

# HIGHGATE

## Teacher of Religion and Philosophy September 2021



A talented, scholarly philosopher or theologian who is an inspiring and innovative teacher is required to teach in this academically selective, coeducational day school from September 2021. The department is responsible for both the teaching of Philosophy and Religious Studies and applicants' academic interests might be in either or both of these disciplines, although the desire and ability to teach Sixth Form Theology would be preferable. The successful candidate would not necessarily have to teach both subjects but should be sympathetic to the importance of both. Applicants should be academically well qualified, will be a passionate advocate of their subject, and will be enthusiastic about teaching at all levels in this 11-18 school.

For all teachers new to Highgate, regardless of experience, there is a strong and supportive framework of induction to the School. There are opportunities to contribute to the pastoral and co-curricular life of the school, both aspects of which are valued at Highgate.

### **The Curriculum**

**Key Stage 3** develops the religious and philosophical literacy necessary for navigating a complex religious and secular world, with an emphasis on developing a capacity for high quality critical argumentation. In Year 7 pupils are introduced to the study of religion and explore narratives in Christian Theology and Eastern faiths. In Year 8 pupils respond to the question 'how can we flourish?' by engaging with ethical, Jewish and Islamic notions of the good life. Year 9 offers pupils an introduction to philosophy, with units on political philosophy, metaphysics and epistemology, and secular and religious existentialism.

**Key Stage 4** allows for pupils to choose IGCSE Religious Studies. RS is a popular option at GCSE with multiple sets in both Year 10 and Year 11. We follow the Pearson Edexcel International GCSE specification (4RS1) and have developed a bespoke scheme of work designed to stretch our gifted students and to prepare them thoroughly for the advanced study of Christian Theology, Ethics and Philosophy. In 2019 we achieved 84% 9-8 at GCSE.

**Key Stage 5** allows for pupils to opt for either A-level Theology (OCR) or Philosophy (AQA). We pride ourselves on delivering courses that go well-beyond the requirements of the syllabus and prepare pupils to read Theology and Philosophy at university. Our approach places an emphasis on engaging with classic texts, allowing pupils the chance to develop their own interpretations and arguments. Again, there are multiple sets in both Year 12 and in Year 13. Over the last three years, the department averaged over 70% A\*/A for both Theology and Philosophy.

### **The Department**

The Department aims to foster an enthusiasm for the study of both disciplines and a spirit of academic ambition and enquiry in asking questions of Truth, Beauty, Goodness and God. We deliver exciting and challenging lessons, through a range of tasks and stimuli, and expect hard work and independence of thought from our pupils.

The eight members of the department (including the Chaplain) share a common ethos and the atmosphere is very positive, productive and supportive. Colleagues willingly share expertise and resources and volunteer for extra responsibilities as and when necessary. The department regularly takes pupils on trips and conferences in London and further afield, and in recent years we have hosted guest speakers from the Universities of Chicago, Cambridge, LSE and King's College London. There is an active Theology and Philosophy Society as well as a Philosophy reading group, which meets fortnightly. The department is well equipped and resourced, it has its own office and all classrooms have interactive whiteboards.

The School has in place DfE recognised arrangements for the Induction Year and the confirmation of NQT status and has considerable experience of and success in guiding entrants to the profession to qualified status.



Teachers at Highgate enjoy a welcoming, comfortable and exceptionally well-resourced environment and are provided with significant assistance from a range of support staff. Salaries are competitive. The School pays the employer's contribution to the Teachers' Pension Scheme. Terms are shorter than in the maintained sector. Staff have free access to the School's sports facilities.

Highgate is strongly committed to inclusion and is an equal opportunities employer. We aim to create a welcoming, respectful and safe environment for all

members of our community, from every ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability/disability, religion and background. We know that more diverse teams are stronger teams, and that the more inclusive we are, the more our staff and pupils will feel a sense of belonging and will thrive. To enable us to make any reasonable adjustments, please let us know when you submit your application whether you have any special requirements.

Highgate is committed to the safeguarding and welfare of children and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to this post, including checks with past employers, the Disclosure and Barring Service and overseas police check if necessary. Candidates from overseas must provide information about their past conduct, for example, by providing documents issued by overseas teaching authorities.

Robbie Leigh, the Head of Religion and Philosophy ([robert.leigh@highgateschool.org.uk](mailto:robert.leigh@highgateschool.org.uk)) or James Newton, the Deputy Head (Academic) ([james.newton@highgateschool.org.uk](mailto:james.newton@highgateschool.org.uk)) are very happy to answer any questions.

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### **Application procedure**

Please complete the on-line application form on our website (<https://www.highgateschool.org.uk/work-with-us>).

**Closing date: 8:00am on 27 January, but applications will be considered as they are received. Interviews are provisionally scheduled via Zoom for the week beginning 1 February 2021.**

## Criteria for the post of Teacher of Philosophy and Religion

(to be read in conjunction with the details of the post)

### 1 Essential professional criteria

Criteria	How will these be tested or verified?
A good honours degree in Philosophy or Theology or a joint degree including either of these, and excellent subject knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Original degree certificate(s)</li><li>• Questions about subject specialisation (and course content for more recent graduates)</li><li>• Opportunities at interview to discuss techniques for teaching set topics</li></ul>
Experience of teaching GCSE, A level or Pre-U Religious Education and/or A level or Pre-U Philosophy successfully, and an understanding of effective assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A 50-minute lesson to be taught to one of the current post-holder's classes</li><li>• Opportunity to comment on and grade pupils' written work</li></ul>
Excellent communication skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Two panel interviews; lesson (as above)</li></ul>
Sympathy with, and knowledge of, fundamental British values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Questions at interview to test this</li></ul>
The ability to adapt quickly to a new environment, establish good relations with pupils and gain their confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Opportunities at interview to recount experiences where these skills have been demonstrated</li><li>• Questions which referees will be asked as part of the confidential reference request</li></ul>
Awareness and understanding of safeguarding and welfare of children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Questions at interview to test attitudes towards and knowledge of children's safeguarding and welfare</li><li>• Questions which referees will be asked as part of the confidential reference request</li></ul>

### 2 Desirable professional criteria

Criteria	How will these be tested?
A teaching qualification (eg PGCE, GTP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Original certificate</li></ul>
Experience of teaching successfully in an academically selective school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Questions which a referee from an academically selective school will be asked as part of the confidential reference request</li><li>• Verification of a candidate's employment history</li></ul>
Knowledge of, and experience of teaching, the topics currently studied at GCSE, AS and A2/Pre-U	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Opportunities at interview to recount experience of teaching and of successful strategies used in teaching these topics</li></ul>

A willingness to be involved in the wider life of the department (eg societies, trips etc))	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities at interview to recount experience of running or participating in such activities or to give ideas for these</li> </ul>
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### 3 Person specification for teaching posts at Highgate

Highgate seeks to appoint teachers who will have the following proven qualities, or the potential to develop them. At interview, candidates will have the opportunity to demonstrate or give an account of these attributes.

- The energy, dynamism and stamina to contribute fully to the life of a busy co-educational independent day school.
- Willingness to contribute to the extensive range of activities provided for pupils and to support them in their co-curricular pursuits.
- Capacity for industry and initiative in both independent work and as part of teams of colleagues in academic work, pastoral care, sports and co-curricular activities.
- Profound and continuing interest in the academic subject / s to be taught.
- The depth of knowledge and agility of mind to allow flexibility in lessons, adapting delivery as appropriate in the light of pupils' responses.
- Empathy with pupils across the age and ability spectrum at Highgate and the ability to implement a range of teaching strategies to cater for each individual pupil.
- Awareness and understanding of matters relating to the personal, social, health and emotional development of Highgate's pupils.
- General knowledge of Child Protection issues and good practice, particularly relating to professional obligations on safeguarding the welfare of each child and avoiding guarantees of confidentiality in any disclosure.
- Capacity to deal sensitively with problems raised by pupils, in line with Highgate's pastoral policies and sanctions system, working in partnership with Highgate's designated staff i/c pastoral care.
- Ability to create effective rapport and a sound relationship with pupils, earning their respect and trust but maintaining proper professional boundaries by not deliberately courting popularity or friendship.
- Willingness and ability to liaise effectively and professionally between pupils, staff and parents when required, making accurate records of these exchanges.
- Patience and thoughtfulness to see any issues that may arise with pupils, parents or colleagues from a variety of perspectives.
- The ability to de-fuse difficult situations using different strategies such as careful listening, sensitive use of humour, praise and recognition where due, utilising the School's reward system.
- Retention of a sense of perspective and, on occasion, the invaluable ability to laugh at oneself.

A S Pettitt  
Head