



ST GEORGE'S SCHOOL HARPENDEN

Headteacher Candidate Pack





Dear Candidate,

Thank you for considering becoming The Headteacher of St George's School, Harpenden.

The post will become vacant from September 2024, following the retirement of the current Headteacher, Miss Helen Barton.

The Position

We seek a Headteacher who can balance being both a custodian of our track record, heritage and ethos and a changemaker to stay forward thinking and lead the school into a new season.

Founded in 1906, St George's has a long history with an outstanding reputation. It is a single academy, mixed ability secondary state boarding school for students aged 11 - 18, with approximately 1,400 students, around 110 of which are boarders.

St George's is a non-denominational Christian school, the practice of which runs through the heart of the school and is essential to us culturally and formally.

The Opportunity

This role presents an exciting opportunity for someone to take a high performing school and make their mark with a new season of thinking across its strategy, operations and estate.

As a large, complex school we represent a rewarding challenge with plenty of scope to continue building on our long history of excellence.

We have intentionally restructured the board over the past couple of years to create a supportive and encouraging platform for this task.

The Accommodation

The position comes with a generously proportioned four bedroom, detached, arts and crafts style home in a prime location a very short walk from the school, centre of town and Harpenden station. Harpenden is regularly voted as one of the best places to live in the UK.

Thank you again for your interest in this wonderful school community and its energetic vision for its next season.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Yours,

John Featherby
Chair of Governors

“ *I absolutely adored my time at St George's. I started school as a very small relatively quiet year 7, and looking back I can confidently say that St George's helped me to thrive in so many ways over the years.* ”

Rachael Ball, 2015-2022

The Position



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St George's School, Harpenden seeks a new Headteacher to lead the school into a new season from the start of the 2024/25 academic year.

To help you provide a rounded and relevant educational experience to the young people we have the privilege of working and living alongside.

To maintain a culture and working environment that provides all our staff with a meaningful and enjoyable career.

To ensure our operations are effectively run and administered and that our estate can be stewarded and enjoyed as a school, a home and a centrepiece of the local community.

To recognise our interdependence with our various stakeholder groups, from parents to nature, and place quality relationships at the heart of our way of being.

And, in accordance with our founding principles, to maintain our cultural and formal commitment to the beauty and benefit inherent to the Christian life and ethos.

“ *A school does not exist to send out men and women solely to play a part in life whereby they achieve a competence and honourable life of useful work, but it exists to send out for posterity and for their own generation, men and women who by their character shall leave the society in which they live, the better for their presence and hence the world much nearer the Kingdom.* ”

Dr. Watts



Introducing The School



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Established in 1906 by Reverend Cecil Watts, St George's started life as an independent, co-educational boarding school - a social innovation for its time - with a strong affection for whole family education. It was also one of the first multi-denominational Christian schools in the country and that ethos remains core to school life. In the 1960s it converted to a state school and retained the boarding element and Christian commitment.

There are approximately 1,400 pupils, around 110 of which are boarders. We are always over subscribed in terms of application for places in both Year 7 and Sixth Form entry. The school has an exceptional reputation with a vibrant, family like culture which centres around its much loved house system and a strong pastoral ethos. The school has a friendly warmth and magic to it - an "alchemy of the intangible" - that creates a unique, exciting and enriching place to be a part of.

The school has an extensive site with considerable playing field space, including a range of rugby and lacrosse pitches and a cricketing pavilion; the school is well known for its sporting achievements, not least for having nurtured three of the current England rugby team at school age. Its building stock ranges from old and traditional to new and contemporary, reflecting the school's long history and its ongoing programme of investment. This includes a large, contemporary sports hall with a fitness suite.

Academically, we were delighted the 2023 cohort matched the outcomes achieved in the last fully-examined year (2019), which was a record breaking year for St George's. At GCSE, our Progress 8 score is 0.72, 91% obtaining a 4+ in English and Maths. Our GCSE APS per entry was 40.6. At A Level, 68% obtained A* - B, with 84% being accepted into their first choice university.

On a sporting basis, we had teams in the national finals for lacrosse and unbeaten rugby teams (we play both state and independent schools). And, an exceptional 'extra-curricular' take up (although we don't see it as 'extra'), such as the Duke of Edinburgh award.

The creativity of music and drama is integral to school life and we are lucky to have a music school (Harpenden Musicale) on site. Our Art department also has an exceptional reputation for its quality of work and is a wonder to visit; it includes an on site dark room.



Introducing The School *continued*



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We have an excellent body of students who continually have a passion to learn, are well behaved, respectful, hold themselves to high standards and are wildly enthusiastic about house events and the good natured but competitive inter-house culture. The student body regularly communicates their strong affection for the school and its community.

Pastoral care is a cultural practice for us, intentionally woven through the house structure and daily life of the school, in addition to the formal, targeted provision that is available. All students and staff (other than the Senior Leadership Team) are part of one of the school's four houses (Grant, Goddard, Watts and Monk) to help support this commitment.

We have a number of active parent and school bodies, including the Parent and Staff Association, the Cecil Grant Trust, Parent and Staff Prayer Groups, Old Georgian Alumni and a wide range of parent volunteers who give generous amounts of time to help with school sports teams and other activities.

Sixth Form entry is conditional for all students (current and potential) on achievement of certain grade profiles across the board and for their chosen subjects. We have 420 sixth form students.

The Boarding Provision

Boarding at St George's is spread across three houses: Keswick, Crossthwaite and Skiddaw in honour of the school's early Lake District origins.

Crossthwaite is the Boarding House for boys in Years 7 - 12 with living and recreational space for up to 55 boys in dormitories of 2 to 4 beds. Keswick is the Boarding House for girls from Years 7 to 12 with living and recreational space for over 60 girls in dormitories of 2 to 6 beds. Skiddaw is a mixed house for Year 13 students with living and recreational space for 18 students in twin dormitories with en suite bathrooms.

All houses provide the students with a secure and welcoming place to live, work and socialise, so as to make their time at school as fulfilling and enjoyable as possible. A connection with the boarding ethos is woven through the school, it is not treated as an add on to school life.



What is the school's vision



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Our school motto is 'Aim Higher' and we believe the principles the school was founded on are as fit for purpose today as they always have been. In short, to run a school that will:

- Help every individual discover their purpose and gifts and realise their full potential
- Nurture strength and depth of moral and spiritual character
- Make a positive contribution to local and national community via the students we send out into the world and the way in which we operate as an institution

What is the opportunity?

We are looking for a Headteacher who can balance being both a custodian and a changemaker. Someone who can navigate how to honour and nourish our tradition, history, track record and ethos, whilst also helping the school stay current and forward thinking.

This role presents an exciting opportunity for someone with the vision, energy and enthusiasm to take a high performing school and make their mark with a new season of thinking. We have intentionally restructured the board over the past couple of years to create a supportive and encouraging platform for this task.

Whilst the board has ideas about what the future of the school could look like, we are excited to co-create a way forward with the new Headteacher.

Via excellence of delivery, innovation and imagination, the board is here to help you provide a rounded and relevant educational experience. To furnish our wonderful young people not only with academic ambition but also the skills, character and sense of purpose needed to navigate 21st Century life.

To consider how our estate, operations and knowledgebase can be more effectively and enterprisingly used. And to deepen the school's relationship with the natural world and its sense of interdependence with it.



What is the Opportunity? *continued*



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To nurture a workplace that staff find inspiring and meaningful via a personal sense of purpose, autonomy and mastery. And to develop a communal, collaborative sense of school stewardship amongst the students, staff and wider stakeholder groups.

We will provide you with the resources and support you need to have a rewarding, joyful career at St Georges. And to provide you with the creative space you need to develop yourself and your passion for education along the way.

Headteacher's Accommodation

The position comes with a detached, arts and crafts style home a very short walk from the school, centre of town and Harpenden station.

It is generously proportioned with four bedrooms (plus study), three reception rooms, kitchen, garden, outside storage and off street parking.

The house will be available with the position rent free at the commencement of the role.



What type of leader are we looking for?



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We seek an individual with established experience at school leadership level and a deep knowledge of the statutory and professional expectations required of a British secondary school. Someone who, with that knowledge, can think strategically and creatively as well as having an eye for detail. We are a large, complex school that requires an individual capable of overseeing substantial financial, educational, operational and safeguarding commitments.

Someone with the confidence and resilience to navigate the challenges and pressures (internal and external) that are increasingly present within the education sector. But who can remain calm and kind in difficult moments. And ensure a safe and healthy environment for staff and students alike in line with our pastoral, statutory and safeguarding responsibilities.

Someone who, via their commitment to the Christian faith, can authentically help guide the school spiritually as well as professionally.

Someone with an optimistic approach to people; with a management style that will assume it is possible to trust an individual until they have evidence to the contrary. And who believes that leadership should strive to be effective delegators and guides, not micro-managers.

Someone who can lead in a servant hearted way, with humility and grace. Yet has the moral and professional courage to take intentional decisions in the best interest of the school.

Someone who recognises all organisations are interdependent entities and that the health and quality of our relationships defines the quality of our school. And who, in the pursuit of that endeavour, sees our parent body and other external stakeholders as collaborators and partners.

Someone who sees the secondary school season of life as a precious, formative period that is about far more than just learning for exams. And that teenagers are not only students but young adults with the capacity and potential to be meaningful contributors to society.

Someone who recognises the importance of our relationship with nature, the imperative of being good stewards and the physical, emotional and spiritual benefits that accrue from being connected to it.



What does being a Christian school mean to us?



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St George's was one of the first non-denominational Christian schools in the country, so is not attached to a particular stream or diocese. Church attendance forms part of the school's admission process.

Within the life of the school, Christianity plays a central role. We have a chapel on site and a full time Chaplain. There are regular services during the week and students attend three chapel services a term on a Sunday.

Our culture, behaviours and ethos runs in line with the familiar values of the Christian faith. But we also hope to pursue the side of Christianity that perhaps receives less public acknowledgement such as the pursuit of beauty, a sense of awe and wonder, the importance of adventure, taking risks for the greater good, the willingness to be counter-cultural, a desire to reach for the transcendent and a value for the symbolic and the ritual.

Someone who recognises the importance of our relationship with nature, the imperative of being good stewards and the physical, emotional and spiritual benefits that accrue from being connected to it.



Introducing the school governance



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Senior Leadership and Staff

The Senior Leadership team is currently comprised of one Headteacher, two Deputy Headteachers and five Assistant Headteachers. One of the Deputy Headteachers, who has been part of the school for a long time, will also be retiring at the end of this academic school year. A key initial task for the new Headteacher will be considering the appointment of a new Deputy. In addition to the leadership team, there are approximately 200 members of teaching and support staff.

The Board

The current Chair has been in post for nearly four years and during that time the governance of the school has been overhauled to make way for a more dynamic, forward thinking form of governance. The governors are a youthful, diverse, professionally engaged group of individuals with a great deal of passion for the school.

The board has been restructured into three committees to better support the school in its operational and strategic delivery: Finance, Audit & Facilities, Staff & Students and Environment & Engagement. The latter is a more creative space to provide the school leadership with room to consider how the school can continue to innovate and provide a truly holistic, 21st Century educational experience. We run a board cycle that works on annual rhythm in line with the seasons, with each part of the year having a specific seasonal focus.

We would summarise our role as being responsible for vision, culture and oversight. And whilst our job naturally involves holding the school accountable to its commitments, we work hard to foster a culture within the board and across our relationship with the school leadership team that is supportive, collegiate and collaborative. For example, this term we held an away day for the board at a local country house that is a friend of the school and took the leadership team with us for the morning to spend some time thinking creatively and building relationships together.

We also spend time with staff and students who are not on the leadership team to honour their investment into school life, build mutual understanding and listen to their perspectives.



About Harpenden



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Harpenden is a picturesque town on the outskirts of the Cathedral City of St Albans, Hertfordshire. Once a village, now a small town, Harpenden was named by The Telegraph as 2023's most desirable town to live in with its abundance of green spaces, vibrant high street, regular markets and superb range of cafés and restaurants.

There is an abundance of leisure options, including a brand new leisure centre with a state of the art pool and gym facilities alongside the equally new 'Eric Morecambe Centre' for theatre. There are clubs galore, for juniors and adults alike, many of which occur within the extensive Rothamsted Park or Harpenden Common, both of which run right into the centre of town. The surrounding countryside contains an abundance of footpaths and bridleways. So, if you enjoy a walk, cycle, run, ride or dog walk you will not be disappointed.

Harpenden has excellent communication links. As a commuter town into London, Harpenden's Thameslink station runs a fast service into St Pancras and the City of London, before continuing on through to Gatwick Airport, Wimbledon and Brighton. Luton Airport is a short drive or one stop rail journey away, meaning residents can access two airports directly and easily by train. Road wise, the town is flanked by the M1 and A1 creating easy access up and down the country.

Harpenden has an exceptionally active church scene, with a range of communities and denominations enjoying healthy, sizeable congregations. And Harpenden Churches Together creates a strong bond between the various church communities, many of which hold joint youth and other events.

St George's School sits right in the heart of the town, making it a centrepiece, architecturally and communally, of town life.



Job Purpose

The Headteacher has full responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of this school, which includes the boarding provision, and is responsible for providing vision, leadership and direction for the school and ensuring that it is managed and organised to meet its aims and targets. The Headteacher will provide professional leadership for the School that secures its continued success, ensuring high quality education that realises the potential of all pupils. However, as an employee of the Governing Body, he or she is fully accountable to the School's Governing Body. To gain success the Headteacher will:

- Effectively manage outstanding teaching and learning
- Promote excellence, equality and high expectation for all students
- Promote Boarding and its cultural contribution to the School
- Provide vision, leadership and direction
- Analyse and evaluate School performance and identify priorities for continuous improvement
- Manage the School's budget in order to achieve the School's aims
- Carry out day-to-day management, organisation and administration
- Secure the commitment of the wider community
- Demonstrate an ability to engage parents and the wider community such that any fundraising necessary to maintain/expand our facilities is successful
- Create a safe and productive learning environment which is engaging and fulfilling for all students
- Work effectively with the School's Governing Body and Foundation
- Support the work of the School's Chapel to include attending Sunday Services.
- Build successful teams and work collaboratively with others to achieve success
- Make robust decisions on the best course of action and translates these into structured plans that prioritise resources appropriately to deliver school improvement
- Drive self and others to achieve successful outcomes
- Respond and adapt effectively to changing circumstances, maintaining high levels of performance



Main Duties

Shaping the future

The Headteacher, working with the Governing Body and others, is expected to create a shared vision and strategic plan, which inspires and motivates pupils, staff and all other members of the community and leads the School to become a system leader and a world class school. The Headteacher will:

- ensure that the vision for the School is clearly articulated, shared, understood and acted upon effectively by all
- lead by example, providing inspiration and motivation for pupils, staff, governors and parents to create a shared culture and positive climate
- develop strategies, underpinned by sound financial planning, for inclusion in the school action plan
- develop and enhance the educational partnership currently existing between the School, parents, Governing Body, The Harpenden Secondary Schools Trust, linked partner primary schools, the LA, the local community and other agencies.
- ensure that strategic planning takes account of the needs, diversity, values and experiences of the School community at large and in particular that the needs of all pupils form the basis of educational planning



Leading teaching and learning

The Headteacher, supported by the Governing Body, has a central responsibility for enabling pupils to 'Aim Higher' and achieve their potential. The Headteacher will:

- create and maintain an environment which promotes and secures creative, responsive and effective approaches to learning and teaching, high expectations, excellent standards of achievement and good behaviour
- determine, organise and provide equal access to a diverse, flexible and relevant curriculum which values and challenges all children, including those with Special Educational Needs and English as an additional language, and to ensure that appropriate provision is made for more able pupils
- establish and maintain effective systems of planning, assessment for learning, recording and reporting, using data and benchmarks to monitor progress of every child's learning
- monitor and evaluate curricular provision, regularly review classroom practice and to evaluate the standards of achievement and the quality of teaching and learning in order to set and meet challenging, achievable targets for improvement
- manage regular reviews of all aspects of the curriculum, to initiate, encourage and implement new and effective ideas, taking a strategic role in the development of emerging technologies to enhance and extend the learning experience of all pupils
- establish and monitor curriculum continuity and progression between the Key Stages of the curriculum and Value Added, from partner primary schools to Higher Education
- acknowledge excellence and, where necessary, challenge poor performance across the School



Developing Self and working with others

The Headteacher of the School will build a community dedicated to the lifelong development of the whole person and will:

- create a positive and collaborative learning culture within the School by treating people fairly, equitably and with dignity and respect
- plan, allocate, support and evaluate work undertaken by groups, teams and individuals, ensuring that there is a clear delegation of tasks and devolution of responsibilities
- implement and sustain systems for the effective management of all staff performance, incorporating targets for future development
- motivate and enable staff to develop expertise in their respective roles through a wide range of high quality induction and continuing professional development opportunities in the context of the School's agreed improvement priorities
- maintain and develop the senior management team and wider management structure; promote a culture of effective communication, involvement and development for all
- review their own professional practice regularly, set targets and take responsibility for their own professional development
- give and receive effective feedback and act to improve personal performance
- seek the support from others including colleagues, governors and other stakeholders
- manage their own workload and that of others to allow for an appropriate work/life balance



Managing the Organisation

To provide effective organisation and management and seek ways of improving organisational structures and functions based on rigorous self-evaluation of the School in order to maintain and improve the efficient, effective and safe learning environment. The Headteacher will:

- create an organisational structure which reflects the School's values, enabling the management systems, structures and processes to work effectively in line with the School's ethos and legal requirements
- produce and implement clear, evidence-based improvement plans and policies for the development of the School and its facilities
- work with governors and senior colleagues to recruit, retain and deploy staff appropriately, managing their workload to achieve the vision and goals of the School
- set appropriate priorities for expenditure, allocate funds and ensure effective administration and control of financial matters, in partnership with the School's Operations and Finance Team and Governing Body
- promote and manage the boarding provision of the School in partnership with the Director of Boarding
- manage and organise the school's accommodation effectively and efficiently to ensure that it meets the needs of the curriculum and health and safety regulation
- promote an attractive and safe environment which stimulates learning and enhances the fabric of the School
- think creatively to anticipate and solve problems
- work effectively with the School's Foundation Company and other supporters of the school to ensure that the resources they provide to the school are most effectively applied.



Securing Accountability

The Headteacher is accountable to the Governing Body for the School, its environment and all its work including the wider accountability in relation to pupils, parents, carers, and other relevant groups. The Headteacher is also accountable for ensuring that pupils benefit from a high quality education, enjoy learning and are able to do so through a variety of experiences, promoting collective responsibility within the whole School community. The Headteacher will:

- ensure that parents and students are well informed about the curriculum, attainment and progress
- engage the School community in systematic and rigorous self evaluation that achieves positive outcomes and challenges underperformance
- present a coherent and accurate account of the School's performance in a form appropriate to a range of audiences, including governors, the local community, OFSTED and others, to enable them to discharge their duties and responsibilities
- ensure individual staff accountabilities are clearly defined, understood and agreed and are subject to regular review and evaluation
- develop the School's ethos in partnership with the School's foundation company which enables everyone to work collaboratively, share knowledge and understanding, celebrate success and accept responsibility for the outcomes
- Ensure that students are able to understand and contribute to achievable and challenging targets to make at least good progress and are given strategies to achieve this
- Demonstrate political insight and anticipation of trends in education and communicate these to the school's stakeholders



Strengthening Community

The Headteacher will work collaboratively at both strategic and operational levels with all those connected with the School community, particularly the local primary schools and the Harpenden Secondary Schools Trust. The Headteacher will:

- promote and support the positive benefits of living within a culturally and ethnically diverse society, building a School culture and curriculum that takes account of the richness and diversity of the School's communities
- work with other secondary and primary schools in the Harpenden area and the Harpenden Secondary Schools Trust in the development of collaborative strategies and the forthcoming secondary school to be built in Harpenden.
- create and promote positive strategies for challenging racial and other prejudice
- ensure that learning experiences for pupils are linked into opportunities provided in the wider community
- collaborate with other agencies in providing for the academic, moral, social, emotional and cultural well-being of pupils and their families, and work with the relevant agencies to protect children
- create and maintain a positive and effective relationship linking home and School in a supportive, working partnership to encourage and improve pupils' achievement and personal development
- regularly participate in Chapel services throughout the week

Improving the Life Chances of Children and Young People

Working with the Governing Body to develop a staff who have the necessary skills and knowledge to promote equality, respect diversity and challenge stereotypes to promote the rights of children and young people. The Headteacher will ensure that staff:

- listen, question and respond to what is being communicated by children, young people and those caring for them
- recognise when a child or young person may not be achieving their developmental potential or their health may be impaired and be able to identify sources of help for them and their families





Criteria	Essential	Desirable
QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS		
Honours Degree or equivalent	•	
Qualified Teacher Status		•
Substantial experience of teaching	•	
Experience at either Deputy Headteacher / Headteacher / Head of School level	•	
Evidence of significant CPD in the last three years	•	
Higher level educational/management qualification		•
Experience of working in a Church school		•
The capacity and willingness to contribute to the development of the school's strong Christian ethos	•	
PERSONAL APTITUDES, QUALITIES AND SKILLS		
A clear, well-articulated personal vision for education in the context of a Christian comprehensive school	•	
Proven ability to plan strategically	•	
The ability to lead, influence and manage continuity and change	•	
The ability to communicate the school's vision and inspire and motivate students, teachers, parents and governors	•	
The ability to be proactive, innovative and versatile, with a high level of drive, energy, enthusiasm, resilience and integrity	•	



Criteria	Essential	Desirable
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT		
Understanding of effective strategic, financial and resource management	●	
Evidence of a strong contribution to raising standards in your current school through self-evaluation and school improvement planning	●	
The ability to perform a high profile role with a strong visible presence and a professional approach that demands excellence and earns the confidence, trust and respect of the entire school and wider community	●	
Experience of and commitment to working collaboratively with a Governing Body	●	
Knowledge and understanding of the wider educational agenda, including current national policies and educational issues, as well as statutory and legal frameworks governing the operation of academies	●	
Experience of positive behaviour management and a commitment to ensuring that student behaviour and attendance are outstanding	●	
A demonstrable understanding of the process of safeguarding and safer recruitment, ensuring a safe, secure and healthy school	●	
Substantial experience and ability to use sound judgement to anticipate and resolve conflict and issues	●	
LEADING LEARNING AND TEACHING		
The ability to monitor and develop staff, evaluate performance, celebrate excellence and challenge poor performance	●	
Evidence of the use of a range of strategies to meet the learning needs of all students	●	
Proven experience of developing and leading curriculum initiatives	●	
A commitment to a student-centred, inclusive approach in which every student is affirmed and valued	●	
Recognition and promotion of the role that parents/carers and families play in supporting young people to succeed and thrive	●	
Experience of providing systems of planning, assessment and record-keeping and communications with parents/carers and students to enable individual targets to be set and monitored	●	



Important Information and How to Apply

If you would like to discover more about this exciting opportunity, need any further information or you wish to have an informal discussion, please contact our retained consultant at Academicis, Caroline Olsen: colsen@academicis.co.uk or call 01223 907979 / 07500 889504

To apply, please click on the mynewterm application link: [mynewterm](#)

Please include a personal statement in your application detailing how you meet the Job Description and Person Specification, explain how you would relate your education, training and experiences to the requirements of the post for which you are applying. Please complete this in no more than 2 sides of A4.

Contract Type: Permanent, Full Time

Salary Range: L 37 – L 43

Closing date: Monday 20th November 2023

Shortlist: Wednesday 22nd November 2023

Interviews: Wednesday 29th & Thursday 30th November 2023

Start Date: September 2024

St George's School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and visitors to share this commitment. This post will require a Full Enhanced, with List Checks, Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS).

We are required to conduct online searches about all candidates as part of the selection and appointment process, in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance, in order to identify any incidents or concerns which are publicly available online. By submitting and signing your application, you acknowledge that such searches will be conducted as part of the selection and appointment process



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