



Blundell's

FOUNDED 1604



CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK

APPOINTMENT OF HEAD

FOR SEPTEMBER 2026

Closing date: Thursday 20 February



WELCOME



Thank you for your interest in the role of Head of Blundell's School. We are grateful for the time and effort you have taken in considering Blundell's as the next step in your professional journey.

As you may know, Blundell's School has a rich history, with a legacy that dates back to 1604. Over the centuries, our school has provided an exceptional education to generations of students, nurturing academic excellence, character development, and a strong sense of community. It is this community – one that fosters a sense of belonging, collaboration, and support - that continues to be at the heart of Blundell's today.

In recent years, Blundell's has made remarkable progress, with continued improvements in academic performance, the expansion of our extracurricular offerings, and a commitment to providing a well-rounded education for every pupil. We are incredibly proud of what we offer to every child and young person - whether they are in our Pre-Prep, Prep or Senior School - and are excited about the potential to build upon these achievements. The opportunity for our next Head is not only to uphold the values and traditions that make Blundell's unique but also to drive forward our vision for the future.

We believe that this role offers an extraordinary opportunity for leadership and growth, and we are eager to find someone who shares our passion for fostering an environment where both students and staff can flourish.

Thank you once again for your interest in Blundell's School. We look forward to the next stages of the recruitment process and the possibility of welcoming you into our community.

Mr Nigel Hall
CHAIR OF GOVERNORS



An Introduction

Applications are welcomed from candidates who are aligned with Blundell's ethos and educational offering, and are excited about the idea of where to take the school next. Given the changing environment in which all independent schools are operating, the next Head will need to be agile, imaginative and responsive to market pressures and will work with the Governors to explore ways in which Blundell's can continue to future proof itself, whilst maintaining the excellence of provision and strength of community that it is known for.

Following the appointment of Bart Wielenga as Rector of Michaelhouse in South Africa, for September 2026, the Governors of Blundell's seek to recruit an outstanding Head who will build on the school's successes and continue to nurture and develop its core values and educational offering. While the Governors and Leadership Team have a clear vision for the school's future direction, the next Head will have the opportunity to shape and deliver a strategy, working with excellent colleagues and providing clear and inspiring leadership to a committed staff and highly engaged wider school community.

In recent years, much has been done to ensure Blundell's is firmly on the map and a school of choice in the South-West of England and beyond. Significant efforts have gone into developing an ambitious learning culture, fostering an environment where teachers thrive, and pupils exceed their own expectations. This has created a positive culture and a strong belief that the educational processes are visibly benefiting the pupils.

Candidates for this role will find at Blundell's a real appetite to learn and grow and to give pupils the best possible opportunities. Staff and pupils are collaborators in this, and the relationships between staff and pupils is one of the defining features of the school. Looking forward, there are endless opportunities for whoever is appointed and an openness amongst Governors and the Leadership Team, to strive, as custodians, to ensure this wonderful school thrives for centuries to come.



The Blundell's Difference

Blundell's is a co-educational boarding and day school, educating 870 pupils, aged 3 to 18, across its Prep and Senior schools. It occupies an attractive and sizeable campus on the edge of the market town of Tiverton, very much in the heart of Devon and surrounded by hills and green space.

The philosophy of "Roots and Wings" is deeply embedded at Blundell's. Roots that ensure pupils remain grounded, with values that provide a foundation on which to build their lives, with wings of ambition and aspiration, the confidence and courage to realise their full selves. This, coupled with the school's motto 'Pro Patria Populoque' (for the country and the people) serve as an excellent introduction to the sort of school Blundell's is.

The school has a reputation for the collegiality of its staff and the positivity and friendliness of its pupils. The outstanding characteristic of Blundellians is their 'can-do' attitude.

The main finding of the school's most recent Independent Schools Inspectorate report was that the quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is "excellent", and the quality of pupils' personal development is also "excellent". It also noted that "Pupils throughout the school demonstrate strong development of self- confidence and self-awareness, at levels appropriate to or, for many, beyond their age. Pupils showed their justifiable pride in their own and in others' achievements, without appearing in the least arrogant or excessively competitive." Read more [here](#).

Blundell's is proudly a non-selective school, but consistently ranks among the top schools in the country for value-added data, the school has achieved outstanding academic results with 80% of all A-Levels being A* - B over the past two years.

On average each pupil achieves half a grade more per GCSE than the average for pupils of their ability in independent schools in the UK and an increase of .85 of a grade in each of their A-Levels.

Alongside Oxbridge places, pupils consistently win the South-West rounds in academic competitions, progressing in recent years to national finals in Maths, Physics and Chemistry challenges.

In recent years, there has been a strong focus not only on learning, but also on the process of learning, both in and out of the classroom, and the leadership team are committed to building on this yet further. A guiding light is their commitment to being more thoughtful in understanding their pupils, and more innovative in developing their potential, than any other school in the country.

Whilst the academic life of the school underpins everything, Blundell's is a school that celebrates the holistic development of its pupils. The school has always had a strong reputation for its sport and outdoor pursuits, but its drama, arts and music provision are also highly regarded with a range of performances, trips and achievements speaking to this.

Taking part in music, drama, sport, outdoor pursuits, activities and clubs might lead to a lifelong passion, but may equally be a source of fun and enjoyment. Blundell's has an enormously rich and vibrant Co-Curricular programme that nurtures those with real talent, alongside those who simply want to try new things.

Devonians are known for their warmth, and this is reflected in the strength of the relationships within the school. This is fostered by the Boarding Houses.

Each member of academic staff acts as a Tutor for a small group of tutees within a House. Tutors are an important element of the pastoral system at Blundell's, and perform a key role in enabling the school to achieve the core pastoral objective of knowing each pupil individually, and as an individual.

Staff and pupils at Blundell's interact in a wide variety of differing environments and these interactions help to promote strong, positive relationships which, in turn, create a happy and collaborative work environment. Put simply, staff and pupils at Blundell's get on well together, and enjoy each other's company, whether that be in the classroom, on the sports field, in the Boarding Houses, or indeed anywhere across the school. Pupils want to learn, and to improve, and the staff enjoy supporting them in their endeavours. This leads to a sense of community, and of togetherness.



Chapel Life

The chapel reflects the Christian foundation of the school and plays a central part in the school community, both in terms of spiritual guidance, but also representing a chance for different parts of the school community to convene on a regular basis at the start of the day. Services are held in the chapel on a daily basis throughout the school week, and also on Sundays. The school has its own Chaplain who works closely with the Head, and is proud of its chapel traditions, which include a strong commitment to singing and all that comes with communal worship. Whilst the life of the chapel is led by the Chaplain, the Head takes services on a regular basis and is a visible part of chapel life.

Community Partnerships

Community engagement and social responsibility is a key part of a Blundellian's education and is recognised as being important for a healthy, happy school that is part of its wider community. Blundell's is fortunate to have extensive grounds and therefore commits itself, as a charity, to using its facilities for the purposes of education in its widest sense. Pupils at Blundell's from Years 7 to 13 have the opportunity to join one of four Community Action Teams (CATs), they are: The Environment and Sustainability Team; The Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity Team; The Academic and Creative Arts Team; and The Sport and Outdoor Pursuits Team. The pupil led CATs enrich and develop sustainable partnerships, working closely with the school's Charity Committee.

The Future

The leadership and Governors of Blundell's are not complacent and there is a spirit of continuous improvement embedded in the culture. There are currently three reviews taking place, with a focus on the pastoral system, years 7 and 8, and the co-curricular offering. Each of these is likely to have a three year life span, and are at different stages of progression.

There is also a recognition of the importance of ensuring the estate is managed and developed appropriately, and there is an expectation that the site and facilities at both the Prep and Senior schools will be enhanced in the coming years. Much thought and resources have been expended in recent years to create a more sustainable site.

Much is done to support the continuous professional development of staff, with regular research and evidence based academic publications being produced by the staff, as well as the delivery of programmes specifically designed to support the development of different tiers of teaching staff.

Strategic and Financial Direction

Governors and the Leadership Team are working together to review and develop ongoing key strategic and financial priorities for Blundell's. This work has been informed in some part by feedback from a recent parental survey, and builds on previous strategic and resource planning. This is an evolutionary programme of work and the incoming Head will have the chance to feed into the next phase of strategic prioritization, whilst it is hoped they will wish to continue the current direction of travel.



When asked to sum up the best thing about working at Blundell's, current staff say:

"I am allowed to be myself and given the freedom and support to structure my department for the best outcomes of students. I gain enormous personal pleasure working alongside the students and building such strong and lasting relationships with them. I love making a difference every day, it keeps me young, makes me laugh, and keeps me in touch with what is really important."

"The community spirit across the whole school, staff, pupils, parents. Having been able to develop my own ideas, with support and encouragement from others, to create a job I love".

"The pupils that we produce and how they leave the school and move into the world as adults. Blundellians are always happy to chat to you and catch up and I remain proud of the young people who leave the school. I also love the support and camaraderie amongst the common room as a whole"

The Role

The Leadership Team

The current leadership team includes the Senior Executive Team (SET), which consists of the Head, the Bursar, the Second Master, the Head of Blundell's Prep School and the Senior Deputy Head (Innovation). In September 2025 a new Second Master will be joining the school, with the current incumbent moving on to headship.

The SET is supported by four Deputy Heads, Academic, Pastoral, Co-Curricular and Operations, who are all part of a wider Senior Leadership Team (SLT), which also includes the school's six Directors. The Directors are responsible for IT, Community Partnerships, Marketing and Admissions, Foundation, Staff Development and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. The Head meets weekly with the SET and regularly with the SLT as well as the Operational Leadership Team (OLT).

The Head of Blundell's Prep School reports to the Head of Blundell's School and the Prep School has its own experienced leadership team.

Both Heads are supported by central support from the Bursary team in the areas of Finance, HR, and Estates. The current Clerk to the Governors will assume the role of Bursar with effect from April 2025 when she returns to the UK.

The Governing Body

The Governing Body normally meets termly and is made up of a maximum of 18 members. The Head is in touch with the Chair of Governors every week and there are termly meetings for the main sub committees: Prep School, Education, Finance & General Purposes, Governance and Investment & Philanthropy. A Standing Committee comprising the Chairs of the sub committees and the Chair and Vice-Chair has recently been established to facilitate operational decision-making including oversight over Fees and Remuneration. A strategy alignment meeting is held every 12 - 18 months which brings together Governors and the Senior Leaders.

The Governing Body is very supportive of the school, and Governors regularly attend events, meet staff, parents and pupils. The Head attends all committee meetings and prepares reports for the Full Board meeting each term. Other Senior Leaders attend Governing Body and Committee meetings when required.

Leading Blundell's

The Head of Blundell's is a visible presence around the school and whoever is appointed will need to enjoy being part of a close knit community, where many of the staff live on or near the school site and where there is a strong family feel to the place.

Blundell's operates in a highly competitive environment, with a high density of other boarding and day schools across the South-West. It occupies a particular position within its region, whilst also attracting families from further afield and overseas, but marketing and pupil recruitment are a key part of this role, and the Head will play a key role in this area. This will require travel both within the UK and internationally, working closely with the Director of Marketing and Admissions.

The Governors are committed to the school's strong boarding ethos, and to retaining its high proportion of boarders, and whoever is appointed must understand what makes boarding schools tick and be committed to maintaining and developing the boarding offering and numbers further. The current boarding provision allows pupils to be full, weekly or flexi boarders.

Whilst Blundell's does not currently have an overseas school, there are a number of projects that the Governors and Head are engaged with in this regard. The next Head will be expected to pick up on work done to date to take opportunities forward where they are identified.

Working with the recently appointed Director of Development, who is himself an Old Blundellian, the Head will also play a key role in alumni relations and fundraising, particularly for future capital projects.



Key Responsibilities

Strategic Direction

- Develop and implement the strategic vision for the school, working with the Governing Body to agree the goals and priorities for the future
- Keep the strategic plan under regular review ensuring that it is translated into measurable targets for implementation and monitoring.
- Ensure all stakeholders understand and are committed to the strategic vision. This includes staff, parents, alumni and the wider school community.
- Ensure that the ethos and values of the school are sustained and well communicated to all stakeholders.
- Be aware of and respond with agility, to the wider external environment and sector, adapting plans to change as necessary.

Academic Pastoral and Educational Leadership

- Inspire and lead the Senior Executive Team ensuring that roles and responsibilities are clear and that the highest standards of performance are set and maintained.
- Work collaboratively with the Head of Blundell's Prep School to the benefit of both school communities.
- Provide inspirational and motivational leadership to all members of the school community and create an environment in which pupils and staff feel supported and challenged.
- Ensure that Blundell's is a school which continues to prepare its pupils for both academic and personal success, focusing on a rounded education and the Roots and Wings ethos.
- Ensure that emerging technologies are explored for their potential to enhance the learning environment.
- Ensure that the school adheres to the highest possible standards of safeguarding and pastoral care, and that the physical and mental health and well-being of all pupils and staff remain at the heart of the school's mission.

Leadership and Management

- Work with the Bursar and the Governors to ensure that the strategic financial planning of the school is secure and sustainable.
- Ensure that leadership roles are clear and that high standards of performance are set and maintained.
- Ensure appropriate deployment and overall management of financial, human and physical resources in support of the strategic direction of the school.
- Ensure that excellent communication processes are in place so that staff understand and engage with relevant issues, including the vision, strategic direction and finances of the school.
- Ensure that appropriate school policies and procedures are in place, so that the school complies fully with relevant legislation and regulation and its charitable objectives.
- Ensure that rigorous performance management is in place for the whole staff, so that all staff are accountable for pupil experience and outcomes, and that professional development opportunities are focused on individual needs as well as whole school priorities.
- Ensure the appropriate policies and procedures are in place to recruit, develop, reward and retain staff of the highest calibre.

External Engagement

- Play an active and visible role in the local community and the wider region, building, maintaining and strengthening relationships with key stakeholders.
- Be an active ambassador for the school locally, nationally and internationally.
- Ensure strong and trusting relationships with current and prospective parents, alumni and other stakeholders.
- Work closely with the Marketing and Admissions team to ensure that creative marketing strategies are in place and all opportunities to publicise the school are maximised.
- Play a lead role in the school's fundraising, alumni relations and marketing strategies.



Candidate Specification

The successful candidate will have obvious leadership qualities and will demonstrate a strong fit with the ethos of Blundell's, as well as knowledge of and a commitment to best practice in relation to safeguarding children and young people.

It is likely that the strongest candidates will demonstrate many of the following criteria:

Qualifications and Experience

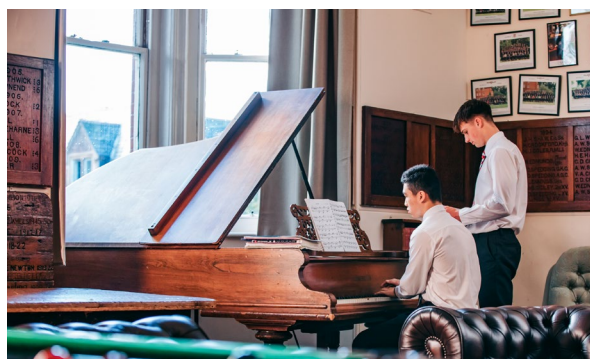
- Educated to degree level, with evident commitment to continuous self-improvement and professional development.
- Proven track record of success in educational management, with senior leadership experience.
- Excellent teaching track record with success in both teaching and pastoral care.
- Experience working in schools that have some comparability with Blundell's, particularly in terms of those with a strong boarding ethos.
- Knowledge of and interest in current and future educational practices and committed to continuous improvement and innovation in teaching and learning both individually and for staff.
- Experience of setting up and running an overseas school would be an advantage.

Leadership and Management

- Ability to develop and articulate a clear vision that is accessible to all stakeholders.
- Excellent commercial acumen including a sound grasp of robust financial management and budgeting.
- A strong understanding and a commitment to, best practice in safeguarding the welfare of pupils, and an appreciation of the importance of regulation.
- Significant experience in staff management processes including recruitment, development, retention and performance management.
- Strong marketing skills, and an understanding of schools that operate in competitive markets.
- Proven ability to lead change.

Personal Attributes

- Someone who at heart is an educator, marrying this with a commercial and strategic outlook.
- Evidently enjoys working with young people and playing a visible leadership role within a school community.
- Strong interpersonal skills; enjoys building relationships, creating a strong culture and supporting, influencing and leading teams.
- A collegiate and collaborative approach, with the ability to motivate, influence and inspire staff, pupils and parents.
- An accomplished communicator in both spoken and written word with very good listening skills.
- An understanding of and sympathy with the school's Christian ethos and willingness to play an active role in supporting the chaplain and the chapel life of the school.
- An ability to articulate the benefits of co-education and schools where all-round achievement is celebrated as much as academic achievement.
- Personal charisma, dynamism, energy and enthusiasm.
- A real understanding of the importance of marketing and pupil recruitment.
- The ability to think innovatively and strategically.
- A focus on excellence and high standards.
- Excellent judgement: a clear thinker, who is concise and able to make decisions in a fair and reasoned way.
- The strength of character to deal with the pressures of leading a school.
- Experienced in the effective management of competing priorities.





Application Process

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to Blundell's School on this appointment. Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code TAOYC

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

The closing date for applications is 9am on Thursday 20 February.

Key dates:

- Longlist interviews via Teams: w/c 3 – w/c 10 March
- Shortlist interviews at the school: 2 May
- Final interviews at the school: 14 and 15 May

For a confidential conversation about the role, please contact Jo Ogilvy, Consultant at Saxton Bampfylde on jo.ogilvy@saxbam.com

* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Blundell's is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening including checks with past employers and an enhanced check with the Disclosure and Barring Service. Background checks on your online digital presence will also be carried out. All staff are required to provide evidence of identity, entitlement to work in the UK and of any qualifications required for the job.

[Click here to download the Senior School Safeguarding Policy](#)

GDPR personal data notice:

According to GDPR guidelines, Saxton Bampfylde Ltd are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.



Working at Blundell's

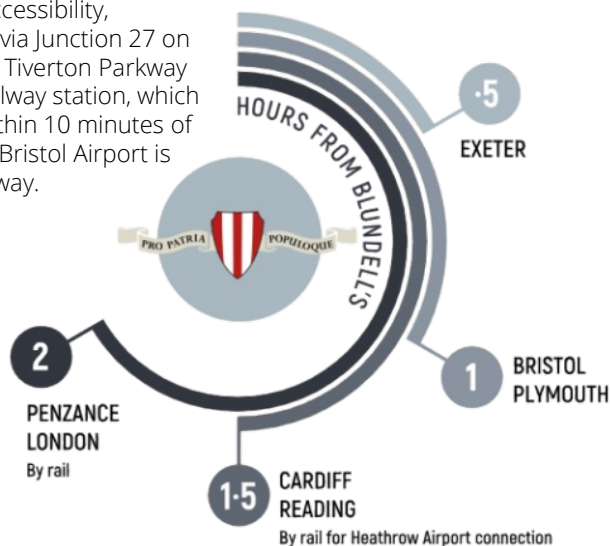
Salary and Benefits

The Head will receive a competitive package, with a base salary dependent on experience. The Head will be expected to live on site during term time and will be accommodated in a generously proportioned house on site, with utilities and council tax covered by the school. Other benefits include a competitive pension contribution (a DC pension scheme for new appointments) and generous fee discount.



Location

Devon is one of the most popular holiday destinations in the UK as well as being a fantastic place to live and work. Blundell's is situated on the edge of the market town of Tiverton within easy reach of many stunning villages, towns and cities, both the North and South Devon coasts, and the wild beauty of Dartmoor. The general ambience of Blundell's is enhanced by the tranquillity of the surrounding rolling Devon countryside and the school's historic buildings. Blundell's is blessed with excellent accessibility, particularly via Junction 27 on the M5 and Tiverton Parkway mainline railway station, which are both within 10 minutes of the school. Bristol Airport is one hour away.





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