



Candidate Pack

Headteacher

Newstead Wood School



NEWSTEAD WOOD SCHOOL

"creating opportunities for success"





Welcome

Thank you very much for your interest in becoming Headteacher of Newstead Wood School.

Newstead Wood School is a selective girls' grammar school, with a co-educational sixth form, and a long and distinguished history. Founded in 1957 and located in Orpington, it is widely recognised as one of the highest-performing state schools in London and nationally, with a strong track record of exceptional outcomes at both GCSE and A-Level.

This success is underpinned by an ambitious curriculum, expert teaching and a culture of intellectual curiosity and aspiration that enables pupils to thrive and progress to leading universities and professions. Alongside this academic strength, the school offers a rich breadth of opportunity beyond the classroom, ensuring that pupils develop as confident, articulate and well-rounded young people.

While Newstead Wood School has many strengths, we are equally ambitious about its future. We believe there is significant potential to build on the school's success: strengthening teaching and learning, widening access to its excellent provision - particularly for disadvantaged pupils - and extending its influence within the Trust and beyond. This is an outstanding opportunity for a leader with the vision and determination to shape the school's next phase. The new Headteacher will bring a strong track record of excellence alongside the integrity, tenacity and compassion to lead this exceptional community, sustaining its success while driving further improvement.

United Learning is a big group of schools – with over 75,000 pupils and more than 10,000 staff – so we have the capacity to support you educationally and operationally. At the same time, we are values-led and base all that we do on good relationships, so you will be joining a big family. Reporting directly to the Regional Director, you will be supported both personally and professionally, benefitting from the strength of a national Group who will support your development and that of your staff and school. United Learning values local governance and you will be working with the Local Governing Body to deliver continuous school improvement.

We are committed to fairness, diversity and inclusion. We are currently working hard to improve representation of black, Asian and minority ethnic leaders at headship level and to raise our proportion of women leaders to match their representation in our wider workforce. Whoever you are, if you have a strong track record of improving young people's education and a drive to do more, we very much look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jon Coles". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional but personal style.

Sir Jon Coles, Chief Executive

The School

Newstead Wood School is a selective girls' grammar school for over 1,250 pupils aged 11–18, with a co-educational sixth form, located in Orpington within the London Borough of Bromley. It has a long-standing reputation as one of the highest-performing state schools in London and nationally, combining exceptional academic outcomes with a firm commitment to inclusion and wellbeing. The successful candidate will inherit a school with a strong culture of aspiration, intellectual curiosity and achievement, providing secure foundations for the next phase of development.

Situated on an attractive 22-acre site, the school offers an inspiring environment in which pupils learn, thrive and grow. Expansive green grounds and dedicated teaching spaces, including specialist facilities for music and computing, reflect the breadth and ambition of the school's provision. A distinctive feature is the school's ownership of the Bromley Tennis Centre, giving pupils access to exceptional sporting opportunities rarely found in the state sector.

Recent developments, including a courtyard-style quad, a dedicated sixth form centre and a refurbished library, further enhance the learning environment and provide high-quality spaces for study and social interaction. An on-site Costa Coffee facility is a valued addition to the Sixth Form and wider school community.

Culture, Curriculum and Pupil Experience

The school's ethos is underpinned by its motto, Fortitudine Crescamus ("May we grow in strength"), reflecting a commitment to developing resilient, confident and independent young people. Leaders set consistently high expectations, realised through an ambitious, carefully sequenced curriculum and a culture that encourages every pupil to excel and pursue the highest aspirations.

The curriculum is deliberately broad and balanced, designed as a coherent seven-year journey from Year 7 through to Sixth Form. It combines strong academic foundations with extensive co-curricular and enrichment opportunities, ensuring pupils develop as well-rounded individuals. A wide-ranging elective programme enables pupils to explore interests beyond the classroom, while participation in activities such as performing arts, sport, debating, volunteering and enterprise is a defining feature of school life.

There is a strong emphasis on developing the whole pupil, with plentiful opportunities for leadership, collaboration and service.

Clubs and societies sit alongside enrichment opportunities such as productions, national competitions and international visits. Recent successes include national sporting achievements, music tours and participation in global leadership events.

Alongside these strengths, leaders are committed to further strengthening the quality and consistency of teaching and learning, ensuring that excellence is embedded across all areas of the school's work.

Outcomes and Post-16 Excellence

Academic outcomes at Newstead Wood School are consistently exceptional. Pupils achieve highly at GCSE and A-Level and progress to leading universities, including significant numbers each year securing places at Oxford and Cambridge and other Russell Group institutions. This sustained success reflects both high starting points and the significant value added through effective teaching, enrichment and guidance.

The Sixth Form is a particular strength, providing an ambitious and intellectually vibrant environment in which pupils are supported to achieve excellent outcomes and make aspirational next-step choices. Looking ahead, there is a clear ambition to secure even greater consistency across all subjects, particularly within the school's highly popular STEM offer. The vision is for the Sixth Form to be a centre of excellence for Key Stage 5 provision, both within the school and across the wider Group.

Community, Partnerships and Global Outlook

The strength of the Newstead Wood School community is reflected in its highly engaged alumni network. Former pupils maintain strong links with the school, regularly returning to mentor pupils, support careers education and contribute to enrichment opportunities.

Notable alumni include Emma Raducanu, Dina Asher-Smith, Gemma Chan and Kim Medcalf, providing current pupils with valuable inspiration and insight into a wide range of professional pathways. The school is also part of the International Coalition of Girls' Schools, a global network committed to empowering young women to engage with the world's challenges with confidence, competence and empathy.

As part of United Learning, Newstead Wood School benefits from being within a strong national group that prioritises collaboration, professional development and the sharing of best practice, while retaining its distinctive identity. The exceptional standards achieved at Newstead Wood School also provide a unique opportunity to support leadership development, enabling emerging leaders to experience and learn from a culture of excellence.

Safeguarding and wellbeing are central to the school's work. Ofsted recognises that pupils feel safe, are well supported, and benefit from a strong emphasis on inclusion alongside academic success. The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, benefit fully from the opportunities available.

The Opportunity

Newstead Wood School is a school with considerable strengths and a clear sense of purpose, yet one that is firmly committed to continuous improvement. We believe its best days lie ahead. There is a strong ambition to ensure that more pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, benefit fully from the school's excellent provision, and to continue strengthening key areas such as teaching and learning.

The next Headteacher will lead a high-performing, oversubscribed school with a national reputation, while also shaping the next phase

of its development. We believe the school can play a leading role within United Learning and beyond, with clear opportunities to build on existing excellence and extend its influence. This is an exciting opportunity for a forward-thinking and ambitious leader. We are looking for someone who is motivated not only by sustaining success, but by driving further improvement. This is a school ready for transformative leadership, and the Group is fully committed to supporting the Headteacher in delivering this ambition.

Leadership Support and Development

The role combines the autonomy of leading an individual school with the benefits of working as part of a national group. United Learning prioritises collaboration, values shared practice and provides high-quality professional development. Leaders are supported by an experienced Regional Director, subject advisers and central services including finance, HR, estate and many more. The Group's knowledge-rich curriculum and shared assessment framework provide valuable insight and benchmarking to support improvement.

The successful candidate will join a strong network of Headteachers, benefiting from professional challenge, support and collaboration, and will be aligned with the United Learning Way.

Prospective candidates are encouraged to explore the school [website](#) to gain further insight into its ethos and values. We strongly recommend arranging an informal visit prior to application.

To arrange a visit or confidential discussion, please contact Geoff Morris, Head of Leadership Recruitment, on 07811 345 638 or at geoff.morris@unitedlearning.org.uk



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About United Learning

United Learning is a Group of schools which aims to provide excellent education to children and young people across the country. We seek to improve the life chances of all the children and young people we serve and make it our mission to bring out ‘the best in everyone’ – pupils, staff, parents, and the wider community. We uniquely comprise schools in both the state and the independent sectors.

As a Group, we can offer more to both staff and young people than any single school could offer alone. The growing range of outstanding group-wide activities that we can provide will mean that more young people will have truly exceptional and inspiring experiences. We believe that our Group contains the most developed relationships and practical interaction between independent and state schools in the country, creating benefits for all the schools involved.

United Learning comprises both United Church Schools Trust, which operates our fee-paying independent schools, and United Learning Trust, which operates our state-funded academies.

To find out more about United Learning, please visit the website www.unitedlearning.org.uk

As part of United Learning, Newstead Wood School will share the objective of bringing out ‘the best in everyone’, enabling each pupil to become a balanced, happy and articulate person with intellectual freedom, confidence, compassion, integrity and a lifelong love of learning.



Our Ethos

Our approach to education is underpinned by a sense of moral purpose and commitment to doing what is right for children and young people. We believe in supporting our colleagues to achieve excellence and in acting with integrity in all our dealings within and beyond the Group. We believe the safety and welfare of all children and young people is paramount. We summarise this ethos as 'the best in everyone'. This ethos underpins our core values:

Ambition – to achieve the best for us and others;

Confidence – to have the courage of our convictions and to take risks for the right cause;

Creativity – to imagine possibilities and make them real;

Respect – of ourselves and others in all that we do;

Enthusiasm – to seek opportunity, find what is good and pursue talents and interests;

Determination – to overcome obstacles and achieve success.

As a single organisation, we seek to bring together the best of independent and state sectors, respecting both traditions and learning from each other. We believe that each of our schools is and should be distinctive – committed to developing its own strengths and identity while sharing our core values to promote service, compassion and generosity.

Continuing Professional Development

We believe that successful organisations make a priority of developing their staff; all the more so in education, where the people of the organisation are its most important asset. While the development of all staff is important, we make the support and professional development of Heads and senior leaders a particular priority, given the impact that leaders have on the life of staff and pupils alike.

We work on the basis that each of us, however effective, can always improve. The new Headteacher of Newstead Wood School will be set personal development objectives with the Regional Director each year and will be supported to achieve them. The Headteacher will also be asked to take a role in supporting the leadership of the whole organisation, working with other Heads in the Group, and sharing ideas and practice with one another.

They will also have the benefit of accessing a range of networks, including the Group Education Forum, which brings together Heads from across the Group six times a year. United Learning has also commissioned training programmes from major universities.

We believe that schools are at their best when they are autonomous and able to develop a distinctive ethos, reflecting the needs of their pupils and the context within which they work. The Group can get behind the work of Heads and leaders in schools through creating strong networks, providing outstanding educational support and professional development, and by taking the strain of professional functional support. We aim to ensure that the technology, finance, HR and data support is provided more effectively and efficiently than would otherwise be possible, so that Headteachers can focus on educational leadership.

The newly appointed Headteacher at Newstead Wood School will also benefit from a comprehensive induction programme.

Our Framework for Excellence

To achieve our mission, our schools prioritise five key principles:

- 1** The best from everyone
- 2** Powerful knowledge
- 3** Education with character
- 4** Leadership in every role
- 5** Continuous improvement



Our aim is to bring out 'the best in everyone'. So, we must expect the best from everyone, all the time. Every child is a special individual, capable of extraordinary things. Who can know the limits of any child's potential?



Our Framework for Excellence

'The best from everyone'

Our aim is to bring out 'the best in everyone'. So, we must expect the best from everyone, all the time. Every child is a special individual, capable of extraordinary things. Who can know the limits of any child's potential? So, we expect unreasonably – we constantly challenge children to do what they think they can't, to persist, to work hard and to be at their best.

From every adult we expect the same: that they are at their best, expect unreasonably of themselves, are determined and resilient and pass those expectations on to the children in all they do. We act with the utmost love, care and good faith – the highest standards come with the greatest attention to the wellbeing of all.

'Powerful knowledge'

Our most important purpose is to teach young people things they would not learn outside school, which free them to think and act more powerfully in their lives. Words and numbers are our most powerful ways of representing the world. Mastery of language and fluent mathematical skills are therefore our top priority. We aim to prepare young people to make a success of their lives: a core entitlement to subject-based learning; the development of talents; an understanding of work and society.

Worthwhile learning is often hard. Inspiring teaching is what gives access to difficult concepts and the thrill of intellectual discovery. Powerful knowledge is not static or backward-looking. It includes the ability to critique, challenge the status quo, think and learn.

'Education with character'

Academic success is very important. Exam passes are an important aspect of that. But there is more to a good education. Our schools also aim to develop character, compassion and service. Young people are expected to contribute to their school and to society; to try things which they think they cannot do; to persist in the face of difficulty; to become resilient in overcoming obstacles; to manage themselves;

to work independently on things which challenge them; to work with others and in teams; to be courageous and caring; to lead.

We want young people to look back on a joyful schooling which has inspired and challenged them, given them wide opportunity and prepared them for the ups and downs of life.

'Leadership in every role'

Our children are leaders of the future. We expect them to start today – taking advantage of structured opportunities to lead and taking responsibility for themselves and others. Every adult in the school is a leader. In every word, tone and gesture, they set direction and expectation. We expect every adult to take responsibility and the initiative to do what is right for the children.

All those in formal leadership positions create the climate in which others work. They demand the highest standards, build a performance culture, develop their teams and create the space for others to lead. All leaders listen, grow relationships, act with integrity and care and expect the best from themselves and others in building a happy, confident school.

'Continuous improvement'

However good we are, we can be better. We constantly look for improvements and implement them with pace. We look for ideas for improvement inside the organisation and out; we observe one another; we steal good ideas with pride and look to make them better; we work together to improve.

We always look at the evidence and are rigorous in evaluating impact. We stop or change things which aren't working; we improve things which are. We aim for high leverage, high impact for low effort and low cost. We constantly look to have more impact for less cost and effort and to spend every pound wisely.

Job Description

The Headteacher will lead and inspire excellence throughout the Academy. They will work with all staff to ensure success for all pupils at every stage of their education and provide them with the skills and confidence in their future life and work.

As a senior leader within United Learning, the Headteacher, together with the Local Governing Body (LGB), will be responsible for establishing and implementing the vision and direction for all staff and pupils throughout the school. In leading the school, the Headteacher will ensure that United Learning's ethos and values are deeply embedded and visible, securing 'the best in everyone' for all stakeholders.

Broadly, the responsibilities of the role are as detailed below:

Educational Leadership and Management

- Ensuring excellent academic outcomes in all key stages;
- Developing outstanding teaching and learning for all pupils;
- Embedding an aspirational and innovative culture of learning;
- Implementing a rigorous system of monitoring to evaluate the work of the school;
- Securing and maintaining high standards across the whole school;
- Embedding a fulfilling and enriching curriculum for all children;
- Setting and achieving aspirational targets for all pupils that ensure rapid progress to become an outstanding school;
- Ensuring the welfare and safety of all pupils from all groups, including their safeguarding.

Strategic Leadership and Management

- Leading the implementation of The United Learning Way, which outlines the guiding educational principles of our Trust, throughout Newstead Wood School.
- Defining and delivering the vision and objectives of the school and the School Strategic Plan as agreed with the LGB and the Regional Director;
- Leading the school in partnership with the LGB and United Learning senior leaders;
- Developing and maintaining the values of United Learning within the school;
- Contributing professionally to the broader United Learning agenda.

Job Description

People Leadership and Management

- Leading on all staffing issues, including the appointment and development of staff;
- Ensuring a culture of working together to achieve high standards throughout the school;
- Promoting staff wellbeing within the Framework for Excellence;
- Managing performance and ensuring that staff receive appropriate support in order to achieve excellence;
- Leading reflective practice and inspirational professional development that enables all members of staff to flourish;
- Promoting equality and fairness for all staff;
- Taking responsibility for one's own professional development as the Headteacher.

Financial and Business Management

- Working closely with the school and Central Office finance colleagues to ensure budgets are set and managed within guidelines agreed with the LGB and the Group through the Regional Director and Chief Financial Officer;
- Monitoring actual spending against budget;
- Monitoring and evaluating the impact of funding to support the progress and achievement of priority groups including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or those eligible for pupil premium funding;
- Implementing key Group-wide policies and strategies (e.g. in relation to Compliance, Finance, HR and Technology);
- Ensuring that efficient administrative systems are implemented and managed;
- Managing, maintaining and utilising the site and facilities to their full value to the Academy, the Group and the community;
- Ensuring that health and safety and safeguarding policies are managed and implemented.

Links with Community and Business

- Developing strong and effective partnerships with parents;
- Developing a thriving sense of school community to include present and past pupils and parents;
- Creating proactive, entrepreneurial and effective links with the wider community;
- Making a strategic contribution to the development of the Group;
- Developing strong and effective partnerships with local primary schools, colleges and universities;

Reporting

- The Headteacher of Newstead Wood School reports to the Regional Director who reports to the National Director of Secondary Education of United Learning, who is responsible to the overarching Charity Board through the Chief Executive.
- The LGB, and its Chair in particular, will also work closely with the Headteacher in relation to its responsibilities to act as a 'critical friend' to the school. This relationship with the Chair and LGB will be key to driving the school forward and further developing local partnerships.
- The Headteacher will keep the Regional Director fully informed on the progress of the school and will submit reports for consideration as appropriate. The Headteacher will participate in an annual performance review as part of the agreed appraisal process.

Person Specification

Education and Training

- Educational and professional qualifications appropriate for the role of Headteacher of the school. Such qualifications would normally include a degree from a recognised university, professional qualifications (for example PGCE) and ideally a further post graduate qualification;
- Evidence of professional development across career to date.

Experience

- Demonstrable success in a leadership role in a comparable organisation and through significant periods of development;
- A proven track record of securing excellence in an educational establishment;
- A proven track record in rapidly raising pupils' achievements;
- Evidence of the ability to develop excellent relationships with staff, members of the local community, parents and pupils (across key stages);
- Experience in leading and developing colleagues and effective teams.

Knowledge, Skills and Qualities

- An in-depth understanding of school leadership and school improvement needed to achieve outstanding pupil progress and personal development;
- The ability to create and implement effective management systems in which roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are clearly articulated;
- An understanding of the importance of research in developing approaches to learning and curriculum design and the ability to put this into practice;
- An understanding of expectations of all phases of education, from early years through to Post-16;
- A thorough understanding of school markets, the analysis required to develop those and the skills to implement successful marketing strategies.

Personal Qualities

- A clear understanding of and commitment to the development of the United Learning values, the United Learning Way, and the Framework for Excellence;
- Belief in equality of opportunities for all pupils and staff regardless of culture, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or religious identity;
- Clarity of vision with the ability to communicate it in a compelling and engaging way;
- An adaptable leadership style which encourages leadership from others and celebrates success;
- Determination and resilience;
- Sensitivity and wisdom in managing relationships with pupils, parents and staff;
- High level interpersonal and communication skills with the capacity to influence at all levels;
- High expectations of pupil achievement, conduct and behaviour;
- A commitment to collaborative working, both within the school and across the Group;
- Openness, sense of humour, energy and enthusiasm.

Terms & Conditions of Employment

Employer

United Learning

Position

Headteacher, Newstead Wood School with responsibility for the whole school

Reporting Line

Regional Director, Secondary Academies

Location

Newstead Wood School or such other nearby place operated by the school or to which the school may relocate.

Start Date

January 2027

Starting Salary

The salary will be commensurate with the significance and importance of the post and the experience of the successful candidate.

Holidays

You are entitled to take holidays during the normal school holidays except where your presence is required for proper execution of your duties as Headteacher. United Learning would expect you would not have less than six weeks of the year without any work involvement.

Teachers' Pension Scheme

The Principal is eligible to be a member of the TPS.

Health Insurance

The Headteacher is eligible to be a member of United Learning's medical insurance scheme, currently with BUPA. It is also possible for other family members to be included within the policy but, when this happens, there is a charge.

Ill Health

United Learning's sick leave and pay policy will apply. The policy allows for a three years' sliding qualification period, at the end of which you will be entitled to full pay for 100 working days and half pay for 100 working days.

Relocation

Assistance with relocation is negotiable and may be available up to a maximum of £8,000 on the basis of receipts relating to actual relevant expenditure.

Safeguarding

United Learning is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff to share this commitment. This appointment will be subject to an enhanced DBS (previously CRB) check is required for all successful applicants.

United Learning's normal terms and conditions of employment apply for the position of Headteacher. The final detailed terms and conditions are subject to agreement between United Learning and the successful candidate and will be reflected in the formal employment contract.

How to Apply

If you wish to discover more about this exciting opportunity, need any further information or would like to have an informal discussion please contact our Head of Leadership Recruitment, Geoff Morris on geoff.morris@unitedlearning.org.uk.

Visits to the school are warmly encouraged and can be arranged through Geoff Morris.

All applications should be submitted online via our [website](#).

The closing date for receipt of applications is **9am on Friday 3 July**.

The Selection Process

We will treat all enquiries, formal and informal, in confidence. The selection process will be 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 philippa.beckett@unitedlearning.org.uk. Shortlisting will occur during the week commencing 6 July 2026.

The selection process will take place on **Friday 10 July** and **Friday 17 July** at Newstead Wood School. You do need to be available for **both** dates.

Candidates will be offered full feedback on their application and/or interview.



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