



CANDIDATE BRIEF FOR THE POSITION OF
HEAD





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BACKGROUND

About the Mill Hill Education Group

The Mill Hill Education Group is a rapidly growing family of schools. As of September 2024, there are ten schools in the Group:

- Mill Hill School (co-ed senior boarding and day school in Mill Hill).
- Belmont, Mill Hill Prep (co-ed prep day school based in Mill Hill).
- Grimsdell, Mill Hill Pre-Prep (co-ed pre-prep day school based in Mill Hill).
- Mill Hill International (co-ed senior boarding and day school in Mill Hill).
- Cobham Hall (co-ed senior boarding and day school in Kent).
- Lyonsdown School (prep school for girls in Barnet).
- Keble Prep (co-ed prep school in Winchmore Hill).
- Kingshott School (co-ed all-through school in Hitchin – up to GCSE).
- St Joseph's In The Park (co-ed prep school in Hertingfordbury, Hertford).
- Abbot's Hill School (girls all-through school in Hemel Hempstead – up to GCSE).

The Group has grown in recent years through charity mergers, adding Cobham Hall in 2021, both Keble Prep and Lyonsdown in 2022, St Joseph's in the Park in 2023 and, most recently, Kingshott and Abbot's Hill. The Group recently announced the launch of its first overseas school, Mill Hill International School Thailand, opening in September 2025. Links between the schools are strong and growing, with considerable opportunities for peer support between the school leaders. Despite the overall size of the Group, all its schools share a commitment to developing every individual pupil and are markedly friendly and supportive communities.

The schools that make up the Group are united by a shared educational ethos and operate as one charity with one set of Governors (collectively called the Court). All schools seek to instil a lifelong love of learning, equipping pupils with a readiness to embrace change that sees them set up to succeed in the present and in the future. This has been implicit in the motto of Mill Hill School since its foundation in 1807: 'Instilling Values, Inspiring Minds'.



About Grimsdell, Mill Hill Pre-Prep School

Grimsdell is a co-educational pre-preparatory school educating more than 200 pupils aged 3 to 7. Grimsdell's aim is to instil in each child a deep and natural love of learning that will stay with them forever. Grimsdell is relatively new in comparison to the other schools within Mill Hill Schools, opened in 1995 in Winterstoke House, a former boarding house for Mill Hill School.

Grimsdell prides itself on the exciting, Creative Curriculum it offers, which extends well beyond the National Curriculum. The school's commitment to curriculum innovation and vibrant, modern pedagogy has earned it a reputation as one of London's top pre-prep schools, as reflected in the accolade of Pre-Prep School of the Year at the Independent School Awards in 2022. Pupils are inspired to learn whilst being encouraged to explore and enjoy their childhood. With the vast green spaces and access to the other Mill Hill Schools sites, pupils make extensive use of the outdoors in all subject areas and Forest School has a firm place within the curriculum. Grimsdell pupils are equipped with the adaptable tools and skills they will need for 21st-century life, and as a result, Grimsdell children thrive in all kinds of situations.

Girls and boys learn, work and play together, and pupils quickly develop excellent social skills and learn to be adaptable and emotionally intelligent, making friends across genders and knowing they are equal. Every pupil is encouraged to embrace challenges and to understand that success comes from hard work and persistence. Grimsdell welcomes failure, and by actively teaching this positive mindset, each child understands how they best learn from a young age. Grimsdell pupils' willingness to try anything is one of their biggest strengths.

Academic

Grimsdell believes that learning should be inspiring, memorable and meaningful. Combining academic rigour with 21st-century skills, the creative curriculum provides depth in coverage of skills in all subject areas and allows children to recognise the links in their learning.

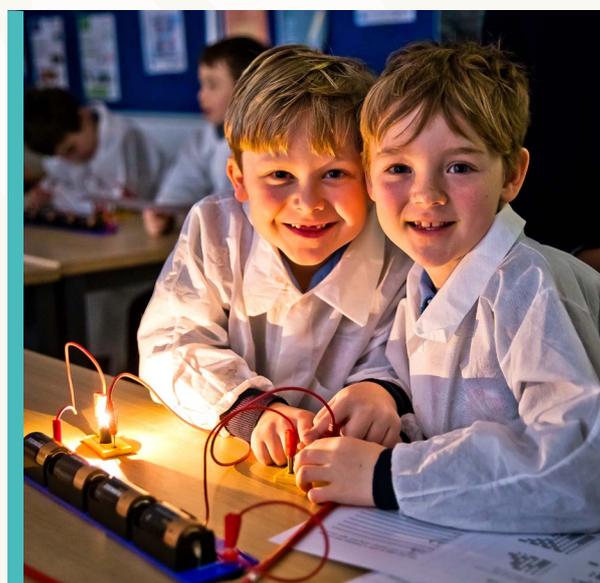
The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and National Curriculum are taught following a cross-curricular and enquiry based approach to teaching and learning. Each year group tackles themes in a different way and sees pupils develop their skills in core subject areas such as reading, writing and arithmetic. Each theme lasts for a term and has been planned to ensure that the learning objectives for each year group/subject are covered creatively and dynamically.

“The co-curricular programme engenders pupils' interests as well as develops pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. This is a significant strength of the school.”

ISI Inspection Report January 2024

Children are immersed in their learning through colourful and engaging indoor and outdoor environments and multi-sensory learning experiences. Examples of termly themes include: 'Into the Woods', 'Turrets and Tiaras', 'Splish, Splash, Splosh', and 'Ice Worlds'. Children are encouraged to question, enquire and problem-solve. They work in groups or pairs to discuss, debate and think critically and creatively. Practical tasks test their thinking and challenge them to be creative, all the while building their independence and confidence. The curriculum is both demanding and exciting, giving each child the chance to excel in so many areas.

Outdoor Learning has always been a strong feature at Grimsdell with Forest School deeply embedded within the school curriculum. Learning beyond the classroom takes the ethos a step further, with highly engaging lessons making the most of every space both within school grounds and around the local area.





Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care is at the heart of everything Grimsdell does. Pupils flourish in a stimulating, secure environment that instils confidence and promotes wellbeing. Staff understand the importance of tailoring the Creative Curriculum Grimsdell offers to bring out the best in each individual pupil, allowing them to find their own path to success. Pupils are happy, engaged and encouraged in all aspects of school life.

Grimsdell is a nurturing environment where you can feel a sense of community when you step through the front door. Classes are no larger than 20, with a class teacher and a teaching assistant in each one, ensuring each pupil receives the individual care required to support their pastoral development. All of this is underpinned by the 'Grimsdell Way' which provides the moral compass that all follow.

Grimsdell is a Christian foundation based upon the principles of religious freedom. Pupils represent a wide range of faiths and cultures, with assemblies placing a strong emphasis on moral and mutual respect.

House System

An additional strand to the school's pastoral care is the flourishing House system, which provides children with a sense of belonging and healthy competition. The children represent the Beech, Oak or Willow houses. There are three house events each year, run by the Head of House, and there are Year 2 House Captains for each house. Staff encourage team spirit and healthy competition during these events and children learn the skills of good sportsmanship.

The House System has been designed to embody the values and ethos of the Pre-Prep and aims to be an integral part of the school community. Children can earn 'smileys' (house points) for following The Grimsdell Way, showing a growth mindset or producing exceptional pieces of work or performances. These points accumulate, and there is a termly assembly where the winning house is announced and awarded a cup.

Co-Curricular

Music and Drama is engaging and fun at Grimsdell, and is an integral part of the school day. Pupils sing in class, between activities, when they are lining up and when they leave assembly, and music is played each morning as the children enter school.

The Physical Education programme provides each child with the opportunity to learn vital skills for their development. In Year 2, children start to play team sports at Belmont, using its coaches and facilities, playing netball, hockey, rounders, touch rugby, football and cricket. Pupils from Mill Hill School run an annual sports festival for Grimsdell, and the summer sports day is a highlight of the year.

Grimsdell also has different special activities within the year, from an annual Golf Workshop, trampoline taster lessons, a swimming gala, Yoga, street, modern and tap dance workshops and a festival of sports.





Mill Hill Schools Journey

When a child joins the Mill Hill Schools at age 3, they begin a journey that will carry them through to age 18 and beyond. The curriculum runs seamlessly through every school in the Group and is designed to prepare each child for life in the 21st century. It teaches children to think creatively and critically, and builds flexible skills for a fast-changing world of new technology. Just as crucial to their overall learning are the interpersonal skills that the Group equips all its pupils with; emotional intelligence, teamwork and leadership skills, and the ability to think on their feet and work under pressure. Above all, Grimsdell children value kindness.

The ties between Grimsdell and Belmont are extremely close; the schools coordinate their curriculum and learning approaches, and from Year 1 each child takes part in Forest School, camps and workshops at Belmont. By the time pupils leave Grimsdell, they are almost as familiar with Belmont as their own school. The transition between the schools is simple and stress-free, with no need to take Belmont's external 7+ examination. As a result, almost all Grimsdell children go on to Belmont in Year 3.

School Environment

The four schools that make up Mill Hill Schools are set in over 120 acres of beautiful grounds, with woods, fields and sports pitches as far as the eye can see, and with Central London only 10 miles away.

Grimsdell's own grounds include woods for Forest Schools, a Science Garden, and separate play areas for the youngest children. The playgrounds are exciting, imaginative, open-ended resources, with adventure equipment, areas to tell stories and do crafts, and a stage.

Grimsdell's pupils have the benefit of using Belmont's grounds and coaches for sport, and utilise Mill Hill School's swimming pool, athletics fields and theatre, as well as sharing the Chapel.

Further information on the Mill Hill Education Group and Grimsdell can be found here:

www.millhilleducationgroup.com

www.millhill.org.uk/grimsdell





THE ROLE

MILL HILL EDUCATION GROUP IS LOOKING TO APPOINT THE NEXT HEAD OF GRIMSDELL, MILL HILL PRE-PREP FOR SEPTEMBER 2025 FOLLOWING THE APPOINTMENT OF KATE SIMON TO THE ROLE OF FOUNDING HEAD OF MILL HILL INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL THAILAND FOLLOWING ELEVEN YEARS OF OUTSTANDING AND DEDICATED LEADERSHIP.

Reporting directly to the Group's CEO and in collaboration with the Director of Prep Schools, the Head is responsible for the effective day-to-day management of Grimsdell, in accordance with the Group's strategies and policies.

A detailed Scheme of Delegation exists to support clear lines of responsibility and accountability, alongside the support available from colleagues. Under this Scheme, the Head is responsible for setting the curriculum and educational standards of the school, the employment and development of its teaching staff, the recruitment, behaviour and discipline of its pupils, the inspection readiness of its policies and standards, and is the lead ambassador for the school in its wider community.

Above all, the Head is responsible for maintaining the School's ethos and achieving its aims. The Head plays a key role in leading, articulating and implementing the strategic planning of Grimsdell. The ambition is that Grimsdell will maintain its position as a beacon of excellence within the Group, sharing best practice with the other schools, whilst maintaining its strong reputation in the local community.



Specific Duties Include:

- Ensuring the highest standards of safeguarding and pastoral care are maintained, liaising closely with the DSL/ DDSL and working with the Group's Director of Safeguarding.
- Ensuring academic excellence, through a well-designed curriculum, and by ensuring that all teaching is professional, effective and creative so that pupils have enjoyment and enthusiasm in their learning.
- Ensure pupil progress is accurately monitored and communicated, with appropriate advice given at key stages of their journey.
- Recruit and retain suitably qualified staff, encouraging an environment of rich professional development and pedagogical initiative, whilst appreciating the importance of staff welfare.
- Support a culture of mutual encouragement and support amongst all staff.
- Ensure that the school meets all statutory and regulatory requirements, working with fellow Execs and with the support of the Group's specialists.



- Maintain a broad, fulfilling and efficient co-curricular programme, giving a breadth of opportunity for all whilst ensuring those with particular gifts are developed.
- Maintain high standards of communication to the wider school community, engaging as an ambassador with stakeholders within and outside of school.
- Deal fairly and efficiently with any parental concerns and complaints.
- Help to establish and support local state school partnerships.
- Play a key role in promoting the school to prospective parents and pupils, working closely with other Execs to ensure the effective recruitment of pupils.
- Liaise with the Director of Operations over maintenance and improvement priorities in the existing campus.
- Contribute to the detailed planning and implementation of the campus master plan.
- Attend meetings of the Court, including strategy days, preparing and presenting papers in line with the reporting schedule.
- Manage the SLT in an effective manner, ensuring appropriate delegation and accountability and ensuring that the team is working efficiently with clear lines of communication within school.
- Work with the Director of Finance and Resources to ensure the School is efficiently structured with sound finances, including detailed budget setting.
- Be a highly visible presence within school, leading by example in all things.

“
Leaders effectively incorporate outdoor learning to strengthen pupils’ development in all phases of the school.”

Good Schools Guide Review 2020





THE PERSON

Essential Qualifications and Experience

- Educated to university degree level.
- A clear vision of what constitutes an outstanding education.
- A track record for delivering the highest educational standards in a leading school.
- Experience gained in a leadership role with knowledge of the pre-preparatory age range.
- The Group is committed to attracting a diverse range of applicants, and it is emphasised that there is no requirement that the above experience has been gained in the independent school sector; those with experience solely in the maintained sector are also encouraged to apply as are candidates currently working internationally.

Personal Qualities

- A warm and approachable manner, committed to the development of the Grimsdell and Mill Hill communities, with the ability to engage across a wide range of school stakeholders.
- Somebody who values the rich history and traditions of the school whilst being innovative and forward-thinking in their approach.
- The ability to make wise and difficult decisions, consulting appropriately.
- A collaborative approach to problem solving, seeing the benefit of working with peers.
- A philosophy of education that is, above all, child-centred.

“
Teachers are experienced, have good subject knowledge and follow well-planned schemes of work, adapting their teaching to effectively meet the needs of pupils.”

ISI Inspection Report January 2024

- The capacity to be creative and imaginative in finding solutions.
- A natural and compelling communicator, confident in public speaking and leading meetings of all sizes.
- Committed to the professional development of all staff.
- A capacity for hard work with the ability to cope well with the pressures of the role.

Terms and Conditions

- Highly competitive salary.
- Membership of the Group's defined contribution pension scheme.
- Family-sized accommodation located close to the school (if required).
- Relocation allowance (if required).
- School fee remission for children.



HOW TO APPLY

THE SEARCH FOR A NEW HEAD AT GRIMSDELL IS BEING LED BY ODGERS BERNDTSON AND THE NEW POSTHOLDER WILL BE SELECTED BY A COMMITTEE CHAIRED BY THE CEO.

- The closing date for applications is **09:00 GMT Monday 14 October 2024.**
- Longlist interviews with Odgers Berndtson will take place **w/c Monday 21 October.**
- Short list interviews with the Selection Committee will take place on **Tuesday 5 November.**
- Candidates invited to the final stage will be invited to have a full briefing visit on **Friday 8 November and Monday 11 November.**
- Final interviews will take place on **Thursday 14 November.**

To apply, please submit a comprehensive CV along with a covering letter which sets out your interest in the role and encapsulates the aspects of your experience relevant to the required criteria. Please include current salary details and the names and addresses of three referees. Referees will not be approached until the final stages and not without prior permission from candidates.

The preferred method of application is online at: **www.odgers.com/92140**

For an initial discussion, please contact:

Peter Lawrence: +44 (0) 207 529 3055
peter.lawrence@odgersberndtson.com

Isabel Howard: +44 20 7529 3925
isabel.howard@odgersberndtson.com

Personal data

In line with GDPR, we ask that you do NOT send us any information that can identify children or any of your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, data concerning health or sex life and sexual orientation, genetic and/or biometric data) in your CV and application documentation. Following this notice, any inclusion of your Sensitive Personal Data in your CV/application documentation will be understood by us as your expressed consent to process this information going forward. Please also remember to not mention anyone's information or details (e.g. referees) who have not previously agreed to their inclusion.

Mill Hill Education Group is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.



Grimsdell

INSTILLING VALUES INSPIRING MINDS



Grimsdell, Mill Hill Pre-Prep
millhill.org.uk/grimsdell



ODGERS BERNDTSON

odgersberndtson.com

