

# The Skinners' School

## Appointment of SEND Learning Support Assistant



## ABOUT SKINNERS'

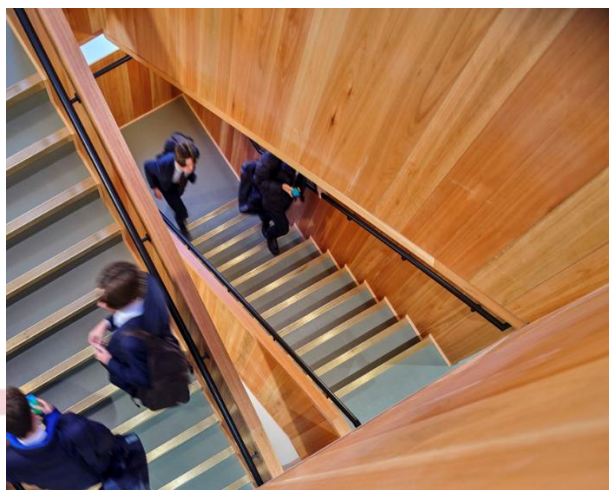
Skidders' School was founded in 1887 and is a thriving boys' grammar school. There are currently 1119 pupils, 325 of whom are in the Sixth Form. A friendly and hard-working community, the school is amongst the highest achieving in the country, both academically and in terms of extra-curricular provision. Pastoral care is also a real strength.

Skidders' School is situated on the northern side of the town of Royal Tunbridge Wells in West Kent, with 20 acres of sports pitches. Surrounded by countryside, Tunbridge Wells has excellent transport links by rail to London (approx. 45 minutes to London Bridge, Waterloo East, Charing Cross, 60 minutes to Victoria), and Hastings. The M25 and M20 are a short drive from the School. Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports are easily reached, as are the Channel Tunnel and ferry terminals. It is a short drive to the neighbouring towns of Sevenoaks and Tonbridge.

## ADMISSIONS

The School is significantly over-subscribed and has an excellent reputation in both Kent and Sussex. It admits 160 boys (five forms) at age 11. Entry is achieved via the Kent 11+ examination, with an entry qualification that is higher than the Kent County Council 11+ pass. Once they reach our qualifying score, pupils are given places based on distance lived from the school (although we also offer a sibling preference). The current 'catchment' of the school is approximately 12 miles.

Nearly all Skidders' students stay after Year 11 to enter the Sixth Form and are joined by a small number of students from other schools. Pupils are required to achieve a total of 50 points over their best 8 GCSE grades in order to enter the Sixth Form.





## HISTORY

Skidders' is one of the Skidders' Company's family of schools – the others being Tonbridge School, New Beacon School, Judd School, Skidders' Kent Academy, Skidders' Academy, Skidders' Kent Primary School and the Marsh Academy. In September 2023, the five academies within the family, including Skidders' School, formed a multi-academy trust (The Skidders Academies Trust) The Skidders' Company, one of the original twelve London livery companies, provides a rich seam of support, governance and tradition.

Since the construction of the original school buildings in 1887, considerable development has taken place in recent years in order to accommodate an increasing school roll. The Leopard building (1994) houses Mathematics, Design Technology and ICT. The Beeby building (2002) created specialist accommodation for Modern Languages, and the Byng Hall renovation of 2008 provided a wonderful theatre for Music and Drama. A £2.5 million Sports Hall complex was opened in September 2012, dramatically increasing the range of sports available. In November 2020 we opened the £4.5 million Mitchell Building: a Sixth Form Centre, School Library and new premises for the English department.

## ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Examination results at Skidders' are excellent. At A Level, 80% of grades are at A\*-B. Students thus access the top universities in the country, with a small number accessing high level apprenticeships; typically, 10% of the cohort go to Oxford or Cambridge. At GCSE, around 70% of grades are 9-7, with 95%+ progressing to our Sixth Form.

Our goal is to help each pupil develop his talents and interests to the full. The curriculum is thus aimed at giving a broad education, leaving specialisation as late as possible. At Key Stage 3 this includes an integrated STEM curriculum. At GCSE and A Level there is a wide range of options, with students typically taking 10 GCSEs (including three separate sciences and a modern language) and either 3, 4 or occasionally 5 A levels. A growing number of students also undertake the Extended Project Qualification in the Sixth Form.



## **PASTORAL SYSTEM**

Skidders' has a reputation as a friendly and supportive community. The responsibility for general welfare and progress lies with teams of Form Tutors. Heads of Year work closely with Form Tutors to ensure every pupil is known and supported. Good relationships between students, staff and parents are at the heart of all we do and are a key element in our success.

## **THE SCHOOL DAY**

School begins at 8.45am. Each day has five periods, which last for one hour. School ends at 3.35pm but many activities take place at lunchtimes and after school. In addition, many sporting fixtures are played on Saturday mornings. Pupils enthusiastically take part in the extra-curricular life of the school and value it as highly as they do their academic studies.

## **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY**

We place great emphasis upon the development of character, wellbeing and potential through extra-curricular activities. A wide range of clubs and societies supports both the learning of pupils and their interests. These operate during and after the school day, with pupils immersing themselves in Chess, Eco Council, Politics, STEM and Philosophy, to name just a few. Drama, Music and Art play a significant role in the life of the school, with concerts and a wide range of productions a regular part of the school's life.

We very much welcome job applicants who would support the extra-curricular life of the school.





## CCF AND DUKE OF EDINBURGH

Skidders' School has one of the largest CCF contingents of any state school in the country, including Army and Air Force sections. The attractions of Adventurous Training, Easter and Summer camps, along with rifle practice in the School's range, draw significant numbers to join. Alongside, the Duke of Edinburgh award is also very popular: pupils can graduate through Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards.



## SPORTS AT SKINNERS'

We consider involvement in team sports to be a valuable part of the pupils' education. There is a very strong fixture list every Saturday and we also achieve success in national competitions. We place an emphasis upon excellence, but also upon mass participation and team work. We often, for example, field seven rugby teams for Year 7 alone. We think it is important that every pupil can say that they have represented the School competitively.

The main sports are rugby, hockey and football during the winter months and cricket, tennis and athletics during the Summer Term. However other sports include basketball, table tennis, badminton, cross-country, climbing and shooting. The Sports Hall is also equipped with a state of the art fitness suite, which is also freely available to staff at the school.



## STATEMENT OF VALUES

**The Skinners' School is place of learning.** Students acquire not only qualifications, but a respect for scholarship and learning, as things worthwhile in themselves. We intend that they will also develop an appreciation of human achievement in the arts, humanities, languages, science and literature. Students must be diligent and open-minded, and they must develop the ability to think critically, to respect evidence, to distinguish between opinions and prejudices and to make balanced judgments of their own. Through involvement in our varied extra-curricular programme every boy should develop and grow intellectually, culturally, physically and spiritually and emerge as a well-rounded, flexible, articulate and collaborative individual.

**Skinners' is a caring school.** No young person will learn effectively unless he feels happy, safe and secure. At Skinners' we try to address the particular needs of every pupil through a comprehensive pastoral system. We value everyone as unique and we work together to develop self-respect, self-discipline and self-understanding. We aim to make responsible use of our talents and opportunities, strive for wisdom and knowledge and take responsibility for our lives.

**Skinners' is a community.** We respect others for themselves, not for what they have or what they can do for us. We believe that the capacity to form strong relationships is the foundation of a happy and fulfilled life. As such we strive to show others they are valued, to earn the trust and loyalty of others and to work together cooperatively. We do not tolerate bullying, violence, theft or abuse.

**Skinners' is at the heart of a wider community.** We learn to take on our responsibilities as citizens. We respect and celebrate diversity. We promote opportunities for all. We place truth, integrity, honesty, loyalty and goodwill at the heart of what we do. The ethic of service is more highly valued by us than that of self-interest. We believe that from those to whom much is given, much is expected.

These values will underpin our work and relationships at Skinners' School; they are at the foundation of all that we do.



## **SEND AT SKINNERS'**

As a grammar school, Skinners' School tends to cater for Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, ADHD, ASC, physical and sensory impairment and social and mental health issues.

We identify pupils with SEN through information gleaned from parents and primary schools, through educational psychologists' reports, through CAT and Lucid Exact assessments and from teacher referrals.

There are currently 115 pupils on the SEN register, with one pupil with an EHCP. The department works with students on a regular basis, in class, in small groups or one to one. The work focuses on their particular need, with study skills incorporated into most sessions.

The SEND LSA role is needed to help the SEND department meet the growing demand and need of our students with SEN.

The department occupies the Learning Hub in the main school building, with one classroom and two rooms devoted to admin and small group work and a sensory room to provide students with a safe space to self-regulate.

Teachers are kept aware of pupils' difficulties via the Inclusion Profile and Pupil Passports, via weekly staff briefings, the SEN notice board, and by virtue of SEN being a standing item on Heads of Department agendas.

The school's notional SEN funding is used to help purchase specialist equipment (laptops/ tablets, software, handwriting schemes) and resources for social communication.

On rare occasions, pupils with SEN follow an adapted curriculum. In general, however, given the starting points of our pupils, the curriculum is generally not modified, though lessons are differentiated and scaffolded to support learning difficulties.

In terms of preparing pupils for life, PSHE, Civics (in the Sixth Form) and form tutor time are designed to give all pupils the resources to cope with adulthood. Opportunities for leadership are available to, and taken up by, all groups of pupils: students with SEN are no exception and they become prefects and attain leadership positions in sports, music, outward bound and CCF.

There are also no barriers to SEN pupils accessing every part of the curriculum and every activity offered at school. Full participation is assumed for all pupils and reasonable adjustments are made.

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

### **Reporting to: SENCo**

### **Main purpose**

To provide learning support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This will involve working with the SENCo and teachers to plan and deliver activities that support pupils with routines, transitions and behaviour management.

### **Supporting students**

- Run intervention groups and one to one work with identified students under the guidance of the SENCo
- Build positive relationships with pupils, promoting high self-esteem and independence
- Adapt communication style according to pupils' individual needs
- Support SEND pupils with their social, emotional and mental health needs, escalating concerns where appropriate
- Promote high standards of behaviour, responding to incidents in line with the school's behaviour policy and guidelines on physical intervention
- Assist with the development and delivery of Pupil Passports
- Develop and complete APDR cycle paperwork for relevant students accessing SEND support

### **Teaching and learning**

- Contribute to the planning of differentiated learning activities for individual or small groups of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), delivering activities inside or outside the classroom
- Support the teaching of a broad and balanced curriculum aimed at pupils achieving their full potential in all areas of learning
- Adopt relevant strategies to support the work of teachers at Skinners' and develop attainment of those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- Promote, support and facilitate inclusion by encouraging participation of all pupils in learning and extra-curricular activities
- Use effective behaviour management strategies consistently in line with the school's policy and procedures; support class teachers with maintaining good order and discipline
- Organise and manage teaching space and resources to help maintain a stimulating and safe learning environment
- Contribute to effective assessment and planning by supporting the monitoring, recording and reporting of pupil performance and progress and attainment
- Read and understand lesson plans shared prior to lessons
- Use ICT skills to advance pupils' learning
- Provide regular feedback to teachers on pupil progress, attainment and barriers to learning
- Contribute to the overall ethos, aims and work of the school



## **Working with staff, parents/carers and relevant professionals**

- Share knowledge and understanding of pupils with colleagues and education, health and social care professionals, so that informed decision making can take place on intervention and provision
- Contribute to meetings with parents and carers by providing feedback on pupil progress, attainment and barriers to learning
- With the class teacher, keep other professionals accurately informed about performance, progress or concerns about relevant pupils
- Develop effective professional relationships with colleagues

## **Professional development**

- Help keep own knowledge and understanding relevant and up-to-date by reflecting on own practice, liaising with school leaders, and identifying relevant professional development to improve personal effectiveness
- Take opportunities to build the appropriate skills, qualifications, and/or experience needed for the role, with support from the school
- Take part in the school's appraisal procedures

## **Safeguarding**

- Work in line with statutory safeguarding guidance (eg. Keeping Children Safe in Education, Prevent) and our safeguarding and child protection policies
- Promote the safeguarding of all pupils in the school

## **Person Specification**

### **1. Skills**

- Good literacy and numeracy skills
- Good organisational skills
- Ability to build effective working relationships with pupils and adults
- Skills and expertise in understanding the needs of all pupils
- Knowledge of how to help adapt and deliver support to meet individual needs
- Subject and curriculum knowledge relevant to the role, and ability to apply this effectively in supporting teachers and pupils
- Excellent verbal communication skills
- Active listening skills
- Knowledge of guidance and requirements around safeguarding children
- Good ICT skills, particularly using ICT to support learning

### **2. Experience**

- Experience working in a school environment or other educational setting
- Experience working with children / young people with special educational needs (SEN)
- Experience planning and delivering learning activities

### 3. Personal qualities

- Enjoyment of working with children; capacity to inspire, motivate and challenge
- Sensitivity and understanding, to help build good relationships with pupils
- A commitment to getting the best outcomes for all pupils and promoting the ethos and values of the school
- Commitment to maintaining confidentiality
- Commitment to safeguarding pupils' wellbeing and equality
- Resilient, positive, forward looking and enthusiastic about making a difference
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Some flexibility in approach to daily routines
- The ability to remain calm in stressful situations

*The Skinners' School is committed to the safeguarding of children; all employees will receive safeguarding training and will need to follow the Safeguarding Policy.*

### APPOINTMENT PROCESS AND HOW TO APPLY

Candidates should submit a completed application form, including details of key achievements and responsibilities, along with a covering letter which fully addresses the competencies outlined in the job description and person specification.

Completed applications should be emailed to the Headmaster's Secretary, Mrs Wendy Dray at [wendy.dray@skimmers-school.org.uk](mailto:wendy.dray@skimmers-school.org.uk)

The closing date for applications is **12pm on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November (early applications very welcome: we reserve the right to appoint before the closing date).**

Candidates will be invited for interview shortly after the closing date.

