



WOLVERHAMPTON
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Head

Candidate Information



Welcome

Thank you for your interest in Wolverhampton Grammar School, one of the country's oldest independent schools, we are proud of our reputation as an award-winning 4 - 18 year olds co-educational day school with a warm family atmosphere and a strong sense of community.

The Board of Directors seeks an outstanding educationalist as our new Head for September 2024. The successful candidate will be a visionary and grounded leader with the strategic skills to evolve Wolverhampton Grammar School further in the next exciting chapter in its history. He or she will bring a significant record of senior leadership experience, proven external relations abilities and outstanding people skills. A genuine belief in the transformative power of education, the value of a personalised curriculum and the holistic mission of our School is essential.

We are ambitious for the further development of our School. Our new Head will work closely and collaboratively with a high-performing and dynamic Senior Management Team and a committed Board of Directors to explore a range of exciting opportunities and ensure our continued success and sustainability in the context of current and future political and economic uncertainty.

If this opportunity is one that excites you and you believe you have the requisite skills and experience, we are delighted to hear from you.



James Sage
Chair of the Board of Directors

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Introduction

Wolverhampton Grammar School was founded in 1512 by Sir Stephen Jenyns to provide a “good, moral education” for the children of Wolverhampton. Whilst that same motivation exists today, children today join the School from across Wolverhampton, Staffordshire, Shropshire and the wider West Midlands region. The School moved to its present location in picturesque suburbs in 1875 and comprises a Senior School, Junior School and a recently opened Infant School, now enabling the School to offer parents a high-quality all-through education from Reception to Sixth Form.

The School partners with a number of local, national and international organisations to deliver a rigorous education both within the classroom and outside the School. These include the prestigious Merchant Taylors’ Company, where Sir Stephen Jenyns was twice elected Master. Over 500 years later, Jenyns’ foundation stands proud as a thriving day school with an enviable reputation both locally and nationally, supported by an active alumni community that spans over 30 countries.

Wolverhampton Grammar School is a busy, happy and high-achieving community delivering an education with a clear mission to “transform lives as well as minds”. Young people and their learning, development and welfare are at the heart of everything the School does. The diversity within the student body genuinely reflects the catchment area’s demographic and is highly valued, as are the deeply rooted links forged with the local community. It is a school notable for its friendliness and lack of pretension.

Wolverhampton Grammar School is rightly proud of its national awards. From winning the TES Senior Management Team of the Year Award 2018 to being judged Best Independent School in the Midlands, the School has been recognised for its outstanding staff, delivering the very best that the independent sector has to offer.



A world away from the many schools that have felt compelled to bow to league tables and competition, forgetting the magic of learning and education. Its positive relationships, plentiful opportunities and genuine humanity left us wanting to skip out of the gates

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The Opportunity

This is a tremendous opportunity for a caring, creative and confident school leader to join a highly successful, ambitious school and to make a real and lasting contribution to its character, development and place in the city of Wolverhampton.

The next few years are likely to be challenging for all independent schools as the educational, cultural, economic and political landscapes continue to change rapidly, so the new Head will need to be robust, determined and a strategic thinker in order to overcome obstacles and make the most of opportunities as they present themselves.

The new Head will contribute towards delivering the objectives of the Strategic Plan for 2022–25 and will also have the opportunity to help create a new vision for the next exciting phase of the School's development, including promoting fundraising and planning events to mark the 150th anniversary of the School moving to the Compton Road site.

The current Plan is shaped around three core objectives, which retain the School's ethos, values and sense of place but are also forward-looking, ambitious and purposeful.

1 To grow the School by:

- maximising academic achievement
- new approaches to optimising the Sixth Form offer
- building on the success of the Junior School
- extending a WGS education to a wider audience
- increasing the provision of bursary places.

2 To look after and develop people by:

- providing authentic leadership and direction to staff
- embedding a community that embodies equity, diversity and inclusion for all students and staff
- being a centre of excellence for student wellbeing and personal development
- being a centre of excellence for staff development and wellbeing.

3 To have a positive impact on the surroundings and the wider community by:

- forging links with key academic and business organisations in the West Midlands
- contributing more to the city of Wolverhampton and nearby areas
- working towards being a Carbon Zero school.

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Location & Facilities

Wolverhampton Grammar School has long been an iconic school for the city and region. The 32-acre campus is located to the west of Wolverhampton city centre and comprises impressive architecture with excellent sporting facilities. The original Victorian building, with its high ceilings and gothic-style windows, is an impressive sight from the main Compton Road and is a well-known local landmark and reminder of the School's long, successful heritage.

“ *lending an air of dignitas without pomposity* **THE GOOD SCHOOLS GUIDE** ”

Many other buildings have been added since, ranging from the Edwardian period to the 1990s. The Senior and Sixth Form buildings wrap around the exceptional Junior School. Purpose-built classrooms, the latest laboratories and libraries, a Sports Centre and dedicated music and art studios, together with the Viner Gallery (art gallery and exhibition space) and Hutton Theatre, provide exceptional facilities for both Senior and Junior School students.

The site also includes a dance studio, cricket, hockey and football pitches, netball courts, an all-weather Astroturf pitch and athletics track, as well as a fully equipped Sports Centre with a multi-gym and indoor courts for badminton, squash, fives and basketball.

The School is also a haven for wildlife, with over 200 mature trees, a brook, bug hotels and resident beehives providing a natural and assisted habitat.

Students – Admissions & Destinations

Around 80–90 students join each year into Year 7, of which about half come directly through the Junior School from which there is automatic entry. The remainder come from a range of state primaries and independent prep schools. Often there are several entries into Year 8 and Year 9, partly due to the local middle school system and recently because the pandemic led to an increase in demand for independent education.

The School is 'gently selective,' with tests in maths, English and verbal reasoning. Between five and 10 join the Sixth Form each year, and candidates need an average of 5.5 points for each GCSE, with at least 4 in maths and English and 6 in their chosen A Level subjects (7 for maths and sciences).

Whilst some students leave post-GCSE (for different courses or state schools), the vast majority stay on for A Levels and progress to the UK's top universities, including Oxford, Cambridge and Russell Group Universities. There is a strong interest in science and medical degrees among students, with business and economics courses equally popular. Careers advice and support with UCAS is exceptional.



Students are a delight – articulate, interested and upbeat
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Academics & Curriculum

Students from Wolverhampton Grammar School consistently do well in examinations across the extensive range of subjects offered, and results continue to improve. In 2023, 67 per cent gained 9–7 at GCSE; 46 per cent A*/A at A Level (with 74 per cent A*–B and a 99.4% pass rate). In 2019 (the last pre-pandemic results), 52 per cent gained 9–7 at GCSE, and 32 per cent gained A*/A at A Level.

All teachers are experts in their own academic disciplines, trained and experienced professionals who love their subjects as much as they enjoy teaching the students. Lessons are lively and challenging, and knowledge is treasured, opening up minds to a love of learning. Small class sizes and space for individual tuition enable teachers to get to know their students. Educational support is tailored to the individual student according to their requirements.

Wolverhampton Grammar School is confident in its use of technology across every aspect of school life – including in the classroom, in pastoral support monitoring, in teaching and learning support services, in reading for pleasure schemes and in all parent and student communications. The School was shortlisted for the TES Independent Schools Awards 2019 for the “Best Use of Technology” category for demonstrating measurable excellence in the use of education technology by a school.

“ Sky high levels of warmth and genuine respect between staff and students. Lots of fun too – in several lessons, we heard laughter spilling out of the classroom into the corridors ... it’s a nurturing and stimulating environment where lessons smack of creative and imaginative ingenuity

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Activities, Sports & the Arts

One of the ways Wolverhampton Grammar School is able to differentiate itself from the local free grammar competition is by offering the largest range of sports, music, drama, art and extra/co-curricular activities, clubs, societies, trips, international expeditions and sport tours of any independent school in the area. The facilities to support all these opportunities are outstanding, as is the commitment of the staff and students to them.

With over 100 activities on offer, there really is something to suit all abilities and interests. Students can also be responsible for setting up their own clubs or societies at any time, and join in with a variety of House events from Tug of War to Bake Off, Charity and Diversity initiatives. The range is extremely diverse; from the likes of a Political Forum, Climbing Clubs, Duke of Edinburgh Award, and Computer Science Club to even a Harry Potter Fan Club, the list is endless.

Wolverhampton Grammar School students see it as a great honour to be selected to represent the School in a sports team, and students are encouraged to make the most of every opportunity offered to them by the Sports Department for training and additional coaching sessions. All sports are open to boys and girls. Both indoor and outdoor facilities are excellent.

Students can play and sing in any number of musical ensembles, groups and choirs, hold art exhibitions in the purpose-built Viner Gallery and perform their dramatic productions in the School's industry-standard Hutton Theatre.

They can also take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (Bronze, Silver and Gold levels) or the Coast 2 Coast Charity Run, listen to guest speakers during assemblies as well as art lectures every month in the Senior School, attend Medical Society guest lectures throughout the year at lunchtimes for Year 11 and Sixth Form, and take up opportunities to get involved at School Open Days and Discovery Days.

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Pastoral Care & Welfare

At Wolverhampton Grammar School we pride ourselves on offering the best pastoral care possible. Looking after every individual is key to the ethos of our School. We recognise that happy, confident students will thrive and succeed, not only during their school years but beyond. The expert pastoral team includes a School Counsellor and physical and mental wellbeing is tracked using the latest digital tools.

The Senior House system which is at the centre of school life further enhances the School's outstanding pastoral care, enabling students to build relationships across year groups. The vertical House system spans Years 8 to Upper Sixth and by doing so, encourages reciprocal opportunities for leadership, mentoring advice and support between students of different ages.

Students are palpably happy, feel safe at school and appreciate that it is differences that make the school community the special place that it is. Children from all backgrounds, all religions and all echelons of society learn to support, respect and care for each other.

Wider School Community

Wolverhampton Grammar School has a thriving alumni community. The Old Wulfrunians (OWs) association ensures the benefits of studying at a top independent school extend beyond the School itself. Students go on to achieve great things, and there is a worldwide alumni community of thousands in over 30 countries. OWs regularly act as mentors to current students imparting their career knowledge and university experiences.

A growing fundraising effort amongst OWs supports the improvement and accessibility of the education on offer.



School Finances

The School is in a strong financial position with cash and free reserves of over £4m and no debts. The School consistently returns a healthy surplus. The investment surplus, historically over 10%, has been reduced on a short-term basis in recent years due to a conscious investment in staff (teaching and non-teaching) and the careful management of fee levels in the context of the local area through the post-COVID recovery period.

Bursaries are offered to around five Year 7 students each year, with the School funding 3.5 full fee equivalents each year.

On average, Wolverhampton Grammar School funds £770k per year to educate 80 children in need of financial support at the School. The ambition is to raise an additional £1 million per year to fund more free school places to educate bright and gifted children from Wolverhampton. External funding is provided by generous OWs and other external bodies, including the Merchant Taylors' Company.

The most recent fundraising campaign, during 2020, raised over £250k for students whose parents were struggling financially as a result of the pandemic. Twenty-eight students were able to continue their education at the School as a result of the generosity of OWs. Plans are being made for a large fundraising campaign celebrating 150 years on the Compton Road site.

Capital investment post-pandemic has been adjusted to reflect all of the above and has included the new infant playground, Heads of House offices and investment in netball and hockey facilities.

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Governance & Leadership

The Board of Directors is a group of 10 Directors who bring a wide range of skills and experience to help support the School. The whole Board meets four times a year. There are two main sub-committees – Education and Finance & General Purposes. Each Director is part of one of the sub-committees, and the Chair, Head and Finance Director attend both committees. The Education Committee meets termly, and F&GP meets four times a year. There is an annual AGM in October each year. There is also an Estates Committee made up of three Directors, the Finance Director and the Estates Manager. The Board comprises individuals who will be easy to access for support as needed.

The Senior Leadership Team (Head, Finance Director, Junior School Head and Deputy Head) meets weekly. The wider Senior Management Team consists of the Head, Finance Director, Junior School Head, Deputy Head, Director of Marketing & Communications, and three Assistant Heads. The team meets once a week in addition to separate weekly meetings with the Head.

Role Description

The Head is accountable to the Board of Directors for the delivery of outstanding education and pastoral care. More specifically, the key responsibilities of the next Head can be outlined as follows:

Strategic Leadership & Innovation

- To build on the School's many existing strengths – particularly its strong sense of community and innovation in the classroom – and evolve it in the next exciting chapter of its history.
- To ground future strategy in the context of the challenging macro landscape, ensuring that WGS anticipates change and seizes opportunity.
- To lead an ambitious community in the further development of the School's educational provision, ensuring that standards continue to rise and the School's commitment to access and diversity continues to be championed.

Organisational Leadership & Management

- To lead, inspire and further develop a talented and committed Senior Management Team.
- To develop leadership at all levels, empowering all staff and pupils to take initiative and share ideas.
- To manage and work with the Finance Director to ensure strong finance and resource management

Pastoral Care & Safeguarding

- To ensure that the School is fully compliant with DfE and local authority child protection and safeguarding regulations and best practice.
- To take overall responsibility for the delivery of excellent pastoral care – ensuring the security and pastoral care of all students in line with safeguarding legislation, including safer recruitment, and working alongside external agencies as appropriate.

Admissions, Marketing & Fundraising

- To be an authentic ambassador for WGS, leading on pupil recruitment in order to maintain pupil numbers and building strong relationships with prospective families.
- To develop and maintain strong relationships with a wide range of feeder primary schools in both the state and independent sectors, ensuring continued access to the School's education from diverse communities within and beyond the city of Wolverhampton.
- To take a strategic approach to marketing the School, ensuring that WGS is well-positioned to meet the challenges of local competition.
- To take the lead on fundraising for WGS, engaging persuasively with existing and potential donors and further developing the School's culture of philanthropy.

External Engagement

- To be a visible leader of WGS both in terms of the course of the school day and in terms of all extra-curricular activities.
- To further develop the School's community links and partnerships.
- To ensure continued outreach to the maintained and academy sectors.
- To strengthen WGS's already strong links with Old Wulfrunians and wider supporters.





Person Specification

The successful candidate will be able to draw on the strengths and skills of others to formulate a compelling vision, create a dynamic strategy and deliver on that strategy. He or she will offer the following experience, knowledge, skills, and personal qualities.

Experience

- A proven record of successful senior leadership experience gained as a Head or Deputy Head.
- Proven experience of leading and inspiring high-calibre teams.
- Experience of handling complex pastoral issues involving staff, pupils and parents.
- Experience in a range of settings, preferably including co-educational schools and diverse communities.
- Experience in pupil recruitment and marketing.
- Experience of leading change and innovation.

Knowledge & Skills

- First-rate communication skills, both orally and in writing, with the warmth and charisma to represent Wolverhampton Grammar School to a range of audiences.
- Outstanding relationship-building and networking skills with the ability to inspire pupils, staff, current and prospective parents, Old Wulfrunians and the local community.
- Excellent strategic skills with the vision and creativity to evolve the School in the next chapter of its history.

- A reader and educational thinker with an interest in innovation and the role of digital technology in the classroom.
- Presentational and ambassadorial skills, especially in the areas of pupil recruitment, marketing and fundraising, and a willingness to play a lead role in these areas.
- Financial acumen with an appreciation of the commercial dimensions of successful modern headship.
- A working knowledge of the demographic, economic and social diversity of the city of Wolverhampton and the School's catchment area.
- The skills to run an inclusive and diverse school community, valuing and promoting inclusion.
- A thorough understanding of Head's responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection issues and a clear commitment to delivering best practice in safeguarding.

Personal Qualities

- A visible leader, committed to knowing and further developing a community.
- A flexible, open and empowering leadership style that will include the ability to grow powerful teams.
- An inspiring and motivating leader with a high level of emotional intelligence who values relationship building.
- An active listener, able to draw on the experience and strengths of others.
- An original thinker with strong organisational skills and ambition for the School's development who can deliver on the agreed strategy.
- A high level of energy and resilience and the ability to work under pressure.
- A deep commitment to the School's inclusive ethos and the transformative power of education.

Terms & Conditions

An excellent remuneration package commensurate with the importance of the role and the experience of the successful candidate will be offered.

The package would include the right to participate in the staff school fee discount scheme, family medical insurance cover and contributions to the Teachers' Pension Scheme.

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Founded in 2001 by Russell Speirs, RSAcademics has advised and supported over 700 schools and educational organisations in the UK and worldwide. Through our working partnerships with heads, leadership teams, boards, staff and parents, we specialise in supporting schools in five main areas: strategy, marketing and research; equality, diversity and inclusion; operational improvement; leadership and governance and philanthropy. We enable schools worldwide to thrive by finding and developing senior leaders, guiding decision makers, making connections and shaping debate. We are known for the calibre and spirit of our people. We exist entirely to serve schools because we believe that the world needs thriving schools. RSAcademics is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion in schools.

Please visit www.rsacademics.com for more information.



Because the world needs schools to **thrive**

Application Process

The search for a new Head for Wolverhampton Grammar School is being led by RSAcademics, and the new post-holder will be selected by a panel chaired by James Sage, Chair of the Board of Directors.

Interested candidates are invited to contact RSAcademics to arrange a confidential discussion with one of the consultants handling this appointment:

- Miranda Landale, Search Consultant:
mirandalandale@rsacademics.com or
- Sarah Evans, Senior Advisor:
sarahevans@rsacademics.com

Closing date: 10.00am on Monday 16th October 2023.

Applications should be made electronically to **RSAcademics**. To submit your application, please upload your documents according to the instructions on the RSAcademics website.

You should submit the following (both in PDF format):

- A completed application form (available alongside this candidate information on the **RSAcademics** website).
- A covering letter addressed to Mr James Sage, Chair of the Board of Directors. The letter should explain your reasons for applying.

If you have any questions about uploading your application documents, please contact Khiloni Aplin, Project Manager (Leadership Appointments), at applications@rsacademics.com. Khiloni can also be reached by calling our Head Office on +44 (0)1858 383163.

The process is as follows:

- When you submit your application, you will receive an automated email from RSAcademics confirming that we have received it. If you have not received the automated email within two working days of submitting your application, please email us at applications@rsacademics.com or contact us by telephone.
- Preliminary interviews will take place with RSAcademics via Teams on 23rd and 24th October 2023.
- Longlist interviews with the Governors' panel will take place at the School on 20th and 21st November 2023.
- Shortlist interviews with the Governing Body will take place at the School on 30th November and 1st December 2023.

N.B. Safer recruitment checks will be made at all stages in the recruitment process.

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