



THE KING ALFRED SCHOOL

Appointment of a Blacksmith

**2.5 days a week, including 10 days spread across the school holidays
from September 2023**

Information for Candidates

February 2023



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For further information about The King Alfred School please visit our website at www.kingalfred.org.uk

1. THE KING ALFRED SCHOOL



For over 100 years, The King Alfred School [KAS] has stood for a nurturing and enlightened educational experience. Founded in 1898 by a group of parents uncomfortable with late Victorian educational practices, KAS was created to encourage learning for its own sake and to provide a well-rounded education that brought out the best in each child, drawing on the best educational evidence.

KAS still stands out from the prevailing environment as a school that achieves academic success without unnecessary pressure, and social success through the development of nurturing relationships and appropriate responsibility rather than external discipline. It is a school that is genuinely loved by students, parents and staff alike.

KAS has often been referred to as a “progressive” school. Certainly, it subscribes to many of the concepts of the progressive movement. We emphasise child-centred education, which aims to draw out the best in the individual child. We believe in the principles of mutual respect, of relationships based on trust rather than authority and punishment, and of allowing each child to develop at his or her pace. The school places a strong emphasis on creative and active learning and on the value of play. Informality is typified by the use of first names, the absence of uniform and as few rules as can reasonably be managed within a community.

The ‘village green’ setting of the main site, next to Hampstead Heath, contributes to the community feeling. The school has about 650 students, from age 4 to 18. Most children join at Reception and continue on to the end of their school lives. Transition from Lower to Upper School is a natural one and for KAS pupils does not depend on assessments, tests or examinations. We aim to provide a happy, compassionate environment in which the emotional, physical and social developments of the child are held in equal regard to academic progress.

A high teacher/pupil ratio enables the committed and professional staff to provide a rich variety of activities. As well as careful preparation for GCSE and A levels, teachers strive to provide a broader and more generous education. KAS measures the success of its philosophy by the acknowledged maturity of the students when they leave, by their success in getting onto their chosen pathways after leaving school, and by the fact that students invariably end up doing something worthwhile, interesting or unusual.

KAS is committed to professional development and training for all its staff. New ideas from teachers are encouraged and there is active staff involvement in all aspects of the school. Staff are supported to pursue master's degrees, engage in action research projects, and connect with education professionals in this country and abroad.

The King Alfred School is situated on two beautiful sites. On the main site at Manor Wood, school buildings are spread around an open field; a number of mature trees from the original Manor Wood provide play and camp-building areas for the younger children and protection for a small amphitheatre. The facilities have been expanded considerably over the years, including a new Sixth Form Centre.



Curriculum Principles:

- Our curriculum is the sum of all learning experiences inside and outside the classroom, and all staff are expected to contribute to the extra-curricular life of the School.
- We put the child at the centre of our teaching and learning. Intelligence shows itself in many ways and we aim to educate in a way which challenges and supports each individual.
- Our curriculum aims to help students to make meaning of the world around them. We support our students in developing an awareness of spirituality and morality; an understanding of the importance and the limitations of inherited knowledge, culture and values; a sense of social responsibility; and an understanding of and preparation for the world of higher education and work.
- Our curriculum aims to enable our students to enjoy achievement and keep competition in perspective, valuing the intrinsic worth of actions and learning.
- While being aware of the National Curriculum, we are not constrained by it and take full advantage of our independence and our own rational, progressive traditions.
- We actively encourage opportunities for interdisciplinary learning, with opportunities for students to apply their skills and knowledge from a range of curriculum areas. This will be especially high profile in our Years 6 to 8 curriculum.
- It is our expectation that in Years 10-13 KAS teachers will use GCSE and A Level specification as a starting point but will aim to teach above and beyond examination requirements. We are also now questioning the future of GCSEs, and are a leading member of the Rethinking Assessment group.
- Success in external examinations is a proven consequence of our approach but our truest measure of success is the fact that our students leave KAS as adults who are well-rounded, socially adept, emotionally resilient, inquisitive life-long learners, who are self-motivated, independent thinkers.
- Our curriculum is constantly evolving. A process of review and development informed by current educational research and thinking is embraced by our community of learners, teachers and parents.



2. The Forge at KAS

The Post

We are looking for a Blacksmith for 2.5 days each week during school term time, including 10 days spread across the school holidays.

This is an unusual job in a very special place and thus we are primarily looking for candidates with commitment to teaching and learning through the skills and ethos of blacksmithing.

The Department

The forge is based within the school's Design and Technology Department in the woods adjoining Hampstead Heath, in North London. The school is an Independent school with pupils from 4 to 18 years of age. www.kingalfred.org.uk gives more details.

The school has a strongly embedded philosophy of learning coming 'from the heart' and engagement' through' making and doing. There has been a forge in the school since its early years and this has been re-established in more recent years. We now have a small but well-equipped forge suitable for teaching and blacksmithing.

Blacksmithing is integrated into the school in the following ways;

Within the general school and particularly the Design and Technology Curriculums:

- Assisting pupils engaged in projects which use metal-smithing and blacksmithing skills. To date this has ranged from year 3 (7-year-olds) to year 13 (A level, 18 years old)
- Demonstrations to class groups' learning is enhanced by contact with the Forge and the Design Technology department. For example; year 5 were studying the Ted Hughes piece 'The iron man' so they and their teacher came to watch us work metal to get a feeling for the materials and processes (and dirt and danger) involved. Similarly year 9 (14 year olds) were studying Dickens' Great Expectation and came to see and experience a working forge.
- Each week all pupils between 11 and 15 years old get an afternoon each week to engage in co-curricular activities in a programme called 'Choice'. The programme intends that they make choices based the head, the hands, or the heart. The forge is part of this programme and has small groups of pupils two afternoons each week (Wednesday and Friday).

Within Pupil Support:

- The school is very committed to individualised learning and pupil well-being. By working closely with teachers and the pupil support team we have been able to provide 'safe space' for pupils in small groups or individually. We have found that the unusual combination of blacksmithing activities (dirt, danger, physical activity, concentration) gives a situation which promotes trust and self-confidence. These activities take place both within and outside lesson times as required.



3. JOB DESCRIPTION

Role	Blacksmith
Proposed start date	September 2023
Salary	The salary for this role will be on the KAS scale and the positioning will depend on experience. <i>[The KAS scale is the same as the Outer London pay scale, with the addition of the KAS supplement of c.£5,000]</i>
Hours	2.5 days a week, including 10 holiday days spread across the year (to be mutually agreed)
Line Manager	Head of Design Technology

The successful applicant should be able to-

Blacksmithing skills

- Demonstrate, or show the ability to acquire, a high level of blacksmithing skills
- Have the knowledge and understanding to apply Health and Safety considerations to all activities
- Manage and maintain a small forging facility suitable for use by groups of students and individuals. Including managing material and consumables within a budget and the constraints of a school timetable

Teaching skills

- Devise, prepare and run small group teaching and learning activities
- Identify and work towards individual student needs, both in small groups and individually, providing suitable feedback as needed
- Deliver demonstrations to larger groups of students related to age context and ability
- Work with students on curriculum and examination coursework projects.
- Work effectively with the Design and Technology Department, the Special Student Needs Department and the 'Choice' coordinator
- Respond appropriately to the requests for feedback and help for students and staff

Blacksmithing philosophy

- Articulate an argument about the role of a blacksmith in society and communicate this to all members of the school community
- Show energy and commitment to operating and developing the role of the blacksmith in the school
- Show an awareness of the English School System through from 4 to 18 years of age and, in particular, the approach of King Alfred School. Specifically, show an understanding of how Blacksmithing can make a particular contribution to the broader work of the school

4. PERSON SPECIFICATION

- We see this as an opportunity for an energetic and committed person to operate and develop the role of blacksmith within a learning and pupil support context
- Appropriate training will be provided for the successful applicant
- We encourage people from all sections of the teaching community to apply and particularly welcome applicants from groups which are currently under-represented in our workforce

Attributes	Essential
<i>Qualifications & Experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of Blacksmithing • Experience of working with young people • Knowledge and understanding of appropriate Health and Safety guidelines
<i>Skills and abilities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong teaching skills • Strong pastoral skills • Strong organisational skills • Ability to establish successful relationships with students, parents and colleagues
<i>Personal attributes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enthusiasm and drive • Empathy and sensitivity • Resilience • Analytical and self-reflective • Welcomes feedback and accountability • Sets and maintains high standards in professional relationships with young people and colleagues
<i>Commitment to</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The KAS ethos, and child-centred progressive education • Working in a 'can-do' culture with a commitment to continuous improvement • The happiness, well-being, and progress of all at the school

All members of the King Alfred School community are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

Applicants must undergo child protection screening, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

All posts involving direct contact with children are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. However, amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected'. These are not subject to disclosure to employers and cannot be taken into account. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found on the Disclosure and Barring Service website or at Unlock.