



Talbot Heath
Independent School for Girls aged 2-18

CANDIDATE
INFORMATION



Thank you for your interest in this important and exciting post. The Governors are looking for an inspirational leader to succeed Tracy Harris, joining a line of powerful and transformative leaders going back to 1886.

The new Head has an exciting opportunity to further develop this school, drawing on considerable strengths and a committed staff body to continue to invest in a high-quality curriculum and campus that prepares girls for their place in a global society.

The appointed candidate will be an outstanding educational leader with a strong track record in school leadership. They will have the strategic vision and commercial acumen to successfully guide Talbot Heath into its next chapter. In addition, they will bring the warmth, gravitas and interpersonal skills to work effectively with internal and external stakeholders across the school community, acting as a compelling champion of Mary Broad's pioneering spirit and vision.

Applications from serving Heads and those aspiring to Headship are welcome. If you believe you have the requisite skills and experience, I would be delighted to hear from you.



REBECCA
NEWTON

Chair of Governors

INTRODUCTION

Talbot Heath School is a leading day and boarding school for girls aged 2 to 18, offering a holistic and inspiring 21st-century education for its 415 pupils. It is situated in the beautiful Talbot Woods in Bournemouth. Talbot Heath is committed to intellectual curiosity and academic rigour in a vibrant, friendly and inclusive environment, remaining true to the values of its founder, Mary Broad, a pioneer of girls' education.

The School comprises the Nursery, the Junior School (Early Years – Year 6) and the Senior School (Year 7 – Upper Sixth) and is proud of its all-through provision and family feel. There is a strong commitment to community, and the School has a number of active learning partnerships with other schools.

There is no one type of Talbot Heath girl; individuality is supported and encouraged within a secure learning space that gives pupils the ability to grow and thrive. The School enables students to develop the character, skills and values to make a positive difference and

embrace the opportunities of the wider world. The School's motto of 'Honour Before Honours' encapsulates the essence of the School. It is a community that cares and supports one another, with integrity and character lying at the heart of who they are.

Talbot Heath is a Church of England School founded on Christian principles, but it warmly welcomes pupils of all faiths. The approach is an inclusive one where all members of the community are united in the importance they place on principles, compassion and consideration of others. In 2024, the School consulted with its community and established three new values that underpin the ethos at Talbot Heath:

CURIOUS MINDS

GENEROUS HEARTS

ADVENTUROUS SPIRITS



HISTORY OF TALBOT HEATH



Talbot Heath cherishes its long traditions and heritage while celebrating modernity and dynamism. Originally known as Bournemouth High School, the School was founded in 1886 by Mary Broad, a committed social reformer and Christian. Upon its inception, the mission of the School was to provide a first-class liberal education for the daughters of the professional classes in a setting that did not compromise pupils' love of life and learning. It was renamed Talbot Heath School in 1936, when the School moved to its present site.

Talbot Heath has always been a fervent advocate for modernisation and pushing the boundaries of possibility. It was the first school in the area to have a gym and a domestic science department and was also the trailblazer for taking pupils abroad to ensure learning beyond the classroom. This commitment to development is reflected in its campus, which is described as a 'modernist gem', as it was designed by a pupil of Lutyens and refurbished with interiors from Heals.

This is a tremendous opportunity for a current or aspiring Head with a warm leadership style and excellent customer-facing skills to lead one of the country's leading all-through girls' schools.

The new Head will have the opportunity to pick up the reins from Tracy Harris of guiding the School on a path towards achieving the objectives of its **Strategic Development Plan 2024–2027**. Specifically, this will allow the new Head to use their skills and experiences in the following areas, as outlined in the Strategic Plan:

- 1 Learning for Sustainability:** making greater use of the School's woodland setting, developing adventure zones, developing the whole campus as a living lab, and developing partnerships with organisations such as the National Education Nature Park.
- 2 Artificial Intelligence:** developing the use of AI in teaching and student research and adopting an ethical and informed approach to its use.
- 3 Curriculum Innovation:** encouraging outdoor learning and the use of AI, developing an all-through curriculum with progressive programmes for oracy and reading, and establishing a Mini Baccalaureate.
- 4 Pupil Wellbeing:** developing Talbot Heath's wellbeing goals and a wellbeing hub, promoting a Healthy Minds and Bodies curriculum, and enhancing the role and involvement of parents.
- 5 Leadership:** prioritising leadership development across governance, senior leadership, staff and students; amplifying the student voice; and empowering, equipping and enabling staff through professional development. There will be an opportunity for the appointed candidate to evolve an already successful Senior Leadership Team and to play a critical role in delegating responsibility – leading a great school towards becoming an even more outstanding educational community.
- 6 Growth:** creating a unified school culture, strengthening connections with alumnae, exercising careful financial stewardship, promoting public benefit, seeking out fundraising opportunities, focusing on robust pupil retention and recruitment, and monitoring the infrastructure of the estate.

THE OPPORTUNITY





LOCATION & FACILITIES

The School is located in the attractive and affluent suburb of Talbot Woods, two miles to the north of Bournemouth's centre. Known for its tree-lined streets and elegant houses, Talbot Woods is a tranquil and prestigious place to live and work. The area is popular due to its proximity to the picturesque Talbot Heath Nature Reserve, providing staff and pupils an escape into nature right on the doorstep.

The original red-brick Senior School buildings create an unimposing exterior, behind which lies a large, airy building, stretched around two courtyards. This building remains the heart of the School's teaching spaces, complemented by extensive modern developments, including the STEAM Hub and sports centre. The wide, light corridors and spacious classrooms in the main block display students' work and photo montages from trips. Outside, there are extensive and first-class sports facilities in a beautiful woodland setting. In a nod to the School's proud heritage, history lessons are still taught in a Second World War air raid shelter on the grounds.

ADMISSIONS & PUPIL PROFILE

Talbot Heath girls come from a range of backgrounds, and most day pupils live within a 20-mile radius. School buses bring them in from the New Forest, Bournemouth, Poole and across Dorset. Many of the School's boarders are from overseas, but Talbot Heath also provides flex-boarding for day girls.

It is an academically selective school with around 40 girls joining in Year 7 via the CAT4 entrance exam, with individual tests including maths and English. As a through school, pupils from the Junior School are assessed on an ongoing basis and guaranteed a place in the Senior School if they meet the School's admissions criteria. Around 20 girls join at Sixth Form level each year, when candidates need five grade 6s at GCSE (with some subject-specific criteria).

Academic, music, drama, art, sport and all-rounder scholarships are available from Year 7. Bursaries of up to 100 per cent are available according to need, and there is a discount for daughters of those in the Forces. The Mary Broad Award is a means-tested bursary specifically for Sixth Form pupils.





ACADEMICS & THE CURRICULUM

Talbot Heath is demonstrably a future-thinking school, with the campus reflecting its ambition and purpose. In September 2019, the School opened its magnificent STEAM Hub. It gives students the opportunity to imagine, build, test and display their most imaginative ideas and designs. This exceptional facility has put both the School and Bournemouth on the map in terms of skills, development and investment in the priority growth areas of engineering, manufacturing and the creative industries. Talbot Heath School has again been recognised as an Apple Distinguished School for 2024–2027 for its commitment to and innovation in technology in education. Apple Distinguished Schools are centres of innovation, leadership, and educational excellence, using Apple technology to connect students to the world, fuel creativity, deepen collaboration and make learning personal.

Talbot Heath's Junior School is an exciting and busy place with a curriculum that is broad and wide ranging, taking the best from the National Curriculum but going beyond it, making sure the girls have a diverse range of opportunities in which to engage. The curriculum is regularly

reviewed and updated to ensure it remains fresh, dynamic and meets the individual needs of the pupils, whether it be sport, languages or music, understanding and making use of the inter-disciplinary nature of learning, or global citizenship and robot invention.

The Senior School welcomes girls from its Junior School, as well as pupils from a wide range of schools locally, nationally and internationally. Pupils are broad in their interests and personalities but are united in their positive attitude to education. The curriculum reflects the values and priorities of the School, fostering a sense of community, identity, and shared purpose among students and teachers. Outdoor Learning forms part of the fortnightly timetable, encouraging learning away from the desk, with plans for a roundhouse – an outdoor living space built from natural resources.

Investing in the development and refinement of the curriculum is paramount to fulfilling the School's mission of nurturing well-rounded individuals prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the future, as outlined previously in the summary of the Strategic Development Plan.



... excellent academic and sporting outcomes achieved in a fundamentally nurturing environment.

THE GOOD SCHOOLS GUIDE



Talbot Heath's Sixth Form has a long record of academic excellence and is a powerful launchpad to a successful future. In 2024, 37 per cent of students achieved A*/A grades compared to a national average of 27 per cent. They gained 89 per cent A*-C, compared to a national average of 76 per cent. The School has a profound commitment to nurturing confident, resilient and determined young women who are prepared to navigate their paths in the world beyond Talbot Heath. Leavers embark on highly competitive university courses both in the UK and internationally, as well as coveted higher-level apprenticeships.

In the current academic year (2024–25), the School has implemented several significant enhancements to the Sixth Form:

- Implementation of a Community Action Workplace programme, offering students invaluable hands-on work experience.
- Introduction of Sociology A Level alongside the existing offering of 19 A Level subjects.
- Introduction of the Level 3 Community Sports Leader award, providing an alternative or supplementary option to the Extended Project Qualification.
- Elective opportunities featuring an array of inspiring and engaging experts and speakers as part of our enrichment programme.
- The Mary Broad Bursary – a means-tested academic bursary for high-achieving girls, offering generous reductions on fees.



SPORT, THE CREATIVE ARTS & ACTIVITIES



Talbot Heath's dedicated staff are not only committed to learning in the classroom but embrace a holistic education through a dynamic, energetic and diverse range of extracurricular activities that expands girls' learning far beyond the realms of the classroom walls.

SPORT

Talbot Heath aims to inspire, engage and motivate all pupils to enjoy leading an active, healthy lifestyle. It is proud of its strong sporting achievements at regional, national and international levels across a full range of sports. The fantastic sports facilities include a heated swimming pool, fitness suite, sports hall, gymnasium, outdoor netball courts, tennis courts, full-size Astro turf pitch and a generous

field used for a variety of sporting events. The curriculum remains at the forefront of the School's innovative sport offering, with the STEAM Hub also containing a new indoor pool. Through combining training with academic education into one integrated curriculum, girls who join the Swimming and Tennis High-Performance Academies further their sporting excellence at the same time as achieving academic excellence. Talbot Heath is set to become the UK's leading destination for young female swimmers, as it is now a Swim England Club in its own right, and it is currently the second-ranked tennis school for girls in the UK. That said, the girls approach netball, lacrosse, athletics and a range of other sports with equal enthusiasm, and there is excellent coaching for all abilities in all sports.

CREATIVE ARTS

The Creative Arts Department provides a positive and engaging learning environment for every student and offers a dynamic range of subjects to foster creativity. The **Art** Department is a bright and fully equipped space, including a kiln, darkroom and full Adobe suite on all computers where students are encouraged to create and enquire. Talbot Heath has a lively tradition in **Music**, and the subject is taught in the purpose-built Music School, with its concert hall, two large teaching rooms, an electronic music studio and nine instrumental teaching and practice rooms. **Drama** provides a platform for creative, intellectual and social development of the individual as a whole. The stunning auditorium in the STEAM Hub can be partitioned into four large teaching or

performance spaces for a variety of concerts and productions. When combined, it can seat 800, and there's the main School Hall, too, for smaller events.

ACTIVITIES

A wide range of clubs and societies runs mainly at lunchtimes, with girls encouraged to start up their own. The Critical Thinking club is popular with Sixth Formers, who value it for helping with the university application and interview process. From a long list of domestic and international trips, skiing is always popular, and there is also a summer scheme via Camps International, entailing a month of community work and SCUBA diving in Costa Rica.



PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral care is an acknowledged strength of Talbot Heath and stems from a positive partnership between pupils, parents and staff. The happiness and wellbeing of all pupils is at the heart of everything the School does. The School adopts a whole-school approach which embeds wellbeing and emotional wellness, giving a young person the capacity to grow, prosper and learn. It is the responsibility of all members of staff, teaching and non-teaching, to safeguard and promote it, and good links have also been established with external agencies. The wellbeing and pastoral team consists of well-qualified nurses, a counsellor, boarding house staff, a Learning Support Coordinator, senior pastoral staff, a Pastoral Support Manager, tutors and mentors.

Talbot Heath provides an outstanding range of opportunities for the girls' personal development and to help them consolidate a system of spiritual beliefs and a moral code. A recently introduced House Colours programme encourages students to extol the school values.

BOARDING

Boarding at Talbot Heath provides a home away from home in beautiful, natural Dorset surroundings. The School offers full-term, weekly and flexi boarding options from Year 7 to Year 13. The boarding house, St Mary's, is a small, close-knit community of up to 42 girls in which the needs of each individual are met by a highly experienced team of professionals who ensure a safe, relaxing environment where all students feel nurtured and supported according to their individual needs. The house has bright dormitories from Year 7 and single rooms from Year 9.

The boarding house team works extensively with the school nurses, designated safeguarding leads, external health and wellness services, senior staff and parents to support the experience of our students. Strong and supportive relationships between pupils and the boarding staff allow pupils to work, rest and play in a relaxed but purposeful atmosphere. The extensive grounds and facilities offer an excellent range of activities and opportunities for exploration.

St Mary's is also home to some of Talbot Heath's elite Tennis and Swimming Academy pupils, whose families find the boarding option a great help in supporting their daughters' training schedules.





Talbot Heath prides itself on a very close working relationship between Governors and senior staff across the School. The Governing Body at Talbot Heath is an ambitious, forward-thinking group of eleven experienced leaders from a wide range of backgrounds. The next Head will benefit from the full support of a Governing Body committed to ensuring that Talbot Heath continues to flourish. The Chair of Governors is Rebecca Newton.

Governors work collaboratively with school leadership, staff, parents and the wider community to set strategic direction, monitor performance, uphold high standards of education and promote the wellbeing and development of all students. They play a vital role in fostering a positive learning environment and driving continuous improvement, ultimately helping to shape the future of the School and support the achievement of its educational goals.

In September, the Senior Leadership Team will comprise:

- The Head.
- The Deputy Head and Head of Junior School.
- The Deputy Head, EYFS.
- The Deputy Head, Pastoral, DSL.
- The Bursar (COO).
- The Facilities Manager.

GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP

A school committed to the empowerment of girls and their education, with a focus on excellent academic outcomes, outstanding pastoral care, a committed Senior Management Team, talented staff and a beautiful setting, Talbot Heath looks to its future with confidence and ambition.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- To work with the Governing Body, Senior Leadership Team, staff, pupils and parents to develop and implement the innovative vision which builds on Talbot Heath's existing significant strengths and ensures that the School will continue to flourish in 2026 and beyond.
- To ground this vision and strategy in the context of a challenging market and rapidly shifting educational landscape, ensuring Talbot Heath is well positioned to seize opportunities and respond to changes in the educational, political, economic and social spheres.

- To ensure academic rigour in a culture of inclusivity by developing and maintaining high-quality educational programmes, both curricular and co-curricular.
- To regularly review the curriculum, ensuring all academic programmes appropriately meet the needs of the student body.
- To work closely with the Senior Leadership Team to further develop a cohesive curriculum that serves the whole-school nature of Talbot Heath.
- To maintain a strong, current knowledge of the latest pedagogical trends and developments and lead by example in encouraging staff to be outward facing in their approach.
- To maintain the highest standards of pastoral care throughout the School, ensuring that the safeguarding, wellbeing and welfare of students inform all decisions taken within the School.

- To motivate and develop a high-performing, cohesive leadership team, empowering colleagues to contribute ideas, take initiative and maximise their personal performance.
- To be a visible leader across the Junior and Senior Schools and be a champion for the all-through structure at Talbot Heath.

- To be a dynamic, compelling and authentic ambassador for Talbot Heath School, powerfully advocating the School's vision, aims and ethos such that the School recruits strongly.
- To lead a purposeful marketing strategy and admissions process which ensures the School continues to attract talented and motivated pupils and families who will thrive at Talbot Heath and enrich the community.
- To maintain a strong understanding of the changing independent sector market and ensure that Talbot Heath remains responsive to the challenges and opportunities that this will present.

THE PERSON

The next Head of Talbot Heath School will be an inspirational, visible leader with a commitment to girls' independent education. They will bring an empathy for the foundation and traditions of the School whilst being a moderniser and innovative educationalist.

The appointed candidate will possess most or all of the following experience, skills and knowledge, and personal attributes:

EXPERIENCE

- A track record of highly successful school leadership experience, including evidence of successful strategic decision-making and marketing locally, nationally and internationally.
- A distinguished personal record of success as an educator.
- Proven experience of leading and developing high-performing teams with a clear commitment to the continuing professional development of all colleagues.

SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- Strong strategic capabilities and organisational skills with the vision and creativity to guide and shape whole-school development.
- A strong understanding of the commercial, economic and financial imperatives in the leadership and management of schools.
- The ability to lead the School to be agile, anticipatory and sustainable in a competitive market context.
- Innovative and pedagogically astute, with a clear understanding of how to lead best practice in 21st-century education.
- A broad knowledge of the rapidly changing education sector both nationally and internationally.
- First-class communication skills with the charisma and personal authority to represent Talbot Heath in a wide range of external settings.
- A demonstrable commitment to – and knowledge of – pupil welfare and safeguarding.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES AND LEADERSHIP STYLE

- A dynamic, engaging and enabling figure with the relational skills and personal touch to be a highly visible leader at the heart of the school community.
- Strong personal drive, high levels of self-awareness, resilience, humility and flexibility, as well as a transparent and collegial leadership style.
- Undisputed personal integrity, sound judgement and sense of humour.
- The inner confidence to follow a highly successful Head and the professional wisdom to nurture Talbot Heath's existing strengths whilst continuing to challenge, change, and innovate such that the School continues to flourish.



EMPLOYMENT TERMS & CONDITIONS

The successful candidate will be offered a competitive salary commensurate with their experience.



THE APPLICATION PROCESS

The search for a new Head for Talbot Heath School is being led by RSAcademics, and the new post-holder will be selected by a panel chaired by Rebecca Newton, Chair of Governors.

Interested candidates are invited to contact RSAcademics to arrange a confidential discussion with one of the consultants handling this appointment:

- Camilla Oulton, Search Consultant: camillaoulton@rsacademics.com or
- Sarah Evans, Senior Advisor: sarahevans@rsacademics.com

The deadline for receipt of the application is 10.00am on 23 September 2025.

Applications should be made electronically to RSAcademics. To submit your application, please upload your documents according to the instructions on the **RSAcademics website**.

You should submit the following (both in PDF format):

- A completed application form (available alongside this candidate information on the **RSAcademics website**).
- A covering letter addressed to Rebecca Newton, Chair of Governors. The letter should explain your reasons for applying.

If you have any questions about uploading your application documents, please contact Laura Cave, Project Manager (Leadership Appointments), at applications@rsacademics.com. Laura can also be reached by calling our Head Office on +44 (0) 204 6269 790.

The process is as follows:

- All applications will be acknowledged by email. If you have not received acknowledgement that your application has been received within two working days of sending it, please contact RSAcademics by telephone.
- Preliminary interviews will take place with RSAcademics via Teams on 30 September or 1 October 2025.
- Longlist interviews with the Governors' panel will take place at the School on 14 or 15 October 2025.
- Shortlist interviews with the Governing Body will take place at the School on 3 and 4 November 2025.

N.B. Safer recruitment checks will be made at all stages in the recruitment process.

Founded in 2002 by Russell Speirs, RSAcademics has advised and supported over 700 schools and educational organisations in the UK and worldwide. Through our working partnerships with heads, leadership teams, boards, staff and parents, we specialise in supporting schools in five main areas: strategy, marketing and research; equality, diversity and inclusion; operational improvement; leadership and governance and philanthropy. We enable schools worldwide to thrive by finding and developing senior leaders, guiding decision makers, making connections and shaping debate. We are known for the calibre and spirit of our people. We exist entirely to serve schools because we believe that the world needs thriving schools. Please visit www.rsacademics.com for more information.

RSAcademics is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion in schools and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.



Because the world needs schools to **thrive**