



RAVENSCOURT PARK

Preparatory School

**Information for Candidates applying for the Post of
Head Teacher of Ravenscourt Park Prep School**

Welcome from the Managing Director



Taking up the Headship of Ravenscourt Park Preparatory School (RPPS) is an exciting and rare opportunity. Founded in 1991, RPPS is the pioneer school of the Gardener Schools Group. The post becomes available from September 2026 with the appointed candidate succeeding Carl Howes, whose tenure since 2015 has been extremely successful.

The school should be regarded as one of the best primary age independent schools in London. RPPS enjoys an excellent reputation in the local community, where its ethos and the standards it sets are greatly valued. In difficult times for the independent school sector, RPPS remains oversubscribed with long waiting lists. Now RPPS is ready to move forward into its next stage of growth with a new inspirational leader.

RPPS is part of the Gardener Group of four schools and is sister school to Kew Green Preparatory School. This is a great advantage for an incoming Head Teacher. While we seek to appoint someone dynamic with a drive to innovate, they will not commence their journey as Head Teacher of RPPS alone. The Heads of our four schools work closely together and are a source of support and inspiration to each other. Additionally, the Head of RPPS would work closely with the Board of Directors to bring about their vision for the School.

We are looking for a Head Teacher to bring energy and academic leadership to RPPS and to ensure that the School stays ahead of its rivals in this competitive area of London. The new Head Teacher will be a charismatic and empathetic leader who will quickly gain the trust of pupils, parents and staff and be able to nurture and develop relationships with the community. They must also have the business acumen and marketing skills to drive growth of pupil numbers and promote further diversity and inclusion.

RPPS was established to serve the educational demand of the local community and offer them a quality and style of education that was previously missing in the area. Our vision is for RPPS to be a truly local school where pupils can safely walk, cycle or take a short bus ride to school and where their parents can become active members of a vibrant, inclusive school family.

We are now looking forward to meeting candidates for the role and are confident we will appoint someone who will relish this opportunity to take Ravenscourt Park Preparatory School on into its next chapter.

Theo Brehony

Managing Director,
Gardener Schools Group



The Gardener Schools Group



Maria Gardener and Edward Gardener founded Ravenscourt Park Preparatory School in West London in 1991 and Kew Green Preparatory School in 2004. In response to parent demand, Kew House School, the Group's first senior school, was founded in 2013 and Maida Vale School became the fourth school in the Group in 2020. The Group today comprises these four independent, coeducational schools in London, educating around 1,500 children aged 2 -18 years. The aim of Gardener Schools Group is to build on the success of these schools by organically growing a small group of schools with a similar structure, philosophy and quality of service.

Gardener Schools Group is still a family company. Alongside Founding Director Maria Gardener, her son Theo Brehony is the Managing Director. Jessen Chen, having been at Grant Thornton for 18 years, joined as Director of Operations in 2015 and Angela Drew is the current Director of Education.

Head Teachers within the Gardener Schools Group benefit from the collegiate strength of being part of the company. Heads within GSG meet regularly and are a source of advice, ideas and encouragement for each other.

More information about the Gardner Schools Group can be found [here](#)



Introduction to the School



RPPS is arguably the flagship and most prestigious of the Gardener Group schools, educating over 400 children aged 4 to 11 and with a substantial waiting list. The School comprises two sections: the Lower School, for pupils aged from 4 to 7 years old, and the Upper School for pupils aged from 7 to 11 years old.

It is an inclusive, co-educational independent school where a palpable sense of community and a warm, family-like atmosphere greets every visitor, many of whom remark on how genuinely happy the pupils are - a reflection of the nurturing and inspiring environment RPPS fosters. The 2024 ISI Inspection highlighted equality, diversity and inclusion as a particular strength of the School. The Inspectors observed that RPPS pupils have an exceptional understanding of, and respect towards, people with different backgrounds, faiths and lifestyles; and that they exhibit high levels of wellbeing and clearly enjoy their school experience.

RPPS takes a holistic approach to education, prioritising each child's intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development. A talented teaching team works tirelessly to ensure that every child flourishes, both academically and personally. By setting high

expectations, all pupils are challenged to reach their potential while fostering a growth mindset that encourages perseverance, resilience and a love of learning. The School nurtures potential in a vibrant environment that inspires curiosity, fosters creativity and encourages kindness, collaboration and commitment - core values that guide every aspect of the School's approach to education.

RPPS offers dedicated preparation for 11+ exams in Year 6 and boasts an excellent breadth of academic achievement. Pupils collectively apply to more than 50 different schools, and many win scholarships or exhibitions. Kew House and Maida Vale (also Gardener Group schools) offer automatic places, with an interview but no need to sit an additional exam. While the former is still the most popular choice, so too are Latymer Upper, Notting Hill and Ealing High, Ibstock Place and Harrodian. Places are regularly offered by extremely competitive schools such as Lady Eleanor Holles, City of London School for Girls, Hampton, KCS Wimbledon and St Paul's.

"A very cosy, busy and much-loved local school that prepares children expertly for an impressive array of secondaries while ensuring school is fun, happy and exciting." The Good Schools Guide



Ethos



The School's aim is to nurture, inspire and motivate each child through a culture where the pupils develop respect, compassion and tolerance, value diversity and understand the importance of community responsibility. Through a holistic educational journey, the School engenders confidence and self-esteem, leading to intellectual risk taking, a love of learning and making positive contributions in school, work and life.

The School also believes that parents have a strong role to play in their child's education

and an open-door policy is encouraged so that the School becomes a hub for the community it serves, not just for the pupils, but also for the parents and staff.

RPPS is non-denominational and while Religious Education is taught, covering a wide number of world faiths, it welcomes children from all faiths and none. School assemblies also focus on awareness of world religions as well as important humanitarian and spiritual issues of topical importance.

"Pupils are confident, safe and behave well. This is due to the effective promotion of the school values of kindness, consideration and respect."

- ISI Inspection Report 2024



The Opportunity

This is a tremendous opportunity for an inspirational, warm and creative leader to guide one of London's most successful and popular prep schools on the next stage of its already impressive journey.

The post would suit a current Head wanting to step up to a top school in the sector, or a strong Deputy Head with significant management experience. Details can be found in the section 'The Role' below, but a key aspect will be the ability to engage confidently with parents and to ensure that RPPS remains the school of choice in the area.



Location & Facilities



RPPS is situated close to Hammersmith in West London. The School is adjacent to Ravenscourt Park and is just off Chiswick High Street. Ravenscourt Park Station (District Line, Zone 2) is only a two-minute walk away from the School

The School is housed in four separate buildings located on a single site, next to the park. There is a beautiful vicarage which was the original home for the School and the site as a whole provides a comfortable, vibrant and homely environment for the children. Reception and Year 1 pupils study in the old vicarage where the room sizes prescribe the School's 20 child per class maximum. Years 2 and 3 progress to loftier classrooms above the gym, then to the new Gardener building. The addition of the Gardener Building in 2011 increased the School's physical capacity and consequently enabled it to provide a wealth of new curriculum opportunities.

RPPS has specialist on-site facilities including a multi-purpose Theatre, Library, Music Room, Art Studio and Science Laboratory. Additional facilities include a Gymnasium, Digital Learning Space and a large outdoor playground space. The award-winning, glass-sided Library opens out on to the Playground and is a colourful and welcoming facility for all

children from Reception to Year 6. It is at the heart of all learning at RPPS. The state-of-the-art Science Laboratory provides a hands-on learning environment where students engage in exciting experiments that bring scientific concepts to life. The vibrant Music Room is a dynamic space, equipped for both classroom teaching and group performances. Within the spacious and imaginative Art Studio, pupils are inspired to explore various artistic media, from painting and sculpture to digital design. Computing lessons take place in the dedicated Digital Learning Space.

The fully equipped Gymnasium is a versatile space where pupils engage in a wide range of physical activities, from gymnastics and dance to basketball, volleyball, and tennis. Ravenscourt Park, on the School's doorstep, is one of the Borough's flagship parks, boasting twenty-acres and having won a Green Flag award. It provides the setting for many PE lessons including the use of the tennis and basketball courts. The park is also a social hub for parents and children and there is a real sense of community with many family events hosted in the park, such as class picnics.

"That over 400 children thrive in this compact school is a testament to clever timetabling, design, staffing, thought and energy."

- The Good Schools Guide



360
Virtual
Tour





Admissions

The local market is notorious for being highly competitive and is characterised by discerning, aspirational parents who want the very best education for their children. RPPS was established to fill a gap in this market and seeks to recruit local children with talent and potential.

Prospective parents can register at any point, with siblings given priority over all other registrations. A ballot for those registered

before their first birthday is used to recruit a three-form intake evenly split across boys and girls, after which places are allocated according to the proximity of registration to the child's first birthday. For those already of school age, places are offered in date order of registration and dependent on school reports, an informal interview and a taster morning for Years 1 to 3 admissions and a taster day and short assessment for Years 4 to 6.



Academics & the Curriculum



RPPS provides a high-quality academic education with a focus on challenging and extending all pupils. The curriculum is meticulously crafted to foster a rich learning environment where engagement is deep, meaningful and rooted in evidence-based educational practices. To challenge pupils in their cognitive thinking, open-ended higher order questions and activities are employed in the classroom. The School recognises the importance of providing access to enrichment materials to support and enhance learning, including the opportunities to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

The learning culture emphasises challenge, questioning, dialogue, feedback and growth mindset. The classrooms are designed to be both safe and stimulating environments and teachers carefully plan and deliver tasks that not only promote investigation but also encourage challenge and deeper learning. Displays are vibrant and informative, featuring challenging questions and inspiring facts whilst also providing a dedicated space to celebrate the achievements of pupils across all subjects.

Pupils are given low-key assessments from Year 1 for data tracking purposes and begin sitting exams from Year 5. Setting for maths and English starts in a low key fashion from Year 3. RPPS was an early adopter of online learning and uses the exam preparation platform, Atom.

The School places great emphasis on developing pupils' metacognitive strategies. Pupils are taught to plan, monitor and review their learning, enabling them to become more independent learners. Pupils are set challenging targets to promote continuous improvement. Additionally, it is emphasised

that making mistakes is a valuable part of the learning process, and 'having a go' is crucial to their development.

RPPS believes that a strong foundation in Phonics is essential for developing confident and proficient readers. The School uses the Animaphonics Scheme, which employs a multi-sensory approach to phonics instruction. Lessons are interactive and engaging, incorporating visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic activities. Similarly, Reasoning (verbal and non-verbal) is taught from Year 5 to develop the pupils' problem-solving skills. Lessons are designed to teach these skills in an interesting way that involves a lot of fun too.

The computing curriculum is designed to inspire and equip students with the skills and knowledge they need to navigate and shape the digital world. Computing at RPPS is not regarded as an isolated subject but is integrated with other areas of the curriculum – for example, STEAM projects encourage students to apply their computing skills in many interdisciplinary contexts.

The teaching staff at RPPS are fully committed to continuous improvement and the effective delivery of stimulating content. Teachers are encouraged to regularly reflect on their own teaching practices to enhance their effectiveness. Through discussions, shared practices and staff meetings, teachers develop a shared understanding of strategies that effectively stretch pupils in lessons. Professional development opportunities are regularly made available, with a particular focus on the concept of challenge in education. Teachers are also actively involved in learning walks and observations, which are designed to review and improve the quality of challenge provided in lessons.



Sport, the Arts & Extra-curricular Activities



"The children take great ownership of their learning and understand that they are the most significant contributing factor to their own success, embodying the school's aim to engender confidence and self-esteem, leading to intellectual risk taking and a love of learning."

ISI Inspection Report, 2024

Sport

The RPPS sporting philosophy is that every child, regardless of their ability, can enhance their performance by setting and striving to achieve realistic and attainable goals. From Reception through to Year Six, all pupils receive scheduled P.E. and Games lessons which provide opportunities to engage in a variety of activities and a wide range of team sports, all of which are supported by specialist coaching. Pupils participate in local and national tournaments across all major sports and notable events include those hosted by the Independent Association of Prep Schools (IAPS) and the prestigious Rosslyn

Park 7s. Swimming teams also participate in galas against local schools, as well as in events organized by the London Swimming Association and IAPS national galas – indeed the squad made the London Swimming League A finals in 2022. Great use is made of Ravenscourt Park next door and swimmers use the pool at Latymer across the road. Children are bussed to the nearby Old Actonians sports ground for team games and cross-country, and the School also enjoys exclusive access to Ealing Cricket Club. Additionally, RPPS is able to hold termly tournaments at the home of Kew House School sport, The Trailfinders Club in Ealing.



Music

Through listening, performing and composing both inside and out of the classroom, connections are made to enhance the pupils' learning experience and reinforce RPPS's values. Through music, pupils connect to places both locally and abroad: taking performances into the local community such as care homes and Christmas markets whilst choir tours take them further afield, most recently to Catalonia. Inter-disciplinary connections are made with other subjects and connections are made with peers, for example by performing together in one of five choirs, two orchestras, guitar groups, violin groups, recorder groups, productions and concerts, or composing together in class lessons. There was a recent collaboration with a choir from Basel and the School collaborates with the other Schools in the Group in giving joint performances.





Art & Design

The Art Department is committed to providing all pupils with a rich, diverse and high-quality range of creative experiences in art and design. By celebrating the process over the outcome, the School nurtures a deeper appreciation for the arts and cultivates skills that extend beyond the studios. Students are encouraged to take risks, explore new ideas and use personal experiences to produce

work that reflects their unique perspectives. By providing them with a solid foundation, pupils are enabled to communicate their ideas, feelings, and meanings effectively through various media. Through careful attention to detail, students learn to curate their work thoughtfully, ensuring that their final outcomes reflect both their creative vision and their technical abilities.



Drama

The approach to drama extends far beyond the traditional understanding of performance; it encourages pupils to explore their imagination, build empathy and develop resilience through role play, improvisation and character analysis. As they progress, pupils in Year 4 have their first taste of performing in a year group production and these have covered themes and topics such as World War Two in the musical 'We'll Meet Again'; and

the importance of recycling and protecting the planet in 'The Island That Rocks'. During this process, the children learn the intricacies of group performance, including choreography, singing in unison and in parts, stage directions, and the skills associated with learning and delivering lines. In Year 6, the children give their final performance in an end-of-year production, which in recent years has included 'The Lion King', 'Matilda' and 'Mary Poppins'.





Activities

RPPS takes great pride in the wide variety of clubs it offers pupils and in response to parental demand has recently bolstered the number of extra-curricular activities available. With over fifty different clubs to choose from, there really is something for everyone. Clubs are either run by members of the talented and enthusiastic staff, or

taught by highly skilled external club providers. The programme is exciting and diverse including sports clubs, creative clubs, design-based clubs and various performance opportunities. They are open to all children, and they are encouraged to try a wide range of clubs during their time at the School.

“An extensive range of extra-curricular clubs is available to pupils which elicits high levels of attendance, engagement and interest from those who attend. Pupils develop academic, artistic and sporting knowledge and skills when attending activities such as chess, ceramics and judo. Pupils’ educational experience is further enriched through termly theme weeks and a range of interesting visitors to the school. Pupils participate in a wide variety of educational visits and residential trips.”

Pastoral Care



RPPS fosters a sociable family feeling, providing emotional support and security for all pupils and employees. Each pupil receives individual attention both educationally and pastorally. Every member of staff, no matter who they are, has a responsibility for the pastoral care of every individual pupil and a focus on pupil wellbeing is at the heart of all the School does. The behaviour culture is built on the pillars of kindness, respect, courage, integrity and consideration.

Pupils' emotional and mental health are effectively supported by staff who know them well and with whom they enjoy trustful relationships. Pupils receive regular guidance in PSHE lessons and 'healthy mind, healthy body' assemblies in how to achieve secure emotional and mental health. This supports pupils in developing high levels of self-esteem and self-confidence.

"Leaders and managers are highly adept at promoting equality, diversity and inclusion. Leaders have prioritised and encouraged pupils' respect for difference in others and the social and cultural wellbeing of others. As a result, pupils exhibit high levels of wellbeing and enjoy their school experience. They have an exceptionally high-quality understanding of and respect towards people with different backgrounds, faiths and lifestyles, including those with protected characteristics. This is a significant strength in the school."

ISI Inspection Report 2024



The Wider Community

RPPS pupils contribute positively both to the School and the wider community. They raise significant sums of money through charitable activity. School council members produce 'The Raven': a termly magazine that celebrates a wide range of activities both within and beyond the campus. The School's eco-warriors champion sustainability through community initiatives such as 'take a coat, leave a coat'. A Green Flag, awarded in 2022, recognised the considerable efforts made by pupils to promote impactful environmental practices. Year 5 pupils have organised sports festivals for Year 2 pupils both at RPPS and in a local primary school. Pupils regularly and willingly perform for the residents of local care homes.



Governance & Leadership



RPPS has an 'Advisory Governing Body' comprising an elected Teacher Governor, an elected Parent Governor, and a number of individuals chosen for their experience in business and education, with one of the group acting as the Chairperson. This advisory body has no formal financial or management responsibility or powers, but it meets termly and passes on advice to the Head Teacher and to the proprietors (Gardener Schools Group Ltd.). The Parent Governor acts as a spokesperson for parents, liaising regularly with the parent body. Governance and Leadership functions such as Finance, Payroll, HR, IT and Business Development are managed centrally by the Gardener Schools Group.

The Senior Leadership Team currently comprises:

- The Head
- Deputy Head & Head of CPD
- Deputy Head (Teaching & Learning)
- Assistant Head (Teaching & Learning)
- Head of Upper School and DSL
- Head of Lower School

In addition to the Senior Leadership Team, the Head Teacher can draw on considerable and frequent support from other Heads within the Gardener Schools Group, the full complement of class and specialist subject teachers, support staff, learning support assistants and visiting teachers. In addition, directors within the Gardener Schools Group act as mentors to the Heads of each of the Group's Schools.

"The proprietor, directors and advisory board provide effective support and challenge to leaders. Leaders and staff, in turn, are effective in promoting the school's aims and values. Robust oversight is provided by directors of the school who support and challenge leaders to ensure the Standards are effectively implemented."

ISI Inspection Report 2024





The Role

The Directors of Gardener Schools Group are seeking to recruit an inspirational, experienced, enthusiastic, creative and ambitious school leader for Ravenscourt Park Prep School, to join the thriving Group.

The Head will:

Be responsible to the Directors for every aspect of the day-to-day running of the School, including:

- the leadership and management of teaching and non-teaching staff
 - timetabling
 - the academic and co-curricular programmes
 - pastoral care
 - relationships and communications with parents, pupils and the wider community
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- Lead an effective and efficient management team for the School
 - Work with the Directors on financial controls within the School
 - Work with the Directors on the continued: marketing of the School
 - Maintain the School's pupil recruitment, fostering close links with feeder nurseries and organisations
 - Take an active role alongside the Directors in future decisions about vision and innovation, facilities, staffing, the curriculum and enrichment programmes
 - Be the principal conduit for communicating the School's distinctive vision and offer to staff, pupils, parents, prospective parents, feeder schools and the wider community
 - Be the School's representative in a host of external relationships
 - Work in close co-operation with the Heads of Kew Green Prep School, Kew House School and Maida Vale School
 - Establish links with a variety of organisations beyond the school walls including arts and cultural foundations, academic bodies, business groups and museums
 - Maintain a programme of enrichment – visitors, workshops, national and international residential trips – which goes beyond the core hours of the school day, week and term.

The Person

The Directors will be looking for all or most of the personal and professional requirements listed below.

Experience:

- Experience of working in day schools
- Successful senior leadership and management experience in schools, including team building
- Financial management of academic and other budgets
- Accountability to board of governors or directors
- Experience of managing academic and pastoral improvement
- Marketing within an educational context.

Skills and personal qualities:

- Academically authoritative
- Entrepreneurial spirit
- Energy and enthusiasm
- Good communication and public speaking skills – the ability to articulate a vision and enthuse those listening
- Innovative and creative
- Personal warmth and a sense of humour
- Ability to lead staff to fulfil the School's vision
- Good judgement, both of people and situations
- A cool head and a calm problem-solver
- Enjoyment of the company of children and a commitment to the fulfilment of their potential
- Commitment to independent education and a strategic view both of how it can develop and the threats to its viability
- A willingness to roll up their sleeves if the need arises
- An unequivocal conviction that children come first.

Employment Terms & Conditions

The Directors are prepared to offer an attractive and competitive salary to secure the best candidate. A formal contract, detailing Terms and Conditions, will be drawn up on appointment.

- The following provides guidance, without prejudice, on the likely main provisions:
- Pension provision
- Private health cover
- Negotiable fee remission for children.

The appointment will be subject to a successful medical examination, references and safeguarding procedures.



The Application Process

The search for a new Head Teacher for Ravenscourt Park Prep School is being led by RSAcademics and the new post-holder will be selected by a panel chaired by Theo Brehony.

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

Jenny Funnell, Search Consultant: jennyfunnell@rsacademics.com or
Liz Francis, Senior Advisor: lizfrancis@rsacademics.com

The deadline for receipt of the application is 10.00am on Friday 7th November 2025.

Applications should be made electronically to RSAcademics. To submit your application, please upload your documents according to the instructions on the RSAcademics [website](https://www.rsacademics.com).

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

- a completed application form (available alongside this candidate information on the RSAcademics [website](https://www.rsacademics.com))
- a covering letter addressed to Mr Theo Brehony, Managing Director, Gardener Schools Group. The letter should explain your reasons for applying.

If you have any questions about uploading your application documents, please contact Jonathan Barnes, Head of Operations (Leadership Appointments) at: applications@rsacademics.com. Jonathan can also be reached by calling our Head Office on +44 (0) 204 6269 791.

The process is as follows:

- all applications will be acknowledged by e-mail. If you have not received acknowledgement that your application has been received within two working days of sending it, please contact RSAcademics by telephone
- preliminary Interviews will take place with RSAcademics via Teams on Thursday 13th and Friday 14th November 2025.
- long list interviews with the Governors' panel will take place via Teams on Thursday 20th and Friday 21st November 2025.
- short listed candidates will be invited to visit the School prior to the short list interviews.
- short list interviews with the Governing Body will take place at the School on Friday 28th November 2025.

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

About RSAcademics

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.





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