



Head of Sixth Form

Candidate Information Pack



RGS



Introduction

A very warm invitation to join us...

The Royal Grammar School in Newcastle is a remarkable school with a 500-year history of welcoming people from all backgrounds. From history's Vice Admiral Cuthbert Collingwood, to recent Nobel Prize molecular biologist Sir Gregory Winter, RGS has educated thousands of young people who have gone on to make an indelible mark on the world. It is an exciting place to learn, that is forward thinking and inclusive. We aim to create a sense of belonging, to foster a belief in each other, inspire a love for learning and encourage an ambition to succeed.

The RGS has a reputation for excellence across academic and co-curricular activities and our students benefit from the wide range of opportunities they can enjoy. We are equally dedicated to our pastoral care as we believe that happy children learn best. We encourage our students to be intellectually curious, to think creatively and to challenge themselves in everything they undertake. We believe that academic results should be the consequence, not the purpose, of an outstanding and well-rounded education. That said we are immensely proud of the academic achievements of our community and it is testament to our students' commitment and teachers' dedication that we are ranked as one of the highest performing schools in the country. The RGS is the Sunday Times' North East Independent School of the Decade and we were separately awarded overall Independent School of the Year for the whole of the UK for 2023 following winning the category for Outstanding Educational Partnerships. Most recently, RGS was awarded the Sunday Times' North East's Independent Secondary School of the Year for Academic Performance for 2024 as well as overall Independent Secondary of the Year for the North East.

The Head of Sixth Form role is a tremendous opportunity for an innovative and energetic leader to join our dynamic Senior Leadership Team both to support the continued development of our large and very successful Sixth Form community and the school as a whole. The right candidate will also actively support our determination to raise aspiration and attainment for bright children across the North East, through our established bursary and partnership programmes.

We hope to ensure that our young people leave school as kind, interesting, independent-minded individuals who are willing to take on responsibility and motivated to contribute to society. If you are committed to helping apply the latest thinking in teaching and learning to lay the strongest possible foundations for their future, then we would be delighted to hear from you.

Geoffrey Stanford - Headmaster



RGS Newcastle

There's more to life at RGS...

Thomas Horsley, the original settlor of the Royal Grammar School Newcastle (RGS) pledged his legacy to the School in 1525. Almost 500 years later, RGS continues to flourish as the premier independent school in the North East of England and as one of the country's leading schools, and the Sunday Times' North East Independent School of the Decade 2020. Most recently, RGS was awarded the Sunday Times' 2023 North East's Top Independent Secondary School for Academic Performance. We regularly lead all northern schools in national league tables and pride ourselves on academic excellence, a high level of pastoral support, involvement in a wide range of sports and other co-curricular activities, and our commitment to bursaries and partnerships.

The RGS has grown substantially in recent years. There are now some 1,340 students, over 260 of whom are in the Junior School. The Sixth Form of 350 students is one of the largest in the independent sector. We became coeducational 20 years ago and girls now comprise 46% of the school.

The school is based in the heart of the City, immediately opposite Jesmond Metro station. The school occupies over 30 acres of land and has state-of-the-art facilities, including five brand new art studios, a new library, a new Sixth Form Centre, a 25m swimming pool, two Sports Halls, a Performing Arts Centre, outdoor football/rugby pitches at Mooracres, an artificial turf pitch for hockey and the former County Cricket Ground.

Academically the school is highly selective. Students are assessed for entry at the key entry points (Y3, Y5, Y7 and a handful at Y9, plus sixth form). The biggest entry points are Y3 (60 students), Y7 (c.75 students) and Y12 (c. 45 students). Beyond the academics, in Junior School (Y3-6) entry is assessed through activity days whilst at Y7 students are assessed through online tests and an interaction day. Sixth form entry is through interview only. Students sit baseline tests in Y7, Y10, and L6 – the average GLA CAT score for both the current Y7 and L6 is 117.

Academic selection and excellent teaching means the school's results are exceptional. The published figures for 2023 are on the school's website. For A Level, 34% of A level grades were at A*: 71% A* - A; and 89% A* - B. For GCSE, the proportion of grade 9s was 41.2%; 9 – 8 was 67.8%; and 9 – 7 was 85.8%. These results placed the RGS 51st, nationally, in The Sunday Times Parent Power survey, up from 73rd place in 2022.

In 2021 The Sunday Times Parent Power survey judged RGS Newcastle to be the North East Independent School of the Decade. Since then, the RGS has consistently ranked first for academic results in the North East. In 2023, as well as receiving accreditation for the Wellbeing Award for Schools, the RGS was awarded the overall title of Independent School of the Year for the whole of the UK, following winning the category for Outstanding Educational Partnerships. We have more recently been awarded the title of Sunday Times Parent Power North East Independent School of the Year for 2024.





Our Vision and Ethos

We believe in inspiring young people and equipping them to make a positive contribution to society.

Through promoting excellence, the RGS aims to raise aspiration and attainment across the North East.

By inspiring and nurturing hearts and minds, we can give those around us the freedom to create and shape their own future.

A future that is built on our sense of history and belonging in the city but is fueled by an ambition to succeed and evolve.

A place where freedom of expression, ideas and beliefs can be shared, exchanged and grow openly in our happy environment.

An environment where we look out for each other and treat everyone with care and respect, within and beyond our community.

A spirit to challenge, inspire and stretch the minds of everyone here so we feel free to explore, free to think, free to try, free to dream of possibilities and free to be ourselves.

The four pillars of our ethos are embedded in everything that we do:

- Belief in each other
- Ambition to succeed
- Sense of belonging
- Love for learning



The Role

We are seeking to appoint an outstanding and dynamic person to be the new Head of Sixth Form and member of the school's Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The position at the RGS becomes available following a change of role for current post holder, Mrs Naomi McGough. This is an opportunity for an ambitious pastoral leader to make a significant contribution to the continuing development and future of the RGS.

Reporting to the Headmaster, the SLT carries collective responsibility for the effective daily running of the school, maintaining high standards, the management of whole school issues, advice on and development of school policy and strategy, and the subsequent support for and implementation of agreed policies and strategies. Though individual members of the SLT are allocated specific responsibilities, it is ultimately the responsibility of the SLT to give support and assistance, as and when required, in any aspect of school life as requested by the Headmaster.

This role is **responsible to** the Headmaster.

This role **works alongside** other members of the Senior Leadership Team, comprising the Senior Deputy Head, Director of Finance and Operations, Deputy Head (Academic), Deputy Head (Pastoral), Deputy Head (Co-Curricular), Director of External Relations, Director of Partnerships, and Head of the Junior School. The postholder will also work alongside the Junior School Assistant Head (Academic).

This role is **responsible for** (staff):

- Heads of Year and Assistant Heads of Year for Lower & Upper Sixth
- Selected Heads of Academic Departments (shared with other SLT colleagues)
- Head of Complementary Studies

The appointed Head of Sixth Form will be required to be in post from 1st September 2024.





RGS

The Role

As Head of Sixth Form, the successful candidate will take responsibility for, and promote the education of, all students in the Sixth Form.

They should have a holistic approach: supporting the education of the whole individual in line with the school vision and ethos, spanning across the breadth of Academic, Pastoral and Co- Curricular activity.

First and foremost, they will be responsible for the overall welfare of students in the Sixth Form, along with their team of Heads of Year and their assistants, Form Supervisors and Tutors. They will take a leading role in promoting the wellbeing of all students as well as high standards of behaviour, including attendance, punctuality and general involvement and engagement.

As a central element of this, the Head of Sixth Form will be a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for the school. Academically they will have responsibility for overseeing the progress of students in the Sixth Form, including the monitoring, tracking and support of each individual.

The successful candidate is likely to have had significant experience of pastoral or academic senior or middle management with a commitment to promoting and safeguarding

By its nature, and in line with the expectations of senior leadership, the work of the postholder is not confined exclusively to daytime hours or term times.





Job Description

(The job description for this role is subject to regular review)

Pastoral Care

- Take a significant role in promoting and developing the positive culture of the school and, alongside the rest of the Sixth Form Pastoral team, maintain a culture of high expectations and act as a role model for student behaviour.
- Alongside the Head of Lower Sixth and Head of Upper Sixth, act as a central point of advice and guidance for Sixth Form students, teachers and parents, ensuring proactive care and support of students (including recognition of achievement).
- Ensure effective communication between Sixth Form Supervisors, Heads of Year (HoYs), Heads of Department (HoDs) teachers, Tutors, students and parents, Lead the Sixth Form Pastoral Team, assisting the HoYs with serious disciplinary / pastoral / welfare student issues and liaising regularly with the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the HoYs Y7 – 11.
- With the Deputy Head (Academic), monitor and evaluate Sixth Form student participation and performance in the academic programme.
- Working with the HoYs, recognise and support students with additional needs (including those related to examinations), and liaise regularly with the Learning Support Department to help these students.
- With the Deputy Head (Co-Curricular), monitor and evaluate Sixth Form student participation and performance in the cocurricular programme.
- Working with the HoYs, devise, direct and monitor the Sixth Form Supervision programme.
- Communicate regularly with parents to keep them informed of Sixth Form activity and priorities, addressing issues in a timely and effective manner

- Ensure that pastoral and academic staff follow up problems such as lateness or absence, and missing work deadlines.
- Assist the HoY in preparation of academic reports for all Sixth Form students.

Admissions

- Lead and monitor the admissions process for 16+ working with the Head of Admissions, including the promotion and support of bursary applications.
- Lead the Sixth Form induction process both for new students and RGS Year 11 students.
- Update publicity material, and support publicity activity related to Sixth Form students.

Liaison with:

- The Deputy Head (Academic) and Heads of Department (HoD) to contribute to Sixth Form Curriculum planning, assist departmental work and ensure smooth running of the Sixth Form timetable.
- The Deputy Head (Pastoral) to ensure consistent best practice in pastoral matters and provide colleagues with pastoral related CPD.
- The Deputy Head (Co-Curricular) to ensure students make good use of the range of opportunities outside the classroom
- The Careers Department and support the work of the Head of Careers, especially with UCAS.
- The Exams Administrator and Head of Exams to ensure smooth running of all Sixth Form examinations, both internal and external.
- The Head of Complementary Studies to support the extended academic curriculum.
- The Head of PSHE & Wellbeing to support the programme of activity targeted as Sixth Form students.
- The Director of Partnerships to expand the involvement of Sixth Form students in a range of service activities.
- The Director of External Relations to help market the Sixth Form to prospective students



RGS

Job Description

General

- Act as the strategic lead for all Sixth Form matters.
- Encourage a strong sense of Sixth Form community which actively supports and provides leadership to the whole school.
- Lead the UCAS predicted grades process and appeals.
- Teach approximately one quarter of a full timetable, work with a group of pupils as a tutor and play an active part in the co-curricular life of the School.
- Organise and lead Sixth Form events, with the help of the students, where possible, including assemblies, prize givings and the oversight of leavers celebrations.
- Organise events for Sixth Form parents including Pastoral and academic parents conferences and Information Evenings for prospective students.
- Attend whole school events, particularly those with significant Sixth Form participation.
- Lead the selection process for prefects, and the subsequent monitoring of them.
- Complete references for external agencies/companies to support students who are about to or have recently left the school.
- Alongside the rest of the Sixth Form Pastoral Team, Take on regular supervisory duties, maintain the Sixth Form Common Room and act as mentor to new staff joining the Sixth Form Pastoral Team.

Discipline and Conduct

- With the Senior Deputy Head and Deputy Head (Pastoral), oversee standards of personal conduct in the Sixth Form and throughout the school.

Additional Responsibilities

- Act as one of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads.
- Be an authoritative and supportive presence around the School throughout the day, support other members of the SLT in the efficient daily running of the school and share daily duties with other members of senior leadership team.
- Contribute to the School development plan and support the development of school policies.
- By rotation act as the senior member of staff on call for issues relating to trips during holiday periods.
- Attend a range of school functions to support pupils and staff in their activities and endeavours and represent the School at external meetings
- As part of this SLT role, there will also be opportunity for the Head of Sixth Form to take on additional whole school responsibilities.
- Undertake any further tasks as directed by the Headmaster.



Person Specification

Educational Attainment

- An outstanding academic record including a good degree in a subject that is part of the RGS curriculum.
- Qualified teacher.

Knowledge and Experience

- Experience of pastoral or academic senior or middle management with a commitment to promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children.
- A broad and deep understanding of the wellbeing and mental health issues facing students and schools.
- Pastoral experience working with adolescent students; perception and sensitivity dealing with the issues and The ability to challenge and support a range of students from the most to the least able.
- An appreciation of the importance of a holistic education involving both the academic curriculum and the co-curricular programme.
- Understanding and experience of UCAS and the University application process (in the UK and elsewhere) as well as awareness of 'alternative' routes, e.g., apprenticeships, art foundation courses, gap year options etc.
- A proven track record of successful leadership: this may be in a senior leadership role, in an academic department or pastoral leadership of a year group or house. Experience of enabling the successful development of staff.
- Experience of teaching to a high standard in a high performing academic school.
- A good knowledge of the legislative/compliance framework for independent schools for safeguarding.

Skills and Personal Qualities

- A dedicated team player, who strives for excellence and leads by example, with the ability to work as part of the SLT, contributing to effective strategic and operational decision making in a school setting.
- High professional standards of conduct, appearance and engagement with a commitment to personal professional development.
- Active supporter of Equality and Diversity.
- Confident and experienced public speaker with outstanding interpersonal skills to build strong relationships and enable effective dialogue with pupils, parents, staff, alumni and visitors.
- Organised and able to prioritise workload, balancing decisiveness and consultation appropriately, with problem solving skills to manage competing priorities and the judgement to manage sensitive and complex situations with clarity and care.
- Reliable and calm under pressure to be able to offer stability and consistency to the school community.
- Self-reliant and self-motivated, being able to work independently and as part of a team, while being adaptable and flexible with working patterns to meet the needs of the school community.
- A keen eye for detail.



Living in the North East

Whilst the North East is beloved and popular with so many, we know that not everyone will have had first-hand experience of it, so this is a short introduction to a city and region which we love, and believe you will too. Newcastle is a medium-sized city with an historic centre and a vibrant life of its own. There's culture and arts in the form of the award-winning BALTIC Art Gallery and The Sage, alongside several theatres that attract national touring productions. There's music from classical to club and we are home to the Royal Northern Sinfonia. There's also a growing food culture with some fantastic restaurants.

If you like sport then there's certainly no shortage of top class entertainment: from Premier League football being played at St James' Park and EFL at the Stadium of Light to first class cricket at Durham (a mere half hour away), and great rugby at the Falcons, not to mention basketball and even ice hockey, and then there is the annual Great North Run. The North East has also produced some of the country's finest athletes in track and field and there are clubs aplenty to get involved with, most famously in Gateshead.

The coast and the hills are minutes away from the city centre. By car you can be in the middle of nowhere in 45 minutes, the Scottish Borders is only an hour away and the Lake District an hour and a half. The coast is served by the Metro (our version of the Tube), but some of the country's best beaches are up the road in Northumberland, less than 40 minutes by car. There's mountain biking, road cycling, climbing, and endless hill walks in stunning countryside. There are green spaces all over the city too, with plenty of parks for children and dogs alike to run around.

There are three local teaching hospitals, two universities in the city with another three close by. Some pioneering medical work goes on at the RVI, Great North Children's Hospital and the Freeman Hospital. History abounds with more castles than you could count and sites of interest for almost every period of English (and border) history. Add that to a proud, independently minded and very friendly local population and we have most things you could want.

There are excellent primary schools in the region and city as well as some good secondary schools too, but staff do get a discount at the RGS. There are also a number of good competitor independent schools as well.

The RGS is on the edge of the city centre, a ten-minute walk from the main shopping areas. The leafy, affluent suburbs of Jesmond and Gosforth are close by with housing ranging from purpose-built flats in terraced streets and conversions of bigger houses to terraced houses, post-war semis and large, family-sized detached houses with big gardens. All of this is within walking distance of the school so no commute is needed. Properties are very affordable both within the city and the surrounding area. If you want to travel to work then you could wake up with a sea view, hop on the Metro and be at school just half an hour later. The region wins tourism and lifestyle awards for very good reasons!





Terms and Conditions

- This is a full time, permanent post.
- The Head of Sixth Form will report into the Headmaster.
- Working Hours - Normal working hours will be those necessary to carry out the duties of the post.
- Salary - The salary will be commensurate with the seniority of the role.



What We Offer

- During term-time, staff are provided with a free lunch, if on site.
- The School is part of the Teachers' Pension Scheme, and all teachers are automatically included in the Scheme. The school also offers an alternative to the TPS, The Aviva Pension Trust for Independent Schools (APTIS) which is a defined contribution and salary exchange scheme administered by AVIVA. There is provision for life assurance and income protection for those who choose to join the APTIS scheme. Further information on the APTIS scheme and salary exchange will be made available on appointment.
- The employee will become eligible for sick pay under the RGS Teaching Staff Sick Pay Scheme after a qualifying period. Details of the scheme will be provided on appointment.
- The school offers an optional healthcare plan for all staff which includes optical, dental and physio cover, access to telephone GP consultations and a host of other benefits (terms and conditions apply). Further information will be available to the employee once in post.
- As with all RGS employees, the employee will be encouraged to become involved in the wider life of the RGS community.
- It is the school's policy is to allow all eligible members of staff to educate their children at the school at concessionary rates, subject to their children meeting the academic entry requirements and subject to a place being available.
- Ongoing educational support and development of all staff with the provision of external and internal training courses, and our middle leaders training programme for existing and aspiring managers.
- We offer an interest free travel loan for a corporate Metro travel pass after a qualifying period. Further information will be available upon starting in post.
- We offer a Bike to Work scheme for qualifying members of staff. Terms and conditions apply. Details will be shared upon starting in post.
- Free use of a well-equipped gym, fitness suite and swimming pool at permitted times.
- Opportunity to see free school productions in the Miller Theatre located in our Performing Arts Centre.
- Access to our onsite confidential counselling service.
- We offer access to the school medical team (1 doctor and 2 nurses) for triage medical advice and free flu vaccinations.
- Invitation to join staff clubs and wellbeing activities during term-time as well as staff social events throughout the year.
- Opportunity to join in with RGS tradition and become a member of the Stowell, Collingwood, Horsley or Eldon House.



How to Apply

Candidates are advised to read the 'Information for Applicants' with particular care before applying.

If you have any queries or would like to arrange a visit to the school, please do not hesitate to call Geoffrey Stanford (Headmaster) on 0191 281 5711, or email jobs@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk.

If, having looked through the website (www.rgs.newcastle.sch.uk) and read this job information pack and the Information for Applicants, you think this particular post would suit you, please say so (and why) in:

1. A covering letter and
2. A fully completed RGS application form.

You must complete the application form, even if you want to also attach a CV. Please email all documents to jobs@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk by the closing date.

The closing date for this role is 9.00am on Monday 15th January 2024.

Interviews will be held shortly after the closing date. We will hope to make the appointment as soon as possible following interview, offering the post and gaining acceptance, so applicants should arrive for interview with a clear idea of what would be involved in moving to the area (if necessary) and working at the RGS.

Reasonable travel expenses will be considered to attend an interview if candidates live outside the local area. This is normally up to a maximum contribution of £100 on provision of receipts. If your expenses will be significantly higher than £100 and an overnight stay is required, please note all expenses will need to be booked and approved in advance. If you plan to claim expenses, please contact the Head's Secretary, Sandra Ellis S.Ellis@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk in advance of your interview, who will talk you through the policy and advise on eligibility for reimbursement.





Further Information

Equal Opportunities

We are looking to appoint staff from a wide variety of backgrounds. Not just because it is the right thing to do but because at the RGS we recognise that those different experiences provide fresh perspectives, opportunities to challenge existing beliefs and provide opportunities to act as excellent role models for our diverse student body. We are committed to creating an inclusive and diverse school culture and our staff are at the heart of this. We are proud to be an equal opportunities employer and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and marriage and civil partnerships. Whilst all applications are considered on merit, we would particularly welcome applications from black and minority ethnic candidates who are currently under-represented in our staff community.

We encourage all candidates to complete an 'equal opportunities' form with your application. This will be sent directly to the HR team for monitoring purposes.

Safer Recruitment

RGS is committed to the safeguarding of children and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers and those working in school to share this commitment. The school applies the Government's Safer Recruitment procedures to all candidates. More information regarding the checks can be found in the Information for Applicants and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2023).





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