

JOB TITLE: HEAD OF NURSERY

REIGATE ST MARY'S PREPARATORY AND CHOIR SCHOOL INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

Role commences: As soon as possible





REIGATE ST MARY'S PREPARATORY AND CHOIR SCHOOL

Reigate St Mary's Preparatory and Choir School (RSM) was founded in 1950 to provide an education for choir boys who sang at St Mary's Church in Reigate. Choirmaster, Godfrey Searle, bequeathed his house, Sunnyside, for the establishment of the school along with a trust fund to ensure the continuation of the choral legacy.

Today, RSM is a modern, forward thinking coeducational junior school and Godfrey Searle's Sunnyside house forms part of a wonderful 15 acre school site with modern buildings, playing fields, playgrounds, nature areas, dens and a Forest School. It is located in the heart of Reigate, a historic market town in the east of Surrey at the foothills of the North Downs, an area of outstanding natural beauty.

RSM is part of the Independent Association of Preparatory Schools (IAPS) and, in 2003, became a junior school of Reigate Grammar School (RGS), a multi award winning coeducational senior school, named Tatler School of the Year 2020. RGS is located just a few minutes' walk away and this close proximity allows RSM to make use of their many facilities and resources. Approximately 80 percent of children transfer to RGS at 11 years old, and the remaining leavers join other top senior schools in the locality.

RSM has approximately 360 boys and girls ranging from 2 ½ to 11 years old. The school provides an inspirational and exciting education preparing children for happy and fulfilled lives. Academic outcomes are excellent and this is achieved within a warm and caring environment by developing closer relationships with children and their families. RSM children know they are truly valued and this gives them the confidence to take challenges, learn from mistakes and ultimately reach their full potential. RSM was shortlisted for Independent Preparatory School of the Year 2020 in recognition of this.

The school takes a growth mind-set approach to education and the curriculum reflects the importance of a breadth of study in preparing children for exciting future careers. Education for Social Responsibility (ESR) is at the heart of this and Headmaster, Nick Oakden, leads ESR for IAPS schools nationwide. The aim is to produce confident, resilient and creative young people who care deeply about a sustainable and equitable future for everyone. Sustainability issues are prioritised and RSM is an Eco School with Green Flag status.

There is significant and ongoing investment in technology throughout the school and IT is embedded in all teaching. Classrooms are exciting and inspiring places where children use technology to explore. There is an impressive IT lab and Mac suite and the school's Lego robotics team has been worldwide finalists in Lego robotics competitions many times.

Children play a variety of sports and the school site has four football pitches, a hockey pitch, two multipurpose courts, an artificial cricket strip and a 200 metre running track. The school also has use of RGS's impressive sports grounds at Hartswood. A strong extracurricular programme, with over 50 clubs on offer each week, provides extra sporting opportunities as well as a broad range of other popular clubs such as dance, chess, martial arts and craft. An emphasis on outdoor learning means the children spend as much of the timetable as possible learning outside in the grounds and Lower School children enjoy regular Forest School sessions in addition to this. Every child is a member of one of four well established Houses and this gives them a sense of belonging and peer support as well as providing plenty of opportunities for friendly inter-house competitions.

Music is an important part of life at RSM with a strong peripatetic music programme and a range of choirs and ensembles. There are many productions and performances throughout the year and children regularly perform within the community and at local festivals.

Successfully passed all areas in the 2026 Independent School Inspectorate.

"PUPILS ARE CONFIDENT, CURIOUS LEARNERS WHO ARE ENCOURAGED TO BE CREATIVE AND TAKE RISKS WITH THEIR LEARNING".

"EARLY YEARS CHILDREN RAPIDLY GAIN A BROAD RANGE OF SKILLS AS THEY ENGAGE WHOLE - HEARTEDLY IN ACTIVITIES THAT COVER ALL AREAS OF LEARNING."

ISI INSPECTION REPORT 2023



JOB DESCRIPTION

This is a full-time, all-year-round leadership position. The Nursery will operate throughout the year, closing only for designated public holidays and the Christmas/New Year closure period. The successful candidate will play a key role in leading the provision across the full operating year and should be committed to the opportunities and responsibilities of an all-year-round Nursery environment.

Reports to: Headmaster / designated member of the Senior Leadership Team

Responsible for: Nursery staff, including Room Leaders and Early Years practitioners

PURPOSE OF THE ROLE - Create Something Exceptional

To provide inspirational leadership and effective day-to-day management of RSM Nursery, while playing a central role in establishing and shaping the exciting new provision for babies and toddlers from six months.

To ensure the RSM Nursery is full and thriving, making a significant, with a strong reputation. The post holder will help ensure that the RSM Nursery is making a positive financial contribution, and with a very high rate of transition through to RSM after nursery.

This is a rare opportunity to help create the next chapter of Early Years at Reigate St Mary's. Building on RSM's successful existing Nursery, the Nursery Manager will help turn the school's vision for an expanded 0-4 provision into reality — shaping its culture, team, environments, routines and operational systems from the outset, and establishing the high standards that will define the Nursery as it grows. RSM's new baby and toddler provision is due to welcome children from six months from Spring 2027.

Working closely with senior colleagues, the postholder will ensure exceptional Early Years education and care, rigorous safeguarding and compliance, strong relationships with families and seamless integration with the life, values and educational journey of the wider School. They will also work in close partnership with the Admissions and Marketing team to promote the Nursery, build strong occupancy and support its successful launch and ongoing growth.

For an exceptional candidate with the appropriate experience and leadership capability, there may also be an opportunity for membership of the School's Senior Leadership Team.

WHY JOIN REIGATE ST MARY'S?

This role offers a rare opportunity to:

- lead significant growth in Nursery provision from its first days;
- shape the Nursery's culture, environment, routines and educational approach;
- recruit, develop and inspire your own team;
- work within the resources and reputation of a leading independent school;
- benefit from a beautiful 15-acre campus and outstanding outdoor learning opportunities;
- contribute to the wider life and strategic direction of the School;
- grow a Nursery recognised for excellence in education, care and family experience; and
- leave a lasting professional legacy.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

These are illustrative responsibilities commensurate with the role. The role and responsibilities will evolve and change over time, as required by the Headmaster.

Establishing & Leading the Nursery

- Play an active role in building awareness and demand ahead of opening, working closely with Admissions and Marketing to support recruitment activity, prospective parent engagement and the development of a strong opening roll.
- Work collaboratively with senior and operational colleagues on the opening and growth of the Nursery, anticipating challenges, solving problems and ensuring the provision is ready to welcome children and families in Spring 2027 with confidence.
- Shape the Nursery's culture, environments, routines and ways of working from the outset, establishing consistently high expectations for care, learning and professional practice.

Leadership & Quality

- Lead the day-to-day operation and continual improvement of the Nursery, including the new baby and toddler rooms.
- Create a warm, ambitious culture of high-quality care, learning and high expectations.
- Work with senior colleagues to ensure alignment with RSM's ethos and use quality assurance to drive improvement.



JOB DESCRIPTION CONTINUED

Safeguarding, Welfare & Compliance

- Establish Ensure the Nursery meets all EYFS, Ofsted and relevant ISI requirements, with robust policies, procedures and records in place from the outset.
- Maintain rigorous practice in relation to staffing, qualifications, supervision, health, safety and welfare, including the specific needs of babies and younger children.
- Work closely with the DSL and senior leaders to maintain an outstanding safeguarding culture and ensure the Nursery is fully prepared for registration, opening and inspection.

Curriculum & Child Development

- Lead high-quality, play-based provision in line with the EYFS, ensuring children's individual needs, interests and stages of development inform practice.
- Establish excellent age-appropriate practice for babies and toddlers alongside strong provision in communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development.

People Leadership

- Recruit, lead and inspire a high-quality Nursery team, creating a culture of warmth, accountability and continuous improvement.
- Manage staffing structures, deployment and rotas effectively to meet children's needs and statutory requirements.
- Lead induction, supervision and professional development, building a confident team capable of maintaining excellent practice as the Nursery grows.

Operations & Resources

- Oversee the Nursery's daily operations, including staffing, resources, records, health and safety, and communication.
- Work with school teams on facilities, admissions, staffing, occupancy and budgets to support the Nursery's growth.
- Take responsibility for the review and development of Nursery policies, procedures and operational systems.

Parents & the Wider School

- Build warm, trusting relationships with families and ensure clear communication about children's wellbeing, learning and development.

- Lead sensitive conversations and support settling-in and transition so families feel confident and welcomed from the outset.
- Work closely with Admissions and Marketing to launch and promote the Nursery, supporting recruitment and the achievement of strong and sustainable occupancy.
- Play an active role in recruiting families to the Nursery and retaining them into RSM, helping to enable the admissions journey, including recruiting and meeting prospective families, conducting or supporting tours, attending open events and helping families understand the Nursery and wider RSM offering.
- Act as an ambassador for the Nursery within the local community, helping to build relationships, reputation and advocacy and identifying opportunities to raise awareness of the provision.





PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential

- Full and relevant Level 3 Early Years qualification or above.
- Proven Nursery Manager or significant Deputy Manager experience.
- Substantial Early Years experience, including babies and children under two.
- Excellent knowledge of the EYFS, safeguarding and regulatory requirements.
- Strong leadership skills with the ability to recruit, motivate and develop staff.
- Excellent organisational and operational skills, including staffing, deployment and resources.
- The drive, initiative and resilience to establish and grow new provision.
- Warm, confident communication skills and the ability to build strong relationships.
- A strong commitment to inclusion, children's wellbeing and continuous improvement.
- A strong understanding of the importance of parent engagement, reputation, admissions and occupancy in establishing and growing a successful Nursery.

Desirable

- Experience of opening, establishing or significantly expanding a Nursery.
- Level 5/6 Early Years, EYTS, QTS or relevant leadership qualification.
- Experience within an independent or prep-school Nursery.
- Experience of an all-year-round Nursery.
- DSL/DDSL or additional safeguarding training.
- SENCO, inclusion or other relevant specialist Early Years training.
- Experience of Forest School or outdoor learning.
- Experience of admissions, occupancy, budgets or Nursery growth.

This is a unique opportunity to help create a Nursery that reflects the ambition, warmth and educational excellence for which Reigate St Mary's is known.

We are seeking a leader with the vision to build, the confidence to lead and the determination to make a lasting difference to children, families and colleagues.

If you are excited by the opportunity to shape a Nursery from the very beginning and help create something exceptional, we would be delighted to hear from you.





FURTHER INFORMATION

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Reigate Grammar School has its own salary scale which is substantially above the national scales.
- All teaching staff are automatically members of the pension scheme run by the Teachers' Pensions Agency which is transferable between all UK schools.
- Lunch is provided free of charge during term time.
- All staff have access to the school swimming pool and fitness room at designated times, free of charge.
- Children of teaching staff may be educated at Reigate Grammar School, Reigate St Mary's Preparatory and Choir School, Chinthurst School or Micklefield School at substantially reduced rates. Candidates are invited to enquire about this at interview.
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- Successful applicants will be required to make an enhanced disclosure to the Disclosure and Barring Services and to complete an Online Pre-Placement Medical Questionnaire.
- All shortlisted candidates will be required to complete a 'Suitability to work with children: self-declaration form'. This form must be completed, signed and returned to HR prior to the interview taking place.

SAFEGUARDING

This role will involve contact with children. Reigate Grammar School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. All applicants should read the school's safeguarding policy (available on our website) and are required to declare any criminal convictions, cautions or disciplinary proceedings related to young people. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Services. Full details are given on the application form.

The post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the School is therefore permitted to ask job applicants to declare all convictions and cautions (including those which are "spent" unless they are "protected" under the DBS filtering rules) in order to assess their suitability to work with children.

APPLICATIONS

Applicants are asked to complete the teaching Application Form and Supplementary Form (which are also available on our website) and send them with a supporting statement addressed to the Headmaster as soon as possible and by 9.00am on Monday 14 September 2026 at the latest. Please do not send a separate curriculum vitae. Applications will be considered in the order in which they are received, and the school reserves the right to make an appointment prior to the closing date. Shortlisted candidates will be invited for interview.

Within your application letter we would be grateful if you could indicate where you saw this position, whether it was from the TES or another source.

Applications should be addressed to The Headmaster and sent (by letter or by email) to the address below.

Mrs Dawn Holmes
Head of Human Resources
Reigate Grammar School
Reigate Road, Reigate, RH2 0QS

01737 222231

hr@reigategrammar.org | reigatestmarys.org

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Reigate Grammar School is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from appropriately qualified persons from all backgrounds. We are dedicated to creating and sustaining an environment that values individuality and difference and celebrates the diversity of both staff and pupils by fostering perseverance, tolerance and integrity. We believe in equal opportunity for everyone, irrespective of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation or socio-economic background. Candidates will be assessed against relevant criteria only (i.e. skills, qualifications, abilities, experience) in selection and recruitment. We know that more diverse teams are stronger teams, and that the more inclusive we are, the more our staff and pupils will feel a sense of belonging and will thrive.



SCHOOL LOCATION AND DIRECTIONS

The RSM campus is situated in the historic and vibrant market town of Reigate, which sits within an area of outstanding natural beauty. There are excellent train links to London and the town is close to the M25. Reigate has been voted one of the best places to live in the UK on a number of occasions, reflecting its unique mix of independent shops and restaurants, large parks and green spaces, and easy access to the countryside. There are many excellent local sports clubs which are also hubs for friendship and community.

By Road

Reigate Grammar School and Reigate St Mary's Preparatory and Choir School are situated on the south side of the A25 about a quarter of a mile east of Reigate town centre, between Reigate and Redhill. The most direct route is via the M25. Exit at junction 8 and join the A217 south. Travel to Reigate town centre and turn left to join the one way system.

Continue down Castleford Road to the T junction and bear left onto the A25 Reigate Road. For Reigate St Mary's, turn right into Chart Lane and the entrance is on the right. For Reigate Grammar School, remain on the A25 for 500 metres and the entrance is on the right.

By Rail

Regular main line services operate from London to nearby Redhill station and the Reading to Tonbridge line serves Reigate station and a number of other towns to the east and west.

By Air

Gatwick is the nearest airport, only 20 minutes away by road and Heathrow is a 40-minute journey. Both have regular scheduled flights from UK, European and international destinations.

