



Head

Required September 2026

Candidate Information



Introduction

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the Headship of Truro High School. I am very pleased that you are considering applying, and I hope that this brochure will provide you with the information you need to help inform your application.

This is a superb opportunity for a dynamic and thoughtful educational leader to join the School and at an exciting time in its development. Sarah Matthews has done a tremendous job growing the roll and moving the School forward whilst navigating the challenges faced by many girls' boarding schools. As she leaves us to take up a new international Headship at the end of the School's most recent five-year development plan, this is a great time to make a mark on the next chapter of Truro High School's history. This is a school with little ego or pretence. It is a kind, caring and safe environment, with committed staff, loyal parents and children who feel understood and valued. For a smaller school, we offer impressive breadth and consider ourselves to be a liberal institution punching much above our weight.

We are looking for someone with proven experience in senior leadership to make a mark on a progressive school with tremendous vision and ambition. The successful candidate will value and support our Christian ethos while cherishing the diversity of faiths and cultures that form a vital part of our community. He or she will have the personality and imagination to inspire, and be inspired, as the School looks forward to its 150th anniversary in 2030.

The new Head will welcome the opportunity to establish a home in Cornwall, a Duchy that has, for centuries, fired a fierce passion in all those who live here, proud of its mining heritage, seascapes, wild coasts and moorlands. Cornwall has long had a very enterprising approach to business. It is home to innovative new brands such as Finisterre and Sea Salt. It has many pioneering and highly successful ventures, such as the Minack Theatre, Tate St Ives, and the Eden Project. Combined, they offer an exciting and diverse education for students from near and far.

This Headship is both operational and strategic. We are looking for someone who is prepared to think differently and to shape the School in new and interesting ways, who really enjoys the company of children, walks the School every day, listens to staff and parents, and supports and contributes to the many activities that give the School its special flavour and vim. Above all, the new Head must be a champion for girls' education in what is one of the most beautiful and lively parts of the UK.

If this is an opportunity that excites you, then we would invite you to apply for the role, and we would be pleased to give your application full and proper consideration.

With best wishes,



Julian Thould

Chair of Governors



The School

Truro High School, situated five minutes from the city centre, was founded in 1880 by Bishop Benson, who later became Archbishop of Canterbury. The father of girls, Bishop Benson wanted to provide a school that would offer his daughters the same kind of opportunities and education that were available in the area to boys. To this day, the School continues to be regarded as one of the top girls' independent schools in the UK, offering a first-class, rounded education in a beautiful setting.

Girls can start at the School in the Nursery at the age of 3, and many will stay until the completion of A Levels. Deliberately a smaller school, the feeling is very much of a happy extended family. There are currently 370 girls at the School, day and boarding, and the pupil roll has risen by around 25% over the past seven years as the School has gained a great deal of attention locally through the successes of its pupils and for the diverse and innovative range of events and activities it offers.

Boarding is situated at the heart of the School, where a mix of British girls and pupils from further afield can enjoy the many and varied opportunities that life in Cornwall offers. At present, the School draws boarders from a great range of countries.

The Head, supported by the Senior Leadership Team, is responsible for the success of both the Senior and Prep Schools, which operate side by side, with pupils of all ages making full use of the facilities on site and in the locality. School activities encourage girls of all ages to mix and work together, with the result that those who join Truro High very quickly feel part of the family and enjoy the support and social opportunities that this brings.







Aims & Ethos

The School has a distinctive ethos informed by its Anglican foundation, which aims to nurture and equip young women to face the challenges of a future where a global perspective is needed, digital fluency is essential, and where adaptability, creativity, resilience and critical self-reflection are key. It also ensures the commitment to those values that the School and its pupils hold dear – the excellent teaching, small class sizes and a belief in making sure that every individual matters. It is a formula that has proven successful time and time again, with Truro High School pupils achieving outstanding results – not just academically but in sport, music, drama and the arts, too. The aim is to

create a safe but stimulating environment which creates aspiration, values individuality and develops self-esteem.

The School's aims centre around its strapline, "Where Girls Thrive". The School has a strong commitment to girls-only education. Its staff and Governors believe there are enormous benefits to offering this type of education in the 21st century and are dedicated to offering a full, broad, and contemporary curriculum which will make each pupil feel that each and every opportunity is open to her. At the same time, the School's primary aim remains to ensure that its pupils enjoy their time at school. Parents regularly comment on how happy pupils at Truro High are,

and the word is always top of the list when parents are asked via regular survey how they would describe a typical High School pupil.

The School's Church of England foundation remains central to its ethos, and it has strong links with Truro Cathedral, where services and celebrations are held each year. The High School also has long-established links with its local parish church and priest. It is, however, very diverse and welcomes pupils of all faiths, beliefs and backgrounds. It is a community where each child and every member of staff is supported and listened to and are challenged and encouraged to reach their full potential, regardless of their ability.



Location & Facilities

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The whole school sits on a single 12-acre site with Nursery, Prep and Senior Schools all able to take advantage of a full range of facilities. The main building dates back to 1896 and has had a number of extensions made to it over time, for example, a modern language building and a music and drama facility. In recent years, the School has seen redevelopment of a central green space within the site, which includes the creation of outdoor teaching spaces, an adventure playground and gardens incorporating a willow field and extensively used picnic space. The Sixth Form Centre was extensively refurbished in Summer 2023 to include collaborative workspaces, staff offices and a dedicated interview room. There have been boarding area updates and a new gym in 2024, as well as a wellbeing lounge and a dedicated gallery space to display girls' artwork and exhibitions by local artists.

Located in the far west of Great Britain with a rugged and spectacular coastline edged with endless golden beaches, Cornwall has long been one of the most sought-after holiday destinations in the UK, with more than five million visitors making a beeline for its shores every year. It's an area rich with romance and history, an inspirational haven with creativity pulsing through its veins. With a proud heritage of seafaring, mining and engineering, Cornwall is now developing an enterprising and innovative business sector, as well as being a magnet for an exciting and eclectic mix of artists, surfers, scientists and academics who exist side by side, drawn by its beaches, water sports and surf, its captivating fishing villages, its dynamic arts scene,

and, of course, some of the finest food and drink that Britain has to offer.

From the world-renowned music school that teeters on the clifftop at Prussia Cove to the Tate Gallery in St Ives, Cornwall is a cultural oasis that has long proved irresistible to musicians, potters, writers and painters from Patrick Heron and Dame Barbara Hepworth to The Beatles, Coldplay and Muse. Every year, the Eden Sessions attract some of the biggest names the music world has to offer. Newquay's Boardmasters is one of the fastest-growing festivals in the UK, while those seeking the perfect combination of food, entertainment and literary sustenance will head for the now-renowned Port Eliot Festival.

A world leader in hi-tech renewable energies and home to both Falmouth and Exeter Universities, the county has significantly improved links by road, rail and air to Newquay Airport. Cornwall has a vibrant and inspiring nature and offers a welcome antidote to those struggling to maintain a healthy work/life balance. Truro is Cornwall's only city and sits at the heart of the Duchy, just 15 minutes' drive from the sea. Built around a beautiful, three-spired cathedral, Truro is characterised by elegant Georgian houses and picturesque cobbled streets. Shoppers will like the mix of major retailers and local independent shops, not to mention the regular farmers' markets held on Lemon Quay. Add in the recently rebuilt multipurpose Hall for Cornwall, cinema and enough restaurants to transport foodies around the world and back again, and the result is a welcoming, family environment that the School is proud to call home.

Academics & Co-Curricular

The School is very proud of the achievements of all its pupils and aims to do the best by each individual.

The Good Schools Guide (December 2025) noted that Truro High “goes above and beyond for its girls. They are guided, supported and inspired to reach their full potential every step of the way. Their academic success reflects not only the girls’ determination but also the endless energy and commitment their teachers invest in them. It’s a truly joyful place, a close-knit community where every girl is surrounded by constant encouragement to strive, excel and show kindness.” Truro High School was a finalist in the Independent Schools of the Year awards in 2024 for Girls’ School of the Year, was awarded the High-Performance Learning World-Class School status in 2024, only the third UK girls’ school to achieve this, and regularly performs well in national league tables, remaining one of the highest-ranked small independent schools in the South West.

Whilst priding itself on offering an all-round education, there are many areas in which Truro High School excels. STEM, for example, is an important part of life, with many girls studying three separate sciences to GCSE. In addition to running regular STEM events, including a very successful annual Women in Engineering Day, the School has many other projects. Amongst these are Greenpower racing cars – the School has a racing fleet of six cars. An Engineering room acts as a base for the cars and encourages pupils to further their design ambitions. In addition, the School has an educational partnership with the Roseland Observatory and houses a small observatory on site containing the only solar telescope on

mainland UK. Pupils can take a GCSE in Astronomy. A successful innovation has been the School’s Aspiring Medics programme, which supports pupils in Years 10–13 considering careers as doctors, veterinary surgeons, dentists and allied occupations. The programme includes weekly meetings, regular lectures and a variety of workshops and offers pupils the best possible start to their medical careers. A recent initiative has encouraged girls to bring out their entrepreneurial flair through a pupil-led café. There are other programmes related to performing arts, enterprise and home economics to enhance pupil development, for example, Leith’s, and drama masterclasses.

The School embraces the creative arts with a passion. Art, music, drama and textiles are taught through to A Level. In addition, dance lessons are a popular part of the curriculum. Creative highlights each year include the Cathedral carol service, classical, jazz and rock concerts, a dance show in the Hall for Cornwall involving almost every girl, and drama and musical theatre performances. The quality of music in the School is impressive, with a high proportion of pupils taking individual instrumental music lessons and the School demonstrating a particular strength in singing. Truro High School’s Chamber Choir has performed in a range of high-profile events in recent years.

Whilst Truro High School girls are renowned for their positive outlook and impeccably good manners, they are fiercely competitive on the pitch. Swimming and hockey are particularly strong sports

nationally. Pupils have enjoyed national and international success in a range of sports in recent years, including hockey, sailing, fencing, archery, and equestrianism.

Truro High School recognises that its staff are its most valuable asset. It recruits and retains well-qualified academic and support staff who demonstrate enthusiasm for their areas of expertise and who display interpersonal characteristics which are reflective of the School’s ethos and educational philosophy. Many of the staff travel far to work here and are immensely loyal. There is little doubt that working at Truro High School is rewarding both personally and professionally. Parents are very supportive, and a significant number volunteer in the School on a range of co-curricular clubs. There is a strong parents’ association supporting a wide range of school events. The School has worked hard in recent years to build strong relationships with parents and to ensure they feel part of the community. There is an annual school ball for parents, staff and pupils in Years 11–13 as the centrepiece of a range of parents’ events.

There is a strong Marketing and Admissions team, who have played an important role in improving the profile of the School in a competitive market. Although the School’s reputation is strong, the local catchment area is relatively small, and there are challenges to recruitment and retention at all ages from both independent and maintained school alternatives. In this competitive educational market, the opportunities for collaboration with local independent schools and state-sector academy trusts offer real opportunities.





Leadership & Governance 09

The current Senior Leadership Team consists of the Head, the Senior Deputy Head (DSL), the Deputy Head Pastoral, the Head of Prep, the Bursar, the Director of Academic Operations and Partnerships, the Director of Teaching and Learning and the Director of Marketing & Communications, who meet weekly. The Head is supported by a full-time EA, who also serves as Registrar.

The Board of Governors are highly supportive through their time commitment and the experience they bring to the School. In addition to the termly Full Board Meetings, the four standing committees meet on a termly basis, and Governors are familiar figures around the School, including through regular attendance at services, plays and concerts, as well as lesson observations and reading with pupils.

The Head is accountable to the Governors and is appraised every third year externally and by the Chair in the intervening two.

The Role

Truro High School is looking to appoint a new Head for September 2026 or as soon as possible thereafter. The Head will provide leadership across all areas of the School and is responsible for promoting and developing its ethos and reputation internally and externally. Given the competitive environment in which the School operates, the Head will play a critical role in marketing the School to prospective and current parents to ensure that pupil numbers are maintained and increased. The School attaches the greatest importance to ensuring the girls in its care are challenged, developed and cared for across all aspects of school life, and it will be the Head's responsibility to ensure that the highest possible standards are achieved across the board.

The Head will be proactive and visible within the thriving boarding community, during the evenings and weekends. The School's reputation arises largely from its balanced focus on both academic achievement and co-curricular development, and it has a strong reputation for having a 'family feel' in which girls are known as individuals. Whilst the pursuit of academic excellence is important at Truro High, so too is the enrichment that girls experience through other aspects of their school career, and the Governors wish to maintain this balance.

The Head's responsibilities also include the appointment of all teaching staff, the oversight of teaching, the content and organisation of the curriculum, and the management, discipline and welfare of the School. The Head will work closely with the Bursar regarding the day-to-day running of the School. Reporting to the Governors, the Head will understand and be able to demonstrate the inspirational leadership skills required to grow and maintain this friendly and supportive environment, combined with the achievement of high standards of academic excellence, pastoral care and extra-curricular offering.

Keys to success are:

- Being a strong strategic, inspirational and collaborative leader, able to deliver Truro High's Strategic Development Plan and develop future strategic plans for the School;
- Being passionate about the development of girls and seeking to raise aspirations, whatever a pupil's interests may be;
- Being able to articulate and market the benefits of the education which Truro High offers in a way that leads to successful pupil recruitment, both day and boarding;
- Having a strong appreciation of the need for robust financial management in small schools and an appetite and ability to contribute to the non-educational aspects of school leadership;
- Having the drive to support performance to deliver the best outcomes for the girls;
- Maintaining and developing a culture in which staff feel valued and developed and where there is a shared ambition for what the School can achieve;
- Ensuring the School is fully compliant across all areas of regulation, including the safeguarding and welfare of children;
- Working in partnership with the Governors to deliver shared ambitions for the School;
- Being outward-looking and focused on building mutually beneficial partnerships with other schools and organisations, both in the county and more widely.



Person Specification

The Governors wish to appoint someone with flair, vision and the academic, educational and administrative experience to succeed in the role. Candidates will have a proven track record in the leadership of teams, the management of resources and the management of change. Good communication skills are essential, as is the ability to inspire others. The Governors wish to attract as wide a field as possible and therefore welcome applications from those for whom this would either be a first Headship or those who are currently Heads. Applications are also welcome from leaders currently working in either the independent or state sectors.

Candidates for the role will ideally demonstrate all or most of the following:

Personal Qualities

Essential

- Visible, approachable, and an emotionally intelligent leader
- Resilient, reflective and calm under pressure
- Excellent communicator and listener
- Demonstrates warmth, a sense of humour and personality
- Commercial awareness
- Strong professional profile within education

Desirable

- Experience of fields outside of education

Professional Qualities

Strategic Leadership & Vision

Essential

- Articulates a compelling vision for girls' education in the 21st century
- Demonstrates strategic thinking with evidence of successful school improvement at a senior level
- Able to balance academic excellence with strong pastoral care and co-curricular breadth
- Clear understanding of the independent sector market and competitive positioning in a tight market in the Southwest
- Experience of leading change in a UK independent school

Desirable

- Good understanding/experience of single-sex education
- Awareness and understanding of the boarding market
- Experience of the international education market

Educational Leadership

Essential

- Strong track record of raising academic standards and pupil outcomes
- Thorough understanding of the academic curriculum (GCSE, A Level, IB or equivalent)

- Commitment to educating the whole girl – intellectual, emotional, physical and ethical
- Evidence-based approach to teaching, learning and assessment

Desirable

- Experience with innovation in teaching and digital learning
- Familiarity with girls-specific educational research and practice
- Understanding of special educational needs and disabilities
- Awareness of the High-Performance Learning approach to education

Pastoral Care, Safeguarding & Wellbeing

Essential

- Strong commitment to and understanding of safeguarding and child protection
- Proven experience in the leadership of an excellent pastoral system
- Understanding of mental health challenges affecting girls and young women
- Promotes an inclusive, respectful and emotionally intelligent school culture

Desirable

- Experience of leading wellbeing initiatives
- Experience with external pastoral and mental health support (CAMHS, etc.)

Ethos, Values & Girls' Education

Essential

- Clear commitment to the distinctive value of girls' education
- Champions confidence, leadership, and resilience in young women
- High standards in ethical leadership, integrity and inclusivity
- Strong alignment with the School's Christian ethos and values

Desirable

- Previous leadership in a girls' school or single-sex environment
- Contribution to sector debate/leadership in single sex or girls' education

Staff Leadership & School Culture

Essential

- Inspires, motivates and develops staff at all levels
- Experience of crisis management and media relations
- Demonstrates commitment to professional development and succession planning
- Able to manage performance fairly, confidently and compassionately and not afraid to tackle challenging issues
- Promotes collaboration, trust and high professional standards
- Experience leading senior leadership teams through change

Desirable

- Mentoring experience

Governance, Compliance & Risk

Essential

- Experience working effectively with a governing body or trustees
- Strong understanding of ISI regulations, safeguarding, SEND, equality and employment legislation
- Robust approach to risk management and regulatory compliance

Desirable

- Experience of inspection preparation and post-inspection action planning – for example, ISI team inspector experience
- Familiarity with other charity/commercial governance

Financial & Operational Experience

Essential

- Demonstrates sound financial understanding and resource management
- Experience of budget oversight and strategic financial planning
- Balances educational ambition with financial sustainability
- Commercial awareness and the need to diversify sources of income

Desirable

- Experience of managing the planning/implementation of capital projects, estates development and bursary strategy

External Relations, Marketing & Admissions

Essential

- Confident and compelling ambassador for the School
- Strong communication skills with parents, alumnae and the wider community
- Understanding of recruitment, retention and admissions strategy
- Strong awareness of digital marketing/media

Desirable

- Experience working with school marketing
- Fundraising or development experience

Professional Standing

Essential

- Qualified teacher with substantial senior leadership experience
- Strong and credible career progression – no unexplained gaps
- Willingness to engage fully in school life

Desirable

- NPQH or equivalent leadership qualification
- Experience of work in a non-educational setting
- Experience across different school contexts (day/boarding, prep/secondary, state, etc.)





Terms & Conditions

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The successful candidate will take up the role in September 2026 or as soon as possible thereafter.

An attractive package will be negotiated with the preferred candidate, dependent on experience.

The overall package will include membership of the School's pension scheme, fee remission, an accommodation allowance, and private medical insurance.

The postholder has a responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of the children and young persons for whom he/she is responsible or with whom he/she comes into contact. He/she must always comply with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Successful applicants will be subject to various employment checks, including a DBS check.

Truro High School aims to be an equal opportunities employer and positively encourages applications from suitably qualified and eligible candidates regardless of sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marital status, or pregnancy and maternity.

Application Process

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

- Sarah Glencross – Head of Senior School
Search: sarahglencross@rsacademics.com
- Charlotte Faber – Senior Advisor:
charlottefaber@rsacademics.com

Closing date: 10.00am on Monday, 16th February 2026

Candidates should complete the RSAcademics application form electronically and email it and a covering letter addressed to Mr Julian Thould, Chair of Governors (as PDF files, please), to RSAcademics' Project Coordinator (Leadership Appointments), Laura Cave, at: applications@rsacademics.com / 020 4626 9791.

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 on 24th or 25th February 2026 via Teams
- Longlist interviews with a panel of Governors will take place on Teams on either 5th or 6th March 2026
- Shortlist interviews will take place at the School on 18th and 19th March 2026, when candidates will be given the opportunity to tour the School and meet relevant stakeholders.



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