

The Urswick School HEADTEACHER RECRUITMENT PACK



CONTENTS

- **Letter from the Headteacher**
- **About Us**
 - ▶ Our School Vision
 - ▶ Staffing Breakdown
 - ▶ Pupil Numbers
 - ▶ Notable Achievements and Key Strengths
 - ▶ Main Challenges
- **Job Details**
 - ▶ Job Description
 - ▶ Person Specification
 - ▶ Interview Process Dates

Letter from the Headteacher

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for your interest in the recently advertised post of Headteacher. The Chair of Governors has asked me to write an introductory letter to potential candidates.



I am retiring this summer after 40 consecutive years as a teacher, including being Headteacher of this school since April 2008. I have always been happy at Urswick but have simply decided to step away from the demands of Headship. The school is in an excellent position (including financially stable with a healthy budget surplus) and it is an ideal time for a new Head to build on the many successes of the last 17 years.

We are a Voluntary Aided Church of England School located in the heart of Hackney, close to Mare Street and Hackney Central Station. Most of our children live locally and both our students and staff reflect the diversity of the area. We articulate this with the simple phrase 'we are a Christian School but not a school just for Christians'.

Our students arrive at the school with attainment below the national average. Around 70% of our students are eligible for Pupil Premium Grant. This places Urswick as the sixth most deprived cohort in England and one of the most deprived secondary schools in London. A significant proportion live in overcrowded housing conditions and do not have internet access at home. We aim to ensure that students make accelerated progress, graduate into our Sixth Form and then to University. Our school mission statement is 'Believe and Achieve' – we have high aspirations for our students and offer them all the support possible to break the glass ceiling. Typically, about 25% of our Year 13s go to Russell Group universities and almost everyone goes to a university of their choice. We have a thriving Alumni group and invite former students to return for special events. We have Alumni students currently attending both Oxford and Cambridge.

We have a stable and experienced staff team and an excellent record of retaining ECTs. The senior leadership team comprises two Deputy Headteachers, a Director of Finance and a Director of Operations plus six permanent Assistant Headteachers. I am also Executive Head of New Regent's College, Hackney's Pupil Referral Unit. This role is being de-coupled and NRC will also be looking to appoint a new Headteacher. We also have an Extended Leadership Team, including Heads of English, Maths and Science, who are all on the leadership scale. Something that

is perhaps distinctive about our school is that six former students are now members of staff – including the Head of Transition and Head of Year 7. This reflects the strong sense of community which runs throughout the school.

We renamed the school in honour of our founder, Christopher Urswick, when we moved into our new building in September 2011. Urswick was Rector of Hackney when he founded a school for '12 poor boys to learn to read' in 1520. We are one of the oldest state schools in the country and are currently celebrating our 505th anniversary.

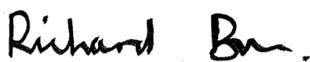
In October 2021 we were awarded the highest possible grade by SIAMS – excellent. The report really captures the ethos and values of our school. In contrast the OFSTED report will not help you get much of a sense of our school. We gained the all-important 'Good' and the successful candidate will have time to prepare the school for the next inspection.

Behaviour of our students is better than good – and has been consistently recognised as such during numerous OFSTED Inspections. This is not achieved by 'Boot Camp' methods but by ensuring our expectations are made very clear to students and our behaviour policy is consistently enforced. There is a very positive atmosphere in the school and a comprehensive rewards system which students very much subscribe to.

I have loved my time at the school and am proud to be handing it over in a very good condition. Equally I am sure the next Headteacher can make it even better. Occasionally I am described as old fashioned! The school is ready for new innovative leadership and ideas.

I wish you well in your application and look forward to working with the successful candidate to ensure a smooth and orderly transition.

Yours sincerely,



Richard Brown
Executive Headteacher

About us



Our School Vision

“Jesus said: ‘If you love me, feed my sheep’ ”

(John 21:17)

Jesus’ “sheep” are all the people he had originally come to help. Anyone following his teachings should try to help others as often and as fully as they can.

At the Urswick School, We all feed, and we are all fed:

Academically

Through our learning in all our subjects.

Emotionally

Through our support for our friends, our Urswick Parents, and our Heads of Learning.

Physically

Through eating lunch together as a family every day.

Spiritually

Through praying together, reflecting as individuals, and celebrating each day of success as a community.

The school’s ethos shows our Christian duty to be a source of nourishment to all members of our community; from physically feeding all students for free, to providing a safe environment for spiritual, emotional and academic growth. A culture of universal, unconditional respect fosters relationships of compassion, just as the school’s motto - “Believe and Achieve” - commands us collectively to positive action, commitment and hard work.

Staffing Breakdown

The Urswick School benefits from high staff retention through supportive leadership, professional development opportunities and an overall positive school culture. Staff enjoy various social events throughout the year and are also encouraged to engage in CPD for their own personal growth. Amongst the staff body are a significant number of teachers who joined the school as ECTs. The school has a proven track record of developing its staff and are especially proud that the vast majority of our ECTs have made significant progression in their career at Urswick. They now hold a plethora of TLRs within the school, including Head of Department, Head of Learning and Extended Leadership Team roles.

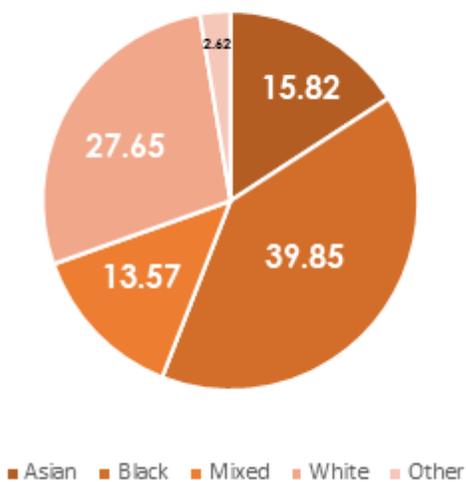
We currently have six members of the school's alumni as part of our staff team, reflecting our deep-rooted commitment to the community.

Staff Role	Number
Leadership	12
Teaching	60
Support Staff incl. TAs, admin & cleaning/site	36

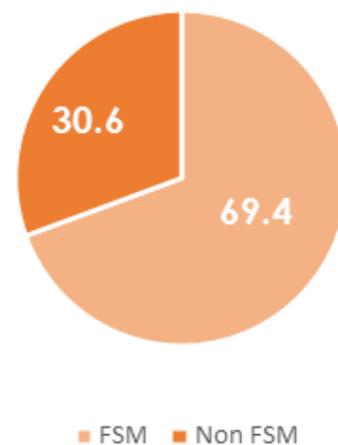
Pupil Numbers

The demographic of our students at The Urswick School is diverse, encompassing a wide range of backgrounds, experiences and needs, as captured in the data below. They present with different academic abilities, interests, and aspirations, which influence their educational journeys. Understanding the unique makeup of the student body is essential for fostering an inclusive environment that supports the academic, social, and emotional development of every student.

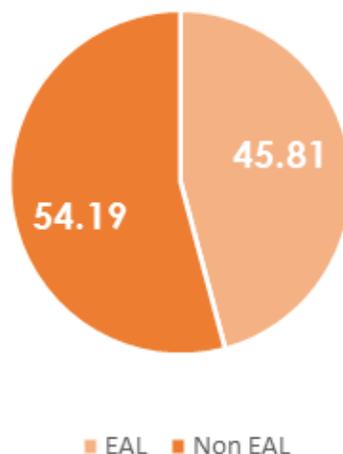
Global Majority Background



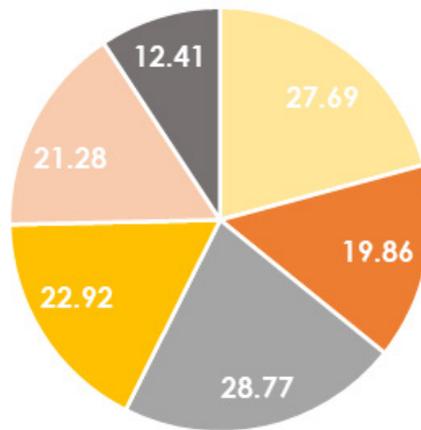
Free School Meal Eligibility



English as an Additional Language



SEN



Year 7 Year 8 Year 9 Year 10 Year 11 Sixth Form

Gender by Year Group



Notable Achievements and Key Strengths

Our mission statement, 'Believe and Achieve', drives the aspiration of our students and helps them to understand, irrespective of their faith or background, that if they set their mind on achieving and have self-belief, they can be successful. Last summer, Year 13 students achieved record A Level results, with top grades over 15% higher than the previous year. The Urswick School currently work with University College, London, who have provided access to study facilities and master classes which alongside our own teaching has contributed to massive improvement in our results.

In addition to the success of our 2024 A Level results, TUS Sixth Form is graded Outstanding by ALPs, placing us in the top 10% of schools nationally in terms of the progress made by our Sixth Form.

OFSTED described the behaviour of our children as 'exemplary' and reported that 'children are happy and safe at this school', 'in the classroom, pupils behave well and with a positive attitude towards their learning'. In successive OFSTED Inspections, The Urswick School has been graded 'Outstanding' for Leadership and Management and Behaviour and Safety. We are not a 'boot camp' and we promote self-discipline amongst young people including by rewarding students who do the right thing.

The school conduct frequent parent questionnaires at parental engagement events, parents comment that "the teaching standards at Urswick are exceptional! My child is very well cared for while she is at school. She very much enjoys attending lessons as all of her teachers are kind, patient and thoughtful to her individual needs. Thank you to everyone at The Urswick School".

Urswick achieved the highest grade, Excellent, in our most recent SIAMs Inspection, an Inspection by the National Society – who regulate Church of England Schools. The report describes the school as 'truly transformational' and states 'There is a strong sense that this is a family. The Urswick School is a loving and inclusive community where diversity is celebrated widely. Staff and pupils are richly nurtured and encouraged so they flourish abundantly'.

Main Challenges

A significant majority of Urswick students are eligible for Pupil Premium Grant, reflecting many of their socio-economic backgrounds. This currently places our cohort as the 6th most deprived in the country. While this context is important in understanding the barriers to learning our students may face, it does not define who they are or limit their potential. Rather, it shapes the way we approach teaching and learning, helping us tailor our strategies to ensure every child receives the support they need to succeed. Our focus is on providing opportunities, overcoming challenges, and ensuring that all students, regardless of their background, can **'Believe and Achieve'**.

As with many other London schools both primary and secondary, falling pupil rolls are an inevitable challenge the school will continue to face. The Urswick School's priority is to maintain high standards of education and support to its community, which requires innovative strategies and efficient resource management of a prospective new Head.



Job Details



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Headteacher

Grade: Group 7, Point 31-36: £113,456 – £127,011

Responsible To: Governing Body

Responsible For: Pupils and all grades of staff employed by the school

The appointment is subject to the current conditions of employment for Headteachers contained in the current School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document; the School Standards and Framework Act 1998; the Teacher Standards (revised 2012); and other relevant current legislation.

Job Purpose

To provide professional leadership for the school that builds on its success and improvement, ensuring high quality education for its pupils in a happy and vibrant school and continually improving standards of learning and achievement for all pupils.

To embody the Christian ethos of the school in a culture of mutual support and self-evaluation and encourage the growth of spiritual and moral values based on the principles of the Christian faith.

The Headteacher will:

- Provide effective leadership for the school securing success and continuous improvement across the whole school, ensuring high quality education for all pupils and the highest standards of learning and achievement in accordance with statutory requirements. As a Church of England School, the Headteacher will be required to uphold and promote the schools' Christian vision, ethos and values within day-to-day working practices.
- Establish and sustain the school's ethos and strategic direction together with the governing board and through consultation with the school community.
- Establish and oversee systems, processes and policies so the school can operate effectively.
- Identify problems and barriers to school effectiveness, and develop strategies for school improvement that are realistic, timely and suited to the school's context.
- Make sure these school improvement strategies are effectively implemented.
- Monitor progress towards achieving the school's aims and objectives.
- Allocate financial resources appropriately, efficiently and effectively.
- Act in accordance with the school's Code of Conduct and ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities as employees of the school.

Duties and Responsibilities

Shaping the Future

- Ensures the vision for the school is clearly articulated, shared, understood and acted upon effectively by all.
- Works within the school community to translate the vision into agreed objectives and operational plans, which will promote and sustain school improvement.
- Demonstrates the vision and values in everyday work and practice.
- Motivates and works with others to create a shared culture and positive climate.
- Ensures creativity, innovation and the use of appropriate new techniques and technologies to achieve learning excellence.
- Ensures that strategic planning takes account of the diversity, values and experience of the school and community at large.
- Demonstrates a commitment to partnership working in line with the London Diocesan Board for Schools (LDBS) and national policy.
- Have a strong commitment to comprehensive education within a diverse inner-city environment, including the development of a de-colonised, anti-racist curriculum.

Leading Learning and Teaching

- Ensures a consistent and continuous school-wide focus on pupils' achievement, using data and benchmarks to monitor the progress of every child's learning and set challenging targets year on year.
- Ensures that learning is at the centre of strategic planning and resource management.
- To ensure progression and continuity of a wide curriculum offer throughout the School and to ensure students are well prepared and well advised about the progression Post 16 and to University.
- Establishes creative, responsive and effective approaches to learning and teaching.
- To ensure the provision of religious education in accordance with the policy of the Governing Body and to have regard to the Church of England character of the School.
- Ensures a culture and ethos of challenge and support where all pupils can achieve success and become engaged in their own learning.
- To support the entitlement of students to a broad and balanced curriculum including SEND students.
- To ensure high quality provision for students with Education, Health and Care Plans.
- Demonstrates and articulates high expectations and sets stretching targets for every child.
- Implements strategies which secure high standards of behaviour and attendance. To maintain a high standard of behaviour supported by policies with consistently implemented practices that promotes self-discipline, independence and responsible attitudes.

- Determines, organises and implements a diverse, flexible curriculum and implements an effective assessment framework.
- Monitors, evaluates and reviews classroom practice and promotes improvement strategies.
- Develops middle and senior leaders to support school improvement and develop a sustainable school.
- Challenges underperformance at all levels and ensures effective corrective action and follow up.
- To encourage the active voice and participation of students in the life of the school.
- To nurture a spirit of care, friendship and respect among students towards each other and the wider community, so that every student can flourish.

Developing Self and Working with Others

- Treats people fairly, equitably and with dignity and respect to create and maintain a positive school culture.
- To lead and motivate staff to ensure that they have access to suitable advice, education and training appropriate to their professional needs and those of the School as identified in the School Improvement Plan.
- To support all staff in carrying out their responsibilities effectively through a programme of regular appraisal and effective line management.
- To ensure that Early Career Teachers and those returning after a break in service have access to adequate support.
- Builds a collaborative learning culture within the school and actively engages with other schools to build effective learning communities.
- Develops and maintains effective strategies and procedures for staff induction, professional development and performance review.
- Ensures effective planning, allocation, support and evaluation of work undertaken by teams and individuals.
- Ensuring clear delegation of tasks and responsibilities.
- Acknowledges the responsibilities and celebrates the achievements of individuals and teams.
- Develops and maintains a culture of high expectations for self and for others and takes appropriate action when performance is unsatisfactory.
- Regularly reviews practice, sets personal targets and takes responsibility for personal development.
- Manages workload and that of others to allow an appropriate work/life balance.
- To develop and maintain positive relationships and links with The Parish of Hackney, the local community and outside agencies, such as the Social Services and Police.
- To ensure effective liaison with the LDBS, the Local Authority (LA), its officers and other council departments serving the School.
- To attend Headteacher meetings and conferences convened by the LA and LDBS and provide feedback when necessary.

Managing the Organisation

- Creates an organisational structure, which reflects the school's values, and enables the management systems, structures and processes to work effectively in line with legal requirements.
- Produces and implements clear, evidence-based improvement plans and policies for the development of the school and its facilities.
- Ensures that, within an autonomous culture, policies and practices take account of national and local circumstances, policies and initiatives.
- Manages the school's financial and human resources effectively and efficiently to achieve the school's educational goals and priorities.
- Recruits, retains and deploys staff appropriately and manages their workload to achieve the vision and goals of the school.
- Implements successful performance management processes with all staff.
- Manages and organises the school environment efficiently and effectively to ensure that it meets the needs of the curriculum and health and safety regulations.
- Ensures that the range, quality and use of all available resources is monitored, evaluated and reviewed to improve the quality of education for all pupils and provide value for money.
- Uses and integrates a range of technologies effectively and efficiently to manage the school.
- To ensure effective transition between primary schools and The Urswick School.
- To lead on the public face of the school including the promotion of the school via social media, newsletters etc.
- To ensure the school-built environment is well maintained, cleaned and hygienic, and complies with current Health and Safety legislation; and that all grounds, buildings, furnishings and learning resources are safe and used with care.
- To ensure the provision of high-quality school food consistent with any relevant legislation.
- To promote an attractive environment which stimulates learning and enhances the appearance and enjoyment of the School.

Securing Accountability

- Fulfils commitments arising from contractual accountability to the Governing Board.
- Develops a school ethos, which enables everyone to work collaboratively, share knowledge and understanding, celebrate success and accept responsibility for outcomes.
- Ensures individual staff accountabilities are clearly defined, understood and agreed and are subject to rigorous review and evaluation.
- Advise Governors in the discharge of their duties in maintaining an effective and efficient school.
- Works with the Governing Body (providing information, objective advice and support) to enable it to meet its responsibilities.

- Develops and presents a coherent, understandable and accurate account of the school's performance to a range of audiences including Governors, parents and carers.
- Reflects on personal contribution to school achievements and takes account of feedback from others.

Strengthening Community

- Builds a school culture and curriculum, which takes account of the richness and diversity of the school community. To foster and promote a strong sense of community and wellbeing within the School including the development of positive relationships with all students and parents/carers and staff and encourage supportive links between the school and the local community.
- Creates and promotes positive strategies for challenging racial and any other prejudice.
- Ensures learning experiences for pupils are linked into and integrated with the wider community.
- Ensures a range of community-based learning experiences.
- Collaborates with other agencies in providing for the academic, spiritual, moral, social, emotional and cultural well-being of pupils and their families.
- Creates and maintains an effective partnership with parents and carers to support and improve pupils' achievement and personal development.
- Contributes to the development of the wider education system by sharing effective practice and promoting innovation and partnership work.

Safeguarding

- Responsible for promoting the welfare of all children and young people. To ensure that students are safe and well cared for. To oversee the work of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and ensure that all staff act within 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and have an excellent knowledge of safeguarding.
- Keeps up to date with all areas of safeguarding responsibilities across the school.
- Co-operates and works with relevant agencies to protect children.
- Sustains an organisational culture which prioritises and monitors the safeguarding of children and young people.
- Ensures all paperwork and electronic records are kept up-to-date and secure.

Notes

Additional specific responsibilities will be agreed with the Chair of Governors depending on the strengths, prior experience, and professional development needs of the successful candidate.

- A** The above responsibilities are subject to the general duties and responsibilities contained in the statement of Conditions of Employment.

- B** This job description allocates duties and responsibilities, but does not direct the particular amount of time to be spent on carrying them out and no part of it may be so construed. In allocating time to the performance of duties and responsibilities, the post-holder must use Directed Time in accordance with the School's published expectations and have regard to the appropriate clauses of a Teacher's Conditions of Employment.

- C** This job description is not necessarily a comprehensive definition of the post. It will be reviewed at least once each year and it may be subject to modification or amendment at any time after consultation with the holder of the post.

HEADTEACHER: PERSON SPECIFICATION

The criteria below will be assessed at one or more of the recruitment processes (application, references, and interview). Please address the aspects below in your supporting statement.

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications		
Qualified Teacher Status	✓	
NPQH or successfully accepted on the NPQH programme		✓
Degree or Higher Degree or equivalent post qualification award		✓
Strong evidence of continuing professional development relevant to the post	✓	
Successfully completed recognised 'safer recruitment' training or commitment to do so before taking up the post	✓	

	Essential	Desirable
Experience		
Senior Leadership experience as Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher, or Deputy Headteacher	✓	
Experience of teaching in more than one school	✓	
Experience of teaching in a medium-sized school	✓	
Experience of teaching in a church school		✓
Experience of leading staff in the improvement of learning and teaching	✓	
Experience of managing people, including staff performance reviews, and acting on any associated issues and valuing excellent practice	✓	
Experience of managing and leading projects for implementing whole school change	✓	
Experience of budget and resource management underpinned by best value practices	✓	
Experience of engaging and utilising of the rich and diverse resources within a local community	✓	

	Essential	Desirable
Professional Knowledge and Understanding		
Demonstrate strategic thinking and planning that builds, communicates and carries forward a coherent and shared vision	✓	
A clear understanding of how to develop and sustain a learning culture that has high expectations and standards of achievement for all at its core	✓	
A clear understanding of the characteristics of an outstanding school and how they may be delivered	✓	
Able to demonstrate ability to implement strategies for raising achievement and achieving excellence for pupils, staff and self	✓	
Able to implement strategies for developing effective teacher to ensure the entitlement of all pupils to effective teaching and learning	✓	
A clear understanding of the strategies for improving the quality of learning and teaching, including promoting excellence and challenging poor performance	✓	
Understanding and experience of curriculum design and management that helps to provide the choice and flexibility to meet the personal learning needs of every pupil	✓	
Able to use data (in a variety of forms), benchmarking and feedback to monitor progress in pupils' learning and development to inform personalisation and identify key objectives for the school	✓	
Committed to ensuring pupils with additional needs can grow and flourish in the school	✓	
An up-to-date understanding of national policy, curriculum development and the statutory and legal framework within which a school operates, including the OFSTED and SIAMS framework	✓	

	Essential	Desirable
Managing a School		
Evidence of a commitment to sustaining and developing a safe, secure and healthy school environment, in accordance with Child Protection and Safeguarding legislation	✓	
Able to demonstrate working knowledge of the principles and strategies of school improvement and the principles and practice of distributed leadership and accountability	✓	
Ability to create policies, through informed decision making, consultation and informed judgements	✓	
Knowledge of strategic financial planning, budgetary management and application of the principles of best value	✓	
Ability to manage a school on a day-to-day basis including delegating management of tasks and monitoring their implementation	✓	

	Essential	Desirable
Skills		
The ability to effectively manage the process of change, including monitoring and the setting of targets	✓	
The ability to think strategically, prioritise and plan to realise the vision and aims of the school	✓	
The ability to think analytically and creatively and demonstrate initiative in solving problems	✓	
The ability to manage and resolve conflict	✓	
Possesses good interpersonal, written and oral communication skills	✓	
Has the presence and the ability to make points clearly, to listen, understand and respond in a variety of situations	✓	
Excellent organisation skills which maintain the smooth running of the school whilst maintaining a focus on the long-term vision	✓	
Knowledge and experience of a range of mechanisms for working productively with the Governing Body and an understanding of its statutory rights	✓	
Commitment to Equality and Diversity in the school, with a no tolerance approach to racism or any other forms of discrimination	✓	

	Essential	Desirable
Personal Attributes		
Resilience and the ability to manage in high pressured environments	✓	
Presents a positive role model in carrying out duties and when representing the school	✓	
Demonstrates personal enthusiasm and commitment to leadership aimed at making a positive different to children and young people	✓	
The ability to lead and work effectively as part of a team, be reflective and self-critical, and take feedback constructively	✓	
The ability to build and maintain quality relationships through interpersonal skills and effective communication	✓	
Demonstrates personal and professional integrity in promoting the values, ethos and standards of the school, and modelling Christian values and vision	✓	
Demonstrates a capacity for sustained hard work with energy and vigour	✓	

	Essential	Desirable
Safeguarding		
Able to demonstrate commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people	✓	
Proven ability to build a culture where children feel confident that their concerns will be listened to and acted upon	✓	
Experience as a DSL or Deputy DSL (or without this, a willingness to be trained and be a DSL)	✓	

	Essential	Desirable
A Distinctive Christian School		
In sympathy with the Church of England's Vision for Education, and willing to uphold the Practices of the Church of England	✓	
Committed to the ethos and values of a Church of England school and to maintaining and developing links with local churches and clergy	✓	
Able to lead inspiring and relevant collective worship, whilst also being sensitive to those of other faiths or no faith whilst respecting the views of all	✓	
Member of a Christian Church		✓

Interview Process Dates

Application closing date	Friday 28th February
School visits for prospective candidates	Tuesday 25th February – 9.30am Thursday 27th February – 5pm
Shortlisting	Wednesday 5th March
Interviews	Tuesday 11th March Wednesday 12th March