

St Helen's School



Appointment Brief Head

September 2023

Reference: SATAKC

Saxton Bampfylde



Welcome to St Helen's

I am delighted that you are interested in becoming the next Head of St Helen's School.

St Helen's is a wonderful school and I feel very privileged to be involved with it. We are a large, thriving all-through school and many of the girls who leave us at the end of Year 13 have been with us since Nursery or Reception. We are ambitious for every single girl: that she achieves her potential; that she leaves us to embark upon an exciting and fulfilling future, able to deal with whatever life throws at her with a calm, inner resolve, and a sense of fun; that she is ready to go out into the world and make a difference. St Helen's has a long tradition of academic excellence which encourages girls to pursue intellectual curiosity beyond the curriculum. Our academic results put us very securely into the top 50 independent schools in the country; we were ranked 30th in the Telegraph League Table of UK Independent Schools 2022. Sixth Formers go on to established, high-ranking universities including Oxford and Cambridge, with more than a third studying STEM subjects. However, we give our girls much more than just academic success; our co-curricular programme is rich and varied, and our pastoral care ensures that every girl is valued and cared for.

Within easy reach of central London, our school is set in 21 acres of lovely grounds and, just as we are proud of our students' academic achievements and their personal development, we are also proud of our facilities and buildings. We have invested over £20 million in a building programme over the last five years and have plans to do more.

St Helen's has a warm and lively atmosphere that makes it a really exciting place to be connected to. Our staff and our girls look out for each other and encourage each other to be the best possible version of themselves. As the next Head of St Helen's, you would play a vital role in leading the school in the next stage of its journey and I look forward to discussing this with you further.

With best wishes,

Philip Young

Chair of the Board of Governors



An introduction

St Helen's is a leading independent day school for almost 1,200 girls aged 3-18 and is a member of the Girls' Schools Association (GSA). The spacious and beautiful 21-acre site is conveniently located in the heart of Northwood in North London, approximately 30 minutes by underground from Central London on the Metropolitan Line and within easy reach of the Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire borders.

St Helen's School is committed to academic excellence and is dedicated to equipping pupils with the skills which will enable them to take their places as leaders in a rapidly changing world. The culture of the School is deeply rooted in its fine history, having been founded by Miss May Rowland Brown in 1899, but is also forward-looking and innovative. Whilst strong academic standards prevail across the whole School and pupils are encouraged to have high expectations for their achievement and career prospects, success is measured and celebrated in the widest possible sense, very much not just the excellent exam results the girls achieve.

The School consists of a Prep and Senior School and educates girls from Early Years Foundation Stage to Sixth Form. St Helen's provides a wonderful environment for girls to flourish and succeed. An outstanding pastoral system is central to ensuring that girls remain balanced and supported throughout the various stages of their journey through the School. Read more about **pastoral support** at the School [here](#).

Academic excellence stands at the heart of learning and teaching at St Helen's; the School aims to give each student a challenging and well-balanced education which develops her intellectual, creative and physical abilities to the full. At all stages the focus is on the learner: pupils are encouraged to think about different ways of approaching their learning and to decide upon and use the methods which work best for them, enabling them to develop an independent approach to their studies. Read more about the **curriculum** at St Helen's [here](#).

Our 2023 results were outstanding, with 85% of students achieving A*-B grades in their A Levels and 72% securing places at their first-choice university. GCSE results were equally impressive, with 63% of students achieving grades 9-8.

Strategy

The School is well-placed to build an even more exciting and rewarding future for everyone within the St Helen's community and, in particular, for pupils. In order to achieve this, the School has put in place a Strategic Plan 2020-23 with the following two priority strands:

- **Academic Development:** Ensure all pupils achieve their potential and make exceptional progress, that they develop the St Helen's learner habits and develop lifelong intellectual curiosity and tenacity.
- **Personal Development:** All pupils develop the St Helen's character attributes, know how to look after their own and others' well-being and become confident, resilient young women ready for whatever the future brings.

And with further facilitating strands:

- **Staff:** To recruit, develop and retain the outstanding staff that deliver the very best teaching and learning, support and guidance in order to facilitate academic and personal development for all.

- **Leadership and Governance:** Leaders at all levels systematically evaluate the impact of structures and strategies and drive forward effective and sustainable improvement to academic and personal development for all.
- **Support:** Provide the highest quality environment, facilities and support structures to facilitate outstanding academic and personal development for all with secure and stable financial planning.
- **Relationship with Wider World:** Establish the school's reputation in the community as one where ambitious girls thrive academically and personally.

As we look forward to celebrating our 125th anniversary in 2024, the School and governors are working closely to develop an ambitious 5-year vision for the School that reinforces our strengths, supports a distinctive positioning in a competitive market, and ensures stability in a dynamic economic and regulatory environment. We are seeking a Head who can bring a fresh and innovative approach to shaping, planning and delivering the future vision for the School.

Prep School

St Helen's Prep School is a vibrant community of learners housed in three dedicated buildings. Teaching in the Prep School is characterised by being creative, child-led and exploratory to the girls' needs. Pupils spend the majority of their time working collaboratively in pairs or small groups and being encouraged to take intellectual risks and explore areas of interest. We believe in a wide rather than 'fast' curriculum and always aim for deep and meaningful learning.

The majority of Prep pupils transition through to the Senior School, where they are also joined by an equal number of pupils from a wide range of prep and primary schools.



Estates

Regular investment is also made into the physical environment to ensure that girls are provided with the best possible facilities within which to learn and develop. The School updated its 10-year Estates Master Plan at the end of 2020 setting out a route-map for capital development projects which will help to secure the School's long-term future and support management decisions on financial planning. A significant amount of work has already been done to address the School's strategic aims, including the building of a state-of-the-art School of Music and STEM Centre: however, there are still key objectives to be addressed which include the building of a multi-million-pound inspirational Arts and Cultural Centre serving both the needs of the School and its wider community which is currently at the planning stage, together with other remodelling and refurbishment projects.

St Helen's Enterprises

With a wealth of superb facilities on offer across 21 acres, St Helen's Enterprises facilitates a range of popular sports activities, leisure clubs and events across the School's estate. The Enterprise portfolio continues to be developed and the current focus is on rebranding the Sports Centre and Venue Hire, identifying new revenue streams and developing high-value partnerships the proceeds from which will supplement the revenues received into the School's charitable funds for the benefit of its bursary and scholarship programmes.



St Helen's Ethos

St Helen's students will be brave and true, ever intellectually curious. They will believe they can do anything. They will want to explore how they can best interact with the world around them and make a difference for the better in their own way. They will be ready for whatever the future brings.

St Helen's girls will:

- Be excited about their learning, always asking the question 'why';
- Be independent, adventurous and ambitious;
- Be the problem-solvers and trailblazers for tomorrow;
- Always be guided by integrity and their own strong moral principles;
- Celebrate diversity;
- Be compassionate towards themselves and others.

St Helen's aims are:

- To provide each and every girl with the opportunity and means to achieve academic excellence;
- To provide students with the personal skills, emotional resilience and the confidence to achieve their full potential through a varied, rich and challenging co-curricular programme;
- To know, value and respect all girls as individuals so as to best support them on their journey through the School;
- To ensure that the girls are ready to play a full and active part in their communities and in an interconnected digital world.



The role

The Governing Board of St Helen's is now seeking to appoint a new Head. This is an exciting opportunity for an exceptional Head to lead one of the top independent girls' schools at the forefront of education and to maintain and enhance its position with a challenging and well-balanced education. The Head is responsible for all aspects of the School's day to day management.

The Head will have the support of a strong and committed Executive Team currently comprising:

- Deputy Head – Academic
- Deputy Head – Pastoral
- Deputy Head – Co-curricular and Partnerships
- Head of Prep School
- Business Director

Key Responsibilities:

Leadership and Management

- Lead by example, promoting through your own actions, the values and ethos of St Helen's
- To educate pupils appropriately and in all relevant areas, promoting a culture of learning and a commitment to the School's core values
- To lead, manage and motivate the Senior Leadership Team and all academic and support staff, acting as a role model
- To ensure that operational activities are delegated appropriately and effectively
- To attract and recruit high quality teaching staff and senior non-teaching staff
- Promote the School's safeguarding policies and procedures and ensure a culture of safeguarding and wellbeing of our students and staff
- Provide direction and support to the Head of Prep School
- To develop good professional relationships with the parents of pupils and prospective pupils, to ensure understanding and support for St Helen's and its goals
- To ensure compliance with all applicable regulations
- Maintain good relations with neighbouring and partnership schools and with our neighbours and local community

Strategic Planning and Finance

- To work with the Governors to develop and communicate a clear vision and strategy for all parts of the School
- Together with the SLT, turn this vision into an operational plan with objectives, targets and timelines
- To be aware of all relevant educational and related external developments or opportunities which might inform strategy.
- To ensure that the School's policies and procedures are in line with best practice
- To maintain educational standards and provide opportunities for development of the School consistent with declared strategic objectives
- To work with the Business Director to develop and monitor the accounts and budgets
- To ensure there is a robust risk management process embedded in school policies and procedures

Academic, Co-Curricular and Pastoral

- To ensure an academic curriculum which is forward-looking, fit for purpose and which prepares St Helen's pupils for the future
- To ensure a co-curricular programme which is broad and exciting, and which supports the academic life of pupils and beyond
- To create the appropriate balance between all areas of school life and activity, including those not leading to formal examinations such as sport, the arts and community involvement
- To ensure the School's ethos reflects principles and values of equality, diversity and inclusion
- To deliver excellent pastoral care, combined with the skill to support the teaching, learning and personal development of pupils and staff

Marketing

- To recruit a full complement of pupils in line with agreed strategic aims and admissions policies
- To promote St Helen's, including the development of a public relations profile and the establishment of positive relations with prospective parents to ensure healthy application rates
- To ensure the continuing high standing of the School's reputation in the independent education sector

Community and Development

- To maintain good communications and relationships with key elements of the local community
- To develop and maintain good outreach activities which enhance the School's public benefit objective
- Engage in fundraising and friendraising activities in support of the School's Development campaigns including active involvement with the School's alumnae

Safeguarding:

St Helen's is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Please click to view our [Child Protection and Safeguarding, Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy](#) and our [Equal Opportunities](#) policies. You can find the most recent [Gender Pay Gap Report](#) here.



Person specification

The Head will be an inspirational and innovative leader with the leadership credibility to secure the full engagement of all staff and other stakeholders in the delivery of the School's strategic aims. S/he will be a collegiate and team orientated leader who is measured and considered in decision-making. The Head will be a strategic thinker capable of developing high aspirations for the School whilst maintaining the high standards and achievements that sets St Helen's apart from others.

The successful candidate will have the following key skills, experience, and attributes:

Qualifications and Experience

- University degree with a management and leadership qualification an advantage
- Record of strong academic leadership
- Experience of developing, implementing and monitoring strategic plans in support of the mission of a school
- Demonstrable experience of engaging and building relationships with key internal and external stakeholders
- Substantial successful experience of resource management
- Experience across the full range of staff management processes including recruitment, development, retention, performance management and dismissal
- Excellent understanding of all elements of a school environment and current and future issues to be faced
- Previous headship experience would be highly desirable

Leadership and Management Skills

- Ability to translate an ambitious vision into meaningful specific plans and objectives and gain commitment from the staff community
- Demonstrable commitment to achieving the highest academic standards
- Excellent communication skills (both written and oral)
- Excellent problem-solving skills including evidence of having dealt successfully with a range of challenges
- Ability to delegate and work with conflicting demands and timescales
- Good project management skills
- Excellent financial and resource planning skills
- Good understanding of regulatory and legal requirements relating to the education environment with a strong commitment to Safeguarding, Child Protection, Health and Safety and Safer Recruitment
- Proven record of successful fundraising and a willingness to fundraise

- Demonstrable understanding of the market and the need for schools to build their brand to remain competitive

Personal Attributes

- Able to act as ambassador and professional advocate for the School, with sound personal credibility and the capacity to build relationships
- A leader and highly capable team player who can build a strong senior management and 'whole staff' team
- Ability and personal charisma to relate to the pupils, staff, parents and the wider community
- Firm commitment to the education of girls
- The intellectual rigour to drive educational debate and continuous improvement

St Helen's welcomes applications from people of all backgrounds and life experiences.





Terms of appointment

St Helen's is offering a generous salary, commensurate with the seniority and responsibilities of the role.

The incoming Head would ideally join the School in September 2024.

How to apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to St Helen's School on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code **SATAKC**.

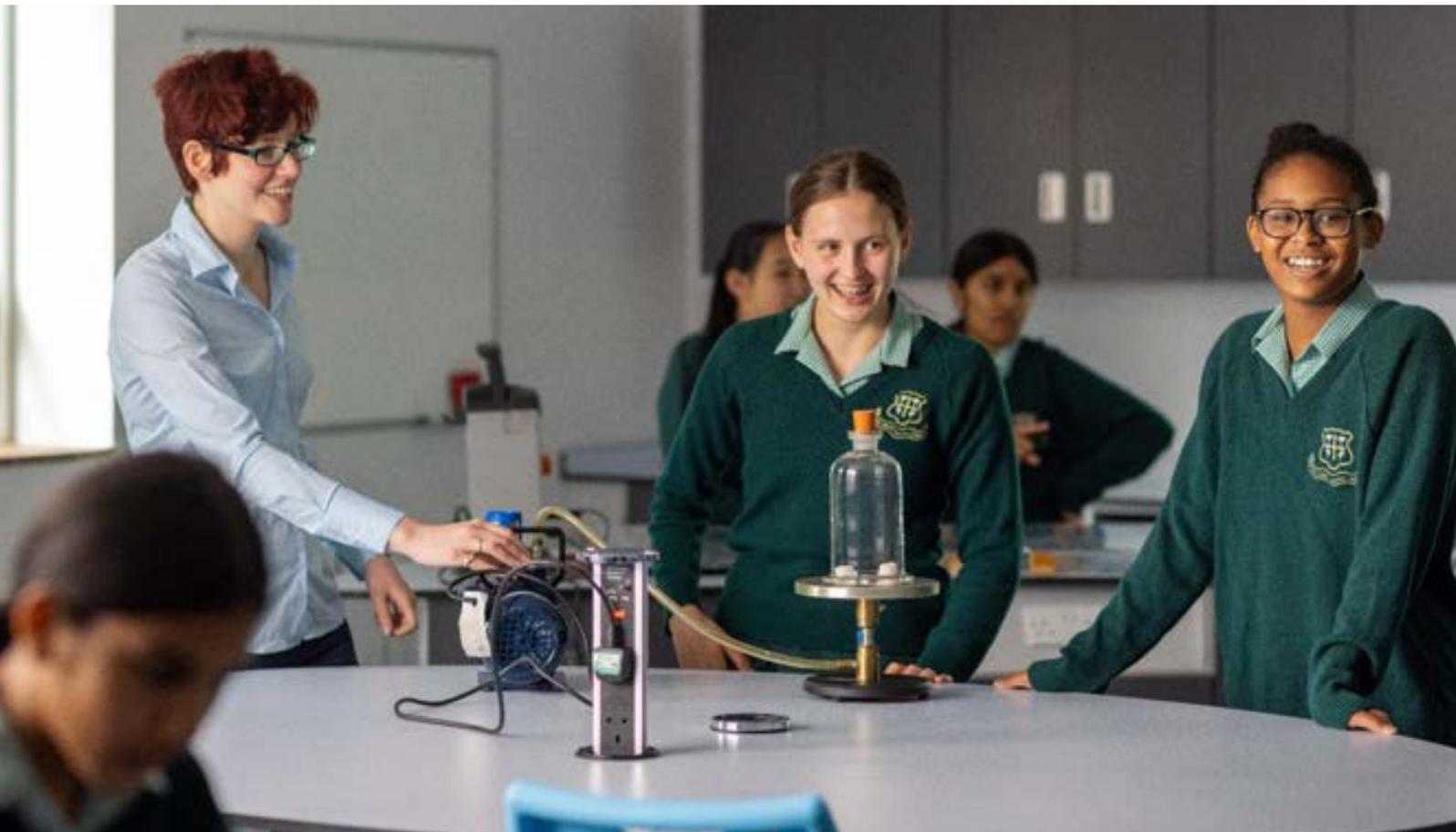
Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Thursday 12th October 2023**.

** The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.*

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.



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