

HIGHGATE

Junior School Principal

Candidate Information Pack



Welcome

We are delighted that you are showing an interest in coming to work at Highgate and in leading the Junior School: thank you so much for getting to know us and finding out about this opportunity.

While the Junior School has always been an important part of Highgate, its growth over the last decade has meant that the majority of our pupils now spend this critical time in their childhood as Highgate pupils, moving on to the Senior School having enjoyed a lively, innovative education free of entrance tests and prescription. We hope that the new Junior School building is the physical expression of our belief that children in academically selective schools need not grow up quickly or miss out on play: the deliberate playfulness of the architecture and the openness to our sports fields underline our commitment to a happy, fulfilling childhood where excitement and curiosity are the motors to our pupils' learning.

The new Principal will enjoy collaborating with colleagues in the Pre-Preparatory and Senior Schools to maintain and foster a vision for children growing up, for their learning, for their development as people and for their welfare. To this end the Principal is a full member of the Senior School's leadership team as well as the Strategy and Management Committee which brings together senior leaders from across the three schools and the support staff. The Principal attends Governing Body meetings and certain sub-committees, reporting on the progress of the Junior School and its development plan, of course, but contributing to strategy discussions and advising Governors. Busy as the Principal is in leading the Junior School, s/he is [they are] a very significant player in the wider life of the whole school.

We very much look forward to meeting short-listed candidates and to exploring the future of the Junior School with you. We are excited about that future and the opportunities which this appointment will create. Good luck with your application and many, many thanks for your interest.

Adam Pettitt
Head, Highgate School

Bob Rothenberg
Governor, Highgate School



The Role

The Head of Highgate, Governors and staff are ambitious for the Junior School and see this as an exciting opportunity for the incoming Principal to build on the Junior School's excellent reputation.

The atmosphere is one of warmth and happiness with a strong focus on pastoral care and the new Head will embody these traits. While it will continue to be distinct from the Senior School and Pre-Prep, it is important for all three schools that collaboration and co-operation between them is effectively maintained. Reporting to Adam Pettitt, Head of the Senior School, the successful candidate will lead on the day-to-day running of the Junior School. The Principal has key responsibilities for the staff, the pupils and their parents and the general administration of the School. They will take an active role in admissions and the building of relationships that this entails. Candidates will work with a dedicated senior team to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is of the highest standard, as well as to drive key topics such as diversity, inclusion, sustainability and future partnerships.

Highgate School supports anonymous recruitment. This means we hide your personal, identifying information to remove bias from the hiring process. We encourage applications from candidates who experience barriers and inequity due to their ethnicity, gender identity, physical or mental health, sexuality, and/or socio-economic background.

"The most impressive junior school building we've ever seen"

Good Schools Guide



The School

Highgate is one of the UK's leading independent co-educational schools. Recently named Sunday Times London Independent School of the Decade, we were established over 450 years ago in 1565.

Highgate is both steeped in history yet propelling forward; a progressive, entrepreneurial, and creative community, we educate around 1,800 pupils across our three schools; Pre-Preparatory School (ages 4-7 - c. 150 pupils), Junior School (ages 7-11 c.420 pupils), and Senior School (ages 11-18 - c.1,250 pupils).

We currently employ approximately 650 teaching and support staff. Working at Highgate is an opportunity to be part of a vibrant, diverse and welcoming community, committed to academic excellence and the highest standards of pastoral care.

Aims and Ethos

We cultivate individual curiosity, intellectual rigour and passion to prepare our pupils intellectually and emotionally for the real world. Academic standards are high; our pupils obtain outstanding exam results and the vast majority go to university.

Charity and Community

Aside from our academic success, we ensure pupils are taught the importance of humility, community and charity. This culture is led by

Head Adam Pettitt who co-founded the award-winning London Academy of Excellence with Tottenham Hotspur Football Club in 2017; the free sixth form college has seen dozens of disadvantaged teenagers from Tottenham achieve record breaking success with top grade A levels and places at leading universities in less than five years. Additionally, Highgate launched their Chrysalis Partnership Programme in 2008, which now works with over 50 schools and over 2,000 children, including those classed as LAC (Looked After Children) and those impacted by special needs.

Sustainability

Care for the environment is a key aim at Highgate; we have an active pupil-led Environment Committee on both the Junior and Senior School, both of which have spearheaded Eco-Conferences with other schools to promote greener education and lifestyles.

Diversity and Inclusion

In Summer 2020, Highgate appointed a Director of Inclusion and has since founded an Inclusion Working Group of over 60 teaching and support staff from all three schools. From the Pre-Prep right up to the Sixth Form, we are actively seeking to embed a real sense of belonging at Highgate. To do this, we are evaluating diversity in our curricular and co-curricular life; exploring how to attract pupils and staff from all backgrounds to work and learn at Highgate; and providing opportunities to share our own experiences as well as learning from alternative perspectives.

"Blessed with playing fields and space beyond the dreams of other London schools"

Good Schools Guide



The Junior School

The Junior School is one of the largest, if not the largest Key Stage 2 Independent Junior School in the country.

There are 445 pupils from Years 3 to 6 in 5 classes in each of these four year groups. It is a happy, vibrant and busy place where each child feels safe and is valued, nurtured and developed as an individual.

We are fortunate to be a 'through' school where pupils do not face an academic hurdle to transition into Highgate Senior School. This is an opportunity which we embrace by providing a wide and rich curriculum not constricted or constrained by senior school tests or externally imposed curriculum needs. In addition, we see the pupil experience as being a celebration of childhood where every year matters. By way of example, a child only gets one go at being in Year 4 so we must ensure their experience of it is as good as it can be. We are not a 'prep' school where we are overtly preparing pupils for something better that will come later in their educational journey. Our Year 6 pupils should leave us firmly believing there are no glass ceilings to any aspect of their learning or their wider school experience.



Take a 'virtual' tour of the Junior School

<https://vimeo.com/456578546/4cf7eo2a54>

"The children happily go into school every day with a smile on their face and come home full of stories and still smiling"

Junior School Parent
Tatler School Guide 2021



The Curriculum

Our broad and creative curriculum is planned around clear learning objectives for every subject area in each year group.

We promote high levels of achievement and effort, ensuring our pupils aim high in all they do. We push the boundaries beyond mere acquisition of knowledge: we want our pupils to develop the confidence to investigate and enquire, to solve problems, and to take personal responsibility for their learning. We aim to broaden their social horizons and cultural interests.

We take care to make sure that all pupils, rather than just some, have the opportunity to engage fully with everything we offer and grow in confidence and independence. This leads us to the importance of emotional intelligence, and how we nurture the growth of resilience, co-operation and reflectiveness through to creativity, good judgement and empathy.

We offer enrichment programmes in all curriculum areas. For example, mathematics and writing workshops, science seminars and debating competitions. All pupils have access to all aspects of the curriculum. Thanks to our purpose-built state of the art building we have, for example, an impressive Art and DTE suite, a library at the very heart of the school, two high spec science laboratories and an outdoor classroom.

"Highgate achieves well for its children. But it also makes a difference for many more children beyond its own gates."

Alastair McCall, Education Editor
The Sunday Times



Co-Curriculum, Pastoral Care, Charity/Community

There are over 60 clubs for pupils to choose from in the Junior School, and time is set aside for each pupil to take part in a co-curricular activity of their choice.

Clubs are segmented by year group and ability and there are wide ranging opportunities to make like-minded friends and discover new interests from coding to cookery and chess through to choir, kahoot and calligraphy!

In addition to developing children's academic and creative talents, we have a team of staff dedicated to nurturing our pupils' wellbeing. To develop a sense of community and belonging from day one at Highgate, our pupils all belong to a form group and one of our four houses. Pastoral support comes from each form teacher in the first instance, supported by our Deputy Principal (Pastoral). We also have a Consultant Child Psychologist and Director of Wellbeing who works closely with our Pastoral Team across the whole school. Every class has a 25 minute lesson each week called OWL (Our Weekly Learning) where children share strategies, successes and barriers linked to our Character Skills and Executive Functioning Skills programme. This approach to academic

and social learning is combined with a Weekly Values Certificate awarded to the child in each year group who demonstrates the termly value and House Points are given to children as a reward. We take great pride in allowing every pupil to create and explore their own identity and develop their passions – the result is a wonderful community that celebrates and recognises everyone as an individual.

We encourage social responsibility through our charity work, both locally and further afield. For example, we are partners with over 50 state schools across London in addition to founding LAET in 2017 and work with these schools mixing all children as regularly as possible. We also lead the children in community-based projects such as care home visits and Homeless Charity workshops that instil the importance of empathy and charity.

Before lockdown 2020, our Y5 pupils took part in a befriending programme with disadvantaged members of the external local community. This involved visits to elderly care homes, hospices and partnering with a Homelessness charity in Highgate. To ensure the experiences taught pupils the importance of empathy, we connected each visit to an act of kindness suggested by the children themselves.

"Charity is in our DNA"

Adam Pettitt, Head



North London life

Our School is situated in one of the most attractive and popular areas of North London, a short distance from central London and adjacent to Hampstead Heath.

We endeavour to be a sustainable school and are well served by good public transport links, including bus routes and the London Underground (Northern line). There is limited parking a short walk from the school, and additional parking a 10-minute walk away.

During term time, a wholesome lunch is provided with daily vegan, vegetarian and meat options, except for on 'meat-free Mondays' in line with our sustainability ethos. We also provide a generously stocked salad bar, pudding station and soup and sandwich selection in addition to free-flowing hot beverages.

Our staff body are friendly and caring community, who, throughout lockdown, hosted regular quiz and comedy nights to keep everybody connected socially. Pre and post Covid, staff enjoy using our gym, squash courts and weekly fitness classes, as well as our newly refurbished 25-metre indoor pool at designated times. Staff are also able to attend many fascinating talks, exhibitions and shows throughout the year from our visiting speakers, pupils and alumni should they wish.



Responsibilities and duties of Junior School Principal

This role offers an exciting and rewarding career move to head up our award-winning Junior School!

You will lead a vibrant and talented team of teaching and support staff, as well as direct the wellbeing and education of over 400 pupils aged 7 to 11.

Reporting to the overall Head of Highgate School, you will also play a pivotal role in making strategic leadership decisions alongside the four deputy Heads in the Senior School and the Pre-Preparatory School Principal, and work collaboratively with the Bursar and senior support staff, in addition to senior academic colleagues to benefit the entire School foundation.

Educational and Wellbeing Strategy

Heading the Junior School will give you direct responsibility for the implementation of safeguarding policies, monitoring the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the Junior School, ensuring compliance with all statutory, legal or regulatory obligations.

You will be given the autonomy to cascade a dynamic strategy for teaching and learning appropriate to the Junior School in line with our ethos and values, and educational aims and priorities of the whole school.

You will ensure that the curriculum and quality of learning is of the highest standard and take pleasure in being involved with teaching and the myriad of co-curricular activities where possible.

Smooth and happy pupil and parent journeys

As Principal, you will make sure the Junior School enables pupils to transfer smoothly to the Senior School at 11+, and similarly welcomes pupils joining both from our Pre-Preparatory School and external Schools at 7+. In turn you will select and, after consultation with the Head and others on the Admissions team, offer places to pupils for admission to the School; and oversee the procedure for offering bursary places.



You will enjoy maintaining a visible presence around the school for parents, pupils and staff, especially at the beginning and end of each day. You will also market the Junior School, liaising with the Head and the Communications Team and meeting with prospective parents at major Open Days and smaller group or individual visits. You will foster appropriate and constructive relationships with parents and carers, ensuring that they feel confident about bringing any concern to the school's attention.

Leading the Energy and Culture of a Thriving Staff and Pupil Body

You will foster a culture where the discussion of teaching and learning is the norm, and inspire and motivate a team of over 60 staff, appointing new members if required, and advise on the admission of pupils in line with the school's policies on inclusion and partnership. You will ensure your team undertake regular training for both their personal career progression and are familiar with educational issues and initiatives.

You will construct, with the Bursar and the Head, an annual budget for the Junior School, as well as keep both, along with the School Governors fully informed on what is going on in the Junior School via written and oral reports.

As the Junior School Principal, you will be responsible for maintaining both staff and pupil behaviour, having the authority to issue warnings or to suspend any member of the teaching staff of the Junior School, as well as suspend any Junior School pupil. It will also your responsibility to ensure that the Junior School meets independent school regulatory requirements and that it is ready for external inspection at any time.



Person Specification

As Junior School Principal, you will have the ability to make reasonable, reasoned and balanced decisions and to create consensus where possible and to know when to hold ground.

You will be able to work harmoniously and constructively with all Highgate colleagues, support staff, the Head, the Bursar and governors, pupils and parents, to foster a strong sense of community.

You will have a good, visible and reassuring presence, creating mutual respect and showing emotional intelligence that inspires confidence and encourages staff and pupils.

You will have the ability to nurture and promote a warm and positive atmosphere for pupils, staff and parents and show warmth, even-handedness and sensitivity, as well as an understanding of and empathy with others' feelings and motives, and to be able to see things from other people's perspectives.

As leader of our Junior School, you will know how to manage conflict and to defuse situations by careful listening, sensitive use of praise, humour and recognition, as well as a demonstrable and sensitive understanding of what current and prospective parents want from the school and an ability to respond to them.

You will have the ability and outstanding judgment required to solve problems decisively and to explain issues and decisions clearly and evenly.

You will encourage talented colleagues in whatever role, and high-achieving and aspiring pupils, in the delivery and pursuit of excellence; and to give advice supportively and effectively.

You will have the ability to market and promote the School effectively, to present information and decisions clearly to prospective and current parents, staff and governors, as well as to the wider community, including the local press, and to foster relationships with a wide range of other (especially our partner) schools.



Terms of Appointment

The successful applicant will take up the appointment in September 2022 or as soon as possible thereafter.

The School will offer a competitive salary and generous benefits to reflect the candidate's qualifications and experience. The Principal's salary is normally subject to annual review.

Highgate School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be subject to an enhanced DBS check and other statutory checks.

Highgate School is committed to equal opportunities and welcomes applications from all sections of the community as we aspire to attract staff that represent the social and cultural diversity of our pupils.

Process

The closing date for applications is noon on Friday 24th September 2021.

Following a meeting on **Thursday 30th September**, candidates will be notified as to whether they will be invited for preliminary discussions with a consultant at Saxton Bampfylde. These meetings will take place during the **week commencing 4th October**.

Subsequent to a shortlisting meeting on **Wednesday 13th October/ Thursday 14th October**, selected candidates will be invited to a first round of panel interviews. Saxton Bampfylde will notify candidates who are not moving forward.

The first round of interviews will take place on **3rd or 4th November** at Highgate School. The final round of interviews will take place on **17th or 18th November**.

How to Apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to Highgate School on this appointment.

Applications should be made via Highgate's website:
www.highgateschool.org.uk/work-with-us/staff-vacancies



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