



**SHIPLAKE COLLEGE**  
HENLEY-ON-THAMES



# **Graduate Drama Assistant Candidate Information Pack**

**Salary £12,820.10 per annum, actual salary  
25 hours per week | To start in September 2026**

## Welcome from the Headmaster

Dear Applicant,

The word I hear mentioned most regularly when speaking to the pupils, parents, and staff of Shiplake College is 'community'. So, thank you for taking the time to consider the role of **Graduate Drama Assistant**, as it represents a wonderful opportunity to join our very special Shiplake community.

Shiplake College is an HMC co-educational boarding and day school offering a holistic education for around 580 pupils from Year 7 to Sixth Form. There has been a co-educational Sixth Form since 1998 and since September 2023 girls have been welcomed into Year 7, as we continue our journey to become a fully co-educational place of learning. We are nestled in leafy South Oxfordshire, five minutes from Henley, and sit right on the River Thames. It is a beautiful place to work.

As well as providing a fantastic learning and living environment for young people, Shiplake offers an enjoyable, challenging and rewarding working environment.

We strive to recruit the best possible teaching and support staff to drive the College forwards and ensure we continue to provide the best possible rounded education for our pupils.

Above all, Shiplake is a school where we try to live out authentically our three core values – the Three Is – **Inclusive, Individual, and Inspirational.**

'Inclusive' is our cornerstone with our strong sense of community in which everyone has value and where the prevailing culture is one of kindness.

'Individual' represents our all-ability school in which we not only recognise but also celebrate that everyone is different - thank goodness for that! This is a personal best school.

And finally, 'Inspirational' - the pre-requisite at Shiplake is that everyone – students and staff alike - turn up each day with a smile, a positive attitude, and a willingness to engage with all aspects of school life.

Shiplake College is a school where academic rigour is non-negotiable, but character development is just as important. We strive to help students develop broad interests across a wide range of co-curricular areas, bolster self-esteem, and give a sense of our place in the wider world with the aim to make a positive difference to society.

Embracing the lifestyle at a busy and vibrant boarding school is paramount for anyone wishing to work at Shiplake. Knowing our pupils well enables us to ensure that they get the best from their education here, and this is a pivotal part of any role at the College. This is a great opportunity for the right candidate and 'fit' is very important to us.

Thank you for your interest in working at Shiplake College and, as we look to an exciting future, I hope that you will consider being part of that story.

**Tyrone Howe**



## The College

Shiplake College is a thriving and relatively young HMC school. In September 2025 we welcomed a record 580 boarding and day pupils aged 11-18 (up from 536 the previous term). There has been a co-educational Sixth Form since 1998 and since September 2023 girls have joined in Year 7 (now making up 40% of all co-educational year groups) as the College goes fully co-educational.

Overlooking the River Thames, two miles upstream of the famous Henley Royal Regatta stretch, pupils enjoy a beautiful and inspiring 63-acre rural site. The College is conveniently located near major air, railway and motorway networks, close to Reading, London and Oxford and just 40 minutes from Heathrow.

Full, weekly, part- and flexi-boarding is available from Year 9 (from Year 7 in 2027), with ad hoc 'overnight stays' also an option for day pupils.

Every pupil is placed at the heart of Shiplake life and the College's ethos is underpinned by the Three Is – **Inclusive, Individual** and **Inspirational**.

Shiplake provides a friendly, supportive and structured environment to bring out the best in each and every pupil. Renowned for outstanding pastoral care and personal development, the College welcomes pupils with wide-ranging skills and talents, who will make the most of the many opportunities offered to them.

The College provides an education that is tailored to the individual, achieved through engaging and inspirational teaching, delivered in small classes where the teachers can know and understand each pupil's method of learning.

The College continues to see year-on-year improvements in examination results. In August 2025, Shiplake leavers achieved excellent public examination grades, with the best ever GCSE results setting a new academic benchmark for the College. At GCSE, pupils achieved 38% of 9-7 grades and 64% grades 9-6, an increase from 34% and 58% respectively in 2024. Overall, 93% of GCSE grades were marked 9-4 (93% in 2024). At Sixth Form, the percentage of A\*-C grades was 82%, and 59% at A\*-B.

In addition to a strong academic foundation, the College offers excellent sporting, artistic and co-curricular opportunities. Two afternoons are reserved for an array of clubs and activities, including a comprehensive outdoor education programme, with pupils encouraged to extend their horizons and experience new challenges and responsibilities.

Academic lessons take place Monday to Friday and each day ends with an hour of academic support during which pupils undertake independent study or seek help with homework from teachers. Sports training takes place on three days a week, with the majority of fixtures scheduled for Saturday mornings.

130 weekly and full boarders become fully integrated into Shiplake's inclusive and welcoming environment. International pupils join us from all over the world, currently from 17 different countries, and represent approximately 4% of the school population. Full boarders take part in a vibrant weekend programme of trips and activities on Saturday afternoons and Sundays, with day pupils and weekly boarders able to enjoy additional family and down time at home.



## School Development

The stunning grounds are a remarkable combination of old and new; of the traditional and the up-to-date. Although only founded in 1959, Shiplake occupies a site which includes an original late-nineteenth century mansion, still dominating the main school buildings.

The school is equipped with modern amenities, including a contemporary Thinking Space, multi-purpose Lecture Theatre, a multi-activity centre with climbing wall, fitness suite and indoor archery/rifle range, and Marjorie's, a café where Sixth Form students can socialise and work independently.

1959: College Founded  
1990: Goodwin Building (Classrooms)  
1998: Sixth Form Became Co-educational  
2002: College House (Year 13 Boys)  
2008: First Year 7 (Lower School) Joined  
2009: Gilson (Girls) House  
2014: John Turner Building  
2020: Davies Centre and Marjorie White Building  
2023: First Year 7 Girls Joined  
2024: Bevan (Science) and Jubilee Classrooms  
2024: Phillimore Fields  
2025: Paddocks Artificial Pitches  
2025: Sixth Form Centre  
2026: Wellness Centre (In Progress)

Further investment and development will help to ensure that the College's future is even brighter than its past.

## Governance

Shiplake College is a charitable company and is privileged to be supported by a highly experienced, knowledgeable and diverse board of governors. This helps to shape future strategies and inform

key decisions to ensure the College continues to maintain the highest possible standards.

## Inspection

Shiplake was visited by ISI in September 2025. The inspection went extremely well and we met all the regulatory standards. Shiplake was also awarded a '**significant strength**', which reflects that "pupils who participate in sports, such as rowing, are given guidance in balancing their academic, sporting and wider commitments in a way which effectively promotes their wellbeing."

## Admissions

Entry points are normally at Year 7 (11+), Year 9 (13+) and Year 12 (16+). Prospective families are encouraged to arrange an individual visit or attend an open morning. Academic, Art, Music, Drama and Sport Scholarships, and means-tested bursaries, are available.

The College embraces pupils from a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds as well as diverse intellectual and physical talents. As a Church of England school, pupils at Shiplake are gently encouraged to lead an active spiritual life throughout their time at the College.

## Community

There are strong links with the local community and pupils are given every opportunity to get involved in local events and to offer service wherever appropriate.

Fundraising for charities takes place year on year.

The Shiplake Connected platform helps maintain and develop the links between the College, parents, alumni (known as Old Vikings) and former staff.



## Job Description

The Headmaster is seeking to appoint an enthusiastic and creative **Graduate Drama Assistant** who is passionate about theatre and dramatic arts.

This is a superb opportunity for a confident Drama Graduate who is interested in pursuing a career in teaching and wants to experience life at a boarding school. You will work closely with the busy Drama department to help them in their day-to-day delivery of lessons and provide support for the hugely successful school productions.

## Role Profile

The role of the Graduate Drama Assistant is to support the Drama department in their provision of theatre and curricular drama within the school, including lessons, productions, co-curricular and trips. This could range from the maintenance of the technical equipment to resources for drama productions.

The ideal candidate will have excellent organisational skills; the ability to work to strict deadlines; be at ease thinking outside the box and be able to offer inspirational and creative ideas for all areas of technical designs for exam performance pieces and productions. You will also have a working knowledge of lighting and sound equipment, Microsoft Office, video editing software and health and safety.

## Key Responsibilities

### Production Support

- Meet regularly with the teachers/directors of the show to discuss technical requirements
- Plan, source, manage and catalogue costumes,

props and set items

- Support in the building of sets for production
- Rig, plot and programme lights for performances
- Source, create and cue sounds for all performances
- Keep track of the budget for all productions and ensure all receipts are kept from items purchased and expense forms submitted appropriately
- Help to train and support pupils who are interested in theatrical design

### Marketing and Publicity

- Create promotional materials and programmes for the productions
- Update and maintain displays in the classrooms and foyer space
- Update noticeboard in foyer with latest news/pictures from the department
- Edit and manage videos and video equipment

### Events

- Attend all productions and help with technical elements
- Help to prepare for and attend all open mornings and external workshops
- Attend theatre trips where possible

### General

- Be available to pupils when you are in school should they need to find a prop or costume
- Manage and organise the costume workshop and stores, ensuring they are kept tidy
- Support with department reprographic needs
- Attend weekly Drama Department meetings



## Staff Benefits at a Glance

A competitive salary will be offered commensurate with the role and the experience of the successful candidate. Full details and terms and conditions will be outlined in a contract issued with an offer of employment.



### PARKING

Free onsite car parking is available. A valid school parking permit must be displayed. Bike storage is also available (and shower/changing facilities provided).



### SUBSIDISED ACCOMMODATION

Subsidised accommodation may be available onsite subject to availability.



### DOG FRIENDLY

The 'Dogs of Shiplake' form an important part of our community and some staff bring dogs to work (please see Dogs and Pets Policy).



### PENSION SCHEME

Support staff are eligible to join the Pensions Trust (5% contribution from staff, 6.85% from Shiplake).



### CATERING

Complimentary lunches during term time (and supper if a school commitment or duty). Snacks at break time and hot drinks throughout the day.



### TECHNOLOGY

All teaching staff and eligible support staff are loaned a school device (Microsoft Surface) to enable flexibility in achieving their roles.



### OUTDOOR POOL

Free access to the outdoor swimming pool for staff and their families, at agreed times when the pool is open during the summer months.



### SPORTS CENTRE

Free access to the onsite weights rooms and fitness suites for staff (and partners living onsite).



### DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is nurtured and encouraged. In addition to the INSET programme, individual requests are supported.



### CYCLE TO WORK SCHEME

This enables employees to purchase a bike and accessories through tax-free salary sacrifice, saving on income tax and National Insurance.



### COMMON ROOM

The Shiplake staff form a vibrant common room with regular social and sporting events.



### DISCOUNTS

Generous staff discount can be applied to day fees for children of employees. Also eligible for discounted school holiday camps (subject to availability).

Any other duties as reasonably required by your Line Manager or member of the Senior Management Team. This job description will be reviewed annually and may be subject to amendment or modification at any time after consultation with the post holder. It is not a comprehensive statement of procedures and tasks but sets out the main expectations of the School in relation to the post holder's professional responsibilities and duties.

### **Person Specification**

Candidates must empathise with, and be committed to, independent education generally, and to the personal best education provided by Shiplake College.

### **Educational Attainment**

- Degree in Drama or a closely related subject

### **Knowledge and Experience**

- Previous experience in a similar role within an educational or theatrical setting
- Health and safety certification (desirable)
- Experience with lighting, sound and AV equipment
- Experience in stage set design and construction

### **Skills and Abilities**

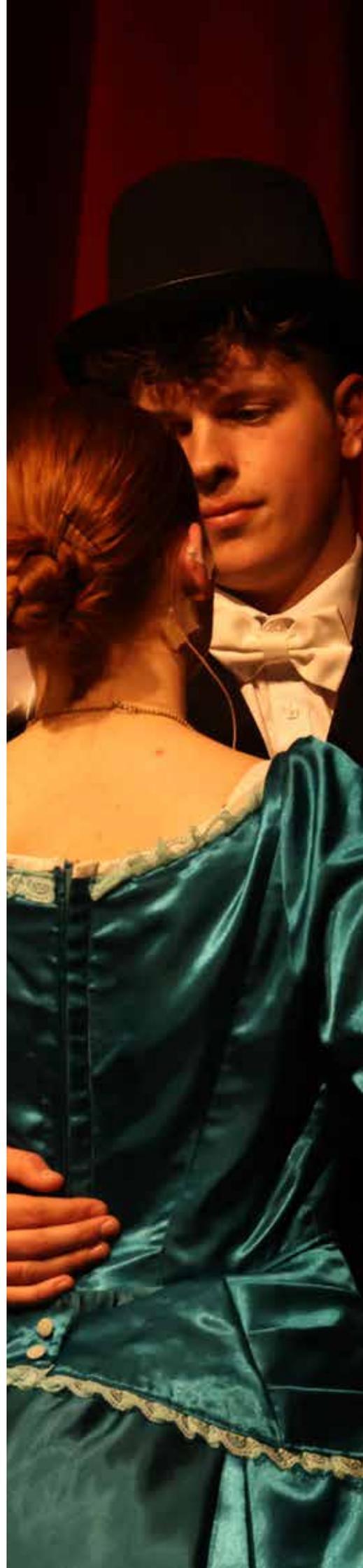
- Strong technical skills in lighting, sound, and AV systems
- Ability to troubleshoot and resolve technical issues
- Excellent organisational and time management skills
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills
- Ability to work collaboratively with staff and pupils
- Creativity and problem-solving skills
- Ability to effectively manage budgets
- Ability to use initiative

### **Personal Qualities and Interests**

- Enthusiastic and passionate about drama and theatre
- Flexible and adaptable to changing demands
- Reliable and punctual
- Committed to promoting a safe and inclusive environment
- Enjoys working collaboratively with pupils and colleagues

## **Child Protection and Safeguarding**

Shiplake College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Applicants will be required to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Shiplake College is also committed to equality of opportunity for all staff and applications from individuals are encouraged from suitably qualified candidates regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and marriage and civil partnerships. There is no typical Shiplake member of staff, we live our core values of individual, inclusive and inspirational and value the contribution that each member of our community makes to life at the College.



# Applications

## To Apply

- Please go to [www.shiplake.org.uk/vacancies](http://www.shiplake.org.uk/vacancies) and download the Teaching Staff Application Form
- Email the completed form, along with a covering letter addressed to the Headmaster, Mr Tyrone Howe, to [jobs@shiplake.org.uk](mailto:jobs@shiplake.org.uk)

**Closing date is 10.00am on Friday 10 April 2026.**

**Interviews the week starting Monday 13 April 2026.**

**We reserve the right to interview early applicants.**

## Application Process

- All applications will be acknowledged by email
- Please read all of the information provided before completing your application
- Within the application form there is the opportunity to demonstrate, using examples, your suitability for the role and the qualities you would bring to Shiplake College. This is where you can bring your application form to life. Please do not send testimonials, certificates or examples of work etc., unless specifically requested to during the recruitment process

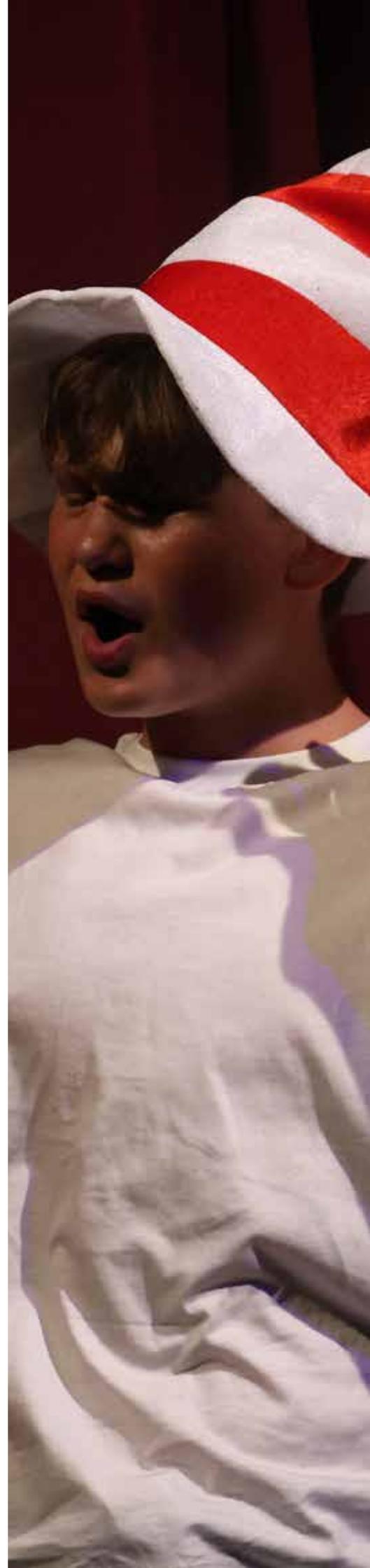
## References

All offers of employment are subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which are satisfactory to the College. One of the references must be from your current or most recent employer. If your current/most recent employment does/did not involve working with children, then the second referee should be from the employer with whom you most recently worked with children. If you are or have been employed within a school, then one reference must be from the Head of your current school, or the last school at which you worked. In all circumstances the information given should be for the Head or HR Department. Neither referee should be a relative or someone known to you solely as a friend.

Shortlisted applicants are advised that references will be taken up prior to interview unless you ask us not to. We will assume it is acceptable to contact your references at any time unless advised otherwise using the appropriate section on the application form. Please ensure that any referees who you are happy for us to contact before interview are aware that they may be asked to provide a reference with a relatively short deadline.

## Online Searches

In line with KCSIE, we will carry out an online search for all shortlisted candidates. Any relevant incidents or issues involving candidates that are publicly available online (including information contained in social media accounts) and identified during the search may be explored at interview. The purpose of carrying out online checks is to comply with the KCSIE recommendation that Schools review information to assist any decision as to the candidate's suitability to work with children and young people. Shiplake College is an Equal Opportunities Employer and seeks at all times to ensure that its processes do not unlawfully discriminate against any prospective employee.



## Interview Process

If you are shortlisted and invited for interview we will ask you to bring in evidence of the following:

- Identity – passport or photocard driving licence
- Address – document from Group 2b of the [DBS List of Valid Identity Documents](#) with current address
- Proof of right to work in the UK – passport or UK birth certificate and proof of National Insurance Number issued by a government agency or a previous employer
- Qualifications - original documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications you refer to in your application
- If you have changed your name by deed poll or any other mechanism (e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) you will be asked to provide documentary evidence of the change

During your visit if you have not done so already, you will be required to sign your application form in order to declare that the information you have given is accurate and true.

In the event that you are unsuccessful please be assured that certified photocopies of documents taken will be destroyed.

Interviews are conducted in person and will explore your suitability for the role and to work with children. On occasion, applicants will be invited to participate in a preliminary online video interview.

As well as a face-to-face interview, if relevant to the role, the selection process may include some other form of assessment e.g. administrative test, demonstration of practical skill, a presentation etc.

All adults working at Shiplake College should be aware of their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of every pupil, both physical and emotional, inside and outside school. This involves ensuring that pupils are protected from significant physical or emotional harm and that there is a positive commitment to ensure the satisfactory development and growth of the individual. Everyone working at Shiplake College should be aware of and, when necessary, follow the school's Safeguarding Guidelines, which are in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, Prevent 2015, Working Together 2018 and the Department of Education's (DfE) and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board's (OSCB) practice and procedures (these are available online at [www.oscb.org.uk](http://www.oscb.org.uk) and also refer to <http://schools.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/safeguarding>).

## Warning

You should be aware that it is an offence to apply for the role if you are barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children. Provision of false information is also an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if you have been selected, and possible referral to the police and/or DBS, and/or the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).

## Queries

If you have any queries at all about the recruitment process please contact the HR Department on 01189 704848 or [jobs@shiplake.org.uk](mailto:jobs@shiplake.org.uk).





### The School Day

- 7.00am • Boarders' Breakfast
- 8.00am • Buses Arrive/Registration
- 8.20am • Assembly/Chapel/Tutor
- 8.40am • Lessons Begin  
(average 6 lessons per day)
- 3.30pm • Games/Co-Curricular Activities
- 4.45pm • Prep/Academic Clinics
- 5.00pm • Supper
- 6.15pm • Buses Depart (5.00pm Fridays)
- 7.00pm • Boarders Activities Programme



**13** daily bus routes  
**1** weekly West London route



**2:1** applications for each place



**10%** discount for most scholarships



**Academic, Art, Drama, Music and Sport** Scholarships available



**Means-Tested Bursaries** available



Fees include **snacks** at break, **lunch** and **dinner**

### Fees 2025-2026

#### Registration Fee

**£180** inc. VAT (non-refundable)

#### Acceptance Deposit

**£1,750** (UK and EU), with £500 credited to the second term's bill.

#### Lower School (Years 7 and 8)

**£8,875** per term inc. VAT

#### Years 9-13

##### Day

**£11,250** per term inc. VAT

*Flexi-Boarding* (up to 2 nights a week)

**£13,775** per term inc. VAT

*Weekly Boarding* (up to 6 nights a week)

**£15,750** per term inc. VAT

*Full Boarding*

**£17,500** per term inc. VAT

### Headline Figures



**580** school roll (2025-26)



**33%** flexi, weekly, full boarding in Years 9-13



**41%** girls across the co-ed year groups



**1:7** teacher:pupil ratio

### Sport and Co-Curricular



**50+** sports and co-curricular activities available



Success in **rowing** for girls and boys at Schools' Head, NSR, HRR, and at international level



Active **Outdoor Education Programme** and **CCF** (Army, Royal Navy and Air Force)



**92** pupils completing **Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award**



**87** pupils completing **Gold and Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award**

### Exam Results



**95%** of GCSE results were **9-4 grades** (2025)



**82%** of Sixth Form results were **A\*-C** (or equivalent)

### Teaching and Learning



**27** subject options at Sixth Form



**5** options for additional Year 12 qualification with UCAS points



**21** subjects offered at GCSE



**1** bespoke Key Stage 3 curriculum



**16** average class size



**9** average tutor group size



**52** pupils are children of Old Vikings (former pupils) and staff

### Destinations and Careers



**96%** secured places at first or second choice university



**55%** progressed to top third UK universities



**35%** progressed to Russell Group universities



Top UK destinations 2025: UEA, Exeter, Brookes, Manchester Met, Cardiff, Reading, York



Top degree subjects 2025: Business, Politics, Marketing, Engineering, Criminology, Sport



USA university destinations 2025: Princeton, Washington, Iowa, Wisconsin, Boston



Microsoft Surface unified **device policy**



All **mobile phones** handed in at the start of each day

### Creative Arts



**238** (40%) pupils receive tuition in at least one instrument



**17** different instruments taught



**10** ensembles and choirs



**7** drama productions and showcases a year



**52** pupils involved in whole school musical 2025



**37** pupils taking LAMDA lessons



**3** whole school art and photography competitions and **1** golden easel



Up to **30** staff dogs on site each day



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