Candidate Brief

TONBRIDGE SCHOOL

ASSISTANT HEAD SIXTH FORM

A member of the Senior Team

From APRIL 2027 or SEPTEMBER 2027





BACKGROUND

Tonbridge is one of the leading boarding and day schools in the country and is highly respected, both here and internationally for providing a world class education.

Our pupils are encouraged to be creative and intellectually curious; to approach new opportunities with confidence; and to learn to think for themselves while being mindful of the needs and views of others.

A superb House system at the heart of the School ensures that everyone, whether a boarder or a day pupil, feels fully at home and well supported. Our beautiful and historic campus provides space in which to think, breathe and grow.

Opportunities abound, thanks not only to outstanding facilities and an extraordinary range of activities, but also to the dedication of our staff, who are committed to their pupils' learning and growth both within and beyond the classroom.

Tonbridge is a school which celebrates the life of the mind, but which also enjoys putting knowledge into action. We are proud of our community partnerships both here and overseas, and of our pupils' willingness to take the lead and serve.

Tonbridge's mission encourages creativity, confidence and compassion. In the words of the great novelist and Old Tonbridgian, EM Forster: 'Only Connect'. We are committed not only to providing a genuinely transformative education, but also to continuing to widen access, so that as many pupils as possible can benefit from the experience that Tonbridge offers.

HISTORY AND GOVERNANCE

Tonbridge School was founded in 1553 by Sir Andrew Judde, a distinguished member of the Worshipful Company of Skinners, which assumed the governance of the School after Judde's death.

The Skinners' Company remain the trustees of the School, though in 2003 an independent Board of Governors took responsibility for the governance. Judde also started the tradition of the Visitation, more commonly known as Skinners' Day. He insisted that each year the Master, Wardens and Court of the Company should travel to the School to meet staff and pupils, present prizes, and receive from the Headmaster an account of the year's activities.

The main buildings of the present school date from the second half of the nineteenth century, but there has been extensive building in more recent years.





ACADEMIC RECORD

As one of the UK's leading schools, we offer a rigorous academic programme to ensure pupils reach their potential.

With outstanding teaching and superb facilities, the design of our curriculum is integral to the pupils' experience, our aim being to maximise learning, equipping them with the knowledge, skills and aptitudes they need while sustaining their personal development and enjoyment

The School encourages all pupils to aspire to academic excellence. We provide an inclusive environment in which the teaching, learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of every pupil matters. Within this uplifting environment our pupils achieve some of the best examination results in the country.

The School provides a broad and balanced curriculum designed to challenge and inspire pupils. Years 9 -11 focus on GCSEs and IGCSEs, while the Sixth Form offers a wide range of A Levels, allowing for specialisation alongside opportunities like the EPQ.

OUTSTANDING
A-LEVEL RESULTS

73%
of all grades are A*/A

94%
of all grades are A*/A/B

77
pupils awarded at least 3 A*/A grades

"The revised sixth-form curriculum provides pupils with a flexible and personalised educational experience." This is a significant strength of the school.

ISI Report, 2024





HOUSE
LIFE

At Tonbridge, a pupil's House becomes their home, community and the heart of their School experience. Whether a boarder or day pupil, each pupil belongs to a close-knit group of around fifteen peers within their year group who are members of the same House.

Every House is led by a Housemaster, supported by a team of Tutors and, in Boarding Houses, a dedicated Matron. Together, they provide pastoral care, academic guidance and practical support, offering encouragement during busy times, a listening ear when needed, and a reassuring presence throughout a pupil's time at the School.

For Sixth Form pupils, House life also provides valuable leadership opportunities, both through formal House appointments and through leading House teams, mentoring younger pupils, and helping to organise House events and activities.









CO-CURRICULAR LIFE

At Tonbridge, the co-curriculum transforms interests into lifelong strengths. With a wealth of activities ranging from sports to the arts, leadership to adventure, we offer pupils countless ways to explore their passions, discover new talents and challenge themselves beyond the classroom. Participation is widely encouraged at both School and House level.

As an "all Steinway" School, more than half of students learn an instrument and a third learn more than one. Guided by a distinguished conductor who has performed with many of the of the UK's top orchestras, the Department nurtures top-level musicianship. Our students frequently achieve top honours at leading universities and conservatoires and perform at prestigious venues in the UK and internationally.

The E.M. Forster Theatre offers pupils the chance to be part of professional-level productions, holding eleven productions each year, often in collaboration with local girls' schools. Whether mastering the art of acting, directing, or production, students explore every element of theatre—following in the footsteps of alumni like Beauty and the Beast's Dan Stevens.

More than 20 different sports are played at Tonbridge, including Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Climbing, Cross-country, Fencing, Fives, Football, Golf, Hockey, Judo, Rackets, Rugby, Sailing, Shooting, Squash, Swimming, Tennis, and Ultimate Frisbee.

Space is made in the regular weekly curriculum for activities and clubs to flourish on a Wednesday afternoon. In their first year, pupils are introduced to the wide range of activities available, such as Formula 1 Design, Investors Club, Model United Nations and many more. Many pupils also opt to join clubs and societies, with more than 35 on offer.



FACILITIES

Tonbridge offers a wide range of state-of-the-art facilities to support our pupils' academic, sporting, and creative pursuits. From our award-winning science centre to our historic library, our facilities provide the ideal environment for pupils to learn, grow and thrive.

There is a dedicated Music School and an Art and DT centre, while the E.M. Forster Theatre is regularly used for theatrical and musical events for the general public as well as for School drama workshops, lessons and productions.

The Smythe Library is a modern space, fully refurbished to support the teaching and learning needs of the whole School community. It is a treasure trove of knowledge, containing over 50,000 books and periodicals.

In 2019, the School opened the award-winning Barton Science Centre, a £20m, state-of-the-art building which places science and technology at the very heart of the School. The three- storey centre combines new classrooms and the latest technology with many original architectural features.

The cricket, rugby and football pitches are among the finest in the country: in particular, The Fifty (rugby) and The Head (cricket) are renowned far and wide. World-class facilities are also on offer at the Tonbridge School Centre, a major sports hub for the region which features an award-winning pool, a large fitness suite and superb athletics track. It includes a five-court sports hall and facilities for fencing and martial arts. The centre has been used by the Australian Olympic team and has formed a training base for Saracens and Harlequins rugby clubs, as well as for England Hockey. It has floodlit clay tennis courts, Astro-turf pitches for hockey, a climbing wall, outdoor basketball court and rackets courts, among many other facilities.

A fundamental aim is for Tonbridgians to develop a lifelong love of sports and of taking part, an achievement which can be measured in the sheer number of students who continue to play sport at university and beyond. Ultimately, the School prepares its pupils for entering the adult world equipped with the knowledge and self-belief to fulfil their own potential and to become leaders in their chosen field.

LIFE BEYOND TONBRIDGE

At Tonbridge, Sixth Formers are not just encouraged to think about the next destination after Tonbridge. Think 25 asks them to look further ahead: who do they want to be, where do they want to be, and what might they want their lives to look like at 25?

That longer view shapes the work of our Global Futures department. The aim is not simply to help pupils secure places at outstanding universities, but to give them the perspective, confidence and adaptability to make ambitious choices about what comes afterwards.

Now well established, Think 25 reflects our belief that success is long-term, holistic and international – and that modern pathways are rarely linear. We want to nurture ambitious, adaptable young people equipped to thrive at leading universities, launch ventures, pursue opportunities around the world and respond confidently to possibilities they may not yet have imagined. We were delighted that the quality and innovative nature of this support was recognised by the Independent School of the Year Awards last year (Finalist, 2025).



TONBRIDGE ALUMNI

Old Tonbridgians (OTs) embark on a variety of vocations once they leave the School, ranging from art, architecture, academia and education to science, business, sport and the performing arts. Tonbridge's career guidance and networking service is regarded as among the best on offer in schools across the country. Journalists and writers educated at Tonbridge include novelists E.M. Forster, Frederick Forsyth, Christopher Reid and Vikram Seth. Scientists include Norman Heatley OBE, who turned penicillin into usable mass medicine, and Professor Derek Barton, a Nobel Prize Winner for Chemistry.

Well-known names in sport include former England cricket captain Colin Cowdrey, former national cricket selector Ed Smith, Ben Earl (rugby) and Zak Crawley (cricket).

Among other alumni are actor Dan Stevens; members of the best-selling band Keane; opera singer Freddie de Tommaso; Oscar-winning documentary film-maker Vikram Jayanti; artist Anthony Whishaw; former ambassador Sherard Cowper-Coles; prominent scholar Owen Chadwick; cultural entrepreneur Sir Tim Waterstone; financier Sir John Bond, and historian Sir Anthony Seldon.



THE NEW BEACON

The New Beacon Prep School is Tonbridge School's main feeder school, a relationship that was enhanced when the schools merged in 2021, reflecting our shared ethos, values, academic rigour and aspiration.

The New Beacon is a leading independent day and boarding prep school for boys and girls from 2 to 4, and boys aged 4 to 13, in Sevenoaks, approximately seven miles from Tonbridge. It has 300 pupils, including a nursery for boys and girls.

Whilst Tonbridge and The New Beacon retain their own leadership, academic staff, uniform and site, the schools work closely together for optimal efficiency and effectiveness. This extends to the two Governing Bodies who work together to ensure strategic alignment.

Please note that throughout this candidate pack, to avoid repetition, unless otherwise stated, where Tonbridge is referred to this also includes The New Beacon (TNB).





LOCATION

Nestled in the heart of Kent, Tonbridge is a quintessential English market town that offers the best of both worlds: a peaceful, safe environment with easy access to the capital.

Previously voted "the happiest place to live in the South East", the town is framed by the rolling hills, bluebell woods and ancient paths of High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The School is at the top of the town's vibrant high street, surrounded by independent shops, cafes, and cultural attractions. The River Medway flows through the ton, offering opportunities for rowing, kayaking, and paddleboarding, with the annual Dragon Boat Race bringing the community together in a vibrant display of teamwork and competition.

With excellent transport links, Tonbridge is just 40 minus from Central London by train. London airports are within ready reach too, with Heathrow just an hour away by car. As part of the commuter belt, Tonbridge has a strong, family-friendly community, making it an ideal place for young people to live and learn.



THE SIXTH FORM

Sixth Form is a defining period in a young person's life, when pupils begin to shape the future they wish to lead. There has never been a more exciting time to join Tonbridge, as we further enhance a Sixth Form experience already recognised as a "Significant Strength" by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (2024). Following the School's recent announcement that we will introduce a co-educational Sixth Form, Tonbridge will welcome its first cohort of girls as day pupils in September 2028, coinciding with the celebration of our 475th anniversary, and as boarders from September 2030.

The Sixth Form at Tonbridge combines intellectual ambition with personal development, preparing young people to thrive in life beyond school. It is a vibrant and purposeful community in which pupils are encouraged to develop independence, curiosity, leadership and a strong sense of responsibility. Academic study is enriched by a wide-ranging programme of extension, co-curricular opportunities and pastoral support, enabling pupils to pursue their individual interests and aspirations while contributing fully to School life.

The Sixth Form experience that Tonbridge offers balances academic specialisation with intellectual breadth, preparing pupils for success at university and beyond. Pupils are supported in pursuing rigorous programmes of study through the five different Sixth Form pathways. Opportunities for independent research, intellectual curiosity and developing broader cultural understanding through initiatives such as the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) and additional language qualifications enable pupils to explore areas outside of their main A Level choices. Tonbridge's bespoke Life Skills programme covers areas such as personal finance, critical thinking, interview skills and global perspectives as we look to prepare pupils for life after Tonbridge. This programme which runs alongside the guidance provided by the Global Futures Department ensures that Tonbridge pupils' progress to leading universities in the UK and overseas, as well as high-quality apprenticeships and other post-school pathways.

Academic outcomes remain exceptional, with 94% of A-level grades awarded at A*, A or B, and pupils regularly progressing to leading universities in the UK and overseas. In 2026, 91% of pupils secured their chosen destination, including places at Oxford and Cambridge, as well as institutions such as

Harvard, Princeton, Columbia, Brown, Tufts and UCLA. Overall, 76% of university destinations this year were to QS Top 100 World Universities.

The introduction of girls into the Sixth Form presents an exciting opportunity to create a genuinely modern and inclusive pre-university environment while retaining the values, traditions and sense of community that define Tonbridge. The Assistant Head Sixth Form will play a central role in shaping this transition, ensuring that every pupil benefits from an outstanding educational experience and that the Sixth Form continues to flourish as a place of academic excellence, personal growth and ambitious futures.

Fine Minds and Good Hearts: Only Connect

At Tonbridge we aim to help every pupil forge the connection between head and heart. Here, we build connections between people, ideas, talents and enthusiasms. In this way, we encourage the pupils to make their own connections as they continue to journey through Tonbridge and beyond:

- Connecting imaginations and inspiring learning
- Connecting people and creating communities
- Connecting passions and developing purpose
- Connecting opportunities and discovering futures

We aim to inspire our pupils to consider where they would like to be at 25 and to support them in their journey even beyond their time at Tonbridge

THE ROLE

The Assistant Head Sixth Form is a member of the Extended Senior Team, thus contributing to the strategic leadership and management of the whole school.

Responsible to the Deputy Head Pastoral and the Headmaster for organising and monitoring the activities of the Sixth Form including the induction of all pupils joining Tonbridge in those years, the Assistant Head Sixth Form will complement the role of Assistant Head Lower School (which is currently styled as Lower Master and has pastoral responsibility for Years 9-11).

The Assistant Head Sixth Form plays a particularly crucial role in overseeing the pastoral wellbeing of girls in the Sixth Form, ensuring that there is suitable provision for them in the academic, pastoral and co-curricular life of the School.

Working closely with the Deputy Head Admissions and Communications, the Assistant Head Sixth Form will help to market the School's Sixth Form and assist in the recruitment and assessment of prospective Sixth Form pupils.

The postholder will play an active role in leading the pastoral care and education of all pupils in the School, working with the Deputy Head Pastoral, Housemasters and subject teachers to shape and develop the whole school pastoral strategy and programme; co-ordinating the Upper School Council, co-ordinating the work of Sixth Form Tutors in conjunction with Housemasters; and, as a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, meeting regularly with the other Safeguarding Leads.

The Assistant Head Sixth Form will provide crucial support for Sixth Form admissions with responsibility for Sixth Form induction and the co-ordination of social, charitable and PSHE-related activities and campaigns, including campaigns such as Mental Health Awareness Week and Movember; leading on the management of the expanded Sixth Form Hub/Common Room.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title Assistant Head Sixth Form

Reporting to Deputy Head Pastoral and ultimately the Headmaster

Main Purpose To have lead responsibility for organising and monitoring the activities of the Sixth Form. To take the lead responsibility for girls in the Sixth Form and the provision of a suitable academic, pastoral and co-curricular programme, to ensure the overall success of the Sixth Form at Tonbridge for both boys and girls.

Main Duties

The following list is not exhaustive but indicates the main areas of responsibility:

- Leading on the pastoral wellbeing of the Sixth Form Girls and working with Housemasters/mistresses, matrons, Medical Centre staff to ensure their safety and creating a sense of belonging here at Tonbridge.
- To hold regular meetings with the girls in the Sixth Form to catch up on any areas of particular concern to that constituency of the School.
- Leading on the management of the expanded Sixth Form Hub. To be responsible for the use of the rooms and dedicated Sixth Form spaces.
- Working with the Deputy Head Admissions to market the 6th Form offer at Tonbridge to prospective pupils and their families, including Open Mornings, senior School visits and other outreach events.
- Working with the Deputy Head Admissions to recruit and assess new Sixth Form candidates.
- The induction and training of Sixth Form Tutors, supported by a Sixth Form Tutor Handbook; the development of suitable initiatives to support the tutors including use of self-reflection and self-reporting in the reporting cycle; and co-ordination of the overall use of Sixth Form Tutor Time.
- Hold assemblies for the Sixth Form as required, with the help of other speakers, to inform those groups of matters of interest to them and to encourage their attendance at School events.
- Designing and Leading the induction programme for all sixth formers, both those who are progressing into the Sixth Form from the Lower School and those joining new to the School in the Sixth Form.
- To work with the Director of Global Futures to help prepare pupils for university, writing references as directed by the Director of Global Futures and Oxbridge Co-ordinator
- Represent the interests of the Sixth Form at Housemasters' meetings.
- To coordinate Sixth Form pastoral societies and campaigns linked to EDI issues including, but not restricted to, the Anti Bullying Council (ABC), the African Caribbean Society (ACS), PRISM, Mental Health Awareness week and related events, such as Movember.
- Work with the Deputy Head Pastoral, and others as appropriate, on mental health issues including coordinating the completion of the School Counsellor Screening for Sixth Formers and the subsequent sharing of results via CPOMS for Sixth Form pupils.
- Attend meetings with the Deputy Head Pastoral with the ABC Co-ordinators and the Head of Pastoral Education and Online Safety and Digital Wellbeing Co-ordinator.
- Work with the Deputy Head Co-Curricular and others to develop and deliver the Wednesday Afternoon Activities programme for the Sixth Form.
- Work with the Deputy Head Co-Curricular and others to develop and deliver Field Days, Giving Day and other charity and community service elements, during pupils' time in the Sixth Form.
- Organising socials for the pupils in the Sixth Form.
- Work with the Deputy Head Academic to Identify strategies to help manage academic progress of Sixth Form pupils following internal exams.
- Act as a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (see Safeguarding Policy for full job description), attending appropriate training as required, and meet cyclically as a Safeguarding group. To take sole charge of Safeguarding investigations or situations as directed by the DSL.
- To work with the Second Master in the work of the prefect (Prae) body and their training.
- Chairing the Upper School Council.

- To contribute to the wider strategic leadership and development of the School as a member of the Extended Senior Team (EST), attending Senior Team and Governing Body meetings as appropriate.
- To undertake any other related duties as required by the Headmaster or senior colleagues.

School Week

Tonbridge School follows a boarding school's weekly pattern with lessons spread over 6 days, Monday – Saturday, with protected time created for co-curricular pursuits and academic enrichment. We have a fortnightly timetable, and the rhythm of the week ensures variety for pupils and teachers, while helping to manage workload. Similarly, the nature of being a boarding school means that school holidays are longer than those enjoyed by day schools.

Confidentiality

The successful candidate must maintain the confidentiality of information regarding Tonbridge School and The New Beacon, its staff and its business. Information must not be communicated to other persons in or outside our Schools except in the recognised course of their duties.

Safeguarding

The post-holder's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons for whom he or she is responsible, or with whom he or she comes into contact will be to adhere to and always ensure compliance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. If in the course of carrying out the duties of the post the post-holder becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children in our schools, he or she must report their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or to the Headmaster.

Remuneration and Benefits

- The Tonbridge Salary scale is highly competitive (approximately £38k-£75.5k) with new members starting at the point on the salary scale which is appropriate to their experience.
- Competitive allowance (pensionable) and timetable remission are applicable for this post.
- Accommodation may be available if eligible, with properties allocated according to need. Relocation support may also be available. Successful candidates who are required to relocate to the area and purchase their own property may be eligible for a Living Out Allowance (LOA).
- The School strongly encourages staff to attend CPD and provides a large budget to facilitate this.
- Pension Scheme: currently TPS for teaching staff. An alternative Defined Contribution Scheme is also available.
- Private medical insurance for the postholder
- Subsidised Sports Centre membership (staff rates) including use of gym, squash and tennis courts, and a swimming pool.
- Cycle to Work scheme
- Subsidised EM Forster Theatre tickets (selected performances).
- School lunch and refreshments are provided during term-time where this would form part of your working day.
- Staff fee remission.
- Membership of the School Library.
- Confidential counselling service.
- Staff car parking.

Tonbridge School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to any post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.



APPLICATION PROCESS

If you are a strategic and visionary leader with a passion for driving commercial excellence, we encourage you to apply.

SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

Applications forms should be accompanied by a short letter of application and a current cv.

Apply via our online application form or, send your completed application form and accompanying documents to:

hrdept@tonbridge-school.org
01732 365555

Closing Date: **Monday 30 November at 9am**

Interviews: **From 3 December 2026**

The selection process will typically involve:

- Interviews with the Headmaster, the Second Master, and the Deputy Head Pastoral and Deputy Head Co-Curricular.
- Teaching a lesson observed by the Deputy Head Academic and respective Head of Department.
- A tour of the School.

We reserve the right to interview and appoint prior to the closing date for applications, so early applications are encouraged.

A willingness to take part in the wider life of a boarding school is expected and candidates are asked to give an indication of their interests in their letter of application.

TONBRIDGE
ONLY CONNECT

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TONBRIDGE-SCHOOL.CO.UK

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