



*Information for Candidates
Interested in Becoming a*

Governor (Education)

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in Hulme Grammar School (HGS). I am delighted that you are considering applying to become a Governor (Education). This is an exceptional opportunity to join a strong Board of Governors made up of a diverse group of people from a range of backgrounds. Our current Board members have many and varying experiences and skill sets which they bring to the table, but all are united in their support for the School and a commitment to see it flourish.

Having undergone several transformations since it was founded in 1611, the School has recently seen a number of changes, which means we are well-placed to continue to be the school of choice for parents in the North West who are looking for an education that is holistic and balances the traditional with the very best of innovations in technology. Our recent rebrand and the development of a clear educational philosophy, coupled with the articulation of the vision and values that sit behind it, means we are feeling confident and well-placed to enter a new and exciting phase of our long and rich history.

Our reputation as a school which offers a broad and balanced education, coupled with outstanding pastoral care and a rich and varied co-curricular programme, is firmly established, and the School enjoys an excellent reputation in the local area and further afield. Academic achievement is impressive, and the quality of education is very good. However, we are never complacent and recognise that ongoing curriculum revision and enhancement, and investment in the professional development of our teaching staff, is fundamental if we are to continue to attract families in a competitive educational landscape and at a time

when many families are more economically hard-pressed than ever before. The Principal and Senior Leadership Team look to the Governors to provide support, challenge and scrutiny so they can steer the School into its bright future and ensure that the educational offering is of the very highest quality for all our pupils from 2 to 18.

We are looking for two new Governors to oversee and monitor academic standards and curriculum development, ideally one with knowledge and understanding of prep schools and the other with a grasp of the challenges and opportunities of senior schools and sixth form.

They will work closely with the Principal and Senior Leadership Team and collaboratively with their colleagues on the Board. We are looking for enthusiastic, dynamic and energetic individuals with knowledge of and, ideally, experience in academia, who will use their experience and knowledge to both challenge and support the Principal and Senior Leadership Team in the delivery of all aspects of education at HGS and to contribute to Board discussions pertaining both to quality of education and the various other strategic conversations and decision-making that sit with a Board of an independent school.

The shared ambitions of the Principal and the Board are for:

- Standards of teaching and learning to be excellent and consistent across Prep, Senior and Sixth Form.
- Curriculum sequencing and transition from Prep to Senior School and Sixth Form to be seamless.

- All children to experience challenge in every lesson as articulated in the School's Educational Philosophy (found [here](#)) and summarised as 'Challenge for All'.
- The ongoing development of the School's co-curriculum.
- The consolidation and enhancement of the support that the School offers to students across all phases as they think and plan their futures beyond school.
- The School's educational offer to truly embody the breadth and balance that ensures students leave with both the academic qualifications and the skills for life in order to flourish at school and beyond.

Details of the School and the role of a Governor at HGS can be found in the pages that follow. We have appointed RSAcademics to lead the search for these additional Governors to join the existing Board. Their consultants would be delighted to have a confidential conversation with you initially if you wish to explore this further.

This is an exciting time to be joining us, and the roles we are looking to fill are pivotal to the educational development of the School, so I hope you will feel inspired to express your interest and find out more.

Mrs Val Stocker LLB
Chair of Governors





School Overview

The School traces its origins as far back as 1611, when it was first founded. Precipitated by the need to find new premises due to the dilapidation of the existing site, it was reconstituted and moved to its then-new, purpose-built site in 1895. The Senior School still occupies the same wonderful Victorian building, although the estate has grown somewhat, and the School has evolved in a variety of ways in the intervening 127 years. Whereas from 1895, the girls' school and boys' school, which occupied the same site, were completely separate entities, in 2006, they were brought together as one school with a single Governing Board and Principal and Senior Leadership Team. From that point until as recently as last year, the School operated on a 'diamond model' but, in September 2023, admitted its first fully co-educational Year 7 cohort (and Year 10 merged and became co-educational at the same time). Later this year, the School will complete its move to being fully co-educational, the next and natural step in its many iterations. The School admits pupils from 2 to 18 and is spread over four sites, all within easy walking distance of each other.

When students and parents are asked what they think sums up the school ethos, there are many references to academic excellence, creating a supportive environment where the individual can excel, superb co-curricular opportunities, a welcoming

and inclusive atmosphere, and an innovative approach to technology and learning. The pupils are grounded, well-rounded and down-to-earth, and the warm atmosphere of welcome is an integral value of the School.

Diversity runs through the School's DNA, and the student body is drawn from both the local community and further afield, as well as including international students. The School prides itself on removing as many barriers to an HGS education as possible so that any student who is bright and committed to learning feels welcome, irrespective of their background or their family's financial situation. To support this aim, financial assistance, in the form of means-tested bursaries, is provided to many students in the Senior School, and we are incredibly proud of this aspect of our work.

GCSE and A Level results are impressive. However, academic outcomes are only part of the story. An HGS education places equal emphasis on the co-curriculum, and pastoral care is at the heart of what we do. When their time at HGS comes to an end, students go on to excel in many and varied fields of careers and higher education. Our alumni prove there is no such thing as a 'typical' HGS student; we take young people and shape them into the very best versions of themselves, setting them on a trajectory towards success in whatever they turn their hand to.



Location & Facilities

The School is situated on the outskirts of Oldham, a large town not far from the metropolis that is Manchester. Oldham's fortunes were built during the Industrial Revolution, and there was once, legend has it, a mill for every day of the year. Today, it retains a proud heart but has undergone periods of rise and decline, not unlike the original Hulme Grammar School of 1611.

The school site is expansive and consists of the main Senior School site, first established in 1895, plus a number of buildings in the vicinity. The original Victorian building has been greatly expanded and improved over the years and includes a Science block, a purpose-built Library and a further multi-functional hall that has been re-developed recently. The Pre-Prep and younger Prep pupils (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) are housed in a Grade 2 listed building a short walk away from the main site in beautiful self-contained grounds that include a Forest School, a core component of the curriculum across the Prep School. Years 3 through to 6 are housed in two nearby large properties of similar vintage that have been converted into welcoming learning spaces.

Other facilities include a sports hall, a recently refurbished swimming pool and plenty of outdoor spaces for sport and for children to enjoy during breaks and lunchtime. The Governors have ambitious plans for investment in the School's facilities. The Summer of 2023 saw targeted investment across all key sites in the School, including the development of libraries in each of the Prep buildings, the redecoration of classrooms in the Senior School and the enhancement of playground facilities across all sites. A new Computer Science suite is planned for development this academic year, thanks to the generosity of a donor, and students from across the Prep and Senior Schools will benefit from that. The appointment of a new Director of Fundraising and Public Benefit means that investment in the school infrastructure through the generosity of donors becomes more possible, as does enhancing the School's Bursary programme. HGS is a school that is going places.





Academics & the Curriculum

Breadth and balance underpin the curriculum's design at all Key Stages. Much work has been done in recent months on careful sequencing of the curriculum, and a relatively new initiative – 'Challenge for All' – is being implemented at all Key Stages. Assessment is used carefully and generates data, which, in turn, is used to further shape the curriculum and to enhance each pupil's individual learning journey. GL Assessments are used across the School to provide benchmark data by which pupil progress can be tracked, and this is complemented by common assessments in each subject in the Senior School, as well as the usual round of mock exams, which help older students as they prepare for public examinations.

The School prides itself on the support it gives to students with additional learning needs, for example, those with SEND or who have English as an additional language. These students' particular needs are represented at the Senior Leadership Team level by the Assistant Principal Additional Needs, and the school support for children with SEND and English as an additional language is excellent. The Prep School has its own SENCo, who has expert knowledge and years of experience of working with our youngest pupils to ensure they learn in line with their peers.

The bespoke curriculum for the children in the Pre-Prep and Prep School is enhanced by Forest School and the contribution of subject-specialist teachers in Computer Science, Music, PE and swimming. In Year 5 and above, children are taught by primary specialists for Maths, English, PSHE and the humanities and by subject-specialist teachers for PE, Music, Science, and Art/DT, the latter two subjects being taught in Senior School specialist facilities.

The Senior School curriculum continues in the vein established in Pre-Prep and Prep and builds on it but is also accessible to those pupils who join the School at Year 7. The Key Stage 3 curriculum in each subject helps students to acquire the knowledge and develop the skills which they will need for GCSEs. However, that curriculum has integrity in its own right, with subject specialists shaping a learning journey that is stimulating and rich. In Year 10, the norm is for students to take nine GCSE subjects, a development implemented this academic year to allow students to focus on fewer subjects and with an eye to their wellbeing. This has had a positive impact already, not least in the space that this creates for students in Years 10 and 11 to follow an Enrichment programme which includes the HPQ, which, in its first year of implementation, has been extremely popular.

Most Sixth Form students choose four A Levels to study in Year 12 and reduce to three subjects by the time they reach Year 13. Students are also given the opportunity to study for an EPQ or undertake the study of MOOCs to enhance their learning and expand their academic horizons beyond the curriculum. As many as 22 subjects are offered in a relatively small Sixth Form, allowing the flexibility to suit the needs and ambitions of each individual student, but consequently, some classes are very small. Sixth Form leavers mostly go on to top universities in the UK and apply for a wide range of courses.

The use of technology is embedded across the School, which is a Google School. The new Governors (Education) will have the opportunity to work with the Principal to ensure that the knowledge-rich curriculum

is supported by and delivered in the most effective way possible through a forward-thinking approach to technology, including AI. The School has a Senior Teacher (Digital Strategy) who provides staff with regular professional development to use AI to best effect and to improve the learning journey for students.

The School was inspected in September 2023 by ISI, a routine inspection under the new inspection framework. Inspectors recognised that effective teaching and learning were to be found across the School, but the aim before the next inspection is to see the 'Challenge for All' strategy implemented consistently across the School. Before the inspection, the Principal and Senior Leadership Team had initiated a process of Senior School curriculum reviews by department aimed at continuous curriculum development and improvement, and it is hoped that the new Governors will help to support and challenge as the Principal and Senior Leadership Team continue on this journey.

With no grading possible under the new inspection framework, the School was found to be compliant in all areas. More than that, strengths were highlighted by the inspectors, such as the School's carefully sequenced curriculum and 'Challenge for All' teaching and learning approach; the high-quality EYFS provision; outstanding pastoral care for students, meaning they feel safe and happy in School; the strength of support for SEND pupils across the School; the breadth of the co-curriculum; and how the School effectively prepares pupils for life.





Sport & Co-curricular Activities

The co-curricular programme is rich and varied. Clubs and societies that represent a staggering array of interests and topics are on offer, and there is a heavy emphasis on the co-curriculum, with all students expected to participate and staff to take an active lead in running them. Trips are an important part of co-curricular life, whether local, national and international and co-curricular or curricular in focus.



Scholarships, Bursaries & Outreach

Last year, a new model of scholarships was introduced. These are aimed at attracting parents of children with talents in a range of fields. Pupils apply for these scholarships when they apply for a place at the School in Year 7 or in Year 12. They do not come with fee remission but rather with a package of exciting opportunities for the students who are awarded them. For example, Drama Scholars receive free LAMDA Speech and Drama training; Science Scholars will receive a place on the trip to CERN free of charge, while Sport Scholars receive free membership at a local gym and strength and conditioning training.

The School awards mean-tested bursaries to pupils whose families would not otherwise be able to pay for an HGS education. The School is proud of its work in this field and works collaboratively with the Bursary Foundation and local feeder primary schools to identify potential bursary applicants and to support them and their families in making an application for a place in the Senior School. The Bursary process is

administered by BAL, who help the School ensure that its investment in this area is responsible and ethical.

The School is extremely proud of the work it does with partner schools in the local area. Every year, hundreds of children in the local community and attending nearby schools receive teaching at HGS, which complements the learning they undertake in their own schools. Recent initiatives have included a French academic outreach day for local primary schools, and a poetry workshop with Simon Armitage, the Poet Laureate, will take place at the end of January 2024. The Enquiring Young Minds programme sees children come to HGS regularly for enrichment activities in Science. There is much that is being done in this field, and the School takes its public benefit work seriously. We are not complacent, though, and the newly appointed Governors (Education) will have the opportunity to help shape our approach to this all-important work as the School continues to be the engine for social mobility it always has been.





Governing Board

The Articles of Association allow a maximum of 14 Governors. The Board seeks to ensure that elected Governors are drawn from a spread of educational, business and other backgrounds, as well as maintaining a mix of genders, ages and other diversity indicators. The Board benefits from dedicated administrative support from a full-time Clerk to the Governors. Governors retire by rotation every three years but can be re-appointed. A maximum term for Governors is currently under discussion to ensure that the composition of the Board remains vibrant and to encourage new thinking.

There is a written policy for the induction and training of Governors, which includes the issue of appropriate documentation on joining, the declaration of willingness to serve, arrangements for briefings, the declaration of any potential conflicts of interest and information on the availability of training.

The full Board of Governors meets a minimum of three times a year to consider matters of policy and strategy, the agenda for which is set by the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee is made up of the Chairs of the various sub-committees, which meet thrice annually to discuss particular matters of school life. There are currently the following sub-committees: Finance and Commercial, Health and Safety, Property, Marketing and Development, and Education. One of the Governors (Education) would be expected to Chair the Education Committee. The Audit Committee meets as necessary to oversee the preparation and audit of the annual report and monitor internal financial controls. Ad-hoc committees can also be established from time to time for specific projects.

The nature of the role is such that candidates will need to live within a reasonable commuting distance from the School; however, while in-person attendance is preferred at meetings, there is an understanding that due to prior calendar commitments, etc., attendance at meetings can occasionally be remote.

Since this is a voluntary role, the post is not remunerated, but reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.

The main duties and responsibilities of Governors at HGS are to:

- Be aligned with the aims of HGS, its vision and values, and ensure that these are achieved across all aspects of school life.
- With the Principal, determine the overall direction and development of the School through clear strategic planning.
- Promote and develop HGS, overseeing its growth and maintaining its relevance in society today and valuing equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Demonstrate an absolute commitment to the safeguarding of young people and to delivering best practice in safeguarding.
- Appraise, support, scrutinise and constructively challenge; to also monitor the work and activities of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Monitor and approve statutory policies and ensure that HGS and its staff and volunteers function within the legal and regulatory framework of independent schools and in line with the expectations of ISI and HGS's governing document.

- Always act in the best interests of the School and manage risks responsibly.
- Maintain sound financial management of the School's resources, ensuring expenditure is in line with its objectives, and investment activities meet accepted standards and policies.
- Ensure that accounts and the annual report are prepared in accordance with recommended practice and to the appropriate timescales.
- Maintain absolute confidentiality about all sensitive or confidential information received and accord with the conflicts of interest policy.
- Contribute expertise to the discussions of the Governing Body.

The degree of commitment required of a Governor at HGS is to:

- Possess a thorough understanding of the role of the Governor, its responsibilities and limits.
- Have a deep interest in education and young people.
- Attend as many meetings as possible.
- Where possible, be visible at school events and, again where possible, attend Student Council meetings.
- Be prepared to commit sufficient time to visit the School periodically during opening hours and to study reports and background papers.
- Attend training courses and seminars as necessary.



Application Process

Interested candidates are invited to contact RSAcademics by email to arrange an initial confidential discussion with Angela Short or Charlotte Faber, who are leading the search:

- Angela Short, Head of Search:
angelashort@rsacademics.com
- Charlotte Faber, Senior Advisor:
charlottefaber@rsacademics.com

Initial screening will be undertaken by RSAcademics. The School will undertake interviews with selected candidates.

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

Founded in 2001 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. RSAcademics is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion in schools.

Please visit www.rsacademics.com for more information.

