

# WATFORD GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Headteacher Recruitment Pack



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# WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the headteacher role at Watford Grammar School for Girls. This exciting opportunity to build on the school's significant strengths and success has arisen following the decision of our current headteacher to step down after 18 years serving the school including 8 years as head. I hope you find this information pack a helpful introduction to our school.

Watford Grammar School for Girls is a thriving community providing an exceptional quality of education to all our students. We take pride in our history and traditions, which provides a strong sense of identity and belonging, whilst simultaneously embracing contemporary values and forward-thinking perspectives. This combination of respect for tradition and a modern outlook prepares our students to become confident, articulate and well-rounded individuals equipped to succeed in a rapidly changing world.

The trustees are proud to be part of an "outstanding" school. We believe that a key part of this success is a shared commitment to excellence in both academic and co-curricular activities, our shared values that define a "Watford Girl" and our strong belief in our maxim: "I can do it and I will do it".

We are seeking a headteacher who will appreciate our school's uniqueness and bring the enthusiasm, drive and energy to add further value. The successful candidate will have a clear understanding of the current financial challenges facing schools and a proven track record of strategic leadership and sustainable school improvement.

The board of trustees is experienced and hardworking, we recognise that these are challenging times for school leaders and we are committed to fully supporting the new headteacher to lead our school forward.

The closing date for applications is 15th January 2026. For further information about our school, please visit our website at [www.watfordgrammarschoolforgirls.org.uk](http://www.watfordgrammarschoolforgirls.org.uk)

To discuss the role, please contact me at [governor.c.woods@watfordgirls.herts.sch.uk](mailto:governor.c.woods@watfordgirls.herts.sch.uk)

We would encourage interested applicants to arrange a visit to the school by contacting Mrs Prajapati at [b.prajapati@watfordgirls.herts.sch.uk](mailto:b.prajapati@watfordgirls.herts.sch.uk)

Thank you for your interest in Watford Grammar School for Girls. We look forward to receiving applications from motivated candidates eager to take on this important and rewarding leadership opportunity.

Yours sincerely,

Camilla Woods

Chair of Board of Trustees



# LETTER FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in becoming the next headteacher of Watford Grammar School for Girls. Leading this remarkable school, described by Ofsted in March 2024 as 'remarkable', has been the greatest privilege of my professional life. I am delighted that you are considering joining this exceptional community with a shared vision to 'create a sustainable and equitable' society.

Watford Grammar School for Girls has a strong sense of community and a long history of girls' education, founded by Dame Elizabeth Fuller in 1704. We are proud of our traditions and our ability to adapt to the needs of modern education. From Founders' Day in May to the distinctive gold shirts the legacy of generations of women pervades the corridors and lives of our school.

Our student body is partially selective, with 1,429 students, approximately 400 of whom are in the sixth form. We are a school with a Christian character and with 87% of our students coming from ethnically diverse backgrounds, we embrace the challenge of diversity through our curriculum, strong pastoral teams and popular Faith and interfaith societies.

Sixth form students are actively involved in the life of the whole school, with the Head Girl Team leading a large Prefect team to organise daily assemblies and events such as Year 7 and Year 8 discos. Our outcomes speak for themselves: 12 Oxbridge places in 2024 and 7 in 2025, 53% progressing to Russell Group universities or elite apprenticeships and between 12–16 students annually pursuing Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary degrees.

Our staff body is highly professional and committed to the vision of the school. Progress 8 places WGGs at the top of tables in Hertfordshire and nationally. The most achieved grade is a 9 at GCSE and an A at A Level. The whole school development of teaching and learning through Metacognition and Habits of the Mind, is creating a common language and practice in classrooms. We are fortunate to attract skilled, experienced and passionate staff in all areas. There is good quality leadership at all levels, with a subjects led by Department Heads who have the autonomy to lead and inspire mastery in their areas.

Our population of vulnerable students is relatively small but served well. Parents and students feel safe and are very positive about the support received. SEND students make excellent progress at A Level.





We have strong community links, an active and engaged Trustee (Governor) Body and direct links with Watford Grammar School for Boys, including shared A Level classes and regular joint events. Our alumni, the Old Grammarians, are regularly involved in school life, reflecting the depth of our community ties.

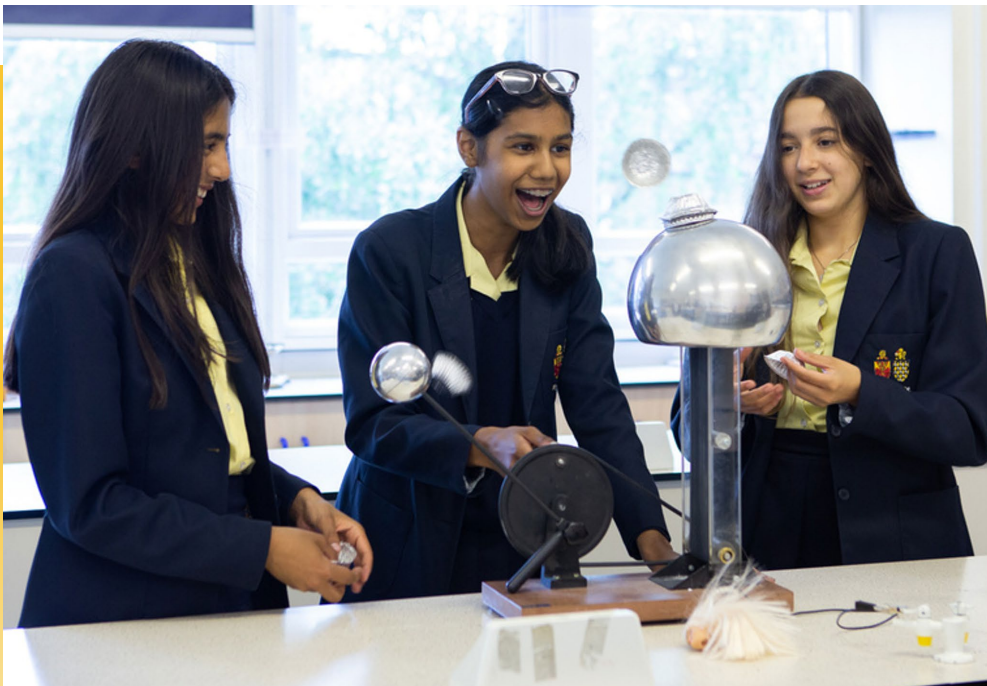
Like the majority of state schools, we face financial constraints caused by reduced funding and increasing expenses. We have been implementing a Sustainable Staffing Plan for at least the last year to ensure stability and continued excellence.

Leaving Watford Grammar School for Girls is bittersweet. It has been the privilege of my working life to lead this wonderful school. If you are fortunate enough to be appointed as Headteacher, please take care of it - it means so much to so many. Good luck with your application.

Best wishes

Sylvia Tai

Headteacher  
Watford Grammar School for Girls





# KEY FACTS AND STATISTICS



1429  
Students  
on roll



11- 18  
Age Range



Single Academy Trust



Based in  
Watford,  
Hertfordshire



Outstanding  
March 2024

Quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour & attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership & management	Outstanding
Sixth Form provision	Outstanding

34.8%

Of pupils speak  
English as an  
additional  
language

5.3%

Of pupils on  
the SEND  
Register

6.5%

Of pupils  
receive free  
school  
meals

5.9%

Of pupils  
are eligible  
for Pupil  
Premium



# ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

Watford Grammar School for Girls is an outstanding academy with a proud heritage and a dynamic future. Located in the heart of Watford, Hertfordshire, the school benefits from excellent transport links to London and the surrounding counties, making it easily accessible to a diverse community.

Founded in 1704 by Dame Elizabeth Fuller, the school has grown from its origins as a charity school into a leading institution that blends tradition with innovation. Today, we educate over 1,400 students aged 11–18, including a thriving sixth form.

We are partially selective, admitting a proportion of students based on academic ability and musical aptitude. We are consistently rated **Outstanding** by Ofsted.

At Watford Grammar School for Girls, we offer a rich and challenging academic curriculum led by expert teachers, complemented by strong pastoral care and an extensive co-curricular programme. Our provision includes over 100 clubs and societies, with exceptionally high participation rates, ensuring that every student can find something to inspire and challenge them. From music, drama and art to a wide range of sports, academic societies and leadership programmes, there is something for everyone.

Students also enjoy memorable trips and experiences, including the Year 7 PGL residential, ski trips and a variety of day visits that broaden horizons and build friendships. Our vibrant activities encourage creativity, teamwork and personal growth, helping students develop confidence and skills that last a lifetime.

We are proud of the strong sense of community shared by staff and students, underpinned by excellent behaviour and a culture of hard work both in and beyond the classroom.

Our historic setting combines modern facilities with characterful architecture, creating an inspiring environment for learning. We are proud of our identity as a girls' school while maintaining close links with Watford Grammar School for Boys, sharing a common foundation and many joint opportunities.

Joining Watford Grammar School for Girls means becoming part of a vibrant, supportive community that honours its history while embracing innovation to prepare students for the challenges of the future.





# OUR VISION AND AIMS

As a girls' school with a proud history, we strive to empower our community to become innovators, drivers of change and leaders to create a more equitable and sustainable society.

Our core values of **creativity**, **curiosity**, **collaboration**, **compassion** and **courage** are integral to the daily life of the school.







## OUR SCHOOL MAXIM

*"I can do it and  
I will do it"*



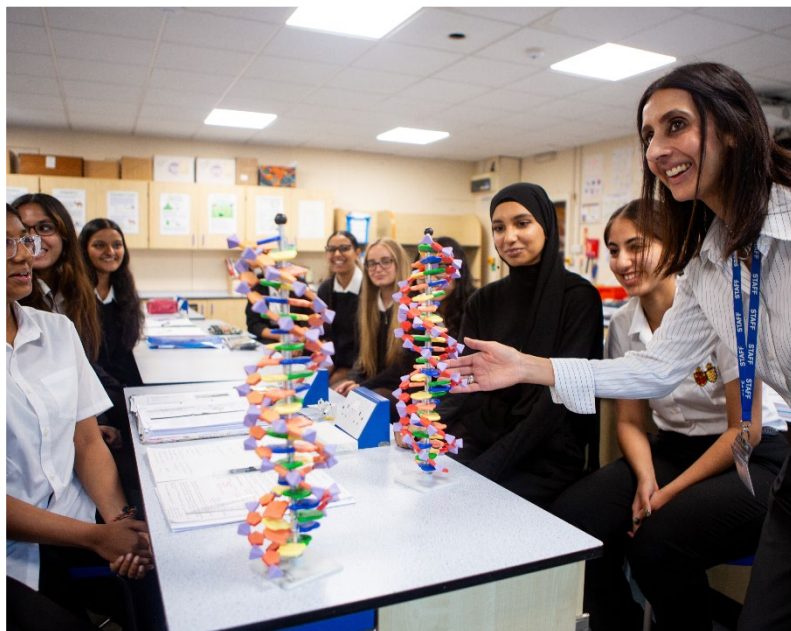
Guides students through their own Watford Girls journey



# EXPECTATIONS OF OUR NEW HEADTEACHER

As our Headteacher you will:

- **Be a visible and approachable** leader who inspires confidence and fosters a collaborative culture across staff, students, trustees and the wider community
- **Articulate a clear and ambitious vision** for the school, providing strategic direction and leading change effectively and successfully
- **Strengthen the school's high academic standards** and reputation while ensuring inclusion and high expectations for all students
- **Demonstrate transparency and openness**, welcoming challenge and encouraging constructive dialogue at all levels
- **Ensure high-quality teaching and learning across all key stages**, supported by robust quality assurance and evidence-based improvement strategies
- **Champion staff wellbeing and professional development**, balancing high expectations with empathy and support
- **Manage school finances responsibly**, prioritising sustainability and efficient resource allocation
- **Engage positively with parents, trustees and the local community**, strengthening partnerships and communication





# WHAT WE CAN OFFER

- **A school with a proud heritage** dating back to 1704 and a reputation for academic excellence
- **A thriving, high-achieving community** of over 1,400 students, including a vibrant sixth form
- **Dedicated, experienced staff** who are committed to delivering outstanding teaching and learning
- **A positive and respectful culture** where students are enthusiastic, motivated and eager to learn
- **Strong partnerships with parents and the wider community**, fostering collaboration and shared success
- **Excellent facilities** that combine historic character with modern resources to support high-quality education
- **A wide-ranging co-curricular programme**, including music, drama, sport and leadership opportunities
- **A supportive board of trustees and engaged parent community**, working together to sustain the school's success





# PERSON SPECIFICATION

To be considered for shortlisting, candidates must clearly demonstrate how they meet the essential criteria outlined in the Person Specification below.

- Please structure your supporting statement using the **STAR format** (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to provide **clear, evidence-based examples of your experience and impact**
- If shortlisted, we will assess additional aspects of school leadership - including alignment with the **Headteacher Standards (2020)** and the **specific needs of our school** - through a series of tasks and a formal interview during the assessment day

## Qualifications, knowledge and experience

- Degree and qualified teacher status
- Experience of working with/ teaching in KS3/ KS4/KS5 students and staff
- Recent and significant school leadership experience as Headteacher, Deputy headteacher or equivalent
- Thorough understanding of current legislation, guidance and best practice for child protection, including safer recruitment and commitment to safeguarding as part of the duty of care

## Strategic Leadership and School improvement

- Experience of inspiring, enabling and motivating others, promoting positive and respectful relationships across the school
- Proven ability to articulate a clear and inspiring vision for the future, provide strategic direction for staff, students, and the wider community, and bring others with them in embracing and implementing change successfully
- Maintain a culture of and demonstrate a commitment to high expectations; fostering staff professionalism and integrity and ensuring accountability for all contributions to the school community
- Maintain high expectations for all students - academically, personally, and socially - ensuring they thrive in school and beyond



## Teaching, learning & curriculum

- Experience of designing and implementing a broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum, with assessment strategies that support progress for all learners, and readiness to adapt practice in line with the 2025 Curriculum and Assessment Review
- Deep understanding of high-quality teaching and learning across KS3/ KS4/ KS5
- Absolute commitment to inclusion and high expectations for all students, underpinned by knowledge and experience of supporting students with SEND, disadvantaged students and higher attainers
- Reviews and monitors progress against agreed, measurable targets

## Accountability, Governance & Working in partnership

- Understand the importance of managing school finances effectively and their contribution to school development and student outcomes
- Able to assimilate and manage financial and other data to achieve sound financial decision-making
- Understands and welcomes the role of effective governance, upholding accountability while working openly and transparently with the Trust and wider stakeholders to improve student outcomes
- Demonstrates ability to engage positively with parents, carers and the wider community to support student outcomes

## Personal qualities/ethics and professional conduct

- Passion for education, coupled with high levels of integrity, resilience and emotional intelligence
- Demonstrates resilience and composure under pressure, maintaining clarity of thought and making thoughtful, effective decisions in challenging circumstances
- Able to adopt a dynamic and flexible approach in response to changing needs and priorities
- Works in partnership with the Central Team and Trust Board in an open and transparent way
- Strategic and collaborative decision-maker, willing to take considered risks and open-minded in listening to and valuing the views of others





# JOB DESCRIPTION

## Main Purpose

The core purpose of the Headteacher is to provide professional leadership and management of the school. This will promote a secure foundation from which to achieve high standards in all areas of the school's work.

To achieve this success, the Headteacher must:

- Lead the delivery of high-quality education by effectively managing teaching and learning and using personalised approaches to enable every pupil to thrive and achieve their full potential
- Establish and sustain the school's ethos and strategic direction together with the board of trustees and through consultation with the school community
- Understand and welcome the role of effective governance, upholding their obligation to give account and accept responsibility
- Establish and oversee systems, processes and policies so the school can operate effectively
- Identify problems and barriers to school effectiveness and develop strategies for school improvement that are realistic, timely and suited to the school
- Ensure school improvement strategies are effectively implemented
- Monitor progress towards achieving the school's aims and objectives
- Allocate financial resources appropriately, efficiently and effectively
- Meet the expectations set out in the [National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers](#) and [School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document \(STPCD\)](#)
- Take strategic and operational responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people, ensuring a culture of vigilance and compliance across the school



### **Key responsibilities:**

- Lead the implementation of the school's vision and values through strategic leadership and decision-making and daily interactions with pupils, staff and the wider community
- Secure the understanding and commitment of all members of the school community to the school's strategic direction, with particular focus on those in positions of responsibility
- Drive creativity, innovation and effective use of technologies among colleagues to achieve excellence
- Develop and implement the agreed School Development Plan
- Oversee the operational efficiency, effectiveness and safety of the school on a day-to-day basis, including arrangements for behaviour, safeguarding, SEND, disadvantaged students and vulnerable learners

### **School Culture and Behaviour**

- Create a culture where pupils experience a positive and enriching school life
- Encourage high standards of behaviour from pupils, built on rules and routines that are understood by staff and pupils and clearly demonstrated by all adults in school
- Use consistent and fair approaches to managing behaviour in line with the school's behaviour policy

### **Leading Teaching and Learning**

- Ensure high-quality teaching across all subjects and phases, informed by evidence
- Ensure curriculum intent and delivery meet the highest standards, driving strong outcomes for all pupils
- Use valid, reliable and proportionate approaches to assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum

### **Additional and Special Educational Needs (SEND)**

- Promote a culture and practices that enable all pupils to access the curriculum
- Have ambitious expectations for all pupils with SEN and disabilities
- Ensure effective collaboration with parents, carers and external professionals to identify additional needs and implement appropriate support and adaptations
- Oversee the school fulfils statutory duties regarding the SEND Code of Practice

### **Health and Safety:**

- Oversee the development and implementation of policies and procedures relating to child protection, health and safety, confidentiality, security, data protection; and ensure that all concerns are recorded and reported appropriately
- Lead a culture that prioritises the safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff
- Lead behaviour systems that foster a safe, respectful and productive learning environment.
- Ensure effective management of staff workload in line with school policies and wellbeing priorities



## **Management of Resources and Communication**

- Prioritise and allocate financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and robust procedures for financial management and accountability
- Implement and maintain effective processes to identify, manage and mitigate risk
- Develop and implement policies for the procurement, use and protection of all resources, including teaching material, equipment and accommodation
- Establish clear and effective communication across staff teams and with all stakeholders
- Consult and communicate with parents about the school and the progress of their children, in particular by arranging regular meetings between parents and teachers
- Be the school's official correspondent with the Council, external agencies, other schools, parents and the wider community
- Lead the recruitment, selection, appointment, management and professional development of teaching and support staff
- Ensure that the range, quality and use of available resources is monitored, evaluated and reviewed to improve the quality of education for all children and provide value for money

## **Working with colleagues and professional development:**

- Build and maintain effective working relationships with staff, parents, external agencies, other educational settings, and the wider community, and representatives of external agencies with rights to operate in relation to the school
- Engage in the school's appraisal procedures
- Undertake ongoing professional development to enhance leadership and performance
- Lead the appraisal and professional development of others

## **Additional Notes**

The Headteacher is expected to operate within the parameters of the National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers and School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD).

The role is defined as Regulated Activity and subject to an enhanced DBS, children's barred list check and satisfactory references.

The duties listed are not an exhaustive list of requirements. The specific nature and balance of these responsibilities will vary according to the needs of the school.

This job description will be reviewed annually as part of the performance management programme.

The headteacher will have access to a range of professional development activities, including conferences, support groups and appropriate training courses.



# IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Pay range:	£99,537 - £129,880 L27–L38 Fringe
Start date:	September 2026
Closing date:	Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> January 2026 at midday
Shortlisting date:	Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> January 2026
Interview dates:	Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> and Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> February 2026
To discuss the role:	Please contact Camilla Woods, Chair of Trustees, at <a href="mailto:governor.c.woods@watfordgirls.herts.sch.uk">governor.c.woods@watfordgirls.herts.sch.uk</a> to arrange a suitable time.
Visits to the school:	We would encourage interested applicants to arrange a visit to the school by contacting Mrs Prajapati <a href="mailto:b.prajapati@watfordgirls.herts.sch.uk">b.prajapati@watfordgirls.herts.sch.uk</a>
School website:	<a href="http://www.watfordgrammarschoolforgirls.org.uk">www.watfordgrammarschoolforgirls.org.uk</a>
School address:	Lady's Close, Watford, Hertfordshire WD18 0AE Tel: 01923 223403



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

Appointment to this post is subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check as well as other pre-appointment checks, including an online check, as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025).

To help us meet our high standards and aspirations of a fully diverse and inclusive workplace, we strongly encourage suitably qualified applicants from all backgrounds to apply and to join us.



# APPLICATION PROCESS

## How to apply:

This recruitment is managed by **HFL Education**, in line with the latest guidance on safer recruitment. Please apply using the standard online application form. CVs will not be considered. Should you need support, please contact **[leadership.recruitment@hfleducation.org](mailto:leadership.recruitment@hfleducation.org)**. Please ask us if you require information about this vacancy in an alternative format..

## Application form:

Applicants must use the standard application form provided (CVs are not accepted). Please complete all aspects of the form fully. Include your full work history, explaining any gaps since leaving school education, and include any relevant training you have completed, particularly those in recent years which have helped to prepare you for headship.

## Person specification and personal statement:

When writing your personal statement, it is important you address each of the requirements in the person specification. Be sure to evidence additional aspects such as training and qualifications together with your background and experience.

You should use the **STAR format** (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to provide **clear, evidence-based examples of experience and impact**.

## References:

In line with safer recruitment guidance, we normally request references after shortlisting. Please make sure your referees are aware of your application and are able to provide a swift turn around if needed. Preferred referees are your last two employers, and you should provide their official organisation email address for us to contact. One referee will be your last Headteacher or Chair of Governors/Trustees.







## WATFORD GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Lady's Close, Watford  
Hertfordshire WD18 0AE

01923 223403

[www.watfordgrammarschoolforgirls.org.uk](http://www.watfordgrammarschoolforgirls.org.uk)