



SEVENOAKS
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

SENIOR DEPUTY HEAD

Academic & Enrichment

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. It is this balance that allows our pupils to flourish as confident, kind and capable young people.

This appointment is therefore one of the most important we will make. The Senior Deputy Head (Academic & Enrichment) will be a central figure in shaping the educational experience of our pupils in Years 3 to 8 and a key strategic partner to me, the wider leadership team and Governors. It is a role of real influence, combining intellectual leadership with warmth, visibility and humanity.

We are looking for someone who shares our belief that rigour and joy in learning should go hand in hand, understanding that enrichment is not an entitlement but a core expectation – and that the strongest schools are built on relationships, trust and professional generosity. The successful candidate will bring clarity of thought, high expectations and a collaborative spirit and will relish the opportunity to help lead a school that is already flourishing but never complacent.

This is not simply an appointment to a senior post. It is an invitation to help shape the future direction, culture and ambition of Sevenoaks Prep.



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 long and proud heritage with a modern, outward-looking educational philosophy that places equal value on academic excellence, wellbeing and enrichment.

The School's guiding principle is captured in its *Way of Life*, an ethos that flows through every aspect of school life and encourages pupils to be responsible, kind and empathetic. Children leave Sevenoaks Prep confident, well-mannered and equipped with essential life skills such as teamwork, problem-solving and creative thinking – qualities frequently noted by destination schools.

Sevenoaks Prep believes that happiness and wellbeing are fundamental to successful learning. The prospectus emphasises that pupils thrive best within a nurturing, family-centred environment where they are known as individuals and encouraged to discover and develop

their talents. Small class sizes and strong relationships between pupils, staff and parents underpin this culture.

PRE-PREP (NURSERY TO YEAR 2)

The Pre-Prep marks the beginning of each child's educational journey. From Nursery (welcoming children from age two) through to Year 2, pupils learn in an environment described as "as exciting as it is adventurous". Childhood is celebrated; curiosity is encouraged – and each child is seen as a unique individual whose strengths are nurtured and whose achievements are recognised.

This strong foundation ensures that pupils enter the Prep confident, enthusiastic and emotionally secure.

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 Senior Deputy Head (Academic & Enrichment) occupies a pivotal position within the School's leadership structure. The role sits at the centre of educational strategy and quality assurance, with responsibility for ensuring that curriculum, teaching, assessment and enrichment operate as a coherent and mutually reinforcing whole.

Working in close partnership with the Head, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the Head of Pre-Prep, the post-holder will:

- Lead the academic vision for Years 3–8.
- Ensure smooth curricular progression from Pre-Prep to Prep.
- Champion excellence in teaching and professional practice.
- Shape and develop the School's enrichment offer.
- Contribute fully to the strategic direction of the School as a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

This is a role with genuine executive influence and the opportunity to shape culture, systems, people and educational direction at the highest level.



THE *Role*

The Senior Deputy Head (Academic & Enrichment) has overall responsibility for:

- Curriculum design, coherence and development across Years 3–8.
- Teaching, learning and assessment.
- Academic standards, pupil progress and inspection readiness.
- Professional culture, appraisal and staff development.
- Pupil tracking, preparation for destination schools and academic reporting.
- The strategic leadership of enrichment and co-curricular provision.

They will combine strategic oversight with operational engagement: observing lessons, coaching colleagues, meeting parents, supporting pupils and shaping the daily experience of school life.

Enrichment is a central element of the brief. The School seeks a leader who believes deeply that creativity, sport, service and co-curricular opportunity are essential to the formation of confident, capable and reflective young people.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Academic Leadership and Curriculum Development

- Lead, develop and implement the educational philosophy and aims of the School (Years 3 to 8), working collaboratively with the Head and staff.
- Support Pre-Prep SMT members with the fluidity and progression of the Pre-Prep curriculum into the Prep.
- Oversee the design, implementation and review of Years 3–8 schemes of work to ensure progression and continuity.
- Monitor academic standards across Years 3 to 8, using data analysis and assessment outcomes to drive improvement.
- Have awareness of data analysis in Pre-Prep.
- Lead, develop and produce policies related to teaching, learning and assessment (Years 3 to 8).
- Coordinate departmental target setting and ensure that detailed schemes of work are in place.
- Manage the staff appraisal programme for Years 3 to 8 staff.

- Support the Head in developing and implementing the School Development Plan.
- Champion a culture of academic excellence, ensuring pupils are challenged and supported to achieve their full potential.
- Produce regular academic and co-curricular reports (Years 3 to 8) for the Headmaster and Governors.
- Deputise for the Head where required.

Teaching and Learning

- Teach up to 40% of a full timetable.
- Ensure that the teaching and learning at the School (Years 3 to 8) is of the highest standard so that the curriculum is delivered effectively to all pupils.
- Sample pupil work as part of the process to monitor the performance of staff and pupils.
- Assist teachers with pupils who are, academically, causing concern.
- Feed back observation findings relating to classroom teaching issues to the Headmaster for consideration as part of the staff performance management process.



- Monitor the use of ICT within departments and encourage the development of initiatives which promote the educational use of IT.
- Articulate a culture of high expectations and standards by setting targets and putting in place effective systems for school evaluation and school improvement planning.
- Support academic initiatives such as the implementation of new schemes of work and programmes of study.
- Take the lead role with the Head of Pre-Prep in ensuring that the School, academically, is prepared for inspections.
- Facilitate coaching and professional development opportunities for staff, ensuring they have access to relevant training and resources.
- Promote the use of innovative teaching strategies, including digital learning and cross-curricular approaches.
- Lead on the development of independent learning skills and critical thinking among pupils.
- Be responsible for coordinating the setting of pupils in relevant subjects and communicating decisions with parents.
- Identify HLP pupils and monitor progress in conjunction with teachers.

- Support the Head in meetings with parents regarding future school options.
- Record and track future school choices.
- Advise and guide parents, where appropriate, regarding curriculum and classroom issues; investigate and respond to parental enquiries and concerns regarding the curriculum, standards of teaching and the academic management of pupils.
- Keep the Head informed of issues arising from parental concerns.
- Work closely with the Head of Pre-Prep and Deputy Head (Pastoral) to ensure the effective transition of pupils from Year 2 into Year 3.

Key Events and Academic Calendar

- Be responsible for designing and overseeing the Years 3–8 academic timetables (including homework).
- Take responsibility for planning, oversight and management of Years 3–8 Parent Consultations and Information Evenings – including communications with relevant pupils, staff and parents. Attend all Years 3–8 parent consultation evenings, even if not teaching a particular year group.
- Oversee and monitor academic entries into pupil references for destination schools.
- Support the Head with meetings with Y5 parents to discuss senior school options.

- Be responsible for the timetabling of Year 8 Saturday School and the staff rota, to include either the Head, Senior Deputy Head (Academic and Enrichment) or Deputy Head (Pastoral) – in rotation – in addition to teaching staff present.
- Liaise with the Head about dates and timings for all academic events, such as academic meetings, parent consultations, future school meetings, etc.
- Be responsible for the development, implementation and publication of internal exam timetables, ensuring that pupils, staff and parents are made aware.

Enrichment

- Develop and oversee a vibrant and varied co-curricular programme (including the Year 8 post-summer exams programme), ensuring opportunities for all pupils to develop talents and interests beyond the classroom.
- Lead and coordinate school-wide events, clubs, competitions and activities that enhance pupils' personal and social development.
- Promote the integration of academic and co-curricular learning to foster well-rounded educational experiences.
- Be the point of contact for external clubs and be responsible for the quality control of these providers.

- Build partnerships with external organisations to expand enrichment opportunities, including guest speakers, educational trips and collaborative projects.
- Ensure participation in enrichment activities is tracked and valued as an essential part of school life.
- Be responsible, with the Deputy Head (Pastoral), for checking and signing off relevant Years 3–8 risk assessments.

Staff Management and Development

- Support the recruitment, induction, and professional development of academic and co-curricular staff.
- Implement and manage the staff appraisal programme for those covering Y3–Y8.
- Be responsible for appraising selected members of staff.
- Facilitate and monitor the programme of lesson observations and lesson walks, ensuring that these are regular and feed into the School's appraisal programme.
- Foster a collaborative and motivated teaching team, encouraging the sharing of best practices.
- Together with the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and Head of Pre-Prep, manage the School's departmental meetings, workshops and INSET training sessions.

Pupil Progress and Attainment

- Oversee Years 3–8 pupil tracking and assessment, ensuring robust systems are in place to measure progress.
- Working with the Exam Officer, manage the requirements of senior school entrance for relevant pupils (e.g. Kent 11+ and ISEB), ensuring that staff have access to up-to-date scholarship and CE exam papers and that pupils are registered for the relevant external exams.
- Manage the process for interview practice for destination schools.
- Ensure that detailed records are kept of pupil progress at all levels to facilitate pupil tracking.
- Identify HLP pupils and monitor progress in conjunction with teachers.
- Oversee the process of producing and proofreading written reports for Years 3 to 8, issuing guidelines and setting deadlines to staff and managing the process of checking reports for accuracy and compliance with school policies.

Safeguarding and Behaviour Management

- Provide strong moral guidance to pupils in line with the School's *Way of Life*.
- Ensure high standards of pastoral care are maintained in line with school values and policies.

- Work closely with the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead to uphold safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Support the Deputy Head (Pastoral) in monitoring pupil behaviour and wellbeing.
- Support staff in managing pupil behaviour and providing intervention strategies where necessary.
- Be responsible with the Deputy Head (Pastoral) for checking and signing off relevant risk assessments.

Leadership and Whole-School Contribution

- Play a key role in the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), contributing to the strategic development of the School.
- Attend and contribute to Governor meetings.
- Support the Head in maintaining high standards of behaviour and pastoral care.
- Deputise for the Head when required.
- Work closely with the Deputy Head (Pastoral) to ensure a balanced approach to pupils' academic and personal development (Years 3 to 8).
- Support the Admissions Department with the admissions process, ensuring that prospective families are met during tours and academic feedback on prospective pupils is shared with the Director of Admissions.

- Support and help to drive the School's pupil retention strategy.
- Produce relevant information to support the marketing department in highlighting the academic strengths of the School to pupils, parents and the wider community.
- Attend and contribute to school events across year groups, including school plays, music concerts and sporting occasions.
- Represent the School at external events, including marketing opportunities and partnerships.
- Have an understanding of the ISI inspection process, ensuring that Academic and Enrichment are prepared for inspection according to the ISI cycle.

The Senior Deputy Head (Academic and Enrichment) may be required to work additional days for the proper performance of their duties without extra remuneration, for example, INSET or training days. Where possible, they will be given reasonable notice of the requirement to work additional days.

There is an expectation for one member of the leadership team to be available at all times during the school holidays. This will not necessarily require the Senior Deputy Head (Academic and Enrichment) to be in attendance but to be on call and available to attend the site if the situation demands. A rota will be organised annually with the rest of the SMT.

THE *Person*

This role offers the successful candidate the chance to:

- Shape the academic identity of a leading preparatory school.
- Inspire and develop an already strong and committed teaching body.
- Strengthen the integration between curriculum and enrichment.
- Influence the strategic direction of the School at an executive level.
- Leave a lasting educational and cultural legacy.

Sevenoaks Prep seeks a leader who combines intellectual authority with emotional intelligence. The successful candidate will be:

- An experienced and inspirational senior leader.
- An outstanding practitioner with strong curriculum expertise.
- Confident in the intelligent use of data while valuing professional judgement.

- A visible, collaborative and empowering presence.
- A natural coach and developer of others.
- An excellent communicator with pupils, parents, staff and Governors.
- A genuine champion of enrichment and holistic education.
- Fully aligned with the School's *Way of Life*.

They will lead with warmth, humility and ambition and will see this role as an opportunity to shape a flourishing community rather than simply to manage a portfolio.

Essential Qualifications and Experience

- A strong academic background with a relevant degree and teaching qualification (PGCE, QTS, or equivalent).
- A relevant leadership qualification (such as an NPQ) or the willingness to gain one within two years of accepting the position of Senior Deputy Head (Academic and Enrichment).



- Significant experience in a leadership role within a prep school or similar setting.
- Proven track record of improving academic outcomes and leading curriculum development.
- Experience in managing and developing teaching staff.
- Strong understanding of assessment strategies and data analysis in education.
- Experience in designing and overseeing co-curricular and enrichment programmes.

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.

Why This Role Will Appeal

This is a role of substance, influence and professional fulfilment. It offers:

- Strategic responsibility and executive decision-making.
- A school with strong foundations and clear ambition.
- A culture that values kindness alongside excellence.
- A balanced leadership team and supportive professional environment.
- A platform for future headship, should that be an aspiration.





REMUNERATION & *Conditions*

Sevenoaks Prep offers a highly competitive and attractive remuneration package, reflecting the seniority and strategic importance of this appointment.

This 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.

The School is committed to attracting and retaining outstanding leaders and will ensure that the overall package is both competitive and supportive of long-term commitment.

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
- Andrew Nott, Senior Advisor:
andrewnott@rsacademics.com

Closing date: 10.00am UK time on Tuesday 3rd March 2026.

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 / 44 (0) 204 6269 791

Applications for this role will be considered on a rolling basis as they are received. Candidates are therefore encouraged to submit their applications at the earliest opportunity.

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 MS Teams w/c 2nd March 2026.
- Shortlist interviews with the Selection Panel will take place at the School on Thursday 12th 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 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.