



TOWN CLOSE SCHOOL

NORWICH'S FINEST PREP SCHOOL • FOR GIRLS & BOYS • 3-13 YEARS

Brief for the position of

HEAD

 ODGERS BERNDTSON



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WELCOME

From Sarah Anthony, Chair of Governors

Town Close School occupies a prime location within the historic and friendly cathedral city of Norwich, with abundant space for children to play amongst gardens and conservation woodland and with modern, high specification facilities arranged around two beautiful period properties. Education lies at our core with pupils motivated to achieve, maintaining our outstanding reputation, with the encouragement of dedicated, capable staff and a loyal, supportive parent body.

We were awarded the prestigious national honour of TES Pre Prep/Prep School of the Year 2020. Despite the current climate, demand for places is excellent and academic performance is strong.

Parents are also attracted to the impressive breadth of subjects and holistic education we offer. Our pupils are prepared for the smooth move to prominent senior schools locally and nationally with many celebrating scholarship success and leadership positions.

Nevertheless, we do not want to stand still in a competitive market and Town Close aspires to keep its position at the forefront of the independent prep school sector. We are looking forwards and are eager to continue improvements to the infrastructure of the School, with an exciting development project to oversee. This position is for a dynamic, visionary Head who demonstrates compassionate leadership, innovative ideas and excellent communication skills, as well as wanting to embrace all that the future holds.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sarah Anthony

Chair of Governors



BACKGROUND

Town Close School is a co-educational day school of around 460 pupils aged 3 to 13 years, situated close to the centre of Norwich on a beautiful 10-acre site, including conservation woodland, alongside a further 5 acres of sports pitches nearby, including a high quality Astro. Founded in 1932, it is now a charitable trust managed by a board of governors.

Children at Town Close enjoy an exceptional start to their educational journey, experiencing academic rigour, intellectual enquiry and an amazing array of co-curricular experiences, enhancing their moral, social, physical and academic development in preparation for their future lives.

There is a spirit of happiness and collaboration amongst the Town Close family from the beginning of the children's journey in Little Acorns until the end of Year 8, a reflection of the values encapsulated in the Town Close Way, written by pupils. The idyllic wooded site in the heart of the City of Norwich gives children the space and freedom to play and explore.

The quality of education on offer has been reflected in excellent results, ever-increasing breadth of opportunity and a number of stand-out achievements that resulted in Town Close being named by the TES as Pre Prep/ Prep School of the Year, 2020. Year 8 pupils who sat their Common Entrance exams in the Summer Term 2023 performed very well. 93% of all grades were A* to C grades. An impressive 47% of the overall grades were graded as either A* or A and 34 scholarships were awarded.

Also recognised were achievements in engineering, most notably in the F24 electric go kart international finals, and a range of initiatives arising from the School Council and the importance Town Close places on pupil voice.

Pupils have been closely involved in developing homework and feedback policies, updating uniform guidelines, formulating measures to protect the environment and promoting well-being. The School Council played a key part in the decision to recruit a School Dog, who has become a hard-working member of the Learning Support Department, joining pupils at drop-in "talk and share" sessions, listening to readers, supporting small groups and working with the School counsellor.

Town Close underwent an Educational Quality inspection by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) in January 2022. The School achieved the highest grading possible of 'excellent' across both categories of educational quality whilst also confirming compliance in all areas of the Focused Compliance Inspection.



VALUES

A Town Close education is underpinned by its core values which are as follows:

Respect

- Excellent manners and standards are at the heart of Town Close.
- We place honesty, tolerance, inclusivity, awareness and inquisitiveness as hallmarks of our School community.

Independence

- We explore and solve problems.
- We take responsibility for our learning.
- We are able to self-regulate and self-motivate.

Resilience

- We learn from mistakes and see them as an opportunity to grow.
- We celebrate individual and collective successes.
- We develop our confidence and self-esteem.

Individuality

- We celebrate passions, interests and diversity.
- We celebrate academic and co-curricular successes.





AIMS

Academic

Town Close seeks to provide an outstanding academic education, through a broad and balanced curriculum, underpinned by academic rigour to develop interested, passionate and morally confident citizens of the future. The School's high calibre staff offer an unrivalled, forward-thinking curriculum, that develops pupils' independence, resilience and individuality.

Extra-Curricular

The School strives for pupils to discover and develop multiple skills and a broad range of interests through an extensive programme of extra and co-curricular activities. Town Close seeks opportunities for personal achievement and fulfilment and for children to be adventurous in participating in a range of activities, appreciating the rewards of individual endeavour and teamwork, exploiting maximum potential from the School site and resources.

Personal Development

Town Close aims to provide a comprehensive personal and social education, allowing children to discuss, inform and instruct and to develop a moral, spiritual and aesthetic awareness of the world around them. It fosters positive relationships and the development of key personal skills for life beyond school and aims to provide every pupil with excellent pastoral care within an ethos of inclusion, openness, warmth and personal responsibility.

Staff

The School recognises the crucial importance of its staff in pursuing its aims and undertakes to provide appropriate support, professional training, review and development. The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and all staff undergo child protection screening and training appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure & Barring Service. The School expects staff to have high expectations of themselves and pupils and to act as positive role-models in all they do.

Parents

The School seeks to encourage parents to share in its aims, participate in the life of the School and work as partners in the education and nurture of their children. Having undergone a recent parent survey, over 80% of the School's Prep parents and 98% of the Pre Prep and Nursery parents are very or completely satisfied with Town Close. These results are significantly above other prep day schools.

Sustainability

Town Close is committed to sustainable development and believe it is important to prepare pupils for the future. As a community, the School works hard to ensure sustainability is reflected in its ethos, day-to-day operations and placed at the heart of learning.

STRUCTURE OF THE SCHOOL

Town Close School operates as one school, with library, theatre, sports, dining and computing facilities all shared. However, the School is organised in two distinct departments, The Pre Prep Department and Prep Department, each occupying different areas of the site. There is a separate Head and Deputy Head of Pre Prep Department, who work closely with the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and Director of Studies, whose roles bridge the entire age range. The Senior Team also includes a Deputy Head who takes responsibility for the day-to-day running of the Prep Department, as well as a Bursar and Assistant Bursar who oversee the facilities and support functions of the School.

Pre Prep

The Nursery, Little Acorns, is led by a qualified teacher and team of teaching assistants, while Reception children each have a class teacher and TA. The School follows the EYFS framework. Children in Years 1 & 2 follow the KS1 curriculum continuing in classes of no more than 20. Year 2 occupies an adjacent building called The Nest. All children in Pre Prep have specialist teachers for swimming and music, with Year 2 also being taught by specialists in games, PE and computing. All year groups from Nursery to Year 4 follow a shared thematic curriculum, in which the humanities subjects, English and the creative arts are taught through the study of a central topic or theme.

Prep

Children join the Prep Department in Year 3, following an adapted KS2 curriculum based on a mixture of national curriculum and ISEB related outcomes. Years 7 & 8 follow the ISEB Common Entrance at 13+ curriculum. In Years 3 & 4 children are taught a number of subjects by class teachers, with maths set by ability and specialists in an increasing number of areas, including DT, French and art. Form teachers in Year 4 and below take pastoral responsibility for their class. Year 5 is a transition year, with children still taught English by their class teacher but with subject specialists teaching all other lessons. Children in Years 5 to 8 join a small mixed-age tutor group at this point, with tutors taking pastoral responsibility for those in their group.

Excellence and breadth are key features of the curriculum, with music, drama, computing, DT, competitive games, art, swimming and PE all taught by highly qualified specialists. Children of all ages take part in theatrical productions and concerts. There is a biennial art exhibition, an annual variety performance including dance, gymnastics and music as well as swim galas, athletics meets, cross countries and a huge range of sports fixtures and tournaments.

The School also competes in electric go-kart racing and enters the Norfolk and Norwich Festival for music and other competitions such as in maths and coding. There is a wide programme of educational visits including week-long residential trips for older children.





Facilities

The School is based around two large town houses and their extensive gardens; the main house is early Georgian and the other mid-Victorian. Purpose-built classrooms and other premises and accommodation have been added, most in recent years. A brand new, high specification sports hall was opened in September 2009, a superb performing arts hall in January 2010 and the Pre Prep and Nursery was extended and re-furbished in 2017. In addition, new Year 2 classrooms were constructed alongside, which in turn allowed Year 8 form rooms to move into the main classroom block.

Future Developments

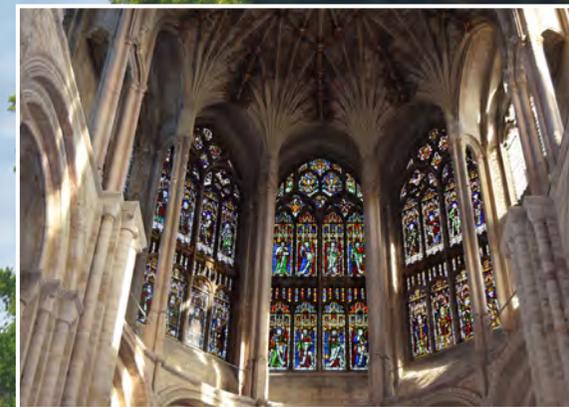
The next development planned is an exciting and ambitious project entailing the rebuilding of the dining room and surrounding area. This will provide a new, purpose-built kitchen and dining room for the whole school, a spacious and well equipped art room, state-of-the-art science facilities, and a high-tech music room with a link to the existing music rooms in the main house. These plans aim to provide the School with fantastic, modern facilities in art, music and science to complement its other excellent facilities, in a new building that celebrates the beauty of the original main house. This new facility will enable Town Close to offer even more outstanding opportunities to its pupils.

LIVING IN NORWICH

Norwich is a beautiful historic city noted for its two cathedrals, castle, numerous parish churches, medieval quarter, lanes shopping area and permanent outdoor market. It is a regional centre for shopping, professional services and commerce as well as boasting a number of theatres, cinemas, museums and other attractions. In close proximity to the City there is beautiful countryside, a National Park, expansive beaches and many attractive towns and villages.

Norwich is a centre for scientific research, medicine, engineering, agriculture and many start-up businesses, providing a stimulating mix of professionals. There is also considerable support for the local football team, Norwich City. The quality of life in Norfolk is high, yet house prices remain comparatively affordable compared to elsewhere in the South.

Norfolk is also less densely populated allowing more space for family life and less congestion. It is a great location to live and work and the School is very conveniently located both for the City and surrounding areas.



THE ROLE

The next Head of Town Close School will be a committed ambassador for the Whole School with excellent communication skills, providing empowering leadership and excellent management. He or she will promote and maintain a coordinated team ethic, respecting talent, providing direction and stimulating change, enabling staff to provide excellent delivery of academic studies and pupil welfare.

Key Responsibilities

- In conjunction with the Governing Body, implementing and continuously evolving the School Strategic Plan for the development of the whole school and translating this into a clear vision and measurable targets for application and monitoring.
- Alongside the Bursar, managing the School and deploying its resources in a cost-effective manner.
- Working with the Admissions and Marketing Department to spearhead public relations and promote our vibrant, friendly and successful School to attract families locally and nationally. In addition, maintaining and further expanding positive communication with alumni and the Town Close Association.
- Providing effective leadership, to enable the Senior Management Team, and wider staff body, to further enhance, innovate and develop a system of teaching and learning commensurate with the reputation of the School.
- Working with staff to ensure positive communication and liaison with parents, oversight of pastoral care, promotion of the School's core values and the welfare of pupils.
- Developing interaction and a common sense of purpose between the Pre Prep and Prep Department staff to ensure consistent provision across the School and the smooth transition of pupils between year groups.
- Ensuring mechanisms are in place for regular reporting to parents on individual pupil progress and on issues of general interest and concern and being personally available to parents for consultation about their children's current and future education.
- Working with the PTA to sustain and nurture the distinctive ethos and sense of community within the School.
- Maintaining and cultivating excellent, friendly relationships with senior schools to ensure smooth transition for our pupils.
- Fostering the well-established links with the local community to enhance the public benefit Town Close School currently offers to various local schools, sports clubs and charities.
- Maintain and monitor an environment that promotes and safeguards the welfare of pupils and staff as the top priority.



THE PERSON

The next Head of Town Close will be an inspirational, decisive leader who understands the strength and energy that arises from empowering their immediate team. They will foster strong, meaningful relationships with staff, pupils and parents to deliver the School's strategic aims and direction.

The successful candidate will have the following experience, knowledge and personal qualities:

- Be an outstanding Head or Deputy with appropriate qualifications and a proven track record which balances strong and successful school leadership with compassion, empathy and motivational skills.
 - Be an exceptional educationalist with a clear pedagogical vision and a wide-ranging knowledge of different curricula and current best practice in order to inspire and nurture achievable learning outcomes for all pupils.
 - Demonstrate forward-thinking, vision and creativity, embracing digital technology whilst cherishing enduring human values.
 - Have an appetite to oversee the continuing development and growth of the School, including ambitious plans for new facilities.
 - Have the ability to prioritise, manage time, work under pressure and have good delegation skills whilst having realistic expectations of what can be achieved.
 - Be someone who promotes diversity, equality and fundamental British values to ensure all members of the School community feel appreciated, supported and included.
- Be a confident, articulate and inspiring communicator who has the ability to lead, listen, respect and support staff, maintaining morale and motivating them to achieve their own personal, as well as organisational, goals and to help with their continued well-being and professional development.
 - Be able to involve the School's loyal and interested parent community in the education of their children and have a visible, reassuring, presence around the School.
 - Have the ability to work closely and productively with the Chair, Board and Bursar to ensure the ongoing sustainability, viability and regulatory compliance of the School.
 - Have the necessary financial acumen and business awareness commensurate with the role.
 - Have a broad range of interests, life experiences and additional capabilities commensurate with the values Town Close seeks to instil in pupils.
 - Appreciate the world of young people and demonstrate kindness, honesty and complete integrity.
 - Prioritise the safeguarding and welfare of children and ensure everyone in the School community complies with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.



TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

Start date

The new Head will take up post in September 2024.

Salary and Benefit Package

Town Close will offer a competitive remuneration package commensurate with the importance of the role and the experience of the new Head. In addition, the successful candidate will be eligible for assistance with fees for any dependent children attending Town Close and will receive private medical insurance with the option to extend this to the applicant's whole family.

The School owns a three bedroom lodge house and the governors will consider this becoming a Head's house should the successful candidate wish. Assistance will also be offered towards relocation expenses as appropriate. The Head will be liable to pay all taxes arising from the receipt of taxable benefits.

Equal Opportunities

Town Close are committed to building an inclusive and diverse working and learning environment for staff and pupils alike and encourage applications from candidates of all backgrounds.

Safeguarding

All positions at Town Close are subject to an enhanced check from the Disclosure and Barring Service and the receipt of satisfactory references. The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.



HOW TO APPLY

The search for a new Head at Town Close is being led by Odgers Berndtson and the new postholder will be selected by a committee chaired by the Chair of Governors.

The closing date for applications is **9:00am GMT on Monday 6 November**.

Initial interviews with Odgers Berndtson will take place from **Thursday 9 November**. Short list interviews with the Selection Committee will take place on **Wednesday 22 November**. Candidates invited to the final stage will be invited to have a full briefing visit **w/c 27 November** and final interviews will take place on **Monday 4 December**.

To apply, please submit an application form, 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/90177.

All applications will receive an automated response.

For an initial discussion, please contact:

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

Lydia Haldane: +44 (0) 131 563 5414
lydia.haldane@odgersberndtson.com

Lottie Willis: +44 (0) 207 367 9795
lottie.willis@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.





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