



Head Teacher at Blackfen School for Girls

Application Pack for Candidates

Raising aspirations - releasing potential



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Letter From the Chair of Governors

Dear Prospective Candidate,

On behalf of the Governors of Blackfen School for Girls I should like to thank you for making time to explore the exciting possibility that you could become our next Head Teacher. This application pack is intended to share with you the arrangements for the recruitment process and provide you with essential information about the school. To follow this up, we encourage you to make a pre-application visit. Our Staff and Governors are very proud of the school's students who would love to show you round and tell you about their experiences here.

This opportunity has arisen because our current Head Teacher will be retiring at the close of the Spring Term after seventeen years of dedicated and inspirational leadership. The post will become vacant at Easter. As a Governing Body, we are looking again to develop a close working partnership with the next Head Teacher, who will be someone committed to striving tirelessly to deliver the school's vision. Governors have a range of skills, including Finance, IT, Education and Project Management. I am confident that you will find that the Governing Body is dedicated to supporting and challenging school leaders and are committed to supporting the continuing professional development of the successful candidate. Governors feel exceptionally fortunate to work alongside an excellent and professional teaching and support staff team, which underlines the high regard we all have for the school. We are all ambitious for every student to fulfil their potential.

You will find in this application pack the instructions on how to apply, together with the dates for the various stages of the selection programme. Please ensure that you respond as requested, as we have designed the process to make our review of all the evidence fair, simple and easily assessable.

Candidates who are shortlisted will receive more information in advance of the interview process. The Governors thank you again for your interest in this significant appointment and look forward to receiving your application.

With best wishes.

Stuart J Fitz-Gerald,
Chair of Governors



Message From Students in the Sixth Form



Message from **Diya Patel,** Head Student

Dear Applicant,

I am pleased that you are considering applying for the Head Teacher position here at Blackfen School for Girls. My name is Diya Patel, and I am one of the current head students here at Blackfen School for Girls. I have been here since Year 7 and I am currently in Year 13. From the moment students start in Year 7 they are given the opportunity to study a wide range of subjects that will help contribute to their success when they flourish in the future.

Our school embodies a special essence that goes beyond its academic facility. Since I joined the school six years ago, I have understood and experienced that here at Blackfen School for Girls we cherish a unique bond amongst students and staff, fostering a relationship built on respect, collaboration, and support. The student's voice holds immense value; it shapes policies, influences decisions, and cultivates an inclusive environment where every perspective matters.

We, as students, seek a Head Teacher who embodies approachability, empathy, fairness, and a genuine interest in our growth. Moreover, being part of this school and its local community offers benefits beyond the classroom opportunities for holistic development, enriched by the diverse fabric of our surroundings. Our school is not just a place of learning; it's a vibrant community where each voice contributes to our collective success.

Thank you,

Diya Patel - Head Student Year 13



Message From Students in the Sixth Form



Message from **Taine Tibbenham,** Year 12 student

Dear Applicant,

Firstly, I am pleased that you have taken the time to consider applying for the post at Blackfen School for

Girls. I would like to take a minute to express why taking the important role at this school should be deeply considered by someone of your calibre.

As a prior Hurstmere student, Blackfen has always been a consideration for a place to take on A-Levels. It's safe to say I'm glad I did. The opportunities offered upon arrival to Blackfen helps to align Blackfen's ethos of leadership and hard work. I have also been privileged to experience the support offered by all teachers which has created a friendly community which fosters growth.

A Head Teacher should have a set of values that will invigorate our academic positions. Coupled with this should be authority that ensure visions are being met by all staff, but more importantly by us, the students.

Thank you,

Taine Tibbenham - Year 12 student



Message From Students in Year 8



Message from **Karrie Sawyerr-Fofanah,** Year 8 Student

Dear Applicant,

Welcome to Blackfen School for Girls. I am really excited to hear that you're considering our amazing school. There are many schools out there but I believe this school is one of a kind and once I share a few details with you I think you will think so too.

I love my school because we have Student Support Officers. They help us if we have any problems like issues with friendship groups or concerns with lessons and many more. We also have Culture Day. This is when we celebrate all of our cultures in the school by coming into school with all of our unique cultural outfits. We have a Culture Carnival after school where we can try different foods and dances from across the world.

Our teachers are really keen to keep improving and helping to make our school a wonderful place to learn and be a safe environment for all.

Sometimes students disagree with changes within the school but we have a voice within the school called The Student Council. They have an important role within the school and they help to make the school see things from a student's perspective.

So, I hope you like our school as much as I do and that you apply to work here.

I hope to meet you at the interview stage.

Karrie Sawyerr-Fofanah - Year 8 Student



Message From Students in Year 8



Message from **Alina Husnood,** Year 8 Student

Dear Applicant,

Welcome to Blackfen School for Girls. We are happy to hear that you are thinking of applying to become the

Head Teacher of our amazing school. There are many things that make our school so unique.

Blackfen School for Girls offers a range of extra-curricular activities such as Discover. Discover is one of my favourite times of the school year. One of the reasons is that you get to try new things outside of school as well as in school. We get the opportunity to do a range of activities such as going to London Zoo or making bath bombs!

Our teachers here at Blackfen School for Girls are passionate about improving our knowledge and make our lessons engaging and interesting. This makes our school a wonderful place to learn.

We hope that you like our school as much as we do.

Hope to meet you soon.

Alina Husnood - Year 8 Student

The four student images have been supplied by Vancols School Photographers



About the School

How can we sum up our school on a piece of A4 paper? Blackfen School for Girls is successful for so many reasons.

Firstly, we aim to live out the true meaning of our motto every day. That's not just students but staff as well. In 2023, 72% of students in Year 11 achieved five or more GCSE 9-4 grades, including at least a 4 in English and a 4 in Mathematics. Progress was also strong. At A Level in 2023, 41% of grades were at A*-B. Similarly, high levels were achieved in Level 3 BTEC qualifications.



We were very impressed by the school ethos and the environment which obviously celebrates the achievements of its students and of course the way the huge event was organised by the staff team.

- Parent

Our flourishing Sixth Form offers a wide range of courses at A Level, as well as vocational level 2 and 3 courses.

Our most recent Ofsted (December 2019) graded us a good school. However, that doesn't tell the whole story. We believe in partnerships and collaboration both within the teaching and associate staff and also with the students. This gives Blackfen School for Girls a unique ethos where all strive for excellence, but in a completely supportive environment. Many staff, new to the school, comment on the way that the school is somewhere teachers can teach and students can learn.



Secondly, Blackfen School for Girls believes in the need to have a Growth Mindset. That success is down to hard work and effort not some notion of innate talent or that intelligence is fixed at the age of eleven. This philosophy lies at the heart of everything we do.



“ You have a very professional and human work ethic, cemented by your dedication, loyalty and conscientiousness to the whole school community. ”

- Parent

We encourage staff, students and parents to look at learning and life in this way. There is no such thing at Blackfen School for Girls as ‘I can’t do X or Y’ only “I will get better if I persevere”.

Thirdly, Blackfen School for Girls School creates an atmosphere of mutual respect between all members of our community. This is evident when one first visits the school. Student surveys consistently point to the relationships between staff and students as the best quality of Blackfen School for Girls. We believe we are a happy school and consider this to play a vital part in the success of our students.

This all leads to the fact that the school is oversubscribed with most students living within a two miles radius. We have a rapidly developing Sixth Form which offers a range of qualifications across a range of subjects. We have a vertical tutoring system which further develops the community feeling of the school and offer excellent teaching facilities.

How can we sum the school on a piece of A4 paper? We can’t. Come and visit us and see what we mean.

Simon Neil,
Assistant Head Teacher



Blackfen School for Girls Vision

1 COMMUNITY

We believe that our school community is a happy and successful one because we offer a unique learning experience of ongoing challenge in a caring environment. Blackfen School for Girls sets out to challenge students from day one in Year 7 to their last examination in Year 13.



2 SUCCESS

We believe in hard work, resilience and a determination to succeed, learning from the lessons of failure to become successful.



3 ASPIRATIONS

We believe in raising the aspirations of everyone in our community and of inspiring a belief that 'anything is possible' amongst our students, staff, governors and parents.



4 OUR STUDENTS

We believe in developing our students into confident, responsible citizens ready to play an active role in the wider community.



Key Information

Status	Standalone Academy
Last Ofsted	December 2019
Ofsted Judgement	Good
Forms of Entry	8
Type of School	Non-selective Girls Years 7-11 with Co-educational Sixth Form
Age Range	11 – 18
Number of Students on Roll	1490
Number of Students in Sixth Form	371
% of SEND Students	7.4%
% of EAL Students	16.5%
% FSM Students	10.8%
% of Pupil Premium Students	16%
School Website	www.blackfenschoolforgirls.co.uk
Penhill Academies Trust	Blackfen School for Girls is a member of this group of five standalone Academies





Head Teacher Job Description

Responsible to: The Chair of Governors

Leadership scale: Group 8 L35 – L39 (£112,518 – £123,661)

Contract type: Full time / Permanent

Responsible for: All students educated at the school and all staff employed to work at the school

It should be noted, that the key priorities and accountabilities included in this Job Description for the role of Head Teacher as shown below is not an exhaustive list. This current Job Description, in consultation with the successful applicant, may be changed in the future should the Governors deem it necessary. A review of the Job Description will also form part of the Head Teacher's Annual Performance Management Review.

Core purpose and responsibility

The Head Teacher will:

- Provide highly effective, professional leadership for the school.
- Secure its continuing success and improvement, ensuring high quality education for all its students and excellent standards of learning, achievement and pastoral care.
- Sustain the school's ethos and strategic direction within the local community.
- Formulate the aims and objectives of the school, monitor progress towards achieving them and oversee systems and processes so the school can operate effectively.
- Identify problems and barriers to school effectiveness, and develop strategies for school improvement ensuring they are effectively implemented.
- Allocate financial resources efficiently and effectively.
- Manage staff and resources efficiently and effectively.
- Monitor the workload and well-being of self and staff.
- Ensure inclusion, diversity and access.
- Create an outward-facing school to work with other schools and be a role model for all in the school and wider community.
- Lead by example, model best practice regarding professional conduct, and personal development.

Legal requirements

The Head Teacher is required to carry out all the statutory duties in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document sections 46 and 47, the contractual framework and the professional responsibilities outlined in sections 48 and 49 of the STPCD in accordance with the National Standards for Head Teachers.



1. SCHOOL CULTURE

- Sustain an ethos of raising aspirations and releasing potential and ensure a strategic direction of working which creates a culture where students experience a positive and enriching school life.
- Uphold and deliver ambitious education standards which prepares students for the next phase of their education and later life.
- Promote positive and respectful relationships across the school community and a safe, orderly and inclusive environment.
- Ensure a culture of high staff expectation.
- Promote and support the well-being of students and staff.

2. LEADERSHIP

- Provide exceptional leadership to all teaching and support staff through outstanding communication and timely, insightful, decision making.
- Develop highly effective delegated leadership throughout the school.
- Hold SLT and other leaders to account through clearly defined roles and responsibilities, challenging targets and objectives.
- Make use of effective and proportional processes of evaluation to identify and analyse complex or persistent problems and barriers which limit school effectiveness.
- Identify a Deputy or other suitable person to assume responsibility for the discharge of the Head Teacher's role during any absence from school.
- Develop appropriate evidence-informed strategies for improvement as part of well-targeted plans which are realistic, timely and appropriately sequenced.
- Carefully monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of school improvement strategies.
- Prepare and lead strategies to maximise success in Ofsted inspections.

3. TEACHING

- Sustain high-quality, expert teaching across subjects and Key Stages 3, 4 and 5, built on evidence-informed understanding of effective teaching and how students learn.
- Ensure teaching is underpinned by high levels of subject expertise and approaches which respect the distinct nature of subject disciplines or specialist domains.
- Ensure effective use is made of formative and summative assessment.

4. CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

- Ensure a broad, structured and coherent curriculum entitlement which sets out the knowledge, skills and values that will be taught.
- Establish effective curricular leadership, developing subject leaders with high levels of relevant expertise with access to professional networks and communities.
- Ensure that all students are supported to achieve standards of literacy and numeracy that will enable them to enjoy maximum success both at school and in later life.
- Ensure valid, reliable and proportionate approaches are used when assessing students' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum.



5. BEHAVIOUR

- Establish and sustain high expectations of behaviour for all students, built upon strong positive relationships, rules and routines, which are understood by all staff and students.
- Ensure high standards of behaviour and courteous conduct in accordance with the school's behaviour policy which is understood by parents and carers.
- Implement fair, consistent and respectful approaches to behaviour management.
- Ensure that adults within the school model and teach the behaviour of a good citizen.

6. ADDITIONAL AND SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

- Ensure the school holds ambitious expectations for all students with additional and special educational needs and disabilities.
- Establish and sustain culture and practices and enable students to access the curriculum and learn effectively.
- Ensure the school works effectively in partnership with parents, carers and professionals, to identify the additional needs and special educational needs and disabilities of students, providing support and adaptation where appropriate.
- Ensure that the school fulfils its statutory duties with regard to the SEND code of practice.

7. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Ensure staff have access to high-quality, sustained professional development opportunities, aligned to balance the priorities of whole-school improvement, team and individual needs.
- Prioritise the professional development of staff, ensuring effective planning, delivery and evaluation which is consistent with the approaches laid out in the standard for teachers' professional development.
- Ensure that professional development opportunities draw on expert provision from beyond the school, as well as within it, including nationally recognised career and professional frameworks and programmes to build capacity and support succession planning.

8. ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT

- Ensure the protection and safety of students and staff through effective approaches to safeguarding as part of the duty of care.
- Ensure that there is a rolling programme of training for staff in the school in Safeguarding and Prevent to meet statutory requirements.
- Prioritise and allocate financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and probity in the use of public funds.
- Ensure staff are deployed and managed well with due attention to workload.
- Establish and oversee systems, policies and processes that enable the school to operate effectively and efficiently.
- Ensure rigorous approaches to identifying, managing and mitigating risk.



9. CONTINUOUS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

- Make use of effective and proportional processes of evaluation to identify and analyse complex or persistent problems and barriers which limit school effectiveness, and identify priority areas for improvement.
- Develop appropriate evidence-informed strategies for improvement as part of well-targeted plans which are realistic, timely, costed, appropriately sequenced and suited to the school's context.
- Ensure careful and effective implementation of improvement strategies, which lead to sustained school improvement over time.

10. AMBASSADORIAL ROLE AND WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

- Ensure that the values of the school are embedded in all strategic plans and implemented to widen opportunities and improve educational outcomes for students.
- Work collaboratively with the Governors and staff to ensure that resources are effectively deployed to enhance provision for young people.
- Work closely with external partners to promote collaborative professional development, to enhance opportunities for all.
- Forge constructive relationships beyond the school, working in partnership with parents, carers, the local and wider community.
- Commit the school to continue to work successfully with other schools, businesses and organisations within a climate of mutual challenge and support.
- Establish and maintain working relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues across other public services to improve outcomes for all students.
- Liaise with the press and media, as appropriate.

11. GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Understand and welcome the role of effective governance, upholding its obligation to hold the Head Teacher to account and accept appropriate challenges in pursuit of achieving sustained school improvement and excellent outcomes for all students.
- Establish and sustain professional, open and collaborative working relationships with those responsible for governance.
- Ensure that staff know and understand their professional responsibilities and are held to account.
- Ensure the school effectively and efficiently operates within the required regulatory frameworks and meets all statutory duties.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

	CRITERIA	APPLICATION FORM (AF) INTERVIEW (I)		WHERE ASSESSED
		AF	I	
A	PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE			
1	Substantial experience of secondary school teaching.	✓	✓	AF/I
2	Successful strategic experience of leading and managing at Deputy / Vice or Head / Principal leadership level in a school.	✓	✓	AF/I
3	In depth knowledge and understanding of the wider educational agenda including current national policies and educational issues pertinent to the operation of a highly successful standalone 11-18 academy.	✓	✓	AF/I
4	Proven track record in leading, managing and supporting Support and Teaching Staff including building successful teams and delegating effectively and implementing and managing change.	✓	✓	AF/I
5	Successful experience of raising aspirations and releasing the potential of all students and staff as a result of own contribution.	✓	✓	AF/I
B	PERSONAL APTITUDES, QUALITIES AND SKILLS			
6	To have high expectations and the ability to think and plan strategically to reflect, promote, deliver and develop a school's vision, mission, ethos, priorities and targets whilst empowering others to take them forward.	✓	✓	AF/I
7	To be articulate, thorough with an eye for detail, collaborative with excellent interpersonal skills, both orally and in writing, as well as ability to present confidently to a wide audience.	✓	✓	AF/I
8	To have proven sound decision-making skills combined with the ability to lead, influence and manage change.	✓	✓	AF/I
9	To be astute and perceptive with strong analytical skills and the ability to use sound judgement in order to anticipate conflict and resolve issues imaginatively.		✓	I
10	To be proactive, creative, innovative and versatile with a high level of drive, energy, enthusiasm, resilience, reliability, integrity, good humour and a sense of proportion.		✓	I
11	To be able to relate openly and constructively and with empathy to Governors, Support Staff, Teaching Staff, Students, Parents/Carers, and other stakeholders.		✓	I



	CRITERIA	APPLICATION FORM (AF) INTERVIEW (I)		WHERE ASSESSED
		AF	I	
12	Successful and proven experience of managing difficult/ challenging conversations on a range of different issues with different stakeholders.	✓	✓	AF/I
13	To be able to prioritise, plan and organise effectively.	✓	✓	AF/I
C	SHAPING THE FUTURE			
14	Experience of and commitment to working with the Full Governing Body to deliver a shared vision, high quality education which focuses on the potential of every individual student.	✓	✓	AF/I
15	Demonstrable commitment and experience of working, leading and empowering a learning community where life-long learning is paramount.	✓	✓	AF/I
D	LEADING HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION			
16	An outstanding classroom practitioner with the ability to continuously monitor and evaluate performance in order to improve the quality of education as required by the Ofsted framework.	✓	✓	AF/I
17	Successful experience of positive behaviour management and of developing a student focused, inclusive and effective learning environment so that behaviour and attendance are outstanding.	✓	✓	AF/I
18	Successful experience of developing a broad curriculum at Key Stages 3,4 and 5, along with an understanding of the issues associated with choice and flexibility to meet a personalised learning agenda.	✓	✓	AF/I
19	A tireless commitment to provide high quality education and careers guidance both in and beyond the classroom for all students.	✓	✓	AF/I
20	Proven experience of the implementation of effective assessment procedures and applications.	✓	✓	AF/I
21	Proven successful experience of school self-evaluation and accountability including the design and use of appropriate performance metrics.	✓	✓	AF/I
E	DEVELOPING SELF AND WORKING WITH OTHERS			
22	To be a high-profile professional who leads by example and who is collaborative, demands excellence, confidence, trust and respect from both the whole school and wider community.		✓	I



	CRITERIA	APPLICATION FORM (AF) INTERVIEW (I)		WHERE ASSESSED
		AF	I	
23	To have substantial experience of building on the outstanding practice and expertise of staff and supporting them so that they have the necessary skills and knowledge to raise standards, promote equality, respect diversity and challenge stereotypes to promote the rights of young people.	✓	✓	AF/I
24	To demonstrate and promote a successful work- life balance.	✓	✓	AF/I
25	Evidence of highly developed skills in performance management, recognising high performance and tackling underperformance through to resolution.	✓	✓	AF/I
F	MANAGING THE SCHOOL			
26	Successful experience of effective strategic financial and resource management to ensure efficiency and value for money, as well as maintenance and developing an attractive and stimulating learning infrastructure.		✓	I
27	A demonstrable understanding and experience of managing the processes of safeguarding and safer recruitment.	✓	✓	AF/I
28	Commitment to sustaining a safe, secure, happy and healthy school environment for all.	✓	✓	AF/I
G	BUILDING AND DEVELOPING THE SCHOOL PROFILE			
29	Successful experience of both maintaining and raising standards in a school, and working with all stakeholders, external agencies locally and nationally.	✓	✓	AF/I
30	Experience of successful collaboration and communication with neighbouring schools, other educational partners and the wider community.	✓	✓	AF/I

Key: AF = Application Form I = Interview



How to Apply

Information for Candidates

Applications for the position of Head Teacher at Blackfen School for Girls

Please note that your application will be photocopied for distribution to the Governors' Selection Panel and ASCL Consultant. Clarity is, therefore, of the essence.

The application process requires you to complete the following two tasks:

1. Complete the application form, ensuring that all boxes are completed.
2. With reference to the person specification, write an accompanying letter addressed to the Chair of Governors. Your letter should demonstrate where, how and why you consider you meet the person specification criteria. You should draw on relevant evidence of how your recent experience has prepared you to lead Blackfen School for Girls.

Your letter should be typed in Arial 12 point and be no more than 2 sides of A4 in length. It should not repeat information included on the application form. Please also note, you are not expected to respond to every aspect mentioned in the person specification.

By completing the application process as requested, you will assist the Selection Panel in shortlisting, so they can clearly determine whether you meet their requirements. Governors are absolutely committed to ensuring this recruitment process is fair and transparent.

Please note CVs and other forms are not acceptable. Blackfen School for Girls is totally committed to safeguarding children. Successful candidates will undergo an enhanced DBS check and prudent checks will be made of references and employment history.

Your completed Application Form and letter should be returned to Mrs D Taylor, Human Resources Officer, dta@blackfen.bexley.sch.uk no later than **Monday 29th January 2024 at noon**. A hard copy of your application will also be required if shortlisted. All applications will be acknowledged on receipt.

The schedule will be as follows:

Shortlisting:	Tuesday 6th February 2024
Interviews:	Monday 26th and Tuesday 27th February 2024

If you have not heard further after the date for shortlisting you must regrettably assume that you have not been successful.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs D Taylor on 020 8303 1887 ext. 3122 or to have a confidential conversation about the position with Mrs M. Johnson, ASCL Consultant. Email maureen.johnson@ascl.org.uk to arrange.