



St Hugh's School
Woodhall Spa, Lincolnshire
www.st-hughs.lincs.sch.uk

APPOINTMENT OF HEAD

FOR SEPTEMBER 2019 IF POSSIBLE

BRIEFING FOR CANDIDATES

Simon Shneerson is assisting St Hugh's School with this appointment and will be delighted to discuss the vacancy with you and to answer any questions.



@sthughslincs

simonshneerson.

07986 100237 • info@simonshneerson.com

KEY DATES

JANUARY 28 at 11.00 am

CLOSING DATE

FEBRUARY 1

LONG LIST CANDIDATES NOTIFIED

FEBRUARY 12 and 13

FIRST INTERVIEWS

MARCH 3 and 4

FINAL INTERVIEWS

Start date September 2019 if possible.



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WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in St Hugh's. We are looking for a successor to Chris Ward who is leaving us this summer after six successful years. During this time he has led a number of initiatives which have changed, developed and improved the school's offer. He has done an excellent job and our October 2018 ISI report underlines how well things are working here.

First and foremost, St Hugh's is a happy, busy school and, if you visit us, you will immediately pick up the feel of our ethos. The children always come first. We have a strong sense of community and we are a well-established part of the Lincolnshire community. We offer a broad, forward-thinking education that combines traditional quality with exciting experiences and we have a very strong local reputation in an area where word of mouth goes a long way.

Having recently stopped both Saturday school and full boarding, we now offer a more family-friendly work-life balance to our staff, our parents and the children. If you would relish leading a successful school in a part of the country where good education is valued, we will give you excellent experience of headship and you will enjoy being here.

Do please contact our adviser, Simon Shneerson, who will be happy to tell you more. I very much hope you will wish to apply and look forward to hearing from you.

John Harris
Chairman of Governors



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BACKGROUND BRIEFING

OVERVIEW

St Hugh's is a lively, high-quality family-style co-educational prep school with 170 children aged 2 to 13. It is situated in Woodhall Spa in Lincolnshire, a large and picturesque village with good shops and various amenities such as a cinema, lido swimming pool and the National Golf Centre. The historic city of Lincoln is located about 20 miles away, as is the market town of Boston.

St Hugh's was founded in 1925 and has an excellent academic record as the only traditional prep school in the area. The school has a strong local and regional reputation, and enquiries and registrations are good despite the economic climate.

This is a school where the children are genuinely encouraged and helped to find and develop their interests and abilities, where the variety of activities is far greater than one would normally find in a relatively small school, and where the partnerships between staff, children and parents are unusually strong. The friendly can-do ethos runs through every aspect of the school and visitors pick up on the genuinely warm relationships as soon as they come through the door. Values of courtesy and consideration are important and widely respected.

The school's main focus is on day education and a Monday to Friday format. Sequential initiatives in recent years have included developing the Nursery and EYFS provision, ending Saturday school and full boarding, and expanding the school transport system. While keeping overall pupil numbers steady, St Hugh's has replaced its few full boarders with very healthy cohorts of day pupils moving up the school. Flexi-boarding remains popular and works well in this area of the country, and there are a few weekly boarders too.

Children leave at 13+ for a wide range of senior schools including Oakham, Oundle, Uppingham, Repton and Stamford, and the scholarship record is outstanding. Other children take the 11+ examination for Lincolnshire grammar schools and this year the pass rate was 100%.

Though academically strong, St Hugh's is not selective at the point of entry and its ability to cater successfully for children of all abilities is one of its major strengths. In October 2018 the ISI team commented that the study skills of the less able pupils were "exceptional". The Inspection also gave the highest possible grading of 'excellent' to all areas of the school.



BACKGROUND BRIEFING

SIZE AND SHAPE

As mentioned, the school currently has 170 pupils. Within that figure the shape of the school has been changing and growing numbers of younger children are joining and moving up the school.

Nursery and Transition normally start the academic year with 30+ children and increase to approximately 40 as the year progresses. At the time of writing there are 33 children in the 2018-9 Nursery group.

In Pre-Prep there are currently 37 children and the main school has 100 from Years 3 to 8.

Most pupils stay until Year 8 although a few pupils leave at Year 6 to join Lincolnshire's grammar schools, but this is counter-balanced by a small intake into Year 7 from state primary schools.

STAFF

St Hugh's has 20 members of teaching staff, as well as 10 teaching assistants, 3 special needs teachers and 7 peripatetic music staff. The support team includes the Finance Officer, a Finance Administrator, School Secretary/PA to Headmaster, Marketing Officer, two maintenance men, a groundsman, one Matron and nine ancillary/domestic staff.

The staff team works hard and is also a sociable group. Morale and motivation are strong and people enjoy working at St Hugh's. There is regular CPD and investment in individual training, along with continuous assessment of performance and constructive coaching by the senior team.



BACKGROUND BRIEFING

ETHOS

St Hugh's is based on an ethos of putting each child first and seeking to develop him or her as a true individual. This is wrapped in a can-do culture where staff work collaboratively with one another and in partnership with parents, seeking to ensure that every child is understood, nurtured and encouraged. Achievements of any sort are recognised and success is celebrated across all academic and non-academic areas.

The religious affiliation is "gently" Church of England but those of other faiths or none are welcomed. Traditional assemblies are held during the week.

In overall terms the school maintains traditional values, though with a modern slant and one which reflects the local area and the senior schools the children will move on to.

EDUCATIONAL AIMS

The formal statement of Aims is:

- To offer a broad, stimulating curriculum that helps each and every child to develop and to fulfil their potential, both within and beyond the classroom.
- To provide a happy and stimulating environment in which every child feels safe, valued and cared for.
- To encourage the traditional values of courtesy, honesty and hard work, together with a sense of responsibility and consideration for others.
- To promote an inclusive environment based on core British values and a Christian ethos.
- To prepare children successfully for transfer to a wide range of senior schools.



BACKGROUND BRIEFING

THE EDUCATION

St Hugh's offers a broad, high-quality education that is focussed both on successful entrance to target senior schools and on giving the children an excellent grounding for life. Teaching develops learning skills and curiosity as well as providing subject knowledge and exam preparation, while pastoral care and social development are also areas of strength.

The school can accommodate a wide range of abilities and the strongest children can be taught to a very high level, with specialist teachers in the core subjects. At the same time, pupils with special educational needs are very well accommodated by a very experienced learning support team.

The school has implemented a pioneering Visible Learning programme which helps staff and pupils identify what makes the biggest impact on pupils' learning.

The ISI report in October 2018 achieved the highest possible grading of 'excellent' in all areas of educational quality, with large numbers of extremely positive comments in the report's narrative. The school also met all the standards within the compliance inspection. Pastoral care is excellent too, and the children are confident and "buzzy".

St Hugh's offers great breadth across music, the visual arts, drama, sports and a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Sports are coached and played to a high standard; the major sports are football, cricket, hockey (girls and boys) netball, rounders and rugby. Pupils also represent the school in athletics, cross country, swimming and tennis.

Music is of a very high standard, with nearly all pupils learning an instrument and there are a number of different ensembles, two choirs and an orchestra. Concerts and dramatic productions are regular features.



BACKGROUND BRIEFING

FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

St Hugh's has first-class facilities and resources, especially for a school of this size.

The core academic subjects are well supported with quality teaching facilities which include two science laboratories, a well-equipped design and technology centre, an art suite and a home economics room. For the performing arts, there is a Music School and a performance hall.

The school has excellent IT provision, including tablets. Outside, there is a Forest School area.

For sports, there are eight grass pitches and an all-weather pitch, together with a spacious sports hall, a grass athletics track, a heated indoor swimming pool and tennis courts.

The school runs a fleet of six minibuses for pupils, allowing pupils to travel from all parts of the county each day. For those who wish to stay overnight, boarding accommodation is of a high standard and has been recently upgraded.



BACKGROUND BRIEFING

THE SCHOOL ROUTINE

Since September 2018 the school has operated a Monday-Friday week with a start time of around 8.30 am. End of day times are staggered, with the younger children finishing from 3.30 pm onwards and the oldest at 6.30 pm (after prep). An evening hobby programme is offered to children who are flexi-boarding, and is part of the attraction of staying overnight.

SENIOR SCHOOLS

Most pupils leave St Hugh's at the end of Year 8 via Common Entrance and a significant number go on to board at their senior schools. St Hugh's has an impressive scholarship record at first-division schools and around one in three of the 13+ leavers gains an award.

A few children leave at Year 6 for Lincolnshire grammar schools and are replaced by children joining from 11+ schools.

BOARDING

In line with national trends, the boarding demographic has changed over recent years and St Hugh's has updated its offer to reflect this. Children are offered both weekly and flexi boarding from Monday to Thursday (inclusive), with termly activity evenings.

The boarding house accommodates 30-40 boarders and most families opt for the attractive flexi-boarding offering, which provides convenience, comfort and the chance to take part in exciting evening activities. The weekly offer appeals to families where both parents are working, perhaps commuting to London or travelling elsewhere.

The school also caters for British, American and other overseas families who are stationed at local RAF bases.



BACKGROUND BRIEFING

GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

The school is a registered charity, no. 527611, which means it has no outside shareholders and any surpluses can be re-invested in developing the school and its facilities.

There are currently ten volunteer Governors who bring expertise in education, business management, accountancy, marketing and law. The Chairman, John Harris, is a local businessman and a past parent. Governors know the School well, are actively involved and are strongly supportive of it. The full Board and its Education, Finance and Marketing Committee meet each term.

The SLT is a small but dedicated and highly experienced team, comprising the Head, the Director of Studies, the Head of Pastoral Care, the Head of Pre-Prep and (currently) the Headmaster's wife. The SLT works well together and also enjoys very good relationships with the governors.

THE BUSINESS CONTEXT

Day-to-day finances and the school's infrastructure and maintenance are in the hands of a full-time Finance and Admin Officer who reports both to the Head and the Governing body.

The Governors are aware that the economic climate is difficult and that private education is under pressure, so they have been taking steps to ensure that St Hugh's is strategically and operationally sound, and also that it is resilient. The decisions to focus on the local/regional day and flexi-boarding market rather than national and international full boarding, and to stop Saturday school in order to improve the School's marketing appeal, were all part of a broader approach to strengthen the business side of the school for the long term.

The Governors also take a cautious approach to spending and have focussed recent investment on teaching and learning resources, as well as on ensuring that staff are well trained and motivated.

As a result, the 2017-8 accounts are currently being finalised but show an increased surplus compared to 2016-7, and projections for the current year (2018-9) are for an even better outcome. The school has no borrowings.



BACKGROUND BRIEFING

CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

Every prep school faces economic and marketing challenges, but at St Hugh's we have a local market that remains solid and committed to quality education, with a sound base of local families as well as those at RAF stations in the area.

For the incoming Head, the main challenges will be:

- Settling into the role, the school and the local area and becoming the face of the school
- Championing exciting education within the school and the community
- As appropriate, expanding the school in its new Monday-Friday format
- Adjusting teaching and learning to allow for any changes to the prep school / CE curriculum
- Developing the curriculum to make the most of emerging technology



BACKGROUND BRIEFING

THE NEXT HEAD

The Governors wish to appoint a graduate who is a well-qualified, first-rate teacher with relevant school experience.

The paramount requirement is to maintain the spirit and ethos of the school and build on the recent excellent inspection. The new Head must, of course, champion the safe, happy and friendly environment at St Hugh's, whilst constantly seeking new and exciting ways to enhance the academic and extra-curricular education.

That's quite a dry specification. What the School really wants is someone who is excited and enthusiastic about helping children achieve as much as possible in a happy, stimulating and adventurous school. Someone who is great with children, someone who can inspire the staff to inspire the children, and someone who can inspire the parents to be inspired by what the staff and the children are doing.

If you can do that, please get in touch. You may be new to headship or you may not be. You may be keen to run your own school, or you may be running a school where you are constrained by your staff, your resources, your governors or your parents. At St Hugh's, everyone will be very supportive and there is considerable scope for someone with vision and energy to make an impact, so the position will be both challenging and rewarding.

THE NEXT HEAD'S PARTNER (IF THEY HAVE ONE)

Chris and Angharad Ward have been closely involved in all the school's activities during his headship, working as a true husband and wife team in the finest prep school traditions.

The whole school community would be delighted if the next Head's spouse/partner would like to play a role in the school too. But we very much welcome and encourage single candidates or anyone whose spouse is following their own career path.



BACKGROUND BRIEFING

SUMMARY

This is an excellent opportunity to take up the Headship of a high-quality prep school, with a solid catchment area, a really strong and supportive community, and scope to further develop the school and its offer now that it has given up full boarding and a six-day week.

Woodhall Spa is a good place to live and a move to St Hugh's will give excellent career experience as well as quality of life for you and any family you may have.

For an informal and confidential discussion, please contact Simon Shneerson who will be honest and helpful.

For a more comprehensive overview of the school please visit our website at:

www.st-hughs.lincs.sch.uk



PERSON PROFILE

The ideal candidate should have the following:

EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

- Graduate with recognised teaching qualification
- Proven track record as a successful, effective teacher
- Experience of headship, senior management or senior school house leadership, managing both people and performance
- Broad awareness of educational theory and practice and of the needs of the prep and pre-prep age group, as well as trends, issues and opportunities
- An understanding of prep school boarding
- A clear educational vision of a successful prep school in the future

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- High personal standards of probity
- An inspiring, confident personality with the ability to excite, lead, guide and gain the respect of staff, children and parents
- A deep passion for education and compassion for others
- Committed to a day and boarding ethos and enthusiastic about school sport
- Willing to support St Hugh's broadly Christian principles
- A willingness to challenge the status quo and a "can-do" mentality
- Sound judgement of people and situations
- Drive, energy and enthusiasm, combined with compassion and patience
- Personable with others and comfortable with parents
- Customer focussed
- Self motivated, flexible and resilient; calm under pressure
- Pragmatic
- Reliable; delivering against promises



PERSON PROFILE

The ideal candidate should have the following:

LEADERSHIP SKILLS AND STYLE

- Able to motivate, influence and inspire, managing others effectively and sensitively and providing coaching as well as instructions
- Open, honest and supportive management style
- A decision maker, with a proven track record of demonstrating understanding and sensitivity when resolving conflicts
- Good organiser with the ability to prioritise
- Able to manage detail as well as the big picture
- Empathy with the School's ethos, which is to be a caring, family environment that plays a full role in the local community
- Enjoys encouraging and celebrating the success and achievements of pupils and staff

BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS

- At least basic financial awareness, and the ability to balance educational and business objectives
- Ability to consider and discuss the widest strategic issues with Governors
- Empathy with administrative and support staff
- Marketing awareness, to present and promote the School
- Willingness to develop the commercial as well as the educational side of the School
- Awareness of HR legislation and good practice
- Awareness of safeguarding legislation and good practice
- Awareness of wider school operations – domestic, sporting, arts and community activities
- Computer literate and confident with ICT



PERSON PROFILE

The ideal candidate should have the following:

THINKING AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- Able to think strategically, build and communicate a coherent vision
- Clear and perceptive communicator, able to command authority and respect
- Good listener with plenty of empathy
- Happy as a public speaker
- Able to be the very visible face of a school
- Able to forge strong links with other schools, both locally and nationally, and to be involved in the wider community

St Hugh's School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the position, including checks with previous employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.



JOB DESCRIPTION

Please note that a formal and more detailed job description will be provided to candidates invited for interview. All the relevant policies can be found on the School's website.

THE ROLE

- The Head is responsible for providing effective and inspirational leadership to the School, for providing an exciting, stimulating and effective education to all the pupils, and for the management and welfare of staff and pupils throughout the school. He or she reports directly to the Governing Body and is accountable for all aspects of the school's performance.

THE MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES ARE TO

- promote and achieve the School's ethos, aims and objectives
- ensure the achievement of excellent educational and pastoral standards, and to
- promote and safeguard the welfare of all pupils and of the staff
- run the school safely, efficiently, effectively and in a way that is financially sound

THE HEAD IS ALSO ACCOUNTABLE TO THE GOVERNORS FOR

- ensuring full compliance with all policies, with all statutory requirements and with accepted good/best practice:
- ensuring that Governors are kept informed of progress and of all relevant issues
- providing the Board with timely professional guidance and sound recommendations for new vision, strategy, policies, and decisions

Success in the role will require a deep and passionate interest in the well-being and personal development of each and every child, with the ability and a willingness to encourage and support pupils, staff and parents.



JOB DESCRIPTION

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Lead the overall strategy of the school and be an excellent role model to all
- Recruit, retain, develop, motivate and manage staff
- Develop the academic, extra-curricular and pastoral life of the school and ensure the highest standards of teaching, learning, care and encouragement
- Oversee the School's boarding provision
- Manage the Finance Officer and the School's business, finances, premises and resources
- Promote excellent working relations among and between staff and pupils
- Ensure all policies are compliant with current regulations and reviewed regularly
- Undertake appropriate professional development and keep abreast of educational developments, refining the school's vision and practice
- Instigate, plan and manage change effectively
- Promote and market St Hugh's effectively to parents, senior schools and other audiences



REMUNERATION, TERMS AND CONDITIONS

REMUNERATION

A comprehensive reward package will be offered to reflect the experience and qualifications of the successful candidate.

The main elements are:

- an excellent salary
- a 5-bedroom house on the school site, including utilities
- contributions to the Teachers' Pension Scheme, or a personal pension if you prefer
- private health insurance
- a generous discount on your children's fees (if applicable), if they join the School
- ongoing investment in your personal training and development
- encouragement to be an ISI Inspector and an active member of IAPS

Relocation support may be made available, if relevant.



REMUNERATION, TERMS AND CONDITIONS

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

The Head's appointment is dependent on

- a satisfactory medical examination
- three satisfactory references including one from your current or most recent employer
- Enhanced DBS clearance and barred list check
- proof of qualifications
- proof of your entitlement to work in the UK

A detailed contract will be agreed with the successful candidate, under terms usual to a headship.

There will be a probationary period of one year during which either party can terminate the employment on two months' notice. Thereafter, two terms' notice will apply to either party.

The Head of St Hugh's is expected to be, or become, a member of IAPS.

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

The successful candidate will be expected to commit to the following:

St Hugh's seeks to provide a safe environment for children. All staff will adhere to and ensure compliance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy at all times. If the Head becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety of welfare of children in the school, he or she must immediately report any concerns to the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead.



REMUNERATION, TERMS AND CONDITIONS

THE HEAD'S SPOUSE OR PARTNER (IF APPLICABLE)

We recognise the difficulties of moving to a new school and we would welcome the active involvement of any spouse or partner if they have appropriate interests or qualifications. This is, however, in no way part of our selection criteria for the Headship and candidates will be considered purely on their own merits. If a partner does not wish to be involved in the life of the School, that is fine.

If you do envisage a possible role for your spouse or partner, it would help if you mentioned this on page 7 of the application form.

The Head's partner will be remunerated according to the degree and area of his or her involvement in the school and a separate employment contract will be agreed.



APPLICATION PROCESS

We are seeking a new Head to join us in September 2019, if possible.

To apply, simply download the Application Form, which is a Word document and easy to type into. Don't worry about page breaks or formatting. When you have finished, please e-mail it to Simon Shneerson at info@simonshneerson.com.

We do not need a cover letter, as the form includes a personal statement, but do use the e-mail to mention any preferences for interview dates or anything else that we can do to help you.

Applications must be received by 11 am on Monday 28th January.

There is no need to visit St Hugh's before applying, as the the school website contains a virtual tour as well as lots of other information and all the School's policies. However, if you'd like to see the school in person, you are most welcome to arrange a visit through Simon Shneerson. First interviews will, of course, include a tour.

If you would like to discuss the School, the vacancy or any aspect of your application, please feel free to contact Simon Shneerson personally, in strict confidence. He is completely discreet and aims to be helpful, honest, objective and informative. His telephone number is 07986 100237 (any day of the week between 8 am and 10 pm) or you can use the e-mail address above.

All applications will be acknowledged and interview dates are given at the front of this document. We will endeavour to arrange convenient times for each candidate. Initial interviews will be held on two days so please let us know if you particularly prefer one of those days.

Confidentiality

- References will only be requested at short-list stage and we will let you know before we approach referees.
- We will not contact your present school unless you reach the short-list and applications can be kept confidential until then. Please contact Simon Shneerson if you have any specific concerns.



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ASSESSMENT PROCESS

First interviews will take approximately two hours and will be held at the school. Candidates will be shown round St Hugh's before meeting with a small panel of Governors. To protect confidentiality, we will endeavour to ensure that candidates will not meet one another but, for obvious reasons, we cannot guarantee this.

Reasonable travel expenses will be refunded on request.

Short-listed applicants will be invited to take part in a final selection exercise on **Sunday/Monday 3rd/4th March**:

- a) a further visit to the School on **Sunday 3rd March**. This is mainly for domestic purposes so you can see the Head's house properly, and the visit will also give you a chance to look round Woodhall Spa and the surrounding area if you wish. Partners will of course be welcome to accompany you.

It is possible there will be an evening meal for candidates and their partners if you are staying locally, but this will be purely for hospitality rather than a formal part of any assessment.

- b) a final interview day on **Monday 4th March**. This will consist of various assessment exercises and will also give you a chance to have another look at the school in action. Again, partners will be welcome to attend if you and they wish. The day will be designed to be informative, challenging, thoughtful but enjoyable. Candidates will meet the Board and, on this occasion only, other candidates.

Before the final interview all candidates will be asked whether they would be in a position to accept any offer of employment and/or provide questions that would put them in that position. A model contract will be provided to all second round candidates.

Helpful feedback will be offered to unsuccessful candidates.

Thank you for your interest in this post. We look forward to hearing from you and, hopefully, to meeting you in person.

