



St Christopher's School



Headteacher's information pack



Welcome from the CEO

After almost 4 years as Headmaster at St Christopher's, Jonathan Coke will be leaving to take up another Headship, starting at the beginning of the Summer Term.

We are now looking for a Headteacher who will preserve the school's unique ethos, support our vision to maintain St Christopher's as one of the best local independent schools and, most importantly, deliver the very best learning experience the pupils.

We seek an individual who is a creative and warm leader, an excellent communicator, has an eye for marketing and has the ability and ambition to guide St Christopher's School through the next stage of its journey.

Leading and managing on our priorities for development will present the new Head with a wonderful opportunity to make a significant impact on the future direction of this already high-achieving school.

As the CEO of ILG I am fully committed to and believe in the potential of St Christopher's School and am looking for the right leader.

If this is a role that excites you and you feel you have the skills and experience, we would be delighted to hear from you.



Mr Amit Mehta
CEO, inspired Learning Group

Overview and Core Values of St Christopher's School

Overview and History

St Christopher's School is an independent preparatory school for both boys and girls aged 2 – 11 years old. With tradition dating back nearly 100 years, we have retained the small school, family atmosphere that so many parents want for their children, whilst staying abreast of contemporary trends.

St Christopher's School was founded in 1928 and was originally a Christian Foundation. It was started in response to the increase in population of the Wembley District which grew from 16,000 in 1921 to around 40,000 in 1930. Many of the new families living here included children and although the local Council did its best to cope, it could not build new schools fast enough, and a number of private schools were opened.

Since that time, a preparatory school has existed on the same site. There have been many improvements and extensions to the building throughout the years which now provides a large hard surfaced playground, ICT room and library, medical room, EYFS outdoor area , a main hall and 7 classrooms.





Core Values

At St Christopher's School we aim to fully realise the educational potential of our pupils: academically, socially, artistically and physically. We encourage in everyone a sense of personal responsibility and individual worth within a caring multi-cultural community. As a result our school has a happy and supportive atmosphere which is conducive to learning.

St. Christopher's ethos highlights its commitment to encouraging pupils to fulfil their potential and for them to be valued equally. We place particular emphasis on a balanced, all-round education. Our pupils are happy and confident, eager to learn and to help others.

Our vision is to provide an educational environment which has all the advantages of a small, nurturing family atmosphere and which also achieves the very highest academic standards. We want to give each individual child the opportunity to develop to their highest potential within a caring and supportive social setting. We have high academic goals and even higher social and developmental expectations.

Aims

At St Christopher's we have a set of aims that through a rich variety of experience the children can:

- Develop a sense of responsibility, care, consideration and respect towards themselves and others
- Develop lively and enquiring minds
- Develop academically to the best of their ability
- Learn to respect religions and moral values and celebrate the diversity of people, religions and ways of life
- Acquire knowledge and develop relevant life skills in an ever changing world

About Inspired Learning Group

ILG currently owns and operates 25 schools and nurseries in the UK. Overall, we look after over 2,000 pupils, making us one of the largest independent school groups in the UK. St Christopher's School is one of 11 Prep Schools within the group.

We see ILG as one extended family, allowing us to share best practice and innovation between schools in order to raise standards of teaching and learning for all our students. We recognise and respect that each school has its own history and identity. We encourage individuality, so that new ideas can grow naturally with the best ideas then being implemented right across the group. This collaborative spirit is an effective way of ensuring that education practices do not fall behind the times and it is why we encourage out-of-the-box methods such as Apple teaching and future thinking.

ILG schools may look reassuringly traditional in some ways, but our move away from standardisation toward customisation is not just modern but quietly revolutionary. We make the effort to understand the differences between individual children and tailor their teaching at a personal level. This means that all children, no matter their needs, are catered for. Our commitment to parents is that no one child will ever be left behind.

ILG empowers its schools to achieve their mission and vision through challenging yet supportive governance. We connect schools, stakeholders and professional associations to create opportunities and build capacity. We work with school leadership to set clear school improvement goals through engagement with pupils, parents, staff and the wider community.

We recruit, invest in and retain outstanding practitioners and ensure the provision and monitoring of a broad and balanced personalised curriculum for children with individual learning needs.





The Opportunity

This appointment is a great opportunity for an existing or aspiring Head to make a lasting impression. At St Christopher's we believe that every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

The new Head must be willing to work closely in partnership with ILG, but also have the strength and independence to make their own decisions for the benefit of the School and its community. The Head works closely with the CEO and Finance Director of ILG, but also has plenty of scope for autonomy in terms of the running of the school.

Understanding and nurturing this relationship with ILG is key to the new Head being able to maximise the considerable opportunities this role offers. It is by nature a reassuring and supportive relationship, not a smothering one. ILG provides St Christopher's School with strategic guidance, financial security and management, plus back office functions such as human resources/talent acquisition and estates, thus allowing the Head to focus on the educational leadership of the School.

The Advisory Board chaired by an educational consultant, provides the governance structure within which the Head can be supported and guided.

The opportunity to learn from the wisdom and experience of others in the support group of ILG Heads is a further benefit of ILG's involvement in the School. The Heads meet together termly to share best practice and concerns.

Short and medium term challenges

There is a need for the new Head to consider carefully the priorities for further development of the School in order to retain and enhance the pupil numbers within a competitive market.





What we do differently at St Christopher`s

Our prep school has small classes of 14 children, on average. We have excellent teachers, including subject specialists and a teacher-pupil ratio which is rarely found in large Independent Preps and state primary schools in Wembley.

We have an outstanding track record of achievements at 11+ exams, with half of our pupils getting offers of places at Grammar Schools or gaining Scholarships . Furthermore, we challenge our pupils with an advanced curriculum which allows pupils to perform far in advance of age-related expectations. However, it is the excellence in our pupils' personal development which makes us better than the large Independent Schools in the North London area.

The School Sections

Nursery

At St Christopher's Nursery we believe that 'every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured'.

Our goal at St Christopher's Nursery is to provide a safe and caring environment, where children can gain a positive approach to school and learning. We aim to make each child's early education experiences positive and meaningful. We know that children learn best in a welcoming, warm, secure, and caring environment, where they are able to experiment and have fun, take risks, learn from their experiences and grow in confidence. The uniqueness and individuality of each child is emphasised and valued.

At St Christopher's Nursery we believe that the Early Years are critical in children's development and that the EYFS builds a firm basis for future learning, development, and independence. Therefore, we educate the whole child and promote independence, curiosity, respect, and resilience. We offer drama clubs, language lessons, and themed days to develop our students knowledge of the world.

We also introduce and begin to embed our school values: Friendship, Kindness, Trust, Honesty, Happiness, and Courage.





Prep

At St Christopher's School, we understand the importance of transitioning from Reception to Key Stage 1 and 2.

It is important that every pupil continues to receive individual attention. This not only helps them to discover and develop their personal strengths, but also to uncover any areas of weakness. Once those strengths and weaknesses are recognised then an appropriate curriculum plan can be tailored.

The curriculum in the Preparatory School includes English, Mathematics, Science, ICT, History, Geography, RE, MFL (French), Music, Art and Sport. Continuous assessment, both formal and informal, takes place throughout the age range including the introduction to the concept of formal examinations.

Our curriculum at St Christopher's School is specifically geared towards preparing pupils for the 11+ exam. Our teaching in English and Maths is heavily influenced by the Independent Schools Examining Board curriculum, which we believe is more challenging and geared to 11+ exam criteria.

The 11+ system allows our pupils to gain multiple offers from different Senior Independent Schools and then make their choice. Unlike a large Independent School, we do not channel students to just one Senior School. Our pupils and our parents have choice. Furthermore, we challenge our pupils with an advanced curriculum which allows pupils to perform far in advance of age-related expectations.

We also teach and practise exam skills through standardised tests and ISEB exams as well as verbal reasoning and non verbal reasoning tests. Finally our assessment system is based on standardised scores which track each student's ability and indicate how they have exceeded the expected national standard. We expect most of our students to exceed the expected national standard.

Extra Curricular & School Trips

Extra Curricular

High quality clubs and extra-curricular activities are an essential part of school life.

The school offers a wide variety of clubs including: Football, French, Arts & Crafts, Games, Book Club, Choir, Recorders, School Council, School Orchestra, Computing, Multi-sports Club and many more. These clubs change termly, giving children the opportunity to try something new each term.

'Booster Club' is held for children in Year 5. This gives them extra help with their numeracy and literacy skills in preparation for the forthcoming entrance exams. Sport.

School Trips

Pupils of St Christopher's School benefit from numerous enriching activities and visits. As the school is located close to Wembley Park Station we are able to access all the wonderful museums, concert halls, art galleries, historic sites, places of worship and educational attractions in Central London.

Each year group can expect to go on between three and six outings a year.

Common outings include: The Barbican, The Royal Academy, The National Gallery, The Natural History Museum, The Science Museum, The War Rooms, The Royal Courts of Justice, The National Portrait Gallery, The Roman Museum at Verulamium (St Albans), The London Transport Museum, The Royal Mews, The Bank of England Museum and Fryent Country Park.





Governance and Leadership

The termly Governance meeting is chaired by David Tidmarsh with the Director of Operations also present and the Head in attendance, who provides a termly report for discussion.



The Role

Key aims of the role

- To lead, motivate and develop the school and its staff so that it fulfils the academic, pastoral, spiritual and social needs of the pupils and their parents, by providing an excellent, broad-based education in line with the school's ethos
- To work with the Advisory Board, drawing on their experience and expertise, to fulfil all the duties and responsibilities for the proper governance of the school; to ensure that the Chairman and Board receive timely notice and appropriate information on all relevant matters
- To work closely and cooperatively with the CEO and Finance Officer, in accordance with the Board's strategic direction, in terms of financial matters and site development.





The Role

Key responsibilities of the role:

The Head is responsible, directly and by delegation, for

- The leadership and management of the School.
- The care and development of each child and for maintaining excellent academic standards within the School.
- The pastoral care and welfare of all staff and pupils.
- The overall financial performance of the School, for which they will be assisted by the finance team, and for meeting the annual budget agreed.
- Leading, managing, and motivating the Senior Leadership Team and, with them and through them, all academic and support staff.
- The appointment of all staff.
- The assessment, appraisal, guidance, support, and professional development of all teaching staff with the objective of achieving inspirational teaching at all levels.
- The marketing of the School, including fundraising, the production of publicity, literature and any advertising, the public relations profile, management of the School's website and the establishment of positive relations with prospective parents.
- Recruiting a full complement of pupils, and overseeing admission and entrance procedures.
- Planning and implementing an effective curriculum and timetable.
- Planning and implementing the academic organisation of the School, reviewing as appropriate.
- Monitoring pupils' progress and ensuring that parents are provided with regular and appropriate feedback setting realistic expectations.
- Creating the appropriate balance between all areas of school life, extra-curricular activity, and community involvement.
- Maintaining good communications and relationships within the School and with key stakeholders including neighbours, local schools, the local community, and former pupils.
- Developing and maintaining good professional relationships with the parents of pupils.
- Delegating effectively and appropriately to achieve the above.

The Role

Working with the Advisory Board

The Head is responsible, directly and by delegation, for:

- Ensuring that the School meets all its legal obligations including compliance with Child Protection, Data Protection and Health and Safety regulations.
- Take overall responsibility for the delivery of excellent pastoral care – ensuring the security and pastoral care of all pupils in line with safeguarding legislation, including safer recruitment and working alongside external agencies as appropriate.
- Implementing policies agreed by the Board and contributing to the vision for the future of the School through strategic leadership and planning.
- Submitting policy proposals for the approval of the Board or assisting the Board in the development of tactical and strategic policies, as well as implementing and monitoring these policies.
- In partnership with the Chairman, ensuring that the Board receives sufficient and timely information and advice in order to make informed decisions
- Implementing Board decisions.
- Preparing and updating the School Development Plan.





The Role

General

- To undertake other duties appropriate to the general purpose of the post, which may from time to time be reasonably assigned by the Chairman or the CEO.
- To carry out teaching duties as appropriate and time permits.
- To set an example of continuous personal development, participating in appropriate training in order to maintain an up-to-date professional expertise.
- The new Head should be aware of trends in education, the requirements of schools and public examinations and, where appropriate, recommend policy changes to the Governors.
- It is expected that the Head will represent the School on sector bodies which the Advisory Board deem suitable.

The Person

Candidates must be genuinely committed to working in an environment where the happiness, wellbeing and safety of the children in our care is central to all that is done.

In addition, good candidates for the role are likely to demonstrate much of the following:

- Senior leadership experience.
- Strong academic credentials and preferably QTS status.
- Understanding of and support for the values and ethos of the School, and commitment to embedding successful all-round education and co-education.
- Inclusive leadership, valuing and promoting the diversity of the community.
- Commitment to delivering top academic, co-curricular and pastoral provision for every pupil, mindful of their wellbeing.
- Natural and easy communication with pupils, staff, parents, prospective parents, the governors and alumni.

The Person, continued

- The skills and integrity to win confidence and trust from all stakeholders.
- Ability to articulate and promote the strengths of St Christopher's and raise the profile of the School.
- A strategic and analytical mind with vision but also a degree of pragmatism – ready and able to address the complex political, social and economic issues ahead.
- Change management skills.
- Commitment to partnerships and bursaries – with a strong sense of social responsibility.
- A primary commitment to St Christopher's but a broader interest in embracing, promoting and contributing to the Inspired Learning Group.
- A national and global perspective on the best in education with a forward-looking but discerning approach to selecting what is truly of value in a fast-changing educational climate.
- Effective team leadership, with the skills to motivate, inspire and enable all in the leadership team and the wider staff.
- The skills to appoint the very best people.
- Courage, high expectations and inner steel.
- Strength in the softer skills – the ability to listen, empathise and show compassion.
- Financial and commercial acumen.
- Commitment to ensuring that St Christopher's is compliant with all regulations, with a thorough understanding of the Head's responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and Child Protection issues and a clear commitment to delivering best practice in safeguarding.
- Enjoyment of learning and the sense of humility which accompanies the desire and will to develop personally and professionally.
- A sense of joy and optimism in leading the St Christopher's community.





Employment Terms and Conditions

The successful candidate will be offered a competitive salary and an appropriate package of benefits which could be shaped to meet the needs of the successful candidate.

The Application Process

Interested candidates for the position of Head at St Christopher's School are invited to contact Inspired Learning Group prior to application for a discussion.

The deadline for receipt of the application is 12 noon on Friday 4th October.

Applications should be made electronically to Tom Havard at Inspired Learning Group using the email tom@inspiredlearninggroup.co.uk.

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

- A completed application form
- A covering letter addressed to David Tidmarsh, Chair of the Advisory Board. The letter should explain your reasons for applying.

If you have any questions about uploading your application documents, please contact Tom Havard, Head of Recruitment and Resourcing at Inspired Learning Group, tom@inspiredlearninggroup.co.uk or 07706323847

The process is as follows:

- All applications will be acknowledged by e-mail and initial call.
- Long List interviews with the Governors' panel will take place at the ILG offices in Stanmore, Middlesex the Week Commencing 7th October 2024
- During week commencing 14th October, short-listed candidates will be invited to visit St Christopher's school and to undertake a personality test online.
- Short List interviews with the Governing Body will take place at the ILG offices in Stanmore, Middlesex the Week Commencing 4th November 2024

The Inspired Learning Group is totally committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and young people and expects the same from its employees. All new staff will be subject to enhanced DBS clearance, identity checks, qualification checks and employment checks to include an exploration of any gaps within employment, two satisfactory references and registration with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).



