



South Hampstead

*High School*

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GDST

JOB APPLICATION INFORMATION

# Head's PA





South Hampstead High School – an independent day school of 900+ pupils, including approximately 265 girls in the Junior School and over 140 in the Sixth Form – welcomes girls aged 4 to 18 from across London. It is a very popular school and entry is competitive at all ages. Established in 1876, it is one of 25 schools and academies belonging to the Girls' Day School Trust. Located in leafy Hampstead, with the buzz of central London's cultural life close at hand, the school is very well served by public transport and there are excellent local amenities nearby.

Academic results are excellent: in 2018, over two-thirds of A Level entries were A\*/A, and over 89% of GCSE entries were A\*/A or 9/8/7. The vast majority of Sixth Formers are accepted at their first choice university, including around 15% to Oxbridge and up to 10% to medical school with increasing numbers moving abroad to attend Ivy League destinations. Notable former pupils include prize-winning authors, ground-breaking scientists, passionate campaigners, successful entrepreneurs, distinguished lawyers and trailblazing creatives.

Working at South Hampstead is stimulating, challenging and fun. Pupils are intelligent and inquisitive, energetic and engaging. We offer competitive salaries, generous employee benefits – including opportunities for sabbaticals – and a warm, supportive environment. There is a strong emphasis on Continuous Professional Development and on supporting teachers to engage with leading education research.

#### THE GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

South Hampstead High School was the ninth school to be established by the Girls' Day School Trust (GDST) in 1876.

Today, the GDST is the leading network of independent girls' schools in the UK.

Since its foundation in 1872, the GDST has been at the forefront of education for girls and a strong voice in promoting opportunities for young women. Through the Alumnae Network, this continues after the girls leave school.

*“When I first stepped through the doors here, I knew that it was a very special place to be – the wonderful atmosphere, dedicated staff and energetic girls, who are such a pleasure to teach.”*

— South Hampstead Teacher

## AIMS & ETHOS

At South Hampstead we believe that education should be a truly enriching experience. We believe in the power of knowledge as a tool for thought and creative endeavour, and a source of lifelong inspiration and curiosity.

In and out of the classroom, we want our pupils to explore the big questions; debate and discussion lie at the very heart of a South Hampstead education. We aim to create abundant opportunities for creative output and to encourage pupils to take risks. In our teaching, we do what we know works and put research and reflection at the heart of our professional development. Teaching is a noble profession and our staff are central to our success.

We aim to provide outstanding breadth of opportunity in our curricular and co-curricular programme and to open our pupils' minds to a myriad of possibilities. We believe that involvement in school life is a key factor in our pupils' happiness. But it's not just about taking part; we aim to instil in pupils a sense of purpose, pride and determination and the belief that they can compete on the biggest of stages.

We aim to create a warm, tolerant and kind community where girls can be themselves and make friends for life. We want them to play their part in our community and in the community beyond South Hampstead. The 21st century is a time of unique opportunities and challenges; we have a critical role to play in preparing our young women to live and thrive, work and lead in tomorrow's world.

## TEACHING & LEARNING APPROACH

South Hampstead follows a curriculum that equips each girl with the means to develop her intellectual abilities as well as her personal and social values. Students are able to explore a deep and expansive body of knowledge, and to discover their strengths and interests via a broad, balanced range of academic, cultural and aesthetic subjects.

Pupils are intelligent, inquisitive, confident, energetic and talented. The programme of work helps to ensure that each girl is thoroughly prepared for the next stage in her life, whether it is transition into the Senior School, higher education or adulthood.

South Hampstead students love to learn. The store we set by the power of ideas is evident in the quality of the conversation, both inside and outside the classroom.

Our teaching is known for its rigour and its passion. In-depth subject knowledge and expertise are givens for all our teachers, but equally important is an innate ability to inspire the very best from each student, both as scholars and as individuals. With a colourful mosaic of enrichment opportunities available – academic societies, national competitions, leadership roles, independent learning projects, incredible speakers and exciting trips – every girl has the freedom to direct her learning and to flourish. Our ambition each year is that our pupils leave us as assured, adaptable, inspired individuals, ready to make their mark on the world and lead happy, successful lives.



*“Throughout the school, pupils are highly motivated, articulate and have strongly developed skills for learning... they are self-aware, reflective and show initiative.”*

— ISI Report

## BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

We are proud to be a busy, buzzy school with a lot going on. Each week there are well over 100 co-curricular activities for the girls to get involved in, before, during and after school. Regular guest speakers, a comprehensive enrichment programme, local and international trips, leadership opportunities and charitable endeavours combine to provide an exceptional range of experiences beyond the classroom.

South Hampstead has a well-established reputation in the creative arts. We welcome writers, poets and artists in residence and put on ambitious concerts and performances. Speaking up and speaking out is encouraged from the earliest years: we have an in-house debating coach and a strong track record in a range of public speaking competitions.

In sport, girls have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities, both as part of a team and as an individual – there are over 65 sporting clubs and teams to join, with state-of-the-art facilities both on site and at our nearby 4-acre sports ground. Our aim is to cultivate a positive attitude towards recreational and competitive sport, developing the skills and team spirit needed for a lifetime enjoyment of sport.

## PASTORAL CARE

Our school is lit up by the attributes that matter most here – thoughtfulness, open-heartedness, respect, courage and honesty.

At South Hampstead we aim to encourage every girl to discover her own aspirations and to run her own race with regards to her progress and achievements. Under our unique co-tutor system, no form tutor is responsible for more than 12 pupils throughout the Senior School. They make sure every girl is thriving: supported, making good progress and feeling fully involved in school life.

Mistakes are learned from and successes are shared: each girl is encouraged to consider how she engages with feedback and to communicate her own strengths. There's plenty of experience on hand from older pupils: buddies and peer mentors provide a friendly face and practical advice, and a fun programme of intra-house activities regularly mixes the year groups, creating a real sense of togetherness and community.

Our programme of PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) prepares girls to go out into the world with confidence, inner strength and high self-esteem, ready to face challenges. There are also regular evening talks for parents, often reflecting the topics taught in class and as well as other issues on the minds of parents. We have a full-time nurse and counselling provision – it's completely normal for girls to sign up for sessions on any issue they like, completely free from any stigma. We understand how to educate girls, setting the feminist agenda and guiding well-rounded, well-grounded individuals to be the female leaders of the future.

## THE CURRICULUM

The curriculum is designed to provide a secure and imaginative basis for academic progress at each key stage of a pupil's development. Our intention is that all our girls will develop their own enthusiasms and initiatives within a broad educational framework. The curriculum aims to provide our pupils with a rich experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education. It is designed to provide stimulation and subject matter appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils. The teaching and learning environment is challenging but very fulfilling. The students are intelligent, inquisitive, confident, energetic and talented.

In Years 7, 8 and 9 the girls follow a full core curriculum, with Latin in all three years, one MFL in Year 7 and a second MFL added in Year 8. Drama, Art, Technology, ICT, PHSE and PE also form part of the programme. Maths is set by ability in Year 7 and French is set on the basis of the pupils' past experience in the language.

All girls currently study ten subjects to GCSE, including English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, one MFL and Science. Pupils can opt to study Classical Greek at this stage. Classical Civilisation A-level is offered at sixth form level.

The curriculum throughout the school is such that all the girls have excellent opportunities to learn and make progress in their academic studies, their personal development. Girls also enjoy opportunities in life beyond school. Their programme of work helps to ensure that each girl is thoroughly prepared for the next stage in her life, whether it is transition into the Senior School, higher education or adulthood.

## BEYOND THE CURRICULUM

We have a great tradition of high achievement in the creative arts. Whether in Music, Drama, Art or Design and Technology, our girls are successful both in school and outside. There are many opportunities for them to perform and to exhibit their creative work throughout the school.

Music is at the very heart of school life, with a variety of major events each year and a host of smaller-scale concerts involving our many choirs, bands, ensembles and orchestras. It is our aim that every girl who comes to South Hampstead High School, regardless of her experience, accomplishment and aspirations, will have the opportunity, and every encouragement, to flourish as a musician.

Drama is packed with opportunities for all students to be involved both on stage and behind the scenes. There are many productions each year in both the Junior and Senior School, in which girls are encouraged to take an active part. We also participate in the annual Shakespeare Schools Festival and offer a wide variety of House Drama events, film making opportunities and master class workshops with external practitioners.

In Art, girls are encouraged to experiment and take risks while working within a fine arts framework. Students work with a range of media including textiles and sculpture. They also acquire skills in areas such as photography, filmmaking and animation.

Design and Technology is varied and very hands-on. Our older girls are regular award-winners in a number of competitions such as Young Inventor of the Year, Young Designer of the Year and Young Engineer of the Year.

Evidence of the talent we have here is displayed all around the school – paintings, sketches, photographs, sculptures and design projects that were created by our students are always on view.

In Sport, girls have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities, both as part of a team and as an individual, during regular lessons at our four-acre sports ground and in the gymnasium, or as part of our co-curricular programme. We currently offer a total of 20 different sports and in excess of 60 sporting clubs across the Junior and Senior Schools. There are regular overseas sport and music tours and overseas expeditions, as well as the more usual school visits at home and abroad. In the Senior School, girls typically spend three hours a week in Sport; in the Junior School, at least two hours. Specialist coaches work with the girls on occasion, and there is a Going for Gold programme for our most talented sportswomen.

The 4 acres of playing fields, squash courts and dance studio are some 10 minutes' walk away. Our aim is to cultivate a positive attitude towards recreational and competitive sport, developing the skills and team spirit needed for a lifetime enjoyment of sport.

# The Role

We are seeking a highly-organised individual to provide the Head (and other members of the Senior Leadership Team) with a comprehensive administrative and secretarial support service so that they can undertake their roles with maximum effectiveness. This is a very customer focused role and as such requires excellent verbal skills and strong organisational and influencing skills.

## Specific Responsibilities

### COMMUNICATIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

- Plan and manage the Head's diary, appointments and reminder systems in order to make the most effective use of her/his time and ensure that the office runs smoothly.
- Deal proactively with all incoming and outgoing correspondence to and from the Head's office, including drafting letters and emails, in order to ensure that an appropriate and timely response is made to all communications.
- Receive the Head's visitors, incoming telephone calls, other messages and, if required, emails, responding on behalf of the Head to routine enquiries, passing on messages to appropriate members of staff, and ensuring that all callers receive an appropriate response within required timescales; ensure that confidential and sensitive issues are dealt with in an appropriate manner.
- Prepare and process documents, reports and presentation materials, using appropriate software packages and ensuring that the quality of work produced is appropriate for its purpose and produced within required timescales.
- Plan and organise internal and external meetings/interviews as required by the Head, ensuring that appropriate information, facilities and refreshments are provided, and making travel arrangements if necessary.
- Maintain records as required by the Head, ensuring that information is up to date, readily accessible, managed in accordance with data protection requirements, and that changes are notified to third parties as required.
- Assist the Head of HR with recruitment advertisements, liaising with agencies, arranging interviews and requesting employment references.
- Oversee, in conjunction with Heads of Year, all references for transferring students.
- Prepare agenda for meetings, take notes at, and prepare and distribute minutes of meetings. Act as Clerk to the Local Governing Body and attend Governors' Meetings.
- As part of the administrative team, contribute to the smooth running of the school office, including providing cover for colleagues as required, and provide general administrative assistance to the Head and Senior Leadership Team.

### MARKETING AND PUBLIC OCCASIONS

- Ensure that visitors and callers to the Head's office receive an efficient, professional, approachable and welcoming service, in line with the ethos of the school.
- Manage the parent portal Firefly to ensure all information available to parents is up to date and accurate.

- Assist with the organisation of events, such as Open Days, Prizegivings, Leavers' Dinners etc to ensure that they run smoothly and efficiently.
- Contribute to the positive promotion and marketing of the school and the GDST in the local and wider community.

### TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Regularly review own practice, set personal development targets and take responsibility for own continuous professional development.

### SUPPORTING THE WORK OF THE GDST

Develop strong, positive relationships with GDST colleagues, contribute to collaborative work across GDST Schools and support other staff in participating in GDST work, in order to develop and share best practice.

All school staff are expected to:

- a. Work towards and support the school vision and the current school objectives outlined in the School Development Plan
- b. Contribute to the school's programme of extra-curricular activities
- c. Support and contribute to the school's responsibility for safeguarding students
- d. Work within the school's health and safety policy to ensure a safe working environment for staff, students and visitors
- e. Work within the GDST's Diversity Policy to promote equality of opportunity for all students and staff, both current and prospective
- f. Maintain high professional standards of attendance, punctuality, appearance, conduct and positive, courteous relations with students, parents and colleagues
- g. Engage actively in the performance review process
- h. Adhere to policies as set out in the GDST Council Regulations, the Hub and GDST circulars
- i. Undertake other reasonable duties related to the job purpose required from time to time.

**This job description should be seen as enabling rather than restrictive and will be subject to regular review.**





## APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Completed applications will comprise a letter of application addressed to the Headmistress outlining why the applicant thinks she/he is suitable for the role; an application form; and the names and full contact details of two referees who may be approached immediately.

Applications should be addressed to Mrs Bingham, Headmistress, South Hampstead High School, 3 Maresfield Gardens, NW3 5SS or by email to [Lcripps@shhs.gdst.net](mailto:Lcripps@shhs.gdst.net) by 12 noon on Monday 29th April 2019.

It is the post-holder's responsibility to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young persons for whom s/he is responsible, or with whom s/he comes into contact. You will adhere to and ensure compliance with the school's Child Protection Policy Statement at all times. If in the course of carrying out the duties of the post the post-holder becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children in the school s/he must report any concerns to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (Deputy Head) or to the Headmistress. Candidates should be aware that they will be asked to undergo a DBS check.

## SKILLS REQUIRED

Excellent interpersonal and communications skills including the ability to relate well to people on all levels with sensitivity, tact and diplomacy	Essential
First class organisational and administrative skills, with the ability to remain calm under pressure and work to tight deadlines; systematic in approach to tasks, with attention to detail	Essential
Evidence of a pro-active approach to planning and prioritising work, with the ability to use initiative appropriately	Essential
Able to maintain a high work rate and to juggle a range of tasks and competing priorities	Essential
Excellent ICT skills e.g. confident and adept in use of Microsoft applications e.g. Word, Excel and database input	Essential
Excellent command of written and spoken English	Essential
Typing speed of at least 70 words per minute	Essential
Shorthand/speed writing of at least 80 words per minute	Desirable
Good telephone manner and ability to deal with callers and visitors in a calm and courteous way	Essential
Desk top publishing skills	Desirable
Ability to summarise complex discussions in writing (e.g. for minute taking)	Desirable
Sufficient numeracy to deal with statistical data	Desirable
Accuracy and attention to detail	Desirable

## KNOWLEDGE BASE

Knowledge of office management processes	Essential
Knowledge of safeguarding issues	Desirable

## EXPERIENCE

Evidence of substantial administrative experience in a complex organisation	Essential
Previous experience of working in a complex, busy, service-driven environment	Essential
Experience of working in a school environment	Desirable

## QUALIFICATIONS/ATTAINMENT

Recognised secretarial or administrative qualification at NVQ3 level or above, or the equivalent gained through experience	Essential
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## ATTITUDE/APPROACH

A high level of personal integrity, with proven experience of handling sensitive situations with tact and diplomacy and with complete respect for confidentiality	Essential
Willingness to "roll up sleeves" in an emergency	Essential
Honesty, energy, stamina and enthusiasm	Essential
A willingness to give generously of their time to support school events and activities	Desirable
An enjoyment of working with and being in the company of children	Essential
Professional but friendly demeanour in relating to all members of the school community	Essential
Well-groomed, with dress standards and appearance appropriate to the role	Essential
Flexible and able to work as part of a team	Essential