Seaford College

Prep · Senior · Sixth Form



For the appointment of

Head of Seaford Prep School

Starting September 2027

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Seaford College

Seaford is a leading HMC co-educational Day and Boarding school of over 930 students. The school is made up of three parts; the Sixth Form, the Senior School (Year 9-11) and the Prep School (Reception to Year 8).

Seaford is a genuinely warm, friendly school with excellent teaching and learning across all departments. Alongside our strong academic core, we offer a world-class pastoral care and an impressive programme of co-curricular activities that is always growing.

Seaford is nestled in over 450 acres of the South Downs National Park, just 10 miles north of Chichester, West Sussex. Our vibrant and forward-thinking community thrives in this environment, nurturing academic excellence, sporting success and creative talent.

Seaford steers away from the traditional Independent School norm and is academically non-selective, preferring to create a stimulating and caring environment for our students where they can fulfil their personal bests inside and outside of the classroom. We look for young people who will get the most out of, and enjoy, the opportunities that Seaford provides – academic, sport, cultural, social, creative – and who will make their own positive contributions to school life.

The vast majority of students who leave us from the Sixth Form go on to study at universities, art schools or conservatoires including many Russell Group universities, Oxford and Cambridge.

The school moved to its current home of Lavington Park in the 1940s. Recent years have seen significant investment in the infrastructure of the site, including a new Learning Resources Centre, English Department, Sports and Performing Arts Centre and Sixth Form Centre.

Hear why our students love Seaford

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The Opportunity

Seaford Prep School holds a unique place in the life of Seaford College. Its youngest students arrive in Reception and its oldest leave at the end of Year 8 for the Senior School, meaning that whoever leads Seaford Prep sees children grow from their first weeks of school to the threshold of adolescence, within one community and on one outstanding school estate.

We are seeking a Head of Prep to lead this community from September 2027. The Prep School educates around 280 students from Reception to Year 8 and is a member of IAPS. Its Head carries responsibility for the strategic, academic, pastoral and operational leadership of the Prep School, and sits on the College Senior Management Team, where they contribute to shaping the direction of the College as a whole, as well as that of the Prep School.

The role is ideally suited to an experienced leader who is as visible and influential in classrooms and on the touchline, as they are in the strategic planning that underpins school life. We are looking for someone who understands that a thriving prep school is built on the confidence and trust of parents at every stage of their journey, from initial enquiry through to transition into the Senior School.

It offers the chance to lead a prep school with the continuity, resources, and ambition of a 4 to 18 school behind it, while playing a full part in the next chapter of Seaford College. The College has seen considerable growth over recent years and is in a very healthy position with over 930 students in total across Prep, Senior, and Sixth Form. We are currently in discussions about opening a nursery provision and the successful candidate will play an important part in this development.



A Welcome from the Headmaster

Dear Candidate,

Anyone who has spent time in a good prep school learns to read it at the edges of the day: in the noise of the youngest children arriving with book bags larger than themselves, and in the quieter assurance of the oldest, who by the afternoon are holding a door or finding a lost coat for someone half their size. Those small moments tell you more about a school than any prospectus, because they show what its students have come to believe about how people should treat one another.

Seaford Prep is a school in which those moments matter. It rests on a conviction that runs through the whole College, which is that every child has strengths worth discovering, and that no child should be underestimated on the strength of one result or one label. Our students are known as individuals, stretched where they are ready to be stretched and supported where they need support, and they grow up within a 4 to 18 school that gives them continuity and a wide range of opportunity in the classroom, on the sports field, on stage and out of doors.

The Head of Prep we appoint will champion academic ambition and pastoral care with equal importance and will lead with the visibility and warmth that parents of young children rightly expect. They will also bring a clear understanding of the market in which independent schools now operate. Families choose with great care and with their eyes open, and they want to know what a school will mean for their child at four and again at thirteen. The Head of Prep will provide a confident answer, build the relationships that bring families to Seaford, and ensure that the journey from Reception into the Senior School feels like one seamless education.

You would join a Senior Management Team that works closely and candidly together, and a staff who care deeply about the children in front of them. I would expect our new Head of Prep to contribute to the strategy of the whole College, as fully as they lead the Prep School itself.

The poet William Wordsworth understood that the child we are shapes the adult we become. Those who lead prep schools see the truth of that line more plainly than most, because the habits of mind and the quiet courage that will carry a young person through the rest of their life are formed, year by year, in front of them. That is the opportunity we are inviting you to lead, and I hope you will consider it.

Yours sincerely,

Matt Williams
Headmaster, Seaford College

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About Seaford Prep School



Head of Seaford Prep School

Reporting to the Headmaster, Matt Williams and the Governing Body

Seaford College

Seaford College was founded in 1884 and is today a very popular co-educational day and boarding school for students aged 4 to 18, set in Lavington Park near Petworth in West Sussex. The College is owned by The Johnson Trust Limited and governed by a Board of Governors.

Leadership and structure

The Head of Prep reports to the Headmaster and, through him, to the Governing Body, and is a member of the Senior Management Team. They line manage the Prep School's two Deputy Heads, one responsible for academic matters and the other for pastoral care, and through them lead the teaching and support staff of the Prep School, working closely with the College's admissions, marketing, learning support, safeguarding, boarding, and operational teams.

Seaford Prep

Seaford Prep School educates around 280 students from Reception to Year 8 and is a member of IAPS. Its students benefit from belonging to a single 4 to 18 community, sharing in the facilities and specialist staff of the wider College while enjoying an education designed around the needs of younger children. Almost without exception, students move into the Senior School at Year 9, and the relationship between the Prep and the Senior School is one of the strengths the new Head will be expected to build upon.

The role at a glance

- Line manages: Deputy Head (Academic), Deputy Head (Pastoral) and Prep School Admissions Officer
- Member of: Senior Management Team
- Start date: September 2027
- Contract: Full-time, permanent
- Location: Seaford College, Lavington Park, Petworth, West Sussex GU28 0NB, with work off site where the role requires

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Purpose of the Role

The Head of Prep School provides visible and purposeful leadership for Seaford Prep School, ensuring that every student from Reception to Year 8 receives an excellent and broad education within a community that is both caring and ambitious.

They will create a culture in which every child is known well and encouraged to fulfil and maximise their potential. They will champion academic achievement while recognising that success takes many forms and that children flourish when their individual strengths and character are developed alongside their learning.

As a member of the Senior Management Team, the Head of Prep School is responsible for the strategic, academic, pastoral, and operational leadership of the Prep School, and works closely with the Headmaster and senior colleagues on the direction and growth of the College as a whole. They are an ambassador for Seaford, building strong and lasting relationships with students, parents, staff, Governors, feeder settings and the wider community.

1. Strategic Leadership

- Lead the development, implementation and evaluation of the Seaford Prep School Development Plan, with clear objectives and measures of success, aligned with and forming an important part of the College's Strategic Development Plan.
- Contribute fully to Senior Management Team discussion and decision-making and to the strategic development of the College as a whole.
- Use attainment, progress, attendance, pastoral and wellbeing data to inform decisions and drive continuous improvement.
- Demonstrate commercial awareness and a clear understanding of the factors that influence recruitment, retention and the sustainable growth of the Prep School.
- Lead change with clarity and sensitivity, encouraging fresh thinking while respecting the values and traditions that define Seaford.
- Keep abreast of developments in prep and primary education and incorporate them into the Prep School's planning where they will benefit student outcomes.
- Maintain a commitment to professional development for teaching and support staff to ensure that best practice and innovation are features of Seaford Prep School.
- Continue to consult with and build positive relationships with Senior School Deputies, ensuring alignment in curricular and co-curricular areas.
- Provide information and advice to the Headmaster and the Governing Body on all aspects of the Prep School, and present to Governors as required.



2. Academic Leadership

- Provide strategic leadership of teaching and learning from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 8, setting high expectations for the quality of teaching and for the progress of every student.
- Line manage the Deputy Head (Academic), setting the academic direction of the Prep School and ensuring accountability for its delivery.
- Lead the development and annual review of a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs, aptitudes and ambitions of all students and is delivered through an effective timetable.
- Liaise closely with Senior School Deputies to ensure appropriate staff resource and curriculum access is achieved.
- Ensure that Reception provision meets the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework.
- Oversee assessment, tracking and reporting systems, setting challenging but realistic targets and monitoring attainment and progress closely.
- Promote academic ambition and intellectual curiosity, and maintain high standards across sport, the creative and performing arts and the co-curricular programme.
- Promote the purposeful use of educational technology.
- Work with Senior School colleagues to ensure academic consistency and continuity and a confident transition into Year 9.
- Teach a reduced timetable, where appropriate, to remain close to the classroom and to the students.

3. Safeguarding, Pastoral Care and Wellbeing

- Promote a culture in which safeguarding and the welfare of students are understood to be everyone's responsibility and are central to every decision.
- Work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies to ensure that safeguarding procedures are robust and consistently followed in the Prep School.
- Line manage the Deputy Head (Pastoral), ensuring that pastoral systems promote the wellbeing, positive mental health and personal development of every student.
- Establish and maintain a culture of kindness, respect and inclusion, with high expectations of behaviour.
- Monitor attendance, behaviour and welfare, acting promptly where concerns arise.
- Ensure visibility and accessibility for parents and students.
- Communicate clearly and sensitively with parents on pastoral matters.



4. Inclusion and Learning Support

- Ensure that every student is known, appropriately supported and appropriately challenged.
- Ensure that children's SEND needs are identified and that measurable and successful interventions are put in place.
- Oversee SEND and learning support provision in the Prep School, working closely with the College's learning support team, specialist staff and external agencies.
- Monitor the progress of students who require additional support and ensure that provision is effective.
- Promote inclusive practice and equality of opportunity for all students.

5. Staff Leadership and Development

- Lead and develop the Prep staff, building an ambitious and collegiate professional culture.
- Work closely with the Prep Leadership Team, delegating clearly and supporting their professional growth.
- In conjunction with the Headmaster, recruit and retain high-quality staff in line with safer recruitment practice and ensure effective induction.
- Manage performance through appraisal, constructive challenge, and support.
- Promote professional learning, identify and develop future leaders, and plan for succession.
- Attend to the wellbeing and workload of staff so that they can give of their best.

6. Admissions, Marketing and Growth

- Play a leading role in achieving the Prep School's recruitment targets, working closely with the Admissions and Marketing teams.
- Meet prospective families and build relationships that convert interest into enrolment.
- Lead the Prep School's contribution to Open Mornings, admissions events, taster days and other promotional activity.
- Develop links with nurseries, pre-schools, feeder schools and community organisations, and build external networks that raise the profile of Seaford Prep School.
- Lead retention strategies, ensuring that families stay with Seaford through the key transition points, including the move into the Senior School at Year 9.
- Celebrate and communicate the achievements of students and staff.



7. Parent and Community Engagement

- Build open and trusting relationships with parents, being visible and approachable at the start and end of the school day and at school events.
- Ensure that parents feel informed and welcome, and that communication with them is clear and timely.
- Handle concerns and complaints promptly and fairly, in line with College policy.
- Represent the College positively within the local and wider community and act as an advocate for its values and ethos.

8. Financial and Resource Management

- Manage delegated budgets responsibly, monitoring expenditure and securing value for money.
- Deploy staff and resources effectively, keeping staffing structures efficient and appropriate to student numbers.
- Contribute to annual planning and budget setting with the Headmaster and the Director of Finance.
- Identify priorities for future investment and support the College's financial sustainability.

9. Compliance and Operational Leadership

- Ensure that the Prep School meets the requirements of the Independent School Standards, ISI and the Early Years Foundation Stage, and is always inspection ready.
- Promote and monitor high standards of health and safety and ensure effective risk assessment and risk management.
- Contribute to the development, implementation and regular review of policies in line with legislative and regulatory requirements.
- Maintain robust, well-organised operational systems for the day-to-day running of the Prep School.



10. Boarding and Wider College Life

- Work with boarding staff to ensure a positive experience for Prep students who board and contribute to the College's development of boarding provision for younger students.
- Encourage Prep students to take a full part in the wider life of the College.
- Attend key College events, including those held in the evening and at weekends, and take an active part in the life of the community.

General

- Comply with all College policies and procedures, including those relating to safeguarding, health and safety, data protection and equality.
- Undertake any other duties that may reasonably be requested by the Headmaster.





The successful candidate will be an experienced and credible leader of primary or prep school education who combines strategic vision with a visible, personal style of leadership. The criteria below will be used in shortlisting and at interview.

Person Specification: Essential

- Qualifications: Qualified Teacher Status; a good honours degree; evidence of sustained professional development.
- Experience: successful senior leadership in a primary or prep school setting, with a record of improving outcomes for students; excellent classroom practice and leadership of teaching and learning; leading and developing staff, including appraisal and the management of performance; strategic planning, and leading change that has been sustained; direct involvement in safeguarding and pastoral leadership; making strategic staff appointments.
- Knowledge: current statutory safeguarding guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education; effective curriculum design, assessment and the use of data to secure progress; inclusive practice and SEND provision; the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and the needs of children across the 4 to 13 age range.
- Skills: communicates with clarity and warmth to students, parents, staff and Governors, in writing and in person; builds relationships of trust with parents and prospective families; sound judgement and decisive, well-reasoned decision-making; organises, prioritises and delegates effectively; analyses information and data and acts on it; financial awareness and the ability to manage resources well.
- Personal qualities: a genuine enthusiasm for prep school education and for the company of young people; visible, approachable leadership and a strong presence around the school; integrity and resilience, with the professional credibility to lead experienced colleagues; commitment to the wider life of the College, including evenings and weekends; commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children; sympathy with Seaford's ethos and its belief that every child has strengths worth discovering.

Person Specification: Desirable

- Qualifications: a master's degree; NPQH, NPQEL or an equivalent leadership qualification; Safer Recruitment training; Designated Safeguarding Lead training.
- Experience: headship or deputy headship of a prep school; experience in the independent sector; leadership of, or responsibility for, the Early Years Foundation Stage; involvement in admissions, marketing or recruitment of students; experience of boarding; management of a delegated budget.
- Knowledge: the ISI inspection framework and the Independent School Standards; the independent school market and the factors that influence parental choice.
- Skills: coaching and mentoring of colleagues; public speaking and representation of a school at external events; confident use of school information management systems and educational technology.
- Personal qualities: interests or expertise that will add to the co-curricular life of the Prep School.



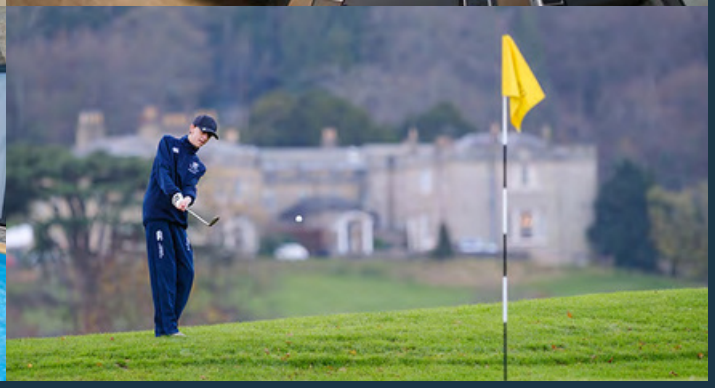
Terms and Conditions

- Full-time, permanent leadership position, starting September 2027.
- Competitive salary commensurate with experience.
- Membership of the Teachers' Pension Scheme.
- Family accommodation may be available for the right candidate, as well as generous fee remission for children educated at Seaford College.
- Participation in the wider life of the College, including attendance at evening and weekend events.









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How to apply

The application process

Interested applicants should visit our website for more information on the school and to view the job description
www.seaford.org/contact/vacancies

Applications should be made directly to Angela Thornley, PA to the Headmaster, **athornley@seaford.org** by 30 November 2026.

First round interviews via Microsoft Teams week commencing 30 November 2026.

Final in-person interviews will be scheduled week commencing 7 December 2026.

Candidates who would welcome an informal conversation about the role are invited to contact the Headmaster of Seaford College, Matt Williams, on head@seaford.org.

Take a look around with our Campus Map
Click here to view

Seaford College
Prep · Senior · Sixth Form

Lavington Park, Petworth, West Sussex, GU28 0NB Telephone: 01798 867392

www.seaford.org

Safeguarding and equal opportunities

Seaford College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All our staff and volunteers are expected to share this commitment and are trained accordingly. Our safeguarding policy and commitment to Keeping Children Safe in Education and our equality policy are paramount in everything we do.

Seaford College is an inclusive community that actively promotes equal opportunities for all students and staff regardless of protected characteristics. We welcome and promote the diversity of our students and staff. The wide range of cultural, racial, socio-economic, and religious backgrounds enriches the College community and helps to promote tolerance of others and their beliefs. We particularly welcome applications from under-represented groups including ethnicity, gender, transgender, age, disability, sexual orientation pregnancy (or maternity), religion or other.

This post is classed as having a high degree of contact with children and is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. An enhanced disclosure will be sought through the DBS as part of Seaford College's pre-employment checks. All offers of employment are subject to satisfactory enhanced DBS checks, prohibition, social media and other checks and references to our satisfaction.

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Our Location

Seaford is situated in the beautiful South Downs National Park and is surrounded by popular towns and villages. Local train stations are in Chichester, Pulborough and Haslemere with lines into London, and it takes 55 minutes to drive to Gatwick Airport.

Popular beaches are close to Seaford College and West Wittering is a popular location for water sports. There are many opportunities for sailing, walking, cycling, golf, equestrian pursuits and historical sites. The county is famous for its country pubs, local vineyards and award- winning restaurants and delis.





