



Dunottar School



Working at Dunottar

HEAD OF GEOGRAPHY

For September 2026



Welcome to Dunottar School

Dunottar is a vibrant, co-educational independent secondary school in Reigate, Surrey. We have 460 pupils across years 7-13 (ages 11-18) and are part of United Learning's family of schools. We are also entering an exciting phase of growth, having recently been granted permission to expand our roll to 600 students. 2026 is an important milestone in our school's rich history as it marks our Centenary year. At Dunottar our aim is to bring out the best in every pupil, enabling them to be the very best they can be. Pastoral care is at the heart of everything we do, and we pride ourselves on our warm and nurturing, family environment. In addition, we offer an outstanding education to our pupils and, through excellent teaching and high levels of individual support, seek to enable them to achieve added value which is comparable with what is achieved in the top schools in the UK.

We are delighted that you are considering working at Dunottar School. We are a close knit team where every professional's impact and input is valued. As a rapidly developing school, I am looking for staff who pride themselves on the highest possible professional standards, are keen to immerse themselves in school life and who relish the creativity of the opportunity that is provided here.

In return, you will enjoy an exciting and rewarding professional life where you will genuinely feel that you are shaping not just the futures of the children you teach, but the school itself. As part of United Learning's family of schools, your professional development opportunities are second to none. Our staff benefit from the expertise that comes from working with other dedicated teachers and staff from a variety of different schools and contexts; so whatever stage of your career you are at, I am confident that you will continue to learn and develop by becoming part of our team.

Mark Tottman, Headmaster



Our People

We aim to appoint the very best teachers who have a passion and enthusiasm for their subject and, beyond that, for teaching itself, so that pupils at Dunottar are inspired to achieve their very best. Enjoying the opportunity of teaching children with a range of academic abilities, our staff feel that their vocation is in enabling every child to gain the best possible outcomes. Success is not measured in raw results, but in how much more each child has achieved than might have been expected.

We create a culture where teachers take pride in exchanging ideas and in talking about teaching. Our staff seek out new ideas from each other and from the United Learning network in a quest for continuous improvement, and are able to blend interrogation of data with understanding the needs of their pupils, equipping them to challenge and care for their pupils in equal measure.

Dunottar is a school with a distinctive atmosphere and an exciting and dynamic place to work. Teaching and support staff work collaboratively in an environment where fun and hard work go hand in hand. It is a school where you can have real impact and where there are rewarding career opportunities for motivated, talented individuals.



The Geography Department

At Dunottar, the Geography Department aims to offer every pupil the opportunity to develop a truly enquiring mind, questioning the world around them and looking at how interrelationships between the physical and human world are entwined. Our curriculum, throughout the school, is designed to bring the awe and wonder of Geography into the classroom, through use of multimedia resources and a wide range of teaching strategies, covering a range of geographical topics across the contrasting countries from all corners of the globe. Skills development is vital within geography and we focus not only on map skills, data representation and interpretation skills, but also aim to develop soft skills through offering ranges of activities which support skills in team work, presentation, communication, problem solving and leadership. This provides opportunities for pupils to demonstrate the seven Warrior Learner behaviours on which our Teaching & Learning strategy is based.

Topics

Topics are chosen to highlight the importance of the interrelationships, from our impact on ecosystems and biomes, at both local and international scale, to how our consumer choices can impact on other people's lives through the study of globalisation. Sustainability and environmental themes run through all units, supporting the development of evaluative skills in terms of the costs and benefits of many of our human interactions, and the values attached to these. We explore locations far away through the exciting topics such as Fantastic Places, the Amazon and China to the more local themes such as fracking in Horley and Leith Hill. Even closer to home, we investigate the woodland ecosystem at Dunottar School using our outdoor classroom.

Trips and Excursions

Exciting trips are also part of our offering with a regular trip to Iceland being offered along with residential trips to Suffolk, London Docklands, Battersea and Stratford giving pupils opportunities to explore the world around them.

Developing Skills for Life

We aim to give our pupils the ability to ask questions, to identify and be able to explain patterns, to challenge ideas, evaluate and to have the tools to take the initiative to prove or disprove geographical theory. This helps support our pupils to develop all-round skills which will be essential in the world of work.





The Role

Geography is a popular subject at Dunottar, with many pupils studying AQA Geography at KS4 and KS5. We seek to appoint an outstanding and inspirational Head of Geography to lead this successful and friendly department. We are looking for a dynamic leader who can shape the strategic direction of the department, further develop the curriculum, and foster a culture that stimulates curiosity, critical thinking, and a deep enthusiasm for the subject. The successful candidate will be committed to the aims and ethos of both the Geography department and Dunottar School, and will play a key role in driving academic excellence.

Fieldwork is an integral part of our provision, and the Head of Geography will oversee the planning and delivery of a range of enriching field trips, both within and beyond the school day, ensuring these experiences enhance pupils' learning and engagement.

The ideal candidate will bring strong leadership, vision, and energy to the role. They will support and develop colleagues, promote high-quality teaching and learning, and contribute fully to the school's co-curricular and enrichment programme. We welcome applications from experienced subject leaders or ambitious colleagues seeking their first departmental leadership position. Part-time applications may be considered, depending on the level of flexibility offered. In return, we offer all the benefits of working within a thriving, supportive, and collaborative school environment.



Key Responsibilities

1. Learning and Teaching

- Provide strategic leadership of teaching and learning within the Geography department, ensuring high-quality, imaginative, and academically rigorous provision across all key stages.
- Oversee the development, review, and implementation of curriculum planning, schemes of work, and assessment frameworks to ensure they are coherent, progressive, and aligned with school and exam-board expectations.
- Model outstanding classroom practice, setting high expectations for teaching quality and pupil engagement.
- Monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning through lesson visits, work scrutiny, pupil feedback, and assessment data.
- Lead departmental initiatives to raise attainment, using pupil progress data to identify trends and implement effective intervention strategies.
- Ensure effective deployment of departmental resources, including digital learning tools, textbooks, and fieldwork materials.
- Promote a culture of academic curiosity, encouraging pupils to think independently, engage critically, and develop a passion for Geography.
- Support teachers within the department, providing guidance, coaching, and professional support to enable strong pedagogical practice.

2. Pastoral

- Uphold and promote the school's pastoral vision and expectations within the department, ensuring that Geography classrooms are inclusive, safe, and supportive environments.
- Support tutors and teachers in monitoring the well-being, behaviour, and academic progress of pupils within the department.
- Act as a positive role model, demonstrating professional conduct consistent with the Teachers' Standards and the ethos of Dunottar School.
- While the post-holder may also be a Form Tutor (depending on timetable allocation), their pastoral influence will extend across the whole department.

3. General Responsibilities

- Lead the organisation and delivery of Geography-related co-curricular and enrichment activities, including academic clubs, competitions, and speaker events.
- Oversee the planning, risk assessment, and execution of field trips and visits, ensuring they enhance the curriculum and meet school policy requirements.
- Ensure departmental compliance with school policies, including behaviour, rewards and sanctions, assessment, marking, and reporting.
- Maintain effective communication with parents, supporting colleagues during parents' evenings and addressing subject-specific queries as needed.
- Chair departmental meetings, coordinating agendas, minutes, and follow-up actions.
- Manage departmental administration, including budgeting, ordering resources, and overseeing displays.
- Support school-wide events, including assessment days, taster days, open events, and duties, as required.
- Carry out any additional responsibilities reasonably requested by senior leadership, particularly those relating to curriculum development or departmental management.



Key Responsibilities Continued

4. Professional Development

- Lead the professional development of Geography staff, identifying training needs and facilitating opportunities for growth, including mentoring ECTs where applicable.
- Contribute to whole-school CPD, sharing best practice and supporting initiatives that enhance teaching and learning.
- Engage actively in personal professional development, keeping subject knowledge and pedagogical expertise up to date.
- Lead the departmental contribution to annual development planning, including strategic goals, self-evaluation, and improvement priorities.
- Participate in and support staff appraisal processes, ensuring constructive and developmental feedback for departmental colleagues.

5. Subject-Specific Responsibilities

- Ensure the Geography curriculum is ambitious, engaging, and broad, enabling pupils of all abilities to meet high expectations.
- Maintain excellent subject knowledge, including awareness of current geographical issues, pedagogical research, and exam-board requirements.
- Quality-assure internal assessments, ensuring consistency, fairness, and alignment with GCSE and A-Level standards.
- Oversee and enrich fieldwork provision, ensuring all pupils develop key geographical skills and benefit from meaningful educational visits, both local and residential.
- Promote Geography across the school, showcasing the subject's relevance, contemporary importance, and academic value.
- Adapt departmental priorities as needed, ensuring responsiveness to curriculum changes, school initiatives, and national developments in Geography education.

Person Specification

Qualifications

- A record of excellent academic achievement including a relevant honours degree.
- PGCE/QTS.
- Evidence of continued professional development relevant to Geography and/or middle leadership.
- Ability to lead and quality-assure the delivery of AQA Geography at GCSE and A-Level.

Skills and Knowledge

- Strong and secure Geography subject knowledge across KS3, GCSE and A-Level.
- Proven ability (or clear potential) to lead, develop and inspire a team of colleagues.
- Ability to design and refine an ambitious, coherent and well-sequenced Geography curriculum.
- Ability to model high-quality classroom practice and support others in improving teaching and learning.
- Excellent organisational, administrative and ICT skills, including the ability to manage departmental systems and resources effectively.
- Strong communication skills: able to communicate clearly, sensitively and professionally with pupils, staff, parents and external partners.
- Ability to analyse data to identify trends, monitor progress and implement effective interventions.
- Ability to work collaboratively across the department and wider school.

Attitudes and Personal Qualities

- Committed to the ethos, values and strategic vision of Dunottar School.
- A strong commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.
- Willingness to lead and contribute to a busy co-curricular programme, including clubs, competitions, trips and fieldwork.
- High expectations of pupil achievement, personal development and conduct.
- A proactive leader, fully committed to delivering a busy yearly programme of academic and enrichment events, including those that may take place during evenings, weekends or holidays.
- Commitment to best practice in pastoral support and student welfare.
- Personal and professional integrity, with the ability to exercise discretion and maintain confidentiality.
- Strong interpersonal skills, with the warmth and presence to build positive relationships with pupils, colleagues and parents.
- High standards of personal presentation and professionalism.
- A collaborative team player with leadership qualities, flexibility and a reflective approach.
- Excellent attention to detail and the ability to self-direct, prioritise and take initiative.
- Positive, enthusiastic and energetic approach to school life.
- Ability to think creatively and imaginatively, contributing to the continued development of the department.
- Ambitious and aspirational for both the pupils and the continued growth of the Geography department and whole school.



Part of United Learning

Dunottar School is part of United Learning, a large, and growing, group of over 100 schools aiming to offer a life changing education to children and young people across England.

Our schools work as a team and achieve more by sharing than any single school could. Our subject specialists, our group-wide intranet, our own curriculum and our online learning portal all help us share knowledge and resource, helping to simplify work processes and manage workloads for an improved work-life balance.

The Package

- **Salary:** Appropriate point on the United Learning Teachers' Pay Scale plus Head of Department responsibility allowance.
- **Pension:** TPS or APTIS Pension Scheme.
- **Remission of fees:** For permanent members of staff with children who attend a UL independent school (in line with the usual admissions policy) - currently 33% for the first child and 50% for further children, pro rata for part-time staff.
- Tailored **Continuous Professional Development.**
- **Employee benefits:** A variety of benefits including gym, cycle and car lease salary sacrifice schemes; access to an Employee Assistance Programme which provides independent, confidential advice 24 hours a day; money back towards the cost of essential healthcare via Westfield Health Cash Plan; a range of discounts, including retail and entertainment discounts via Westfield Rewards.
- **Dining:** Free school lunch during term time.
- **Sports and leisure:** Use of the swimming pool, the Courtyard Gym and tennis courts (at specific times).

Our Location and Facilities

Dunottar School is based in a handsome Palladian-style mansion set in 15 acres of beautiful grounds, just outside Reigate town centre. In addition to the main Mansion House, the school has modern wings housing classrooms, a university-style Sixth Form Centre with rec room and café. The school has a £4.5m Performing Arts Centre, with music practice rooms and a 500-seat theatre, art and DT studios. Our sport facilities comprise of a 25m indoor swimming pool, a large Sports Hall with 4-lane cricket net system, three floodlit outdoor netball courts and a sports field. Rugby and football fixtures are played at South Park FC and Old Reigatians RFC, where we have use of extensive and well-maintained rugby and football pitches (including a 4G pitch).



Contact Information

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