ST PAUL'S
GIRLS' SCHOOL

PERSONAL ASSISTANT TO THE HIGH MISTRESS

CANDIDATE PACK

CONTENTS

03 WELCOME FROM THE HIGH MISTRESS

04 AN INTRODUCTION TO ST PAUL'S GIRLS' SCHOOL

06 ROLE DESCRIPTION

07 PERSON SPECIFICATION

08 FURTHER INFORMATION AND HOW TO APPLY

WELCOME FROM THE HIGH MISTRESS

St Paul's Girls' School (SPGS) is an extraordinary school. Not only does it regularly achieve the best GCSE and A-Level results in the country, but it has a truly distinctive ethos, focused on nurturing creativity, curiosity, and a love of academic discovery. Ours is a school full of opportunity where students are encouraged to take responsibility, to get involved and to broaden their horizons. They are actively engaged in service to the community and local partnerships abound. Friendships made at St Paul's last a lifetime.

The education we offer is classical yet forward-looking, encouraging students to take risks, think ambitiously and play a leading role in the world beyond school. It is no coincidence, therefore, that amongst our alumnae we count leading scientists, journalists, artists and politicians. One of our earliest students was Rosalind Franklin, whose brilliant pioneering work was pivotal to the understanding of DNA. She once commented that 'science and everyday life should not be separated', a maxim we fully support to this day.

The co-curricular programme at St Paul's is wide ranging and ambitious. Music plays a central role. The composer of *The Planets*, Gustav Holst, was Director of Music at the school for over thirty years, and his legacy continues. Likewise, the quality of drama and art is very high indeed and we believe this is crucial to a rich education. Sport features strongly too, with an emphasis on wellbeing and teamwork. Most important of all, however, is our belief that all students should receive the kindest and most individual of pastoral care, and this feature is fundamental to our school.

SPGS remains the most dynamic, forward-looking school I have ever had the pleasure to work for and I hope that you will consider joining us.

AN INTRODUCTION TO SPGS

St Paul's Girls' School is an historic and highly successful day school in west London, welcoming students aged 11 to 18. It was founded in 1904 by the Worshipful Company of Mercers as one of the first purpose-built schools for girls and was designed by the architect Gerald Horsley. It is one of the country's leading independent secondary day schools for girls and is a lively academic community with excellent facilities for all subjects.

There are approximately 800 students on roll, coming from a wide range of feeder schools across both the state and independent sector and there is a thriving sixth form of about 230 students.

Entry to the school at 11+ is by competitive exams held in January and at 16+ in November, and there is heavy demand for each place. Public exam results are consistently outstanding and about 40% of all students every year move on to Oxford and Cambridge.

Increasing numbers also go on to higher education at Ivy League colleges in the United States. Aspirations and achievements in many areas go well beyond what one would normally expect from a school, making St Paul's a very exciting and stimulating place in which to work.

The emphasis on liberal learning established by the first High Mistress, Frances Gray, finds expression today in an academically adventurous curriculum, which encourages intellectual freedom, discovery, and the joy of scholarship. Pastoral care is excellent, and all students are placed in small tutor groups to ensure the highest standards of personal attention and development. There is a vibrant co-curricular life and a busy programme of partnership and service activities, which demonstrate the importance of collaboration, diversity and inclusion, and which empower students to make a difference in the world beyond school.

We have an excellent reputation for the creative and performing arts, with students contributing to an exciting programme of musical and dramatic performances and art exhibitions. Our co-curricular programme is full and varied, offering innumerable opportunities for students to develop their individual interests and skills, from debating to fencing, chess to Fem Soc. We have an active and popular society focused on sustainability, which works closely with the school to raise awareness of environmental issues and to reduce our carbon footprint, a project to which we are deeply committed.

The school is well accustomed to sporting success, with hundreds of fixtures played throughout the year and opportunities for all ages and talents. Our pitches, tennis and netball courts, sports hall and pavilion are close by, offering some of the best sporting facilities a central London school could wish for.

AN INTRODUCTION TO SPGS

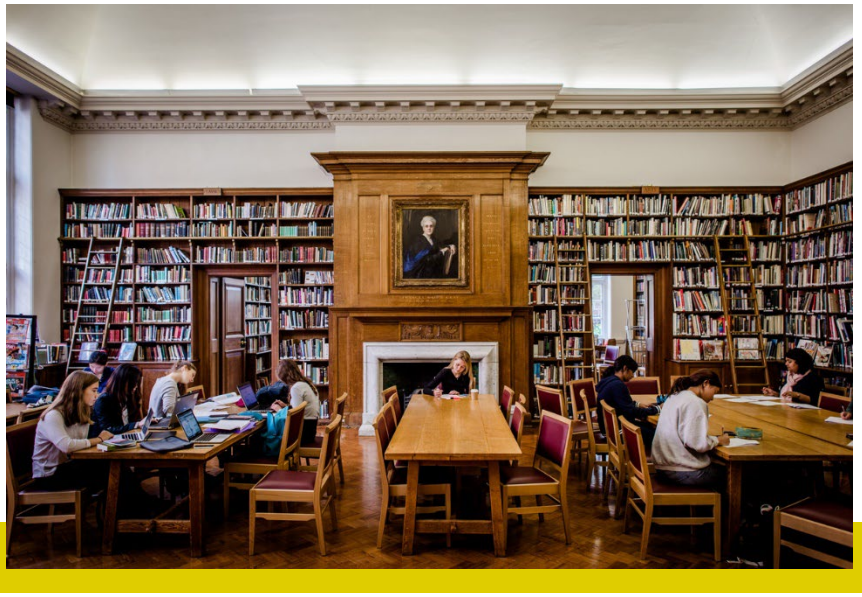
Diversity and Inclusion sit at the heart of the school. We believe passionately that it is our moral imperative to contribute to social mobility through education, and to work to reduce the attainment gap, which the EPI recently reported has stopped closing for the first time in a decade. Our bursary programme currently provides financial support to 11% of students, and we are at the beginning stages of an exciting campaign to significantly increase that figure to 20%. This hugely ambitious target will position SPGS as the leader in bursary provision in the UK amongst independent all-girls schools. We are in the process of establishing the Paulina Foundation, a separate CIO through which fundraising for bursaries, partnerships and buildings will take place, and once established, we will be launching an ambitious campaign with significant targets to ensure that we are able to meet our goals and make an SPGS education accessible to any student who meets the academic standard.

Our partnerships programme has grown considerably in recent years. We work extensively with primary schools, secondary schools and the local community to widen educational opportunities by sharing our facilities and expertise and to provide mechanisms by which we can learn from each other. Our staff and students are engaged in numerous projects, from our new Primary Hub where students mentor primary students, to our Friday service programme, which sees our Y12 students off timetable for an afternoon a week to pursue service activities.

Additionally, our collaboration with St Paul's School continues to grow, with an increasing number of joint activities and opportunities for all staff to get involved.

We are committed to providing a cutting edge, relevant and future proof education for our students. To that end, the school has invested significantly in a programme of building works and refurbishment, including a new Centre for Design & Innovation (CDI), which will house our computer science and creative technology department, alongside sculpture, art and design. The CDI is on track to open at the end of 2023. The development of new technologies will impact every career and every aspect of our lives; the creative industries are the fastest growing sector of the UK economy, accounting for 1 in 6 jobs in the UK. It is essential, therefore, that we ensure our students are fully equipped with the skills, knowledge and expertise they need to navigate a digital world with confidence and that we prepare them for the careers of tomorrow. The building will house art & sculpture studios, with a live broadcast studio, maker spaces and tech labs, and encourage interdisciplinary activities across the breadth of the curriculum, as well as creating opportunities and capacity for partnerships work.

This is an exciting period for the school as we build on the extraordinary foundations of the past to ensure the education we provide is forward-looking and responsive to future needs.



ROLE DESCRIPTION

SPGS is looking to appoint an enthusiastic individual to oversee all aspects of the operation of the High Mistress's office. Inspiring confidence, trust and confidentiality, they will act as the first point of contact with staff, parents and students wishing to meet with the High Mistress.

The successful candidate will have excellent interpersonal and communication skills, and will be an outstanding relationship builder, highly organised, with an ability to manage a diverse workload.

KEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide a warm and friendly welcome to all visitors to the High Mistress
- Manage all incoming communication, ensuring appropriate action and follow up whether via phone, email or writing
- Process all outgoing correspondence, including drafting and sending internal and external emails and letters
- Manage the High Mistress's diary and travel arrangements
- Draft reports, presentations and other documents for the High Mistress, maintaining high standards of presentation
- Undertake research on specific topics when required to support the High Mistress
- Minute and provide administrative support for meetings as required
- In consultation with the High Mistress, prepare and manage the High Mistress's budgets
- Attend calendar and other school committee meetings as necessary
- Organise school events such as Valediction (prize giving for school leavers) and receptions for parents and staff.
- Prepare the High Mistress's schedule and accompanying papers at the beginning of each day
- Administer the Friday lecture programme, liaising with speakers as necessary
- Administer presentation assemblies
- Undertake general office duties including dictation, filing and photocopying
- Manage the timings of appointments and appropriate access to HM to ensure smooth running of her day
- Provide some cover for the Front Office and Reception when required during the school holidays
- Undertake any other reasonable task as requested by the High Mistress

This job description may be amended from time to time in consultation with the role holder. As the needs of the school change, the duties will be adjusted accordingly.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential

- Proven experience of working in a PA role to senior executives
- Demonstrate outstanding administrative and organisational skills with a high degree of attention to detail
- Show an ability to remain calm under pressure, and to show empathy when dealing with a variety of people and situations (both personally and on the telephone), with an ability to diffuse difficult situations
- Show excellent ICT skills (including the ability to use a range of relevant software packages such as Word, Excel and Outlook, and databases) and proficiency at audio dictation
- Provide evidence of proven experience of working to deadlines and delivering results
- Display energy, commitment and enthusiasm necessary for the smooth running of the High Mistress's office
- Display excellent inter-personal and communication skills to facilitate effective communication with a wide range of stakeholders, both verbal and written
- Evidence of being a good team player, capable of working positively under pressure with a flexible outlook that supports the rest of the team
- Present a professional appearance and a friendly approach and a recognition of the need to be an ambassador for the school
- A proven ability to identify and complete work independently, with a highly proactive, flexible and positive approach to all duties and responsibilities
- Demonstrate evidence of diplomacy, discretion, professionalism and an ability to keep one's counsel at all times
- Educated to degree level and/or significant administrative experience

Desirable

- Experience of working within a school

In order to arrive at a decision, the selection panel may enhance the desirable criteria.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND HOW TO APPLY

Terms and Conditions of the post
Working hours are 40 hours per week, Monday to Friday throughout the year. Slightly reduced hours during the school holidays may be an option if desired. In agreement with the High Mistress, there is an ability to work remotely for some of the school holidays.

The full-time salary for this post is £46,000.

Successful candidates for posts here are required to complete a medical declaration and undergo the normal DBS checks.

Application and interview procedures
Further information about the role and to apply can be found on our website spgs.org/vacancies/. Please submit your applications before midday on the closing date. Applications will not be considered without a covering letter, CV, and completed application form. We recommend that candidates apply as soon as possible since applications will be reviewed as they are received, and interviews arranged on a rolling basis.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and overseas police checks
St Paul's is a "registered body" under the Police Act 1997 because employment here involves access to children under the age of 18. This post will require an enhanced DBS check from the Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly Criminal Records Bureau) before we can confirm an offer of employment. Unless you are a member of the DBS Update Service you will need to apply for a new disclosure, even if you already hold one. Former members of staff who are not on the Update Service who re-join us also require fresh disclosures unless less than three months have passed between their leaving and their re-employment date. If you have lived or worked abroad for a period of 3 months or more during the past 10 years you will also need to provide appropriate paperwork, such as a police certificate of good conduct, from the countries you have lived in.

Safeguarding guidelines
The post-holder's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons for whom s/he is responsible, or with whom s/he comes into contact, will be to adhere to and ensure compliance with our child protection policy statement at all times. If, in the course of carrying out the duties of the post, the post-holder becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children at St Paul's, s/he must report any concerns to our safeguarding designated person or to the High Mistress.

St Paul's Girls' School is committed to creating a diverse environment and is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, colour, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, genetics, disability, or age.

Closing date: Wednesday 14 June 2023, midday
Interview date: Monday 26 June 2023

ST PAUL'S
GIRLS' SCHOOL

Contact us to find out more

Human Resources

hr@spgs.org
0207 603 2288
St Paul's Girls' School
Brook Green, Hammersmith
London
W6 7BS

spgs.org