



Sydenham High School

GDST
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

Brief for the position of
Head of Politics
(part-time, to start September 2024)

Sydenham High School GDST





Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the position of Head of Politics at Sydenham High School. Politics is something that affects every one of us at every stage of our lives, making the understanding of Politics and political systems an essential skill to instill in our young women if we are to ensure that they are empowered to take ownership of their futures.

Politics is an increasingly popular subject at A Level, but we are keen to develop a further understanding of Politics across Key Stages 7 to 11 via our PSHE curriculum and Careers and Futures Programme. This role is a fantastic opportunity for an energetic and dynamic subject specialist to support our pupils to become actively engaged in this fascinating subject.

Sydenham High is a selective school with a mission to ensure that every girl reaches her full academic potential. We offer a rich and diverse curriculum, alongside outstanding enrichment opportunities outside of lessons, enabling our students to develop the skills and personal attributes to prepare them for the challenges and opportunities of an ever-changing society.

We are forward thinking and innovative, looking to provide an outstanding education to our young people as well as the very best in pastoral care. Our purpose is to empower every girl to forge her own path with courage and without limits. This is evidenced in our Careers Programme and the broad range of careers-focussed events on offer, as well as in our leavers' wide-ranging higher education and future pathways.

Successful applicants will have a good honours degree in Politics, and ideally experience in teaching the subject at A Level. Above all, they will be a passionate individual, strongly motivated to make themselves an active part of our thriving community.

I very much look forward to meeting you,

Antonia Geldeard

Ms Antonia Geldeard, Head



Our school

Sydenham High School, was founded in 1887 by four pioneering women, becoming one of the last schools to be opened by the Girls' Public Day School Trust. In 1934 the school transferred to its current site in the leafy suburbs of South East London. Sydenham High prides itself on enriching young minds in a way that will endure a lifetime. The School's original Anglo Saxon motto, 'Nyle ye drede', means 'fear nothing' and girls are continually encouraged to have a 'can do' approach to all they do. Sydenham High is selective but diverse, welcoming girls with wide-ranging abilities, talents and backgrounds into a close community that is large enough to offer choice and flexibility but compact enough to ensure that no girl is overlooked.

The Girls' Day School Trust

The Girls' Day School Trust (GDST) is a leading family of independent girls' schools in the UK, with 23 fee-paying schools and two academies. A registered charity, it has 19,000 students, 4,000 staff and a network of 70,000 alumnae.

GDST schools share an ethos and heritage of girls-only education and are members of a unique network which adds value to each school, student and member of staff. Networking opportunities across the Trust enable staff to share best practice and develop initiatives that benefit all our schools and students. In addition to supporting the work of individual schools in supplying excellent induction and development opportunities for staff, the GDST network provides access to an extensive training programme. This includes development opportunities (including a Middle Leaders' Development Programme and Aspiring Leaders Programme) and grants for individual courses of study.



Site and facilities

Ongoing investment by the GDST has seen the school's facilities continue to expand. A new Design Technology and Innovation Building alongside a new Sixth Form Centre is planned to open in Summer 2025. A Performing Arts Centre was opened in 2006, comprising a 90-seat Recital Hall and the 152-seat Westwood Theatre, and the assembly hall was renamed Longton Hall and refitted to provide concert and performance facilities. There are specialist features for the teaching of Science, IT, Music, Art and Design and Technology. Sports facilities include an indoor sports centre, gym, large all-weather pitch and a 7.5 acre sports ground in Lower Sydenham. The current Sixth Form centre has been refurbished to include a generous common room, study rooms and classrooms. In 2014 the historic dining hall was refurbished and extended to include a glass orangery, new serving area and new state-of-the-art kitchens.

The Prep School is home to 240 pupils from the age of 4 to 11. It is based in an attractive large Edwardian family house with light and spacious purpose-built modern additions. The school is set within its own attractive grounds, five minutes' walk from the Senior School and takes full advantage of the Senior School facilities. The personalised approach allows each girl to develop at her own pace. Most girls in the Prep School move into the Senior School.

The Senior School has over 515 pupils and our aim is to develop girls as independent learners, who take responsibility for their own learning. The curriculum offered at each stage allows the exploration of personal learning and thinking skills that underpin not just academic but lifelong success.

For more information about Sydenham High School please visit:
www.sydenhamhighschool.gdst.net.



Our purpose

We aim to inspire the future generations of creators, independent thinkers and trailblazers. We open eyes and hearts by educating the whole person: to balance mind, body and soul. Our diversity of academic and enrichment opportunities enables every girl to forge her own path, strive to be her best and excel. We seek to empower every girl to discover and nurture her unique talents whether in the classroom, the laboratory, the library, the studio, the field, the water, the community or beyond.

We believe that educating the whole person leads to happy, confident and courageous children who flourish and make a positive difference to their community.

Our values

Courage and character: With our school motto at the fore, ('Nyle ye drede', 'Fear nothing'), we aim to foster in every girl the strength of character and courage to discover and pursue her own path.

Curiosity for learning: We seek to empower every girl to learn without limits, cultivating an intellectual and creative mindset through an inspiring and joyful approach to education.

Culture of kindness: We focus on developing a happy and respectful community with strong relationships, prioritising every child's wellbeing and celebrating diversity.

Generosity of spirit: We aspire to be outward looking, giving back, taking on leadership and having a positive impact.

"Pupils develop high levels of self-confidence and the inner strength needed to succeed, as a result of an understanding not to fear failure" - ISI, 2020

The Role **Head of Politics**

The Politics Department at Sydenham High is a dynamic and inspirational department, comprising the Head of Department and a part-time member of staff. In a selective school, it is a pleasure to stimulate and inspire the students' bright and alert minds, and Politics is a popular subject with good numbers at A Level. We encourage our students to think for themselves and develop their own views, and to be actively engaged citizens in their surroundings. The Department therefore employs a variety of teaching methods in order to meet the aim of encouraging every girl to find success, enjoyment and satisfaction in their studies. There is a dedicated teaching room for Politics, based in the Sixth Form Centre.

The department currently follows the Edexcel syllabus, which includes a study of UK Politics, UK Government, Political Ideas and US Politics, seeing students securing strong grades at A Level. Students have access to digital platforms to support their learning, alongside devices in their lessons. Students attend conferences and lectures, such as the prestigious Congress to Campus conference at the British Library, visits to Parliament and the Supreme Court are undertaken each year, often alongside other GDST schools, and many go on to study politics related subjects at university level. The department, often in conjunction with the History department, offers overseas trips, including a visit to Washington DC. The department co-runs a number of clubs and societies, including Think Tank for GCSE and A Level students, and Hot Topics for Key Stage Three students. They also support the running of Debating and Model United Nations. We encourage our pupils to be politically minded and motivated, and the department supports this via the Young Mayor of Lewisham process, through delivering subject specific assemblies, holding hustings at election times and inviting local politicians to speak at school. We are keen to develop a further understanding of politics from years 7-11, and feeding into the PSHE curriculum for these year groups will be a vital role of the department lead. Laptops are provided and used by all members of the Department. Ideally the candidate will show considerable initiative and be prepared to innovate both in the classroom and in the field. Staff are expected to be digitally literate and are encouraged to develop their personal digital skills.

This is a part-time role - the exact allocation to be discussed at interview.

We would consider candidates with a second subject area for a full-time role.



The Role **Head of Politics**

Accountable to: Deputy Head Academic via the Assistant Head: Head of Sixth Form

Responsible for: The Politics Department

Job purpose: To teach Politics to motivated and enthusiastic students in Years 12 and 13, and be a dynamic, energetic and inspirational leader for the Politics department.

Accountabilities:

Policy/Strategic direction and development

- Contribute to whole school policy-making and strategic planning as required by the Head.
- Prepare, monitor and update annual departmental development plans in consultation with colleagues.
- Take the lead in ensuring that school policies and strategies are embedded in schemes of work and departmental plans.

Leadership and management of others

- Lead and manage the department, recruiting, inducting, developing, deploying, motivating and appraising members of the department to ensure that they have clear expectations of their roles, and that high performance standards are achieved and maintained.
- Empower members of the department to develop their leadership potential to ensure continuous improvement within the department.
- Manage day to day requirements such as examination entry and departmental timetables, delegating as appropriate, to ensure the efficiency of the department.
- Attend school on Examination Results Days, as required by the Head.
- Chair departmental meetings to ensure that they are used effectively to review performance and that actions are recorded and implemented.

Teaching and learning

- Promote excellence in teaching and learning to ensure all pupils develop their potential and are equipped for life beyond school.
- Exemplify in own practice the skills of teaching and learning typified by lead professionals, and ensure that good practice

is shared throughout the department.

- Ensure that schemes of work are used, reviewed and modified to enable the maintenance and development of high standards of teaching and learning.
- Monitor pupils' work and the classroom practice of those in the department to ensure high standards are maintained.
- Keep up to date with developments in subject area and education in general to ensure that best practice is adopted within the department.
- Ensure the department's delivery and development of the curriculum is effective in meeting the needs of all pupils.
- Explore further opportunities for developing a rich and challenging MAT programme,
- Contribute to the broader life of the school by supporting and leading curricular and extracurricular events including clubs, societies and activity days.

Co-curricular activities

- Actively promote interest in the subject outside the immediate physical and timetabled confines of the department.

Admissions, marketing & external links

- Lead on all admissions' assessments relating to the subject, including scholarship, interview and entrance examination papers.
- Actively promote the department within the school community to encourage pupils' interest in the subject area.
- Contribute to the positive promotion and marketing of the school and the GDST in the local and wider community.
- Lead the department's contribution to school admissions and external partnership links, including attendance at certain key out of hours events.
- Continue to build on the strong relationship

The Role **Head of Politics**

Management of resources

- Monitor and control the department's allocated budget and purchasing arrangements, to ensure the efficient and effective use of all resources.
- Identify future resourcing needs and aspirations for the department for consideration in the school budget planning process.
- Ensure that all resources are fit for purpose and used in accordance with health and safety guidelines.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Assessment

- Ensure that within the department individual pupil progress is regularly assessed, recorded and reported and used to inform future teaching.
- Monitor pupil progress through the use of performance and benchmarked data to ensure that high standards of learning are achieved and maintained.

Training and development of self and others

- As a lead professional, set personal targets and take responsibility for one's own continuous professional development.
- Be proactive in identifying training needs within the department, ensuring that they are appropriately met, and that all members of the department are active in their own personal and continuous professional development.

General Requirements

All staff are expected to:

- Work towards and support the school vision and the current school objectives outlined in the School Development Plan.
- Contribute to the school's programme of extra-curricular activities.
- Support and contribute to the school's responsibility for safeguarding students.
- Work within the school's health and safety policy to ensure a safe working environment for staff, students and visitors.
- Work within the GDST's Diversity Policy to promote equality of opportunity for all students and staff, both current and prospective.
- Maintain high professional standards of attendance, punctuality, appearance, conduct and positive, courteous relations with students, parents and colleagues.
- Engage actively in the performance review process.
- Adhere to policies as set out in the GDST Council Regulations, notes of guidance and GDST circulars.
- Undertake other reasonable duties related to the job purpose required from time to time.

This job description should be seen as enabling rather than restrictive and will be subject to regular review.



Person Specification **Head of Politics**

Skills Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The ability to lead and manage people to work towards a common goal• The ability to solve problems and make decisions• Teamwork: the ability to work collaboratively with others• Communication skills: the ability to make points clearly and understand the views of others• The ability to plan time effectively and organise oneself well
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Knowledge Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Excellent professional knowledge and understanding• Excellent subject knowledge• Understanding of national and examination curricular requirements of the subject• Up to date with professional developments in the subject and other aspects of education
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Qualifications/ Attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A good honours degree• Qualified teacher status
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Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experience as a subject teacher in Key Stage 5• Experience of teaching A level in the subject for at least 2 cycles• Experience of a management role• Experience of organising or participating in extracurricular activities
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Attitude/ approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ability to enthuse children and adults• Possess a positive attitude and approach to change and development• Enjoy rising to the challenges inherent in a school environment• Lifelong learner
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How to Apply **Head of Politics**

To apply, please go to

https://my.corehr.com/pls/gdstrecruit/erq_jobspec_version_4.jobspec?p_id=033147

Please submit your application form and cover letter by **9am on Wednesday 14 February 2024**.

Starting salary will depend on the experience and qualifications of the successful candidate. We offer a competitive salary and benefits package and a strong professional development programme.

These benefits include:

- Competitive salaries and pay progression
- Access to extensive professional development opportunities
- Training grants for qualifications
- Generous pension schemes
- Free school lunches
- Financial guidance and support
- Retail and lifestyle discounts
- A discount of up to 50% on fees for children at GDST schools

We reserve the right to interview at any point during the recruitment process, so early applications are encouraged. References for candidates invited to interview will be taken before the interview. Interviews will likely be held the week commencing 19 February 2024.

Sydenham High School and the GDST (Charity Registration No. 1026057) are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including online searches, checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

