



discover
who you can be



OSH
OLD SWINFORD HOSPITAL

Appointment of Head
Candidate Information

For September 2026



*Founded in 1667 by Thomas Foley
'for such maintenance and
education and placing forth
of sixty poor boyes'*

...and now one of the country's leading
state co-educational boarding schools



A message from the Chair of Governors

Dear prospective candidate

Thank you for considering the position of Head at Old Swinford Hospital. As Chair of Governors, I am delighted to introduce you to our school, which is proud of its history, its traditions, its ethos, its values, and the vision we share for each and every one of the students in our community.

In our 358 year history there have been 19 Heads of Old Swinford Hospital. Our present Head will leave at the end of the 2025/26 academic year, having seen through the transition of the school from a boys' school to a warm and welcoming inclusive expanded co-educational school of almost 1,000 students. But our expansion is not yet complete and we are looking for a new Head to join us on the rest of our ambitious journey from September 2026.

We hope this candidate information pack together with the information available on our website will give you a flavour of our unique school and an understanding of the role and scope of this post. If you share our vision and values, and think you have the qualities we are looking for and the experience and ability to lead us forward and be the 20th Head of our school, we would be delighted to receive your application.

So welcome to Old Swinford Hospital and please read on to find out more about us.

Yours faithfully

Roger Walker

Old Swinford Hospital

Overview

In 1667 when Thomas Foley set up and endowed the School he was forward thinking enough to see that his philanthropic ideals could benefit the lives of those individuals who came to his school. His principles are as current and relevant today as they were then. The Founder's values continue to be upheld and like Thomas Foley each generation of those in governance, whilst maintaining a wealth of traditional values, has been forward thinking enough not to be afraid to move with the times. Today the School operates in a modern context as a Voluntary Aided co-educational state boarding and day school. It is a partially selective school, managed by a Governing Body under the Local Authority, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council. A charitable foundation manages Thomas Foley's endowment to the benefit of the School.

Aims of the School

Our vision is very clear and sees each and every student discover who they can be.

Our mission is to provide an outstanding education, both within and beyond the classroom, which enables all of our students to realise and exceed their potential and to provide a uniquely stimulating and supportive environment in which all individuals flourish, grow in understanding, self confidence and self esteem and are fully equipped to meet the challenges and demands of life beyond school.

Our values see:

- Children and young people come first
- High aspirations and expectations from ourselves and our students
- Strong and shared community core values of respect, tolerance, consideration, equality, cohesion and taking responsibility
- Students develop and grow with desired qualities, and are prepared for their future lives

We are a school established in the traditions of the Church of England and Christian witness lies at the heart of school life, however students and staff of all faiths and none, and of all backgrounds, are welcomed as part of our community for we believe that strength is best derived from diversity.



The School

At Old Swinford Hospital we have many things of which we are proud and not the least of these is our students. We are incredibly proud of their successes, their achievements, their drive and determination, their approach to learning and their deep sense of community. It is not a coincidence that every visitor pays compliment to our students.

Excellence in education...

...is a goal each student and member of staff seeks to achieve. Our students are taught and guided by a team of professional and caring staff who seek to allow every one of them to achieve the best they are capable of, to develop lively and enquiring minds and to develop their knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and beyond.

As with all schools, results and comparative data have been variable since the pandemic but getting back on track has been of paramount importance to us so that last year over 77% of all Year 11 students gained at least 5 good passes at GCSE (at Grade 5+) rising to 88% at Grade 4+ and included a pleasing 23% gaining grades 9-8 and 40% at grades 9-7. At A level over 40% of grades were A* - B with most leavers taking up places at good universities or securing apprenticeships or degree apprenticeships.

Planning for the future is a significant part of education at Old Swinford Hospital, with a comprehensive careers programme enabling students to find out more about the options available to them after school. The School hosts a careers event annually which is well attended by a broad range of further education providers, professions and businesses, both local, national and global. In addition there is a series of enrichment lectures and seminars focussing on a range of sectors and with the opportunity to engage with people working in them.



Key facts and statistics...

| Type of School: Co-educational State Boarding and Day School | | |
|--|--------|--------|
| Age range: 11-18 | | |
| Selection: Partially selective on ability and aptitude | | |
| Number of students: 947 (rising with expansion to up to 1300) | | |
| Boarders: 535 incl. 245 boarders (177 boys, 68 girls) and 290 flexi boarders (164 boys, 126 girls) | | |
| Ofsted and Performance Tables: https://get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/Establishments/Establishment/Details/103870 https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50191686 | | |
| Staff | Number | FTE |
| Head & senior leaders | 7 | 7 |
| Classroom teachers | 52 | 48.31 |
| Boarding & support staff | 107 | 85.35 |
| | 166 | 140.66 |



The benefits of a boarding education...

...are there for all to see. Our boarding houses, with their extremely dedicated House staff are safe, secure environments where students respect rules and observe standards. Boarding at Old Swinford means parents can feel confident that their children are happy and well looked after whilst for them, perhaps, easing the juggling of the demands of a busy career and family life.

Boarding means prep can be supervised so that students can get the most out of this and private study.

State boarding also gives parents value as they pay only for the accommodation and supervision of their children. As a result we deliver the quality of education and facilities more often associated with the independent sector but at a fraction of the cost.



Celebrating success...

...is not difficult for us to do, be it on the academic side or in other activities. Our students, either individually or in teams, enjoy outstanding success in the sporting field and their musical and dramatic achievements are excellent. Added to this there are a whole raft of societies and interests that have gained notable success at local, regional and up to national level including both the under 15's and the 1st XV becoming national rugby champions at Twickenham in 2023. For those keen on drama, our upgraded drama department has enabled more ambitious productions whilst musically we regularly perform concerts and have had very successful European orchestral tours.

Much closer to home inter-house trophies in everything from rugby to drama or dance are very highly competitive, after all, competing for your House is very close to your heart!

Extra-curricular activities...

...well it would almost be easier to say what is not on offer at some point in a school year. There are numerous clubs and societies that provide the perfect counterbalance to the academic curriculum in addition to a programme of organised activities that takes place on a weekend and a good range of school tours.

The School is an independent licensed Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme operating authority, an immensely popular activity and well supported by a dedicated and experienced team of volunteer leaders. It also has a Combined Cadet Force, badged with the Intelligence Corps, overseen by experienced military personnel. CCF has long been a popular choice but its numbers have grown significantly as each school year expands.

Strong sense of community...

...is something we are rightly proud of, encouraged in all aspects of school life and promoted by our House system. Older students are on hand to mentor younger House members and by their own actions become role models for the younger ones to follow.

We are a community committed to excellence, where opportunities, standards and hospitality are important and where students can grow in understanding and self esteem and recognise the importance of teamwork. We have a traditional ethos that expects students to work hard, have high standards of personal presentation and behaviour and display courtesy and respect for others. Old Swinford students develop tolerance, trust, understanding, consideration and respect for others from all walks of life and they are all proud to be a member of the Times top 100 happiest schools.

The school site...

...has had to grow to accomodate and educate more than twenty times the number the Founder originally established it for. The original 1667 building stands at the heart of the school celebrating history and tradition, now complimented and blending with buildings added by successive generations each displaying characteristics of their time but reflective of their setting. The latest addition, in 2020, was Swinford Court which was key to providing the educational space needed to facilitate our ambitious expansion programme.

There are seven boarding houses, the last of which, Potter House, was completed in 2010 shortly followed by the makeover, re-design and extension to both Prospect House and Foster House. Most recently our attention turned to Dudley House which was refurbished and remodelled in 2022 to welcome girls into boarding and, in 2024, the same for Baxter House as a second girls' House.

The Foundation...

...also known as Old Swinford Hospital, or Thomas Foley's Charity is a Registered Charity which administers the endowment bequeathed by Thomas Foley. On his death he entrusted the governance of the School to his three sons and thirteen other "Feoffees".

Today, the charity is administered by up to fifteen Feoffees, with three of these places reserved for direct descendants of the Founder. The charity has operated independently since 1954 after the School became voluntary aided and prior to which for most of its history it had been an independent school charging no fees. The School of the Foundation is the beneficiary of its trusts and the Feoffees take an active role in the School, appointing the majority of the Governing Body, providing bursary support towards the payment of boarding fees and other grants including capital grants from time to time.



For more information
on the School,
please visit
our website at
www.oshsch.com



The Role

The Head will be responsible for providing leadership, organisation, management and the general conduct of the School. At Old Swinford Hospital we see this as working to achieve the strategic priorities articulated by the Governing Body and ensuring the School is a leading school in the boarding market and that the shape of the School, its curriculum and its management are sleek, modern and focussed so it is in the very best position to provide a first class education in a challenging economic climate.

The Head will develop and implement a strategic vision for the School that:

- Seeks to enhance and develop the delivery of a modern, attractive and cost effective curriculum that meets the needs of all students
- Drives excellence in education raising all aspects of teaching to 'outstanding' and improving results and outcomes
- Promotes Old Swinford Hospital as a leading state boarding school championing the educational and social benefits of boarding
- Completes the growth in student numbers that the expansion and buildings programmes have allowed for
- Defines a leadership style and structure that support growth and improvement and motivates staff to participate in the vision
- Safeguards and promotes the unique heritage of the School and its Foundation and maintains the ethos and the spirit that is Old Swinford Hospital



Leadership & Management

The Head will be responsible for:

- The establishment and maintenance of effective systems and structures of senior leadership and middle management for the whole School
- The implementation of policies, decisions and instructions of the Governing Body
- The financial affairs of the School within the budget set by the Governing Body.
- Directing the available human, physical and financial resources towards the School's aims and objectives
- Maintaining a productive learning environment and ensuring high standards of behaviour and uniform
- Ensuring the School complies with all relevant legislation, regulation and directive and that it is fully prepared for inspections
- Fostering a sense of community within the School and maintaining an ethos in which individuals feel valued and where personal endeavour and responsibility are encouraged
- Promoting, by example, the highest standards of personal and corporate behaviour
- The Head will be expected to be a Director (unpaid) of Oldswinford Enterprises Ltd, through which lettings and other income is generated
- The Head will be expected to be a Director (unpaid) of Old Swinford Services Ltd, through which services and staffing is secured

Strategy and Policy

The Head will:

- Develop the strategic view and direction for the School
- Initiate matters of strategy and policy for the consideration of the Governors and act in accordance with their strategic plan, budgets, policies, procedures, instructions and decisions
- Plan the development of the School and secure appropriate funding for development
- Maintain the ethos and values of the School
- Be responsible for the School's admission arrangements as set by Governors and in accordance with the statutory Code of Practice on Admissions.

Governing Body & Governance

The Head will be expected to choose to be a Governor and will be required to:

- Develop a good working relationship with the Governors and advise and assist them in the fulfilment of their responsibilities
- Attend meetings of the Governors and to support the workings of their sub-committees
- Keep the Governors fully informed on the state and progress of the School and to submit such reports, as they may from time to time require
- Develop maintain and apply appropriate school policies and ensure equality of opportunity for all through these policies, procedures and practices

The Foundation

The Head will not be a Feoffee but will :

- Work closely with the Feoffees and their Steward to support their objectives
- Attend meetings of the Foundation, and any subcommittee thereof, as required from time to time
- Keep the Feoffees fully informed on the state and progress of the School and to submit such reports as they may from time to time require

Curriculum & Teaching

The Head will not be required to undertake timetabled teaching duties but may do so if they wish or think fit and to the benefit of the school and its students.

The Head will be responsible for:

- The direction and assessment of teaching and learning and the content and organisation of the curriculum ensuring that the requirements of the national curriculum are met
- Developing and maintaining a broad, balanced, coherent curriculum which is relevant to the needs and aspirations of the students and their future lives
- Conducting regular reviews and evaluation to ensure the curriculum is updated, taking into account regulations, policies and local and national initiatives
- Providing and lending support to sporting, cultural and extra-curricular activities which will enable students to develop their personal qualities, interests and skills for the benefit of themselves and the wider community

Boarding

The Head shall:

- Champion the educational and social benefits of boarding
- Ensure that the requirements of the boarding community are integrated into the operational plans of the school
- Ensure that boarding is operated in a manner that at least meets the requirements of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools and where possible exceeds them
- Develop and maintain a safe and welcoming environment and boarding provision which enhances the physical, social and academic welfare of the boarding students
- Promote and market Old Swinford Hospital as a leading boarding school

Safeguarding & Pastoral Care

The Head will have overall responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and understanding this in the context of both a school and a boarding

The Head will be required to:

- Reinforce good behaviour in students and encourage self discipline, the respect of and proper regard for authority and good order and discipline on site and at school activities or events off site
- Sustain an environment and code of behaviour which enables effective teaching and learning to happen
- Ensure that the well being of each student is supported through the School's policies and procedures
- Ensure that students are given opportunities to develop an awareness of broader social issues so that they contribute fully to the community and society of which they will be a part
- Encourage a sense of fair play, self respect and respect for other ways of life, beliefs and opinions.
- Ensuring all employees understand they have a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children that this underlies all decisions within the School.

Students

The Head will be responsible for ensuring:

- The health, safety and welfare of all students and, in particular, to take all reasonable steps to keep them safe from harm
- A respect for knowledge and the means by which it may be acquired
- That students receive high quality education leading to the pursuit of excellence
- That the progress of each student is monitored and recorded so that the most appropriate decisions can be taken with regard to their development
- Vocational guidance and advice is provided to assist students in making informed and realistic decisions about future opportunities
- That the activities in which students are engaged are conducted in a disciplined, safe and healthy environment in accordance with the Governors' policies
- That uniform/dress code is enforced
- That behaviour is of the highest standard both inside and outside of lessons
- That there are clear and open lines of communication

Staff

The Head will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that the School complies with all relevant Health and Safety at Work regulations
- Maintaining and developing a structure whereby all staff are supported and motivated in order to benefit both the individual and the School
- The appointment of staff below the Deputy Head and ensuring appropriate recruitment checks are carried out.
- Ensuring that the process of staff development reviews is effective and that, through Performance Appraisal, staff achieve the levels of performance necessary to meet the agreed aims and objectives of the School, in particular the high standards of teaching, and to assist any members of staff who are unable to meet those standards
- Making recommendations to Governors for pay and promotions, in line with Governors' Policy
- Dismissal or suspension in accordance with disciplinary procedures laid down from time to time
- Ensuring that all staff have access to advice, education and training appropriate to the needs of the School and to their stage of development

- Ensuring that new members of the teaching profession and other staff new to the School are properly inducted
- Developing effective and efficient lines of communication with all staff on an individual and collective basis
- Encouraging, monitoring, challenging and professionally developing staff whilst, where appropriate, tackling underperformance

Parents

The Head will be required to:

- Communicate clearly and promptly with parents and develop a working partnership with them to the mutual benefit of the parents, students and School
- Ensure that parents have access to appropriate up-to-date information about the School
- Ensure that parents are kept fully informed of their child's progress and development
- Provide parents with the opportunity to involve themselves in school life
- Be available to see parents of existing students and prospective entrants
- Operate, in accordance with Governors' Policy, a satisfactory procedure for the prompt handling of complaints or queries



Marketing & Public Relations

The Head will be required to:

- Effectively communicate the School's vision, mission and goals within the School and externally and be seen as a figurehead and role model for the school
- Foster good relations with the Department for Education, Dudley Local Authority, other relevant organisations, the local community, business and industry
- Ensure that relations with the local, regional and national media provide the School with favourable coverage in order to maintain and develop the image and standing of the School
- Maintain good relationships with feeder schools
- Be alert to innovative sources of income and support fund-raising and the cultivation of appropriate sponsorship and partnership
- Promote and develop closer links with the Old Foleys' Association, other alumni and supporters



The Person

In the history of the School there have only been 19 Heads. Governors are now seeking to appoint the 20th. We are looking for a Head who is a strong and inspirational leader, who has the depth of experience necessary to promote an excellent boarding education and the vision and passion to join us on the rest of our ambitious journey to continue to grow the School and drive up educational standards from September 2026.

Qualifications

- A good honours degree from a UK university or the equivalent, with a good academic record
- Hold Qualified Teacher Status
- If not an existing Head, have the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) or have been accepted on or willing to take a course leading to that qualification
- A current DSL qualification

Knowledge and Experience

- Appropriate educational career experience and record of relevant continual professional development
- A comprehensive knowledge and experience of national policy, legislative frameworks and school governance
- A good and broad understanding of the boarding and education sector and market



- Demonstrate both academic and administrative leadership ability and be financially aware
- Experience in, and understanding of, financial management, resource planning, budgetary control and project management
- Proven record of successful senior leadership in an 11-18 school with a sizeable Sixth Form
- Evidence of driving up academic improvement and delivering outcomes
- Experience of curriculum review, development and delivery
- Evidence of proven success in relation to driving improvement in culture and behaviour
- Preferably having recent boarding career experience
- Be knowledgeable in all aspects of safeguarding
- Evidence of managing staff including recruitment, induction and development, pay, performance management and disciplinary procedures

Skills

- Be able to think at a strategic level and develop and articulate a clear vision for the School
- Be able to implement plans, manage change and evaluate impact
- Show evidence of successfully leading school improvement, challenge, change and innovation
- Show experience of successful team leadership, collaboration and inclusion
- Be able to analyse a school's strengths and interpret relevant comparative data, establish benchmarks and set targets for improvement with proven ability to deliver
- Be able to create and build results-driven management teams that foster creativity, insight and can-do mindsets
- The ability to challenge underperformance in teaching outcomes and support improvements
- Be sympathetic with the ethos of partially selective education, the commitment to high academic standards and the importance of all round development of students
- The ability to prioritise workloads and delegate effectively
- Good time management skills

Qualities

- Have presence and character, be inspirational, encouraging and motivational, with drive, vision and passion
- Demonstrate strong, clear and sensitive communication skills
- Lead by example
- Be able to deal with sensitive issues or conflict
- Be able to lead School worship and support the Christian spiritual life of the School, whilst respecting and supporting the background and belief of all students
- Demonstrate a good health record, stamina and resilience



Terms of Appointment

Contract

The Governors will award a Contract of Employment defining the role and responsibilities of the Head in relation to the Governors and the Feoffees.

The appointment is subject to the conditions of employment of Heads, set out in the current School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and all other current education, employment and health and safety legislation, including the Heads' Standards.

Residence

The Head will be required to live in the accommodation provided on the school site during term time. The house is modern with four bedrooms.

Removal expenses will be paid (subject to approved quotations). In the case of recruitment from overseas, removal expenses will be paid only from the point of entry into the UK.

Competitive Package

The education based salary will fall within the Group 6 scale (L21-L34), commensurate with the successful candidate's experience and qualifications. There will be scope to advance to higher levels via Group 7 scales with sustained growth in the size of the School and successful performance appraisals.

A boarding emolument will be offered commensurate with the successful candidate's experience and qualifications.

You will also have:

- Access to a contributory pension scheme (TPS)
- Personal health insurance
- Accommodation
- Council Tax and allowances for utilities

Checks and References

The post will be offered subject to the necessary pre-employment checks, including medical fitness and enhanced DBS checks.

How to Apply

If you believe that you and Old Swinford Hospital can grow and move upwards together then the Governors would be delighted to hear from you.

Applications

Applications can be made electronically via the School's website.

The closing date for applications is:

12 noon, Monday 22nd September 2025

Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

Your application should be accompanied by a letter (not more than two A4 pages) summarising your proven ability related to the role and person specifications. The process will give the opportunity to upload this.

Interviews

Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed on Thursday 9th October, at the School. Assessment tasks will take place on that day and there will be opportunities to meet members of staff and students and to tour the site.

Final interviews (including a presentation) will take place on Friday 17th October. Candidates reaching this stage will be invited, with their partners, to join Governors for dinner on the evening of Thursday 16th October.

Candidates reaching the final interview stage will be asked to give a presentation on their vision of the School in the future.

References for candidates on the shortlist will be taken up prior to interviews on 9th October.

Suitability to work with children

Old Swinford Hospital is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post.

Equal opportunities

Old Swinford Hospital welcomes applications for employment from all sectors of the community. The Governors can make exception to this policy for certain residential posts where gender may be specified and leadership posts which may be designated as requiring the post holder to be in sympathy with the specific Christian character of the School.

Data Protection and Privacy Notice

Data protection legislation gives you certain rights about how your information is collected and used and you have a right to request access to information we hold about you. To make a request, contact the Bursar at Old Swinford Hospital (lgreen@oshsch.com).

You also have the right to:

- Be informed about the collection and use of your personal data
- Ask us for copies of personal information we have about you
- Ask us to change any information you think is not accurate or complete
- Ask us to delete your personal information
- Ask us to stop using your information
- Object to the processing of your information, in certain circumstances
- Withdraw consent at any time

You also have rights in relation to automated decision making and profiling and to complain to the Information Commissioner if you feel we have not used your information in the right way.

We will always try to comply with your request however, there are legitimate reasons why we may have to refuse, which depends on why we are processing it.

A full copy of our privacy notice can be found on our website.

If you have a concern about the way we are collecting or using your personal data, we ask that you raise your concern with us in the first instance. Alternatively, you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office at <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>

Any other questions?

If we can help clarify anything, you have any questions or require further information please email Mrs Beverley Hirons, Clerk to the Governing Body on bhirons@oshsch.com





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