



Head of Outdoor Learning and Forest School Leader



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About us

Gosfield School was established at Cut Hedge Park in 1929 when the daughter of the textile manufacturer, George Courtauld purchased the land and buildings from the executors of her late father's estate. Constance Cicely Courtauld started a Senior Boy's Boarding School the same year, with pupils relocating from Leigh Hall School in Southend. In 1944, Cicely gifted the School and estate to Headmaster John Turner who continued the work started by Cicely. In 1967, the School became a charitable trust and in 1986, the School became co-educational. A Prep School was opened in 1989 and we welcomed our first Sixth Form pupils in 1994. In 2006, Gosfield School Ltd purchased the freehold of the estate and buildings from the Turner family. In 2015, we opened Meadow Court, a purpose built Prep School, which is home to a Nursery, Reception Class up to Year 5, within the grounds of our 110 acre estate. We continue to develop and upgrade our infrastructure, we opened our Forest School and Cricket Pavilion in May 2017. Our Cricket Academy welcomed its first Scholars in Summer 2018, we opened our new Design Technology workshop in January 2019 and undertook the design led redecoration of the Manor House. The construction of our new Performing Arts Centre has recently been completed. We are committed to the development of our young people in an environment where all pupils feel valued and are able to achieve excellence in all aspects of life. We have non-academic entry criteria and consistently achieve outstanding outcomes when compared to Schools with academic entry criteria. Cicely's founding principles for the School were to create a family environment in which young people would flourish and we remain faithful to those principles today.

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Our Principal

Mr Rod Jackson Mr Jackson became Principal of Gosfield School in September 2021. He has a wealth of experience, having spent more than 30 years working in Independent Schools in Africa, Australia and the United Kingdom. He is a passionate promoter of an entirely holistic approach to learning, in which a rigorous approach to academic education, an outstanding programme of extracurricular opportunities, alongside excellent pastoral care and personal development combine to create a world class educational experience for each child. Mr Jackson believes that it is essential not only that we educate our students to be global citizens but that we ensure they have the skills and the desire to change the world for the better, as future leaders.

Before joining Gosfield, Mr Jackson served as Head of The International Community School in Marylebone and prior to that he was Head of Secondary at The King Alfred School in Hampstead, earlier leadership roles include Head of Classics at Cranleigh School and Senior Housemaster at Aldenham School. Mr Jackson holds a BA (Hons) degree in Classics from the University of Adelaide and a MEd from the University of Cambridge.



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INDEPENDENT
SCHOOLS
ASSOCIATION

ISA Awards 2023 Winner

ISA Award for Excellence and Innovation in Early Years

Prep School Outdoor Learning and Forest School

It is now widely accepted that time spent in natural surroundings is good for us in terms of our mental and physical wellbeing but also assisting with focus, independence and social skills.

Our Prep School is very fortunate to have such a beautiful setting and such extensive grounds. Our pupils frequently enjoy these green spaces and woodland areas in a wide variety of ways.

Outdoor Classroom Learning

Our teachers regularly take classroom learning outside, giving children the chance to apply their skills in different and engaging contexts.

Forest School

Our long-established Forest School, set in our platinum award-winning woodlands, provides our pupils with the freedom to enjoy the natural environment and to discover themselves.

All pupils enjoy weekly Forest School sessions taught by an accredited Forest School leader. Many of these sessions will involve campfires and, quite often, we enjoy food preparation, cooking and eating!

Problem solving skills, agility, self-confidence, tenacity and resilience are all developed through a combination of free time and structured challenges.

Time in the forest also allows the children to have the freedom to climb trees and relax, making dens and lifelong memories.



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Skills Progression

As an example of skills progression in Forest School, Year 6, pupils will have the opportunity to:

- Replicate the water cycle using natural materials.
- Capture digital images using a hand-held device to record change over time.
- Set up a wildlife camera to capture images of wildlife at night.
- Select tools suitable for a task and use them safely and independently (supervised).
- Identify poisonous plants.
- Gather resources for a fire, light it and boil water.
- Plan, prepare and cook food on an open fire.
- Use knot making skills to create a rope trail for younger pupils.
- Understand how to maintain a willow structure.
- Develop practical skills and use tools to create, build or manage.
- Evaluate risk.
- Develop personal and social skills and build confidence.
- Work through practical problems and challenges.



Senior School Outdoor Learning

Our long-established Outdoor Learning programme, set in our platinum award-winning woodlands, is timetabled weekly for pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9.

Key to our long term investment in our Outdoor Learning is the opportunity for our pupils to learn things that are not taught and tested in most Schools; but are increasingly essential in next generation careers.

Problem solving skills, agility, self-confidence, tenacity and resilience are developed through a combination of free play and structured challenges. Moreover, as generations of children are ever more subjected to challenges presented by online activity and social media, both the physical and wellbeing advantages of time spent outdoor learning are plain for all to see. By the end of Year 8, everyone is ready to embrace all that the Duke of Edinburgh Awards have to offer as our students progress through Years 9, 10, 11 and beyond.

Eco Centre

In January 2025, the Phil Davies Eco Centre was established using funds raised by the Gosfield School PTA over a long period of time. This excellent facility which will be formally opened in April 2025, has already become a focal point for our Outdoor Learning programme.



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Job Description

Position: Head of Outdoor Learning and Forest School Leader

We are looking for an enthusiastic, highly motivated and inspiring person to be our Head of Outdoor Learning and Forest School Leader, working in our fantastic, dedicated on-site woodland space. The right person will be reliable, love working with children and have a passion for outdoor learning in all weathers! Our children love their Forest School time. We are looking for someone who will create engaging learning opportunities that enable them to develop creativity, resilience, empathy and a love of the world around them. We want someone who places wellbeing as the foundation of their practice and recognises children's different social, emotional and physical needs. You should have a Forest School Level 3 accreditation. If you have a current first aid qualification that would be ideal, but we will provide training if not. You must have experience of working with children in an educational role, and some experience of working in a Forest School.



The philosophy of Forest School is to encourage and inspire individuals of any age through an innovative, long-term, educational approach to outdoor play and learning in a woodland environment. Cub Wood is our own unique Forest School space and is cared for and protected by children from our Nursery through to Year 9. From Year 9 we provide pupils with the opportunity to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, building on the skills and collaborative approach they have acquired through outdoor learning.

This role provides the opportunity to further develop our innovative Outdoor Learning programme from ages 2 to 18.



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How to apply

Download an Application Form from our website [www.gosfieldschool.org.uk] and send together with a covering letter to recruitment@gosfieldschool.org.uk

Deadline for applications: Noon, Friday 28th February 2025

Interviews: w/c 3rd March 2025

Start Date: April or September 2025

*Please Note to avoid disappointment applicants are encouraged to apply prior to the deadline as we reserve the right to consider applications as they are received and to appoint prior to the deadline.

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