



GOSFIELD SCHOOL

ESTABLISHED 1929

KNOWING EVERY CHILD, NURTURING POTENTIAL

Principal

Candidate Information

REQUIRED FOR SEPTEMBER 2027



Gosfield School

Established 1929

Knowing every child
Nurturing potential

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Letter from the Chair of Governors

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in becoming Gosfield School's tenth Principal since our founding in 1929.

Our School is a small, independent all-through day school of some 370 pupils, aged 2–18. It was founded on family principles, and we remain true to this philosophy, captured in our School motto: *Knowing Every Child, Nurturing Potential*. We are extremely proud of our heritage and we want our pupils to be the very best they can be; to secure outcomes that fulfil their potential and open doors to their future aspirations. Our home is a splendid Manor House set in 110 acres of Essex parkland, and we are truly blessed with exceptional grounds and facilities.

Our current Principal, Mr Rod Jackson, is embarking on a well-earned retirement after six years at Gosfield, having overseen significant growth in pupil numbers, improvements in the quality of Teaching and Learning, the development of the curriculum, the expansion of extra-curricular and Outdoor Learning provision, and the highly successful launch of our Netball and Performing Arts Academies to add to our existing well-regarded Cricket Academy. We are very sorry to see him leave our school community and are grateful for all he has achieved.

We are looking for a new Principal with outstanding leadership qualities who can lead the School through the next chapter of our history. If you are someone who can provide visible, consultative leadership with a clear focus on Teaching and Learning, then we will be delighted to hear from you. Candidates should be equally at home in a Sixth Form lesson or as a reassuring and familiar presence in our Prep School. The Principal must be able to get the very best from our teaching and non-teaching staff to ensure that we deliver the highest standards in all aspects of the broad education we offer. The Principal is also our chief executive, and the role calls for strong financial and commercial acumen, along with excellent presentational skills in meetings with the many groups that make up our School community.

This is an exciting opportunity to appoint an inspiring leader to take us into our 100th year at Cut Hedge Park in 2029. If you are already a successful leader and have an ambition for excellence, we very much look forward to the opportunity to meet you.

Katherine Makaroff

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS





SECTION ONE

About our School



Our history

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. In that same year Constance Cicely Courtauld, under the inspired leadership of John Turner, started a Senior Boys' Boarding School with pupils relocating from Leigh Hall School in Southend. In 1944, Cicely gifted the School and estate to Headmaster John Turner whose educational vision and philosophy had created the school that is Gosfield. In 1967, the School became a charitable trust and later Gosfield School Ltd purchased the freehold of the estate and buildings from the Turner family.

The following years saw significant expansion. In 1986 we became co-educational and we welcomed our first Sixth Form pupils in 1994. We saw the benefits of having our own Prep School and in 2015 we opened Meadow Court, a purpose-built Prep School and Nursery, within the grounds of our 110-acre estate. This new building complements the Manor House, which is the heartbeat of the Senior School and Sixth Form. Gosfield is now a day school, the boarding house having closed in 2017.

Our estate and facilities

Gosfield is a charitable trust and all income is reinvested in the School. We continue to develop and upgrade our infrastructure. Forest School and Outdoor Learning are very much a part of our Prep and Senior School curriculum, supported by our new Forest School Classroom and Ecocentre. We have also upgraded our Design Technology workshop to a high standard. Our Cricket Pavilion was opened in May 2017 with our Cricket Academy welcoming its first scholars in Summer 2018. Our cricket teams achieve extraordinary success with keenly fought fixtures against much larger schools, very much as a result of high-quality specialist coaching and excellent facilities.

We opened the Performing Arts Centre in 2023, which has created wonderful opportunities in drama, music and dance for all, and members of our Academy have achieved regional and national recognition. Most recently we have invested in a Gym, an extension of the Dining Hall, phased refurbishment of roof and windows and redecoration of the Manor House.



Inspectors described a community that prioritises kindness and respect, “where pupils feel known and valued”.

ISI INSPECTION, SEPTEMBER 2025

Our approach

We are committed to the development of our young people in an environment where all pupils feel valued and can aspire to excellence in all aspects of life. We admit pupils on the basis of who they can become in the classroom and beyond. 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.

Our most recent ISI inspection, in September 2025, found that Gosfield meets all of the Standards in every area inspected, including safeguarding. Inspectors described a community that prioritises kindness and respect, "where pupils feel known and valued". They also found that pupils with special educational needs and disabilities make good progress and attain well, including at GCSE.

Almost all of our Sixth Form leavers go on to their first-choice destination, whether that is university, a degree apprenticeship or employment.

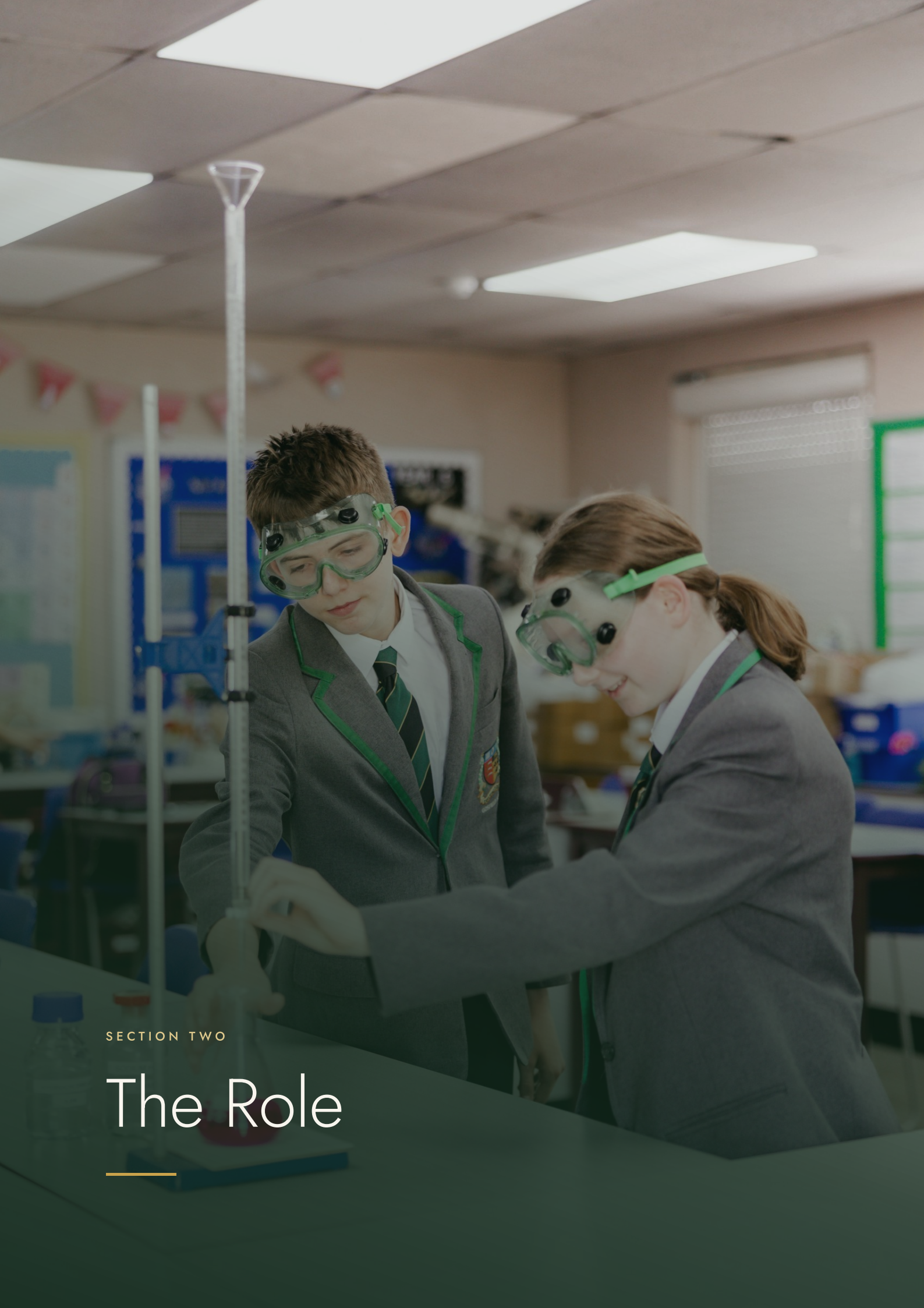
Class sizes vary according to individual subject requirements, with an average of 15 pupils per class in the Senior and Prep Schools, and much smaller classes in the Sixth Form. We set a maximum of 20 per class in the Prep School and 22 in the Senior School. Our class sizes enable every member of staff to understand each pupil individually.

Children do not learn unless they are happy, and ensuring that each child feels safe, settled and supported is our primary concern. We believe that children will flourish if they are allowed to grow as individuals and can achieve beyond expectation because their personal needs are recognised. Our pupils mix often and readily across year groups. This approach builds the confidence of our youngest children and helps our older pupils to remain kind and caring through their teenage years. We get to know our pupils very well and appreciate their unique personalities and approaches to learning.

Because we know our pupils well, we notice quickly when a child needs extra help or more of a challenge. Our learning support team works alongside teachers in the classroom, not away from it.

We are proud to maintain the founding principles of our School from 1929, and we look forward to welcoming our new Principal to our family as we continue our journey with the young people in our care.



A photograph of two students in a school science laboratory. They are both wearing grey school uniforms with green piping and green safety goggles. The student on the left is a boy with short brown hair, looking down at a piece of equipment. The student on the right is a girl with brown hair tied back, also looking down and smiling slightly. They are working with a tall, clear plastic stand that has a funnel at the top. The background shows a typical classroom setting with posters on the wall and fluorescent lights on the ceiling.

SECTION TWO

The Role

The Principal reports to the Chair of Governors on behalf of the Board and is accountable for the educational, pastoral, operational and commercial leadership of Gosfield School.

The Principal is also the School's chief executive. Educational leadership and the running of the business sit together in this role, and the Principal leads a Senior Leadership Team of experienced specialists: the Vice Principal, the Head of Prep School, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Head of Finance and HR, the Head of Operations and the Head of Admissions and Marketing.

Educational leadership

- Champion the highest standards of teaching and learning from Nursery to Upper Sixth
- Ensure the curriculum remains broad, ambitious and relevant, including our Forest School and Outdoor Learning provision
- Sustain and develop the Cricket, Netball and Performing Arts Academies
- Maintain strong systems for assessing progress and supporting individual needs
- Ensure pupils are well prepared for examinations, further study and life beyond school
- Encourage thoughtful use of new technology, including artificial intelligence, in teaching and administration

Pastoral care and safeguarding

- Ensure safeguarding remains the highest priority across the School, working closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Maintain the culture of knowing every child that defines Gosfield
- Ensure behaviour, standards of discipline and rewards are maintained and reflect the School's values and principles
- Ensure that pupils who need additional support and those who are ready to be stretched are equally well served
- Ensure statutory, regulatory and inspection requirements are met, and that the School is always inspection-ready

Leading our people

- Inspire and motivate teaching and non-teaching staff through consultative leadership
 - Lead the Senior Leadership Team, setting clear expectations and holding colleagues to account fairly
 - Ensure effective appraisal, performance management and continuing professional development to develop leadership potential of the Senior Leadership Team and broader teaching staff
 - Promote staff wellbeing while maintaining high professional standards
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Admissions, marketing and external profile

- Act as the public face and chief ambassador for the School
- Work with the Head of Admissions and Marketing to sustain pupil recruitment and retention
- Build strong relationships with current and prospective families
- Develop the School's profile locally and regionally, including with the media
- Convert interest in the School into firm registrations

Financial and commercial leadership

- Working with the Head of Finance and HR, lead budgeting, fee-setting proposals and long-term financial planning
 - Ensure educational ambition is supported by sound finances and that resources provide value for money
 - Working with the Head of Operations, oversee the estate, facilities, health and safety
 - Identify and pursue sustainable opportunities for growth and income, including commercial use of our facilities
 - Demonstrate sound fiscal judgement, prioritising effectively to keep the school on its firm financial footing
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Governance and compliance

- Build a strong and effective partnership with the Chair and the Board
- Ensure employment policies and practices remain compliant and effective, working with the Head of Finance and HR
- Provide Governors with timely, accurate and relevant information, and welcome support and challenge
- Respect the distinction between governance and executive management
- Ensure School policies are implemented, monitored and reviewed
- Ensure compliance with UK GDPR and data-protection legislation, and that significant risks are identified and managed



SECTION THREE

Your profile and qualities



The successful candidate will be only our tenth Principal since 1929, and will lead the School into its centenary. Our new Principal will lead the School through its continued development and growth, building on our significant strengths, bringing new ideas and ensuring that we have the highest standards in everything we do.

Essential

- A good honours degree, and Qualified Teacher Status or an equivalent professional qualification
 - Success as an experienced and well-qualified school leader, and a track record as an outstanding classroom practitioner with the proven ability to inspire pupils and share best practice with colleagues, informed by a clear educational philosophy that has the wellbeing of the child at its core
 - The ability to inspire and motivate our team of teaching and non-teaching staff through consultative leadership, with a commitment to achieving and maintaining high standards at all levels in teaching and learning across the curriculum, and to continuing professional development and performance management
 - The ability to think strategically and to formulate, articulate and implement a vision for the whole school from Nursery to Upper Sixth
 - The ability and presence to represent and market the School successfully to prospective and current parents, and strengthen links with the wider community
 - Strong financial literacy and commercial judgement, appropriate to a chief executive role
 - A thorough understanding of safeguarding and child protection, and recent safeguarding training
 - A commitment to the academic, personal and social development of every child, through an understanding of the needs and concerns of every age group
 - The ability to develop a strong and mutually supportive relationship with parents
 - A willingness to set a personal example to staff of commitment to an all-round education and to the life of the School, through support for and involvement in extra-curricular activities
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Desirable

- Experience of all-through education, or across both prep and senior age ranges
 - Experience as a serving Head, or substantial experience as a Deputy Head or equivalent
 - NPQH, a Master's degree or another relevant postgraduate qualification
 - Experience of leading a school through ISI inspection
 - Experience of pupil recruitment, marketing or business development
 - An understanding of nursery and Early Years provision
 - Experience of working with a governing body or trustees
 - An understanding of the independent sector and the challenges currently facing independent schools
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Personal qualities

- Personal warmth and emotional intelligence in dealing with staff and parents
 - The ability to manage change and resolve conflict sensitively but effectively
 - Resilience and calm under pressure
 - Unwavering integrity
 - An excellent listener
 - A sense of humour
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Terms of appointment

ROLE	Principal
REPORTS TO	Chair of Governors
LOCATION	Cut Hedge Park, Gosfield, Essex
CONTRACT	Full-time, permanent
START DATE	1 September 2027

The successful candidate will receive a competitive package of remuneration and benefits, which includes:

- A competitive salary, reflecting the seniority of the role and the successful candidate’s experience
- On-site accommodation
- Membership of the Teachers’ Pension Scheme
- Private health insurance
- School fee remission for dependent children, subject to the School’s admissions criteria, with terms to be agreed with the successful candidate
- Support for continuing professional development

Full contractual details will be discussed with the successful candidate during the appointment process.

How to apply

Applicants should submit a completed application form, a full curriculum vitae, and a covering letter addressed to Ms Katherine Makaroff, Chair of Governors, setting out your interest in the role and your suitability against the criteria in this document. Please make your letter as specific as you can to Gosfield.

Applications should be sent to chairofgovernors@gosfieldschool.org.uk. The application form can be downloaded from www.gosfieldschool.org.uk/about/staff-vacancies. All applications will be acknowledged by email. If you have not received acknowledgement within two working days of sending your application, please contact us.

Please provide the names, addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers of three referees, including your current and a previous line manager. References will be taken up for shortlisted candidates prior to interview, in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

CLOSING DATE	Monday 12 October 2026, 12 noon (UK time)
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LOGLIST INTERVIEWS	Thursday 5 November 2026
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FINAL INTERVIEWS	Wednesday 18 November 2026
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Selection process

The selection process will include a tour of the School with our School Captains, an informal interview with the outgoing Principal, pupil and staff panels, a presentation and formal interviews with the panel. Shortlisted candidates will be told the presentation title in advance, together with the School's current strategic priorities.

Each longlisted candidate will be required for one full day. If we have a larger field the round will run across two days, and candidates will be told in advance which day is theirs.

Visits and conversations

Candidates are warmly encouraged to visit the School before applying. For a confidential conversation about the role, or to arrange a visit, please contact Katherine Makaroff, Chair of Governors. Candidates who would like to talk to the outgoing Principal about the day-to-day life of the School are welcome to ask, and this will be arranged. You may also attend our next Open Morning on Saturday 3 October 2026.

Safeguarding, equal opportunities and data protection

Safeguarding

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

In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, references will be sought on all shortlisted candidates prior to interview, and online searches will be undertaken. The appointment is subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks, including an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check with a check against the Children's Barred List, identity, right to work and qualification checks.

This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020.

Equal opportunities

Gosfield School is an equal opportunities employer. We welcome applications from candidates with the skills, experience and personal qualities to lead an inclusive school community. Please let us know if you need any reasonable adjustments at any stage of the recruitment process.

Data protection

In line with UK GDPR, please do not include in your application any information that identifies children, or any unnecessary sensitive personal data. Please also ensure that anyone whose details you include, such as referees, has agreed to their inclusion. Our privacy notice is available on the staff vacancies page of the School website.

KNOWING EVERY CHILD, NURTURING POTENTIAL

Gosfield School

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Gosfield School is a member of the Independent Schools Association and a registered charity,
number 310871.

