

HEAD CHEF
JOB
INFORMATION



RGS
NEWCASTLE

HEAD CHEF

Newcastle upon Tyne Royal Grammar School

Required from September 2025



THE POSITION

We have an exciting opportunity for an enthusiastic and talented Head Chef to join our Catering Services team in providing a high quality, professional and responsive catering service to the Junior and Senior Schools and staff. The Head Chef will report to the Head of Catering Services.

Service is cafeteria style and offers a wide choice including soup, a choice of hot and cold main courses and puddings, a vegetarian dish, open sandwiches, and salad meals. The team prepare around 1,500 meals each day as well as preparing a number of formal dinners over the academic year for between 30 and 120 guests.

Very little frozen food is used and the team, working together, takes great pride in producing interesting and healthy food whilst catering for a wide variety of dietary requirements.



Job Description: Head Chef

Closing Date: 9.00am Wednesday 25th June 2025.

Contact: Graeme Toms (Head of Catering Services) g.toms@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk

THE SCHOOL

In 1525, the Mayor of Newcastle, Thomas Horsley, wrote his will, in which he generously gifted his estate to fund a grammar school. Five centuries later, Horsley's vision lives on in the Royal Grammar School, Newcastle's corridors and classrooms, and his philanthropic spirit drives the RGS's commitment to education.

Few schools can claim a 500-year history. Over the years, the RGS, has continued to flourish as the premier independent school in the North East of England and as one of the country's leading schools - consistently topping the regional table for academic excellence.

Today, RGS is a fully co-educational school with over 1,300 students aged 7-18 (Years 3 to 13). Its academically selective places are highly sought after. The school has more than 250 students in the Junior School, which shares the same outstanding site as the Senior School. Its Sixth Form is one of the largest in the independent sector, with more than 340 students.

While RGS prides itself on academic excellence, the school is also known for its emphasis on a holistic education. The school's 'There's More to Life' approach informs its holistic education, which is central to students' success, health and happiness.

RGS is based in the heart of Newcastle, 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 modern 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.



Academic Success

RGS is a special place, known and respected throughout the whole country as well as the North East. It's a place where aspirations are high, results are outstanding, and opportunities are endless. Our students go on to study highly selective courses at the most sought-after universities but also leave the school realising that life outside the classroom has been equally beneficial.

In 2023, RGS was named 'Independent School of the Year' overall in The Telegraph Group's national awards. Most recently, the school was again named North East Independent Secondary School of the Year for Academic Excellence 2025 by The Sunday Times' Parent Power Schools Guide.

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 Y12 – the average GLA CAT score for both the current Y7 and Y12 is 117. We have several students who have the assistance of our dedicated Learning Support Team, which works across Junior and Senior School.



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Co-curricular Activities

At RGS, students can choose from over 170 co-curricular activities, ranging from music, drama, and sports to unique options like e-sports and knitting. All students are encouraged to discover what excites and inspires them.

Sport is also a central part of life at RGS, with students actively participating in a variety of activities including hockey, cricket, and basketball, from early morning until late afternoon. RGS views sport as a fundamental vehicle for students to develop lifelong skills, character, resilience – and, above all, a love for daily movement.

While it may seem tricky to balance schoolwork with so many exciting co-curricular and sporting activities, RGS has found that students actively engaged outside the classroom often perform even better academically. Both programs are designed to help students develop essential life skills, from self-awareness to decision-making and self-organisation.



Pastoral Care

We understand that all of our students are unique and different, and we strive to treat them as individuals, aiming to tailor our care to meet their needs.

That is why pastoral care is another critical cornerstone of RGS's holistic approach. Student well-being is embedded throughout school life, from a dedicated Form Teacher and an allocated Tutor to easy access to the school Medical Team and counsellors who work together to help students reach their full potential.

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KEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The principal duty will be to prepare seasonal, traditional and specialty style dishes and manage all foodstuffs in accordance with requirements. Other duties will include:

- Maintain statutory and school standards of hygiene, food safety and Health and Safety.
- To deliver and provide food and beverages to the highest standards within the financial budget limitations and in line with School Healthy Eating guidance.
- Oversight of stock management and procurement of all items for the Catering Department.
- With the support of the Head of Catering Services, manage the catering function with direct line management of the Assistant Chefs.
- To maintain good relations between the Catering Department and the whole school community including working with the School council.
- In the absence of the Head of Catering Services you will be required to step up and ensure the continuous smooth operation of the Catering Department.
- Food Preparation and Service, including packed lunches when required.
- General cleaning duties.
- Occasional weekday and weekend overtime to support special functions/events in school.
- Lunch counter service
- Setting up of functions including internal and external events, Junior School parent conferences, student interviews and exams etc.
- Working independently or in close cooperation with other support staff teams, actively assisting in the provision of support services across the school, e.g. setting up and clearing away after events to ensure the school is ready for students the following day.
- Attending and leading in team meetings, training activities and performance development as required.
- Other reasonable additional duties which may be required from time to time.

THE TEAM

The Head Chef will join a multi-disciplinary catering team consisting of the Head of Catering Services, 4 Assistant Chefs and a team of Catering Assistants.

QUALIFICATIONS/TRAINING/KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS

The following are essential:

- Minimum of City & Guilds 706/1/2 Qualification
- Food Hygiene Certificate
- An understanding of different dietary requirements and food allergies
- An ability to work as a member of a team in a busy environment
- Equally, an ability to show initiative and work with minimal supervision
- Take a pride in their work
- A strong commitment to quality standards and good practice as they relate to Catering operations, including:
 - An awareness of health and safety, food safety, safe use of cleaning materials and environmental health issues associated with an understanding of COSHH Safety procedures.
- A willingness to actively support the ethos and vision of the school.
- The post holder must show a professional, positive and enthusiastic approach to work and must be flexible and sensitive to the needs of a wide range of school users.
- They must:
 - be customer focused.
 - be confident and courteous.
 - be organised and methodical.
 - have good timekeeping.
 - have a tidy appearance.
- Show an understanding, or willingness to learn the issues associated with working among young people in a school.

The following are desirable:

- Experience of working in a school or similar environment.

HEALTH & SAFETY

An awareness of Health and Safety, and environmental health issues are essential. Assisting the Head of Catering Services in providing lunch for over 1500 pupils and staff in a safe environment for the school community and its visitors, the post holder must perform their duties in accordance with the school's health and safety procedures and policies, taking remedial action and reporting hazards where additional action is required.

- Ensure that appropriate signage is in place when cleaning is in progress.
- Make safe any hazards where possible, and ensure the area is cordoned off.
- Ensure that all allocated equipment and materials are stored safely and securely in order to prevent unauthorised access and potential accidents/misuse.



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 Glass House, 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.



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MAIN TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- This is an operational post which reports to the Head of Catering Services, who in turn reports to the Director of Finance and Operations.
- This is a permanent, full time, term time only position.
- Start date will be 1st September 2025, pending completion of the successful candidate's safer recruitment checks.
- In addition, the Head Chef will be required to work on all staff training days which are spread throughout the year and the annual safeguarding training day.
- Except for a few days at the start and end of each main School holiday (Summer, Christmas and Easter) the Head Chef will not be expected to attend for work during the students' school holidays or during the week of each half term. Single day pupils' holidays will be a normal working day.
- Given the requirements of the role, holiday during term time is not permitted.
- **Normal Working Hours-** In return for this paid holiday entitlement, the staff are expected to display some flexibility over hours worked during term time. Normal hours of work are 7am-3pm, (40 hours per week) but this is often extended so that a tea can be provided at various events and meetings for parents and/or visitors.
- **Weekend Working Hours-** A Head Chef can expect to work most Saturdays during term time, usually 3-4 hours. The earliest start time will generally be 10am and the latest finish time will generally be 5.15pm. Further information will be shared with candidates at interview. The requirement is to provide either a lunch or tea for sports fixtures. For these extra hours, pay will be at the normal overtime rate (time x 1.5).
- **Evening Working Hours-** There are about 20 special evening events throughout the year, which may consist of either a formal meal or a buffet or providing coffee and biscuits during the interval of a concert.
- The salary for this post will be c34k gross per annum (based on a 40-hour working week). As the role is term time only + 4 staff days, the actual salary is c27k.
- RGS staff salaries are reviewed on 1st August each year.
- The employee will be required to comply with a range of RGS policies, in particular, those regarding Data protection, use of ICT facilities, Child protection, Staff Behaviour and Health and safety, a copy of which will be made available.

WHAT WE OFFER

- During term-time, staff are provided with a free lunch, if on site.
- For non-teaching staff we offer a support staff pension scheme, The Aviva Pension Trust for Independent Schools (APTIS). On receipt of a 6% employee contribution the school makes an employer contribution of 10%. There is also the option of a 3% employee and 5% employer contribution if preferred. This scheme is administered via Salary Exchange (also known as Salary Sacrifice) for those who are eligible. You can opt out of the Salary Exchange arrangement whilst remaining in the pension scheme. Further details of the scheme and salary exchange will be provided on appointment.
- Membership to life assurance scheme through Aviva which pays out 5x annual salary in the event of death in service.
- The employee will become eligible for sick pay under the RGS Support 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 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.

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- Ongoing educational support and development of all staff with the provision of external and internal training courses, and our middle leaders training program 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.
- 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.
- Free use of a well-equipped gym, fitness suite and swimming pool at permitted times.
- Supportive and friendly community.
- Invitation to join staff clubs and wellbeing activities during term-time.
- Staff social events throughout the year.
- Access to the school's library service and a wide range of reading materials.

HOW TO APPLY

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

Enquiries about this post should be made in the first instance to Graeme Toms (Head of Catering Services) in the first instance. For an informal chat about the post, contact Graeme Toms on 0191 281 5711 or email g.toms@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk.

Please visit www.rgs.newcastle.sch.uk/join-us/work-with-us to access our application form and further information for applicants.

To apply for this post please submit the following to jobs@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk by the closing date.

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

Note: You must complete the application form, even if you want to also attach a CV.

The closing date for this role is 9.00am Wednesday 25th June 2025.

Interviews are likely to be held on Wednesday 02nd July 2025.

As part of the interview process a day working in the kitchen will be required.

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.

Safeguarding and 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 Keeping Children Safe in Education Safer Recruitment procedures to all candidates including appropriate pre-interview checks on shortlisted candidates and pre-employment checks pending any offer. More information regarding the checks can be found in our Information for Applicants [here](#), and '[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)' (September 2024)

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 neurodivergence, age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and marriage and civil partnerships.

We strive to achieve a diverse workforce, fully representative of our pluralistic society and the ethnic make-up of the student population in the UK. People of colour are under-represented on our staff team. We are keen to attract applicants from a diverse pool of candidates and determined to be a fully inclusive employer, and a great workplace for people of Black, Asian, and ethnic minority heritage as well as White heritage.

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.

CONTACT DETAILS

Royal Grammar School, Eskdale Terrace, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 4DX

Tel: 0191 281 5711

General enquiries: communications@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk

www.rgs.newcastle.sch.uk



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