HEAD OF PHYSICS

Information for Applicants

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD

We are delighted that you are considering joining Putney High School. This is an incredible community in which to teach, work and learn and this role offers an opportunity to play a part in one of the UK's most exciting and successful schools.

Based in Putney, SW London, with a reputation for academic excellence and expert pastoral care, we are a down-to-earth, innovative and unashamedly ambitious school where girls achieve exceptional results and go on to an array of impressive destinations in the UK and abroad.

The wealth of passions our pupils pursue is testament to an education that is intellectually thrilling and fun, and to a dedicated staff body who interest, inspire and support our students to thrive.

We are known for our pioneering initiatives in everything from biophilia and design thinking to the science of learning, and for our leading co-curricular programme. Our superb facilities include a purpose-built Sixth Form Centre, a cutting-edge centre for Science, Music, Drama and Debating and the only girls' school boathouse on a famous stretch of the River Thames.

With a focus on continued professional development, membership of leading organisations and a superb package of personal benefits provided by the GDST, this is an opportunity to join a warm and inclusive organisation which has been a powerful voice in education for over 150 years, and to enjoy the camaraderie of a fantastic group of colleagues.

Thank you for your interest in our school. We hope you will make an application and we very much look forward to meeting you.

Jo Sharrock
Headteacher

THE SCHOOL

Academic with a very modern edge, Putney is a dynamic and down-to-earth school that nurtures bright and imaginative students.

Our unique brand of modern scholarship provides an outstanding education that is bold, broad and above all, relevant. We prepare students for the future by building confident, hopeful young people, with agile, entrepreneurial mindsets, equipping them with skills in everything from design thinking to PPE. Our students go on to become leaders in fields from medicine to politics, architecture to the environment. Curiosity abounds with fun and challenging lessons across an exceptionally rich curriculum and with exciting co-curricular activities to match.

The school is set on a leafy campus in Putney, close to the River Thames. As the largest school of the Girls' Day School Trust (GDST) we have been leading the way in girls' education since 1893 and today provide a happy and progressive environment in which over 1000 pupils aged between 4 and 18 years old can flourish.

We are consistently ranked among the top performing schools both in London and the UK and are known for producing young people who are ambitious, rounded and responsible. They pursue their interests with passion and humour while building the skills, self-awareness and confidence to throw open doors and make their mark in the world.

OUR VALUES

At Putney High School we are:

INNOVATIVE - Forward-thinking in our approach to teaching and learning, ours is a culture that is modern, relevant and inspires the idea-makers of the future.

INCLUSIVE - We offer a holistic education that focusses on the individual and is outward looking - encouraging integrity, compassion, respect and social responsibility.

INTREPID - Interested and interesting, we are unafraid to stretch our wings and to blaze trails, curious to explore and to challenge limits.

INTELLECTUAL - Scholarly in our approach to learning, we are creative in our thinking and bold in our ambitions.

THE DEPARTMENT & THE ROLE

THE SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

The Physics Department is a vibrant, intellectually ambitious community where curiosity, experimentation and scientific thinking drive everything we do. We believe Physics is about the will to find out — empowering students to question, investigate and understand the forces that shape our universe. Our approach places practical science at its core, making full use of our excellent laboratories, specialist equipment and highly skilled technician support.

From the very start of their journey at Putney, students are immersed in scientific enquiry. In Year 7 pupils follow our integrated Natural Sciences course, which blends Biology, Chemistry and Physics with a strong emphasis on experimental method and investigative skill. In Year 9 they progress to separate GCSE courses in the three sciences, following the AQA specification, and more than half of our students choose to continue with a STEM subject at A Level.

Physics at Putney thrives well beyond the classroom. Our co-curricular programme inspires students to pursue scientific ideas independently and collaboratively. Weekly STEM Club invites Years 7 and 8 to explore science creatively, while the Junior Physics Club—led by our own enthusiastic Sixth Formers—offers challenge and enrichment for students in Years 9–11. Older students engage with our popular Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science Society, and all Sixth Formers benefit from weekly Futures Seminars across the sciences. Many of our pupils take part in national Olympiads in Physics, and we are consistently delighted by the number of Gold medals achieved in recent years.

Our A Level students study AQA Physics, and the department has an excellent track record of supporting successful applications to competitive STEM degrees, including Natural Sciences, Physics and Engineering at Oxbridge and other leading universities.

This is an exceptional opportunity to lead a forward-thinking, highly skilled team delivering a rich and ambitious Physics curriculum to bright, inquisitive young scientists. As Head of Physics, you will guide experienced teachers who share a deep passion for the subject and our ethos of Modern Scholarship. We are seeking an inspiring leader who will foster intellectual curiosity, champion experimental rigour, and shape a curriculum that challenges and excites students — ensuring Physics remains a subject they not only study, but truly live.

Accountable to:
Head of Science

Salary:
GDST Middle Leaders' scale (£53,454 - £69,945 per annum). Scale subject to 26.27 annual pay award and dependent on experience

Contract:
Full time

Starting:
September 2026

THE PERSON

The successful candidate will have the following key skills and attributes:

Skills Required

- Leadership: The ability to lead and manage people to work towards a common goal.
- Decision making skills: The ability to solve problems and make decisions.
- Teamwork: the ability to work collaboratively with others.
- Communication skills: the ability to make points clearly and understand the views of others.
- Self management skills: The ability to plan time effectively and organise oneself well.

Knowledge Base

- Excellent professional knowledge and understanding.
- Excellent subject knowledge.
- Understanding of national and examination curricular requirements of the subject.
- Up to date with professional developments in the subject and other aspects of education.

Qualifications/Attainment

- Qualified teacher status.
- Good honours degree.
- Postgraduate qualifications desirable.

Experience

- Experience as a subject teacher from KS3-5.
- Experience of teaching A-Level and GCSE in the subject for at least 2 cycles.
- Experience of a management role desirable.
- Experience of organising or participating in extracurricular activities.

Attitude/Approach

- Ability to enthuse children and adults.
- Possess a positive attitude and approach to change and development.
- Enjoy rising to the challenges inherent in a school environment.
- Lifelong learner.

JOB DESCRIPTION

RESPONSIBILITIES

Policy/Strategic direction and development

- Contribute to whole school policy-making and strategic planning as required by the Head.
- Prepare, monitor and update annual departmental plans in consultation with colleagues.
- Take the lead in ensuring that school policies and strategies are embedded in schemes of work and departmental plans.

Leadership & Management of others

- Lead and manage the department, recruiting, inducting, developing, deploying, motivating and appraising members of the department to ensure that they have clear expectations of their roles, and that high performance standards are achieved and maintained.
- Empower members of the department to develop their leadership potential to ensure continuous improvement within the department.
- Manage day to day requirements such as examination entry and departmental timetables, delegating as appropriate, to ensure the efficiency of the department.
- Chair departmental meetings to ensure that they are used effectively to review performance and that actions are recorded and implemented.

Teaching and Learning

- Promote excellence in teaching and learning to ensure all pupils develop their potential and are equipped for life beyond school.
- Exemplify in own practice the skills of teaching and learning typified by lead professionals, and ensure that good practice is shared throughout the department.
- Ensure that schemes of work are used, reviewed and modified to enable the maintenance and development of high standards of teaching and learning.
- Monitor pupils' work and the classroom practice of those in the department to ensure high standards are maintained.
- Keep up to date with developments in subject area and education in general to ensure that best practice is adopted within the department.
- Ensure the department's delivery and development of the curriculum is effective in meeting the needs of all pupils.
- Contribute to the broader life of the school by supporting and leading curricular and extra-curricular events.

JOB DESCRIPTION

RESPONSIBILITIES

Extra-Curricular activities

- Actively promote interest in the subject outside the immediate physical and timetabled confines of the department.

Marketing and external links, including public occasions

- Actively promote the department within the school community to encourage pupil's interest in the subject area.
- Contribute to the positive promotion and marketing of the school and the GDST in the local and wider community.
- Lead the department's contribution to marketing events and external links.
- Attending appropriate school events to support school activities, such as Open Day and Results Day.

Management of resources

- Monitor and control the department's allocated budget and purchasing arrangements, to ensure the efficient and effective use of all resources.
- Identify future resourcing needs and aspirations for the department for consideration in the school budget planning process.
- Ensure that all resources are fit for purpose and used in accordance with health and safety guidelines in the National Operational Guidance.

Monitoring, evaluation & assessment

- Ensure that within the department individual pupil progress is regularly assessed, recorded and reported and used to inform future teaching.
- Monitor pupil progress through the use of performance and benchmarked data to ensure that high standards of learning are achieved and maintained.

Training and development of self and others

- As a lead professional set personal targets and take responsibility for own continuous professional development.
- Be proactive in identifying training needs within the department, ensuring that they are appropriately met, and that all members of the department are active in their own personal and continuous professional development.

JOB DESCRIPTION

RESPONSIBILITIES

All school staff are expected to:

- Work towards and support the school vision and the current school objectives outlined in the School Development Plan.
- Support and contribute to the school's responsibility for safeguarding students.
- Work within the school's health and safety policy to ensure a safe working environment for staff, students and visitors.
- Work within the GDST's Diversity Policy to promote equality of opportunity for all students and staff, both current and prospective.
- Maintain high professional standards of attendance, punctuality, appearance, conduct and positive, courteous relations with students, parents and colleagues.
- Engage actively in the performance review process.

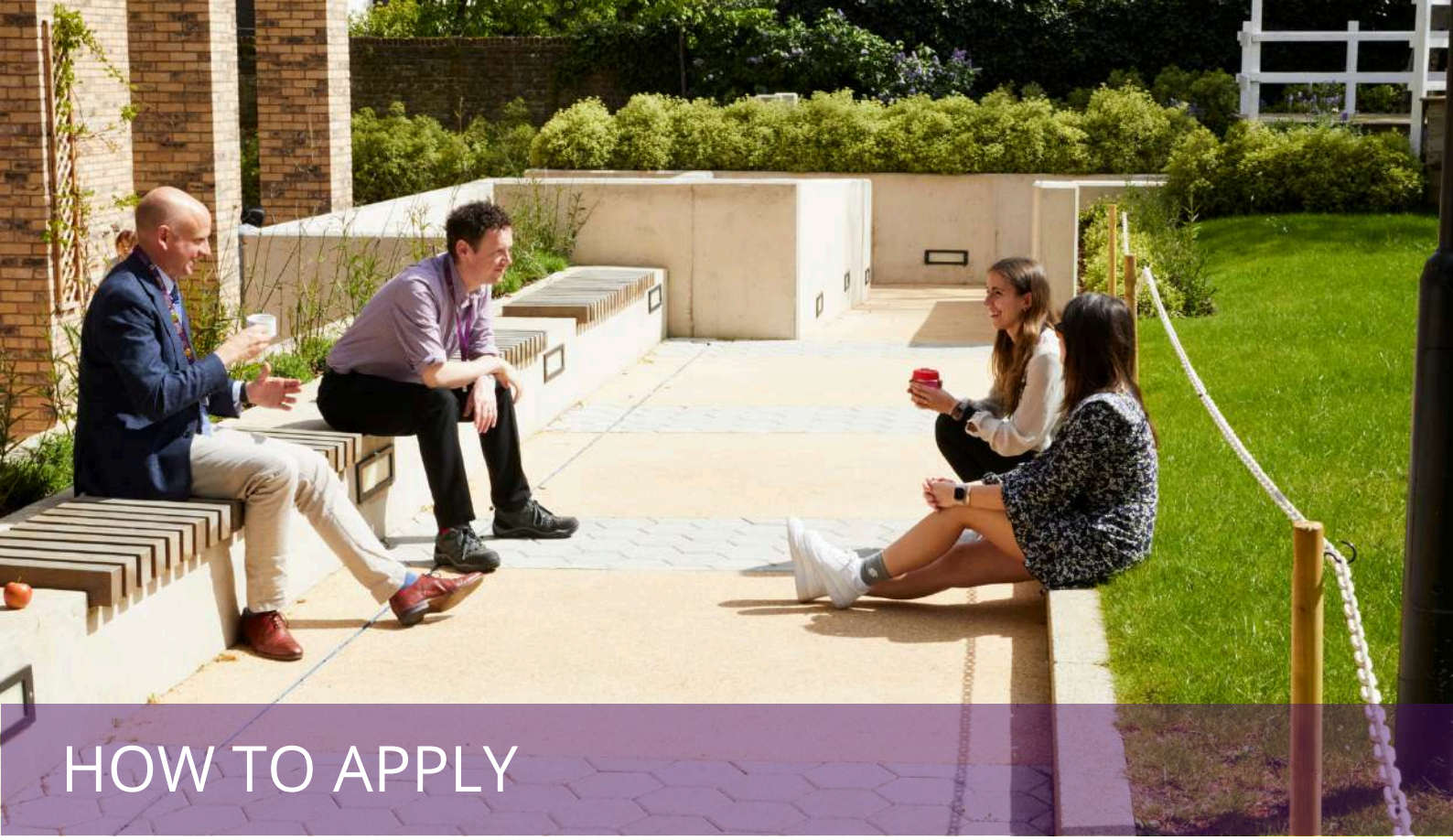
- Undertake other reasonable duties related to the job purpose required from time to time.
- Adhere to school and GDST policies, as amended from time to time, and as set out in GDST Council Regulations, MyGDST and GDST circulars.
- Contribute towards organising, participating in or delivering on the school's programme of extra-curricular activities.
- In accordance with GDST policy, provide cover for absent colleagues by supervising and so far as is practicable, teaching pupils.
- Participate in meetings at the school which relate to the curriculum or the administration or organisation of the school, including pastoral arrangements, or for any purpose as reasonably decided by the Head.
- Carry out duties, such as supervising pupils at lunch, as reasonable.
- Attend all relevant parents' meetings, which may take place in the evening.
- Support pupils and colleagues by attending some school productions, functions, trips and events as appropriate, and contributing, where possible, to the wider life of the school.
- Carry out such other associated duties as are reasonably assigned by the Head.

WORKING FOR THE GDST

The school is part of the Girls Day School Trust, the UK's leading network of 25 girls' schools. As a member of the GDST, the largest network of its kind, Putney is able to share resources to offer students an education like no-other, and to connect staff within a supportive framework of like-minded educationalists.

As part of the GDST we can offer a variety of benefits:

- Competitive salaries and pay progression
- Competitive terms and conditions of employment
- Generous pension scheme
- Free life assurance benefit
- A discount of up to 50% on fees for children at GDST schools
- Access to extensive professional development opportunities
- Training grants for qualifications
- Interest free loans for training, computer purchase loans and season ticket loans
- A Cycle to Work scheme
- Retail and lifestyle discounts
- Financial guidance and support
- 24/7 Employee Assistance Programme



HOW TO APPLY

Within your application form, please complete a detailed personal statement (section 5) instead of a covering letter.

Please review the Job Description and ensure you highlight how your skills and experience meet these expectations.

All application forms should be completed electronically.

NB. CVs are not accepted without a fully completed application form.

Closing Date: Tuesday 17 March at 9am.

Interviews will take place Tuesday 24 March 2026.

Any candidate wishing to seek additional information should contact:

Email: recruitment@put.gdst.net
Tel: +44 (0)20 8788 4886

Candidates who are invited to interview will be required to bring original identification documents (e.g. passport) and if applicable proof of eligibility to work/reside in the UK as well as documents confirming educational and professional qualifications. A confirmation of your address within the last three months is also required.

Putney High School and the GDST are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

At Putney High School, we embrace and celebrate difference. We are proud to be an equal opportunity employer and do not discriminate against any employee or applicant based on their age, disability, gender, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. To ensure this, all positions are subject to blind shortlisting.