

RS ACADEMICS



THE PERSE SCHOOL CAMBRIDGE

Vice Principal

Required from September 2026

Candidate Information



• Welcome from the Principal

Thank you for considering an application to be Vice Principal of The Perse School, Cambridge.

I have worked at The Perse since 1997 and became Head in 2008. I have stayed because it is a great school with incredible governors, staff and pupils in an amazing city. During my headship, The Perse has grown from being a medium-sized boys' school with a co-ed Sixth Form totalling 900 to one of the largest and most successful fully co-ed day schools in Britain, with just under 1,800 pupils from 3 to 18.

Our sites have been transformed with over £50 million of capital expenditure, including the construction of the Peter Hall Performing Arts Centre and our new swimming, sports and climbing complex.

We achieve the best public exam results of any independent school in the East of England, and we regularly feature at the top of the national league tables for GCSE, A level and Oxbridge outcomes.

Whilst we are renowned for our academic excellence, we are not an exam factory. A Perse education is three-dimensional,

with equal weight given to academic study, extra-curricular opportunity, and pastoral care. We know that for pupils to be successful, they have to be happy, and we celebrate success in all its forms.

The Perse is a values-driven institution. Our mission is to make the future better, and we do this by living our values of endeavour, intellectual curiosity and scholarship, breadth and balance, and valuing one another and the environment in all that we do.

The governors have completed a strategic review which sets out The Perse's ambitions for the next 10 years, including how we will take advantage of the many opportunities that stem from our Cambridge location, our distinguished history, our market-leading position, our values and our 3D educational excellence.

Our Strategic Intentions are ambitious, and they require a rethinking of our leadership and management structure to ensure we have the skills and capabilities needed to successfully turn intentions into realities. I will become the Principal of the 3-18 Perse with overall responsibility for the Junior Division (The Prep and Pelican), TPSCI (our international schools and Cambridge trading division), Alumni and Development, and the Upper School. Whilst I will remain Head of the Upper School, leadership and management of the day-to-day operations will be delegated to

the Vice Principal and the Upper Deputy Heads. The Junior Division will continue to be led by the Head of the Prep, who line manages the Head of the Pelican Pre-Prep.

The Vice Principal is a new 3-18 position. The successful applicant will deputise for the Principal and, as such, will have high-level exposure to all elements of governance, leadership and management. This is a role for somebody who aspires to headship.

Since The Perse is already a very high-achieving school, applicants may wonder why the focus for the Vice Principal role is on school improvement. The answer is simple – great schools are great because of their commitment to continuous improvement. They want to keep getting better in all that they do. The Perse is a great school, but it wears its success modestly. It is resolutely focused on doing the best it can for the children who attend and the communities it serves. We live in fast-moving times, and whilst cherishing all that is excellent in the School, we must also change with the times. We are fortunate to be who we are and where we are, and we must use this good fortune well. The Vice Principal will play a pivotal role in the next phase of our exciting journey.

Ed Elliott
Principal

● The School

Founded in 1615, The Perse School is Cambridge's oldest secondary school and one of the country's leading co-educational independent day schools. It comprises three schools, the Upper, Prep and Pelican, and operates across five sites in and around Cambridge, including the Porson Road and Abingdon playing fields. The Perse educates some 1772 day pupils aged 3 to 18 and employs nearly 500 staff. It has a turnover of £40 million per annum.

The Perse consistently features at the top of league tables for public exam results and university destinations. In a typical year, over 80% of A level entries will be graded A*-A; over 90% of GCSE entries will be graded 9-7, and 30-40 pupils will receive Oxbridge offers, with a

similar number gaining entry to medical schools. We are committed to delivering an excellent holistic education with equal weight given to the academic, extra-curricular, and pastoral dimensions. Art, drama, music, outdoor pursuits and sport are all centres of excellence.

All three Perse schools are consistently and significantly oversubscribed, and The Perse is in strong financial health.

The Perse operates a wholly owned trading subsidiary – TPSCI. TPSCI oversees the School's trading activities in Cambridge, which include summer schools, holiday camps, a learn to climb programme and swimming lessons. TPSCI also has responsibility for our international franchise school operations. The Perse School Singapore opened in January 2025 and already has over 650 pupils from Nursery to Year 10.





● Our Location

The three schools are located across attractive sites in Cambridge. Based in a former Perse boarding house, the Pelican (3–7 years) provides a nurturing environment for the School's youngest children. Set within 7 acres of beautiful parkland, the Prep (7–11) benefits from 9 acres of playing fields on its doorstep, including a full-sized all-weather pitch. The Upper School (11–16 years) and Sixth Form is situated in an attractive 27-acre site with

space, as well as benefitting from 45 acres of outdoor space at Little Abington, just 15 minutes from the School.

Cambridge offers a unique blend of history, innovation, and academic excellence, boasting beautiful architecture, picturesque parks, and the scenic River Cam. It is a perfectly sized city – large enough to support a vibrant cultural scene, but small enough to be a safe, green community. The city is well connected, with easy access to London and Stansted Airport.

Vision and Values

The Perse is an ambitious and supportive school where staff and pupils have high expectations of themselves and each other. We aim to be the best we can reasonably be, both in attainment and conduct, so we can make the future better.

We do this by being:

- An inspiring and aspirational school that promotes intellectual curiosity, nurtures scholarship, and fosters a lifelong love of learning through outstanding teaching, a stimulating curriculum and by making the most of our Cambridge location.
- A caring school that supports pupils, staff, volunteers, the wider community, and the environment by maintaining high professional standards, being kind and considerate, valuing diversity and acting sustainably.
- A balanced school that harmonises the academic, pastoral, and extra-curricular to enable the growth and flourishing of young people equipped with the agency, life skills, character, responsibility, resilience and perspective needed to lead happy and successful lives.

- A philanthropic school that, through fees assistance, partnerships, community projects and charitable giving, creates opportunities and provides support to those in need.
- An ambitious, innovative and reflective school that is committed to high standards and continuous improvement.

To be at The Perse is to care. We care for our pupils, we care for each other, we care for our school, we care for the wider community and the environment, and we care about all that we do.

All Perse pupils and staff are expected to adhere to the School’s values that are shown on the following page.

Safeguarding

The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Further information on The Perse can be found at: [The Perse School Cambridge](#)

We value
Endeavour



Which means we
Aim high and challenge ourselves
Try our best and are not afraid to make mistakes

So we
Aim to be the best we can reasonably be
Set high standards and value the efforts people make to reach them
Are organised and punctual
Develop the resilience needed to embrace setbacks as learning opportunities
Win and lose honourably and graciously
Lead by example

We value
Breadth and balance



Which means we
Are involved, engaged and committed
Take full advantage of the opportunities we are given

So we
Take on personal responsibility
Learn to play our part in a team
Honour our commitments
Broaden our horizons by trying new activities
Find enjoyment and personal development in extra curricular learning
Keep a sense of perspective

We value
Intellectual curiosity and scholarship



Which means we
Love learning, thinking deeply and being creative
Welcome reasoned debate

So we
Develop a lifelong love of learning, acquiring the qualities and skills needed for successful study
Go beyond the curriculum and exam specifications
Celebrate original thought, research and creativity
Learn to communicate well both orally and in writing
Invite challenge; listen to and value other perspectives
Reflect on our learning to become more effective learners

We value
One another and our environment



Which means we
Each play our part in creating a kind and considerate community
Care for ourselves, each other, and those in need

So we
Are honest, kind, courteous, and caring in all we do
Balance the needs of the individual and the community
Act responsibly to keep ourselves and others safe and healthy
Look after the school and wider environment
Acknowledge and appreciate the contributions of others, treat all fairly, and recognise that diversity is a strength





• The Role

The appointment of Vice Principal, which is a new position within The Perse School, reflects the strategic intents and ambitions of the School and recognises the requirement to restructure its leadership and management.

The Vice Principal will report to the Principal and will deputise for the Principal in all matters, being the second most senior role across The Perse School as a whole.

The Vice Principal will work very closely with the Principal and governors on the formulation and implementation of The Perse's Strategic Intents, which inform the School Development Plans.

The Vice Principal will lead on school standards and school improvement across the 3-18 Perse with a particular focus on the Upper School.



Key Duties

- Responsible to the Principal for the day-to-day running of the Upper School to maximise pupil wellbeing, personal development, progress and attainment.
- Using the Principal's delegated authority to make decisions in relation to teacher probation, teacher conduct and performance, teacher salary threshold progressions, pupil behaviour and discipline, and parental complaints, in accordance with School Policies and Procedures.
- Line management of
 - Assistant Head (Inspection and Compliance);
 - Assistant Head (Inclusion, Equality and Diversity);
 - Director of Digital Strategy;
 - Special Project Developer;
 - A selection of Heads of Department.
- Leading on improving school performance by producing the Upper School Development Plan, which will be informed by quality assurance, best practice and research, and will be in line with the School's Strategic Intent.
- Devising, implementing and reviewing the data from pupil voice and quality assurance programmes (both quantitative and qualitative), including surveys, focus groups, tracking data, lesson and activity observations. Using this data to identify and inform approaches to school improvement.
- Overseeing the School's Digital Strategy to ensure that digital technologies, including AI, enhance teaching, learning and administration in ways that benefit pupils, staff and the School.
- Overseeing compliance with Independent School Standards and other regulatory requirements.
- Implementing ISI and other professional body recommendations to improve school standards.

- Overseeing 3-18 systems, policies and practices to ensure they are compliant, joined up, efficient, efficacious and deliver high standards.
- Leading the programme of Upper teaching staff meetings and twilight training as part of school improvement.
- Overseeing the 3-18 teaching staff salary structure to ensure it meets recruitment, retention, and school improvement objectives.
- Keeping abreast of research and best practice to identify cost-effective, efficacious, and relevant forms of school improvement.
- Overseeing inclusion, equality and diversity issues to ensure a positive and supportive school culture where everybody can be their best.
- Carrying out "best-value" evaluations to ensure that Perse provision is high quality, cost effective, aligned with the market and with The Perse's Strategic Intent and Development Plans.
- Ensuring that staff time and school resources are being deployed efficaciously in areas likely to generate significant returns that align with The Perse's Strategic Intent and Development Plans.
- Taking a leading role in the School Crisis Management Plan, including acting as a Gold Command.
- Contributing to the academic curriculum and demonstrating excellence in classroom practice, teaching 10%-15% of a full timetable and attending relevant academic meetings, the details to be agreed with the successful candidate.
- Attending evening events and Saturday duties (as required). Being available at designated times in the school holidays to provide home contact support for school trips.



The Person

The successful candidate will be an exceptional leader who will enjoy a high level of exposure to all elements of governance, leadership and management and who aspires to headship in due course.

Their personal qualities, qualifications and experience will include the following.

Essential

- University degree and teaching qualification.
- Significant and successful school leadership experience at either the Deputy or Assistant Head level.
- Experience of successful compliance, quality assurance, and school improvement programmes.
- Strong data analysis and evaluation skills.
- A good judge of people, systems and structures.
- Excellent alignment with the vision, values, ethos and approach of The Perse School.
- A strong sense of vocation, a capacity for hard work and a willingness to lead by example.

- Outstanding interpersonal skills, including the ability to listen well, communicate clearly, and motivate others to be their best.
- An inspiring leader who combines clarity of thought and vision with empathy, fairness, care, and a sense of humour.
- An excellent intellect that sees both the big picture and the small detail, with the ability to prioritise and successfully manage multiple workstreams simultaneously.
- Calm and clear at all times and especially when under pressure.
- Professional integrity.
- Flexible, adaptable and resilient.
- Proactive, driven and tenacious but also collaborative and team oriented.
- Committed to the safeguarding, wellbeing and development of pupils.

Desirable

- Experience as a school inspector, e.g. as a Team Inspector or Reporting Inspector for ISI.

● Terms of Employment

The Vice Principal is the number two position at one of Britain's top 3-18 independent day schools. This is an exciting, challenging and rewarding position, and the package reflects this. You will gain excellent financial and employee benefits, professional growth, and the chance to contribute to a genuinely high-achieving community both academically and culturally. Working hours will be commensurate with the seniority of the role and will include evenings and weekends as required.

A highly competitive salary will be offered in line with skills, abilities and experience. Our salary year normally runs from 1st September to 31st August, and our salary scale is set significantly above the maintained sector to recognise the high levels of commitment and expertise required of all staff. Assistance with relocation expenses is provided.

We offer school tuition fee remission for children to the Pre-Prep, Prep or Senior Schools (subject to passing admission test requirements). Fee remission does not

apply to additional activities such as early/late stay, summer schools, trips, etc.

Membership of a group personal pension scheme (including death in service benefit) with generous employer contributions of 23.68% is provided. Employees can opt to vary their employer contribution rates, subject to a minimum contribution of 13.75% with the difference taken as a non-pensionable income supplement.

We actively promote personal and professional development opportunities, aiming to be a leading employer of choice where staff feel valued, respected, motivated, and engaged in purposeful work. We have a strong commitment to inclusion, equality and diversity, so all staff feel they belong and are valued.

Working conditions are excellent, with a beautifully maintained campus and access to the gym and swimming pool. Free lunches are provided.

We provide a cycle-to-work scheme and free on-site parking (subject to availability).

We also provide an external employee assistance scheme in addition to internal support networks.





Founded in 2002 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. 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.

Application Process

The search for the Vice Principal of The Perse School, Cambridge, is being led by RSAcademics Ltd.

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

Sarah Glencross, Head of Senior Schools Search:
sarahglencross@rsacademics.com

Michael Spens, Senior Advisor:
michaelspens@rsacademics.com

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 Ed Elliott, Principal of The Perse School. The letter should explain your reasons for applying.

The deadline for receipt of applications is 10.00am UK time on Tuesday 28 October 2025.

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 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 Teams during the week commencing Monday 3 November 2025.
- Longlist interviews will take place at the School on Friday 14 November 2025.
- Shortlist interviews will take place at the School on Friday 21 November 2025.

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

The School reserves the right to make an appointment before the closing date; candidates are therefore encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

The School is committed to diversity and inclusion and welcomes applications from staff from all backgrounds.

