 2021

Salary: MPS / UPS

Hours of work: Full or part-time

Contract: Fixed term or Permanent



Welcome from the Principal

We are delighted that you are interested in our Village College. Since opening as a secondary Village College in 1960, we have been true to our roots. We still seek to serve our community and to be at the heart of that community. The school has developed a very great deal, but our community ethos remains.



'Excellence for All' is our over-arching aim and it is the driving force behind all that we do at Comberton Village College. A long-standing national reputation for academic excellence and outstanding opportunities for all of our pupils does not mean that we rest on what has happened here. We always want every single one of our pupils to do his or her best and always seek to strengthen our work to enable this. Ofsted inspections consistently grade the overall effectiveness of our school (including the most recent inspection in February 2013) as 'outstanding'. However, we continue to look for ways that we can improve and do more and do it better for the sake of all pupils and our local community. Our very high-quality and committed staff are at the heart of this and of all that we do.

We seek to ensure that all our pupils receive a broad and rounded education that enables each of them to become capable, caring and confident. The many opportunities available outside of the formal curriculum enable a whole range of talents and attributes to be developed in all of our pupils. These include exciting opportunities overseas in line with our aim to provide education with an international outlook.

The addition of a Sixth Form in September 2011 has enabled us to offer the same excellent standard of education now also to 16-19 year-olds. It was very gratifying that all aspects of our Sixth Form were also graded as 'outstanding' at the first time of asking in February 2013. Understandably, very many students are now choosing Comberton Sixth Form for their Sixth Form years.

As a village college, we remain committed to Henry Morris's vision of the college at the heart of the local community. Our community provision is a central part of our role. We see ourselves very much as an "extended school".

Comberton Village College is at a significant and exciting stage in its development as part of a multi-academy trust. When we set up the Comberton Academy Trust early in 2011, we were determined to have a Trust based on fundamental core values in keeping with the very best of Village College and community-based education in order to deliver excellence for all pupils across each of the Trust's academies. As part of this focus on the future, we took the decision in September 2016 to rename the Trust to become The Cam Academy Trust.

The Cam Academy Trust now comprises 11 academies and we work closely with them to ensure mutual support and challenge for all of the pupils they serve.

In all cases, we see all of them as part of our over-arching remit to provide excellent educational opportunities and outcomes for all pupils in a comprehensive, community context. These core values are articulated in the values of our Academy trust. These values represent our unchanging guide through these very significant and exciting developments

We are absolutely committed to provide the very best education possible for all of our pupils and for our local community. We trust that this website helps to give you a helpful insight into that.

Peter Law FCCT

Principal of Comberton Village College

Overview of the School

THE COLLEGE

Comberton Village College was opened in 1960. As a Cambridgeshire Village College, it was designed to be a centre for the life of its community and to provide quality education for pupils aged between 11 and 16. This remains the case today.

In 1974, the school became fully comprehensive and, in April 1993, it became grant-maintained. It changed to a Foundation School and more recently became a Foundation School with a Trust: the Comberton Educational Trust. In February 2011 the school became an Academy overseen by the Cam Academy Trust. The pupil roll is around 1,800 while over 2,000 adults use the college for a wide range of continuing education and leisure activities. A £7 million building programme was completed in 2003 that has significantly enhanced a whole range of the school's facilities, including major new leisure facilities. A further £4 million building project provided further specialist teaching and learning facilities across a range of subject areas and has been in use since September 2009.

Our Sixth Form opened in September 2011 following the completion of a £9.5 million building project. It offers a strong suite of academic courses, across the subject areas as well as applied courses. This exciting development has enabled students from Comberton to complete their sixth-form studies with us as well as providing opportunities for students from other local schools. There are over 500 students in the Sixth Form who have achieved consistently high results year on year.

THE CAM ACADEMY TRUST

In 2011, The Cam Academy Trust (C.A.T.) was formed. It enabled **Comberton Village College** to convert to Academy status in 2011. Following this, the Cam Academy Trust has taken on further Academies:

- **Melbourn Village College**, an 11-16 Academy in Cambridgeshire. This Academy joined the C.A.T. in September 2013 following an agreement with the C.A.T. to do so.
- **Cambourne Village College**, an 11-16 Academy in Cambridgeshire, close to Comberton Village College. This has been opened as a new Free School by the C.A.T. from September 2013, initially with an intake of Year 7 students only. It serves the new and developing community of Cambourne that was formally in the catchment area of Comberton Village College. Numbers of staff are now teaching at both Cambourne and Comberton Village Colleges as both Academies work extremely closely together.
- **Gamlingay First School** and **St Peter's School, Huntingdon**, both joined the Trust in September 2016.
- Further primary schools include **Offord** primary school, **Thongsley Fields** primary and nursery school, **Hartford** Infant and Junior schools, **Jeavons Wood** primary school, **Gamlingay** Village primary, and **Everton Heath** primary. There is the possibility that the Cam Academy Trust could develop further, although this remains an open question. We are seeking to ensure that all Academies in the Trust work in effective partnership with each other and that there are opportunities for staff to share ideas and resources. For some staff, there will be opportunities to work in more than one Academy.

OUTWARD LOOKING

Comberton Village College has worked significantly with other schools and in outreach projects from 2001 onwards. This dates from various of the designations the school received between 2001 and 2007:

- Specialisms in Sport, Languages and Applied Learning
- Training School and Leading Edge Status

Associated with this, 15 teaching staff were designated as Advanced Skills Teachers and have worked in different ways with other schools.

In July 2011, Comberton Village College was designated as one of the first wave of Teaching Schools in the country. It now works with a number of other schools, including other designated Teaching Schools, as part of the Cambridge Teaching Schools Network in order to provide:

- Initial Teacher Training. We are significantly involved with ITT, including through partnership with the Faculty of Education, Cambridge and through our own SCITT.
- Continuing Professional Development. We provide a number of activities relating to CPD. Many staff in the CAM Academy Trust Schools are able to benefit from these.
- School-to-school support. Staff are involved with supporting achievement in other schools. This includes those designated as Specialist Leaders of Education.
- Research. Many staff are involved in research, including studying for higher level qualifications.

STANDARDS

Comberton Village College has received a full Ofsted inspection on three occasions since 2000: in 2004, 2007 and 2013. On each occasion, the overall effectiveness grade has been 'outstanding'. In the latest inspection in 2013, every aspect of the school's provision was judged to be 'outstanding'. This included the first ever judgement on Sixth Form provision where both teaching and achievement were both clearly deemed already to be 'outstanding'. The short summary was:

"Comberton Village College is a highly successful school which enables its pupils to achieve not only academic excellence but also to become mature, confident, thoughtful and rounded individuals with clear goals for their future lives".

Pupil achievement is consistently high. Typically at KS4, 80% of pupils achieve at least 5+ 9 - 4 grades, including English and Maths, at GCSE or equivalent with 40% of grades at 9-7. Value added measures indicate excellent progress for all types of students. Achievement has been excellent from the outset in the Sixth Form with the significant majority of all grades achieved by students being A*- B. University admissions are very strong including students gaining places on competitive courses at the most selective universities, including Oxbridge.

BROAD EDUCATION

The school's formal day runs from 8.30 a.m. to 2.50 p.m. with 6 timetabled lessons of 50 minutes each day. Pupils see their tutors daily and have a weekly assembly.

However, we believe that true education is broad and should develop character and individual interest. Given this, there is also a very full and wide-ranging extra-curricular programme that runs each day from 3.00 p.m. There are also over 200 school trips and visits each year, both national and international. We have significant school partnerships that involve exchanges in Europe, Peru, South Africa, Mozambique and Japan.

We consider the following as very important:

- Our major Duke of Edinburgh programme. Most pupils do the Bronze award with many continuing to Silver. Some now also progress to the Gold award in our Sixth Form.
- We have held the Arts Mark Gold Award for a number of years, a symbol of our commitment to excellence and breadth in Arts education and provision.
- We have been accredited as a British Council International School since 2002, a sign of our commitment to the international dimension of education.
- We continue to work hard to ensure that the Rights of the Child are promoted, encouraged and understood having been awarded the Rights Respecting Schools Gold award in July 2019.

AIMS AND VALUES

At the heart of what we do are fundamental aims and values relating to education. The Cam Academy Trust has six core principles that must be central to all Academies in the Trust. These have been at the heart of Comberton Village College for many years:

- The Excellence Principle - Education must be of highest of standards and lead to high achievement.
- The Comprehensive Principle - Excellent education must be for all pupils of all types and abilities.
- The Broad Education Principle – Education must incorporate a broad range of subject areas and personal development.
- The Henry Morris Principle - Education should be rooted in and serve its local community.
- The Partnership Principle - We should always look to work in effective partnership with others for mutual benefit.
- The International Principle. There must be a clear international dimension to education both inside and outside of the classroom.

Within these over-arching principles, we seek to ensure that all of our pupils reach their full, positive potential and become:

- **CAPABLE** in the skills relevant to their future lives and in having the knowledge which will increase their understanding, appreciation and interest in the world in which they live.
- **CARING** of others and considerate of the mutual dependence human beings have on each other.
- **CONFIDENT** of their worth because they have developed their strengths, understood their weaknesses and learnt that they can achieve success.

Overview of the Vacancy

THE SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

The Department staff work in eighteen laboratories. In the main school, there are fourteen laboratories and there are four laboratories for sixth form teaching. In the main school upstairs, there are five laboratories and one prep room. The downstairs area comprises nine laboratories, the Science office and three prep rooms, pond and conservation area. All of the laboratories are connected to the school wireless network and the department has excellent ICT resources with a multimedia projector in each lab and plans for students to have their own iPad in the near future.

The team of Science teachers currently comprises fifteen full-time and seven part-time specialists. There are three Heads of Subject who lead the group of teachers delivering their subject in KS4 and KS5, and oversee the development and delivery of their subject in all key stages. The Head of KS3 oversees the management and development of the KS3 course. Also, there are staff in posts of Head of Interventions and STEM, Head of L3 BTEC Science and a Deputy Head of Science. There is a strong sense of teamwork and consistency of approach, both as a whole department and within subject groups. This is supported by a comprehensive and detailed set of schemes of work for all key stages. The department has the support of six laboratory technicians. In addition, close working links with Special Needs Department mean that we receive in-class support from Special Needs Teaching Assistants. We run interventions for students not attending classes as well as peer to peer interventions, with older students tutoring younger students.

The department has had a long involvement with teacher training and currently is involved in mentoring students as part of the school's Initial Teacher Training partnership with the University of Cambridge and with Cambridge Teaching School Network SCITT. The ethos, experience and resourcing of the department make it an excellent place for NQTs to complete their training, as well as more experienced teachers to develop further in the profession. We fully appreciate the demands

and challenges of being an NQT. Any NQTs joining the department would have a reduced timetable, a designated and experienced mentor and whole school NQT training. Equally, RQTs (recently qualified teachers) benefit from being placed on the Trusts' Developing Effective Teaching programme and will have a mentor in the department to ensure teachers continue to develop professionally in the first few years of their career.

We have active links to local industry and scientists and are a STEM test-bed school. We have a thriving Science/STEM club, enter pupils for science competitions, run Science themed events during the school's Activities week and involve pupils in a range of competitions and trips during a typical year. This is a real emphasis of the department, where teachers are encouraged to promote and offer these exciting opportunities.

For KS3 the Department has written its own course, matched to the new National Curriculum and drawing on relevant best practice from the old curriculum and the wealth of experience and knowledge within the department. This was a collaborative effort, as is its on-going review. It has resulted in a course that is taught by all teachers to groups of students in three broad ability bands and contains integral assessment opportunities. Staff teach across the Sciences in the Lower School. Pupils in Year 7 are taught initially in mixed ability tutor groups and then regrouped in to broad bands towards the end of Y7.

The Science Department has consistently achieved a high level of success at GCSE. All of the pupils are entered for GCSE Science, with some students also following Entry Level Science alongside. The last 3 years of GCSE examination results for all science courses were:

	A*-A/9-7	A*-B/9-5	A*-C/9-4	A*-E/9-1
Results 2019	52%	82%	94%	99%
Results 2018	48%	83%	94%	100%
Results 2017	45%	65%	86%	99%
Results 2016	33%	56%	78%	99%

Separate Science results were 71% 9 - 7 and 94% 9 – 5 grades in 2018. Approximately half of KS4 students choose the separate science option (about 140 students per year group). At KS4, for the new GCSE 9-1 Science curriculum, we follow the AQA Trilogy Combined Science and Separate Science series. Staff usually teach their Science specialism at KS4. We have written our own schemes of work at KS4, with an assessment theme of students consistently "following up" key assessed tasks. We aim to work smartly, looking for high quality yet efficient practices.

The school opened a new sixth form in September 2011. The A-level syllabuses taught are OCR A Biology, OCR A Chemistry and OCR A Physics. In the current year 13 we are running three Biology (49 students), three Chemistry (42 students), three Physics (47 students) and one L3 BTEC Science groups (11 students). Number of students and classes are similar in Y12. Our numbers in the Sixth Form have increased significantly where we aim to cap classes at 20 students maximum. Results in over the last 3 years in A level Sciences were as follows:

Grades	Biology	Chemistry	Physics
A*A 2016	30%	50%	39%
A*-B 2016	70%	75%	78%
A*-C 2016	78%	81%	83%
2017			
A*A 2017	15%	10%	6%
A*-B 2017	52%	35%	31%
A*-C 2017	81%	70%	44%
2018			
A*A 2018	35%	25%	27%
A*-B 2018	60%	60%	50%
A*-C 2018	85%	85%	80%
2019			
A*A 2019	13%	10%	16%
A*-B 2019	41%	24%	52%
A*-C 2019	81%	48%	76%

Good progress is made by our students, with most taking up their first choice university places. We have a large number of students who go on to study science related subjects at Russell group universities and Oxbridge. Our intake is varied and very few students “drop out”, therefore each year we do get variation in results depending on the cohort of students. The L3 BTEC Science course has been hugely successful with students going on to Science related careers or university courses.

We operate in subject (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) teams at KS4 and KS5, whilst at KS3 teachers would expect to teach all 3 sciences. We have a technician for each subject at KS4 and KS5 and 2 technicians for KS3 Science. Each team takes ownership over how they operate, with some overarching guidance from the whole science department.

The biology team currently comprises 8 teachers able to teach to KS5. There are designated biology technicians for each key stage. We have close links to the University of Cambridge and take part in many of their outreach opportunities and more. Many students go on to study biology or closely related courses at university.

THE VACANCY

The post is available from January 2021 for a full-time or part-time teacher and the person appointed will potentially have the opportunity to teach all three key stages. We welcome applications from trainees, newly qualified teachers as well as more experienced teachers.

We are seeking to appoint someone who has:

- good subject knowledge, able to teach biology to KS5
- a strong sense of team work and willingness to contribute
- a desire to improve their own and departments practice
- enthusiasm for Science and the ability to convey this to pupils
- a working knowledge of the National Curriculum in Science
- successful teaching skills, including use of ICT
- efficient and systematic working skills
- effective oral and written communication skills

The post will offer an excellent opportunity for personal development within a dynamic and successful Science department and a school that has professional development as a core value. The successful candidate will need to meet the requirements of the general teacher job description and person specification on the college website.

For further details and an application form please visit our website www.combertonvc.org/contact-us/current-vacancies. To get a better insight of our school please have a look at our video: <https://www.combertonvc.org/about-us/open-evening.php>

HOW TO APPLY

Please complete and return the Teacher Application form located on our website. Your application should be supported by a letter of application (consisting of no more than 2 sides of A4 printed) which explains:

- The reason for your interest
- Your relevant track record that confirms you could fulfil the expectations of the role
- Your reflections on how you could contribute to the further development of Comberton Village College as a truly excellent school.

Applications should be submitted to: Mrs L Atherton, HR Manager via email to latherton@combertonvc.org, by **9.00am on Monday, 19th October 2020**. Interviews will be held on Thursday 22nd October 2020.

If you wish to discuss the post further or visit us in advance, please contact Dr Suzanne Smith, Head of Science, at the College via email susmith@combertonvc.org.

Please note: we do not accept CVs.

The Governing Body is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. An Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be carried out for the successful candidate.