



SEVENOAKS  
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

**HEAD OF**

*Pre-Prep*

*Candidate Information*

# HEAD'S *Welcome*

Sevenoaks Prep is a school with a clear sense of purpose. We are ambitious for our pupils, deeply committed to their wellbeing and proud of the breadth of opportunity that defines their experience here. Academic excellence, pastoral strength and enrichment are not separate strands of school life; they are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

The Head of Pre-Prep plays a vital role in shaping the earliest stages of this journey. The Pre-Prep is where children first experience the spirit and values of the School, where curiosity is sparked, confidence is nurtured and the foundations for a lifelong love of learning are established.

We are therefore seeking an exceptional leader to guide and inspire this important part of the School. The successful candidate will combine educational insight with warmth, clarity of purpose and a deep understanding of how young children learn and develop.

The Head of Pre-Prep will be a member of the Senior Leadership Team and a key partner in shaping the culture, direction and ambition of Sevenoaks Prep. Above all, they will share our belief that the early years of education should be joyful, purposeful and filled with opportunity.



**LUKE HARRISON**

Head





# CONTEXT & *Character*

Sevenoaks Preparatory School is a flourishing co-educational independent day school for around 360 pupils aged 2 to 13, set in 25 acres of beautiful grounds on the edge of Knole Park in Kent.

Founded in 1919, the School combines a proud heritage with a modern, outward-looking educational philosophy that places equal emphasis on academic excellence, wellbeing and enrichment.

At the heart of the School is the *Way of Life*, an ethos encouraging pupils to be responsible, kind and empathetic members of society. Pupils are encouraged to develop intellectual curiosity, confidence and strong personal values.

Small class sizes and close relationships between staff, pupils and parents underpin the supportive and ambitious culture of the School.

## **PRE-PREP (NURSERY TO YEAR 2)**

The Pre-Prep provides the foundation for every child's journey at Sevenoaks Prep.

From Nursery through to Year 2, pupils experience an engaging, stimulating and nurturing environment where curiosity is encouraged and learning is joyful. High-quality teaching, strong pastoral care and rich learning opportunities ensure that pupils flourish academically, socially and emotionally.

The curriculum is carefully designed to provide a strong academic foundation while encouraging creativity, exploration and independence. Pupils are supported to develop literacy, numeracy, communication and social skills, alongside the confidence and resilience that will support them throughout their education.

By the time pupils move into Year 3, they do so as confident, enthusiastic and emotionally secure learners.

## **PREP (YEARS 3 TO 8)**

The Prep School provides a rich, ambitious and flexible curriculum designed to bring out the best in every pupil. Alongside core academic subjects, pupils experience languages, digital learning, art and design, drama,

outdoor learning, critical thinking, music and sport. All classes participate in visits, workshops and field trips that broaden horizons and enrich classroom learning, from theatre trips and residential to international ski visits.

Pupils are taught by subject specialists, with increasing expertise as they progress through the School. The School is careful to stretch pupils at the right time, encouraging excellence without unnecessary pressure. Academic outcomes are strong and consistent, with pupils achieving success in scholarships and gaining places at leading independent and grammar schools.

Years 7 and 8 are seen as a distinctive and vital stage. The majority of staff are secondary-trained subject specialists who understand the academic and personal demands pupils will face beyond Sevenoaks Prep. Leadership, responsibility and independence are actively fostered, and pupils leave as confident, self-reliant young people ready to thrive in their next schools.



## ENRICHMENT, SPORT AND THE CREATIVE ARTS

Sport at Sevenoaks Prep is genuinely for all. The School offers a comprehensive physical education programme beginning in the Pre-Prep and continuing through the Prep years, with pupils representing the School regularly in fixtures and competitions. Sport is about participation, physical literacy and developing a healthy relationship with fitness for life.

The creative arts are equally central. Every pupil has weekly music lessons; drama is timetabled from Year 3; LAMDA opportunities are widely available, and there are multiple school productions each year. Art is taught in a purpose-built studio covering a wide range of media from digital art and sculpture to textiles and photography, helping pupils develop confidence and imagination.

We offer an exceptional breadth of co-curricular clubs at Sevenoaks Prep, designed to spark curiosity, build confidence and nurture new talents. With over 40 clubs running before school, at lunchtime and after school, there truly is something for everyone to enjoy.

## OUTDOOR LEARNING AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The School's setting next to Knole Park provides exceptional opportunities for outdoor learning.

Dedicated outdoor learning areas and Forest School activities develop resilience, teamwork, independence and an appreciation of nature. This environment is seen as an essential part of children's personal development.

## WELLBEING AND PASTORAL CARE

Wellbeing lies at the heart of Sevenoaks Prep's educational model. The School has a comprehensive framework of initiatives, policies and programmes that foster emotional resilience, empathy and positive mental health. The Wellbeing Hub, Wellbeing Club and tailored PSHE curriculum reflect a proactive and deeply embedded commitment to pastoral care.

The School's philosophy is to prepare pupils "for the test of life rather than a life of tests", with the *Way of Life* providing the moral and emotional framework for everything the community does.

## COMMUNITY

Sevenoaks Prep is widely recognised as a warm, welcoming and inclusive community. Parents speak of a school that supports not just the child but the whole family. Events throughout the year bring pupils, staff and families together, reinforcing a strong sense of belonging and shared purpose.

This is a school that combines ambition with humanity, professionalism with warmth, and structure with joy.



# STRATEGIC *Context*

The Head of Pre-Prep occupies a pivotal leadership position within the School.

Collaborating with the Head, the Senior Deputy Head (Academic & Enrichment) and the Deputy Head (Pastoral), the Head of Pre-Prep is responsible for the strategic leadership and day-to-day management of the Pre-Prep department (Nursery to Year 2). The role also requires the post-holder to work very closely with the Head of EYFS and Assistant Head Pre-Prep.

The role combines educational leadership, staff development, safeguarding oversight, operational management and community engagement.

The post-holder will lead the development of a vibrant and ambitious Early Years and Key Stage 1 provision while ensuring strong alignment with the School's ethos and educational strategy.

They will also play an important role in supporting the School Development Plan, contributing to inspection readiness and ensuring the smooth academic and pastoral transition of pupils into the Prep School.

# THE Role

The Head of Pre-Prep leads and inspires the Pre-Prep department, ensuring excellence in teaching, learning and pastoral care.

The successful candidate will:

- Lead and manage the Pre-Prep team (Nursery to Year 2), fostering a collaborative and high-performing environment.
- Develop and implement an engaging curriculum aligned with the School's *Way of Life* and national frameworks, including EYFS.
- Ensure high standards of teaching and learning across the Pre-Prep.
- Monitor pupil progress and use assessment data to inform planning and intervention.
- Ensure outstanding safeguarding and welfare practices.
- Contribute to the School Development Plan and the strategic leadership of the School.
- Work closely with colleagues across the School to ensure effective transition from Year 2 into Year 3.

The Head of Pre-Prep is also responsible for ensuring that the Pre-Prep is fully prepared for inspection and

operates in compliance with relevant statutory and regulatory frameworks.

**Reports to:** Head.

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

### *Teaching, Learning and Curriculum*

The Head of Pre-Prep will provide strategic leadership of teaching and learning within Early Years and Key Stage 1. This includes:

- Securing high-quality teaching appropriate to the differing needs of pupils.
- Creating an ethos of high academic expectations and enthusiasm for learning.
- Designing and reviewing the Pre-Prep curriculum to ensure progression and coherence.
- Promoting innovative teaching strategies, including effective use of technology.
- Monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning through observation and evidence-based improvement strategies.
- Ensuring that pupils experience a broad programme of curricular and co-curricular opportunities.

The role also includes ensuring systems are in place for target setting, assessment and monitoring pupil progress.

The Head of Pre-Prep will ensure that all aspects of pupil achievement are recognised and celebrated and that pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development is supported.

### *Pastoral Care and Safeguarding*

The Head of Pre-Prep holds overall responsibility for pastoral care within the department. This includes:

- Ensuring the wellbeing and safety of all pupils.
- Working closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure compliance with safeguarding legislation and best practice.
- Maintaining clear systems of pastoral support and behaviour management.
- Monitoring pupil behaviour and wellbeing and meeting regularly with the Deputy Head (Pastoral).
- Supporting staff in managing behaviour and implementing appropriate interventions.

Strong pastoral care lies at the heart of the Pre-Prep ethos and reflects the School's commitment to nurturing the whole child.





### **Staff Leadership and Development**

The Head of Pre-Prep will inspire and develop a talented team of teachers and support staff. Key aspects include:

- Recruiting, supporting and developing staff.
- Fostering a culture of collaboration and professional trust.
- Providing coaching, mentoring and professional development opportunities.
- Leading appraisal for selected members of staff.
- Ensuring effective delegation and accountability within the team.
- Supporting staff wellbeing and work/life balance.

The post-holder will also work closely with the Senior Deputy Head to ensure that staff benefit from high-quality professional development aligned with the School's educational priorities.

### **Operational Leadership**

The Head of Pre-Prep will ensure the effective and efficient management of the department. Responsibilities include:

- Setting priorities for expenditure within the Pre-Prep and ensuring value for money.
- Ensuring facilities and learning environments support the curriculum.

- Monitoring wraparound care provision.
- Ensuring health and safety compliance within the department.
- Attending relevant governing body committees when required.

The role also includes ensuring that relevant data relating to pupil progress and provision is shared with senior leaders and Governors where appropriate.

### **Admissions, Community and External Engagement**

The Head of Pre-Prep will play an important role in the outward-facing life of the School. This includes:

- Supporting the Admissions Department in the recruitment of new pupils.
- Meeting prospective families and contributing to school tours and open events.
- Providing feedback on prospective pupils.
- Supporting the School's pupil retention strategy.
- Building strong relationships with parents.
- Acting as a key ambassador for the School within the local community.

The post-holder will also lead Pre-Prep assemblies and contribute actively to the wider life of the school community.

# THE *Person*

Sevenoaks Prep seeks a leader who combines educational expertise with warmth, empathy and integrity.

The successful candidate will demonstrate:

- Significant leadership experience in a school or pre-prep setting.
- The ability to inspire and motivate teams.
- Strong strategic thinking and organisational skills.
- The ability to analyse data and use evidence to drive improvement.
- A deep understanding of safeguarding responsibilities.
- Strong knowledge of Early Years and Key Stage 1 curriculum frameworks.

They will be an excellent communicator, able to build strong relationships with pupils, staff and parents, and committed to the School's *Way of Life*.

## **Qualifications and Experience**

Candidates should have:

- A strong academic background with a relevant degree and teaching qualification (PGCE, QTS or equivalent).
- Significant leadership experience in a school setting.
- Experience in developing and managing staff.
- Strong knowledge of safeguarding procedures and pastoral care systems.
- Experience in behaviour management and pupil wellbeing strategies.

A leadership qualification, such as an NPQ, is desirable, or the willingness to gain one.

## **Skills & Values**

- Strong alignment with the School's *Way of Life*.
- Ability to bring a fresh perspective.

- Commitment to embracing diversity and inclusion in a changing world and the skills to run an inclusive and diverse school community, valuing and promoting inclusion.
- Leading by example in honesty and integrity.
- A 'can-do' attitude and the willingness to work hard to get things done.
- Inspirational and empathetic leader with a passion for pupil wellbeing.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- Strong problem-solving abilities with a proactive and solution-focused mindset.
- Ability to build strong relationships with pupils, staff, and parents.
- Commitment to maintaining high standards of pastoral care and safeguarding.
- Flexible, adaptable, and able to respond effectively to challenges.





# REMUNERATION & *Conditions*

Sevenoaks Prep offers a competitive remuneration package reflecting the seniority of the role. The package includes:

- A generous salary, commensurate with experience.
- A strong pension provision, with flexible options available.
- Significant fee remission for children of the post-holder, with additional bursary support where appropriate.
- A range of practical benefits that support daily professional life.

As a member of the Senior Leadership Team, the Head of Pre-Prep may be required to work additional days, such as INSET or training days. There is also a shared expectation among SLT members to be available during school holidays on a rota basis.

# APPOINTMENT *Process*

The appointment will follow a full search and selection process, designed to ensure both rigour and fairness.

The search is being led by RSAcademics, and the new post-holder will be selected by a panel chaired by the Headmaster, Luke Harrison.

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

- Angela Short, Search Consultant:  
[angelashort@rsacademics.com](mailto:angelashort@rsacademics.com)
- Jenny Funnell, Search Consultant:  
[jennyfunnell@rsacademics.com](mailto:jennyfunnell@rsacademics.com)
- Andrew Nott, Senior Advisor:  
[andrewnott@rsacademics.com](mailto:andrewnott@rsacademics.com)

Applications for this role will be considered on a rolling basis as they are received. Candidates are therefore encouraged to submit a CV in the first instance and at the earliest opportunity before submitting an application form.

Applications should be made electronically to RSAcademics. To submit your application, please upload your documents according to the instructions on the RSAcademics [website](#).

As part of your online application, you will be required to upload a covering letter (in PDF format, please), which should be addressed to Mr Luke Harrison, Headmaster. The letter should explain your reasons for applying.

If you have any questions about completing your online application, please contact:

- Jonathan Barnes, Head of Operations (Leadership Appointments): [applications@rsacademics.com](mailto:applications@rsacademics.com) / +44 (0) 204 6269 791

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 on a rolling basis with RSAcademics via MS Teams.
- Shortlist interviews with the Selection Panel will take place at the School on Thursday 26th March 2026.

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

### **Applications and Confidentiality**

All enquiries and applications will be treated in strict confidence. Prospective candidates are encouraged to explore the opportunity in a thoughtful and reflective manner and to see this role not simply as a career move but as an opportunity to help shape the future of an exceptional school community.



RSAcademics is a global executive search and consultancy firm working exclusively with schools. For more than 20 years, we've supported governors and leaders at pivotal moments – whether they are appointing senior staff or making complex strategic decisions.

What makes us distinctive is the depth of first-hand experience in schools across our team – as heads, governors, bursars and senior professionals – combined with specialist expertise in areas such as strategy, research, marketing and finance. This blend is continually enriched by our ongoing consultancy and appointments work with schools worldwide, so our advice is always current, practical and evidence led. Please visit [www.rsacademics.com](http://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.