



GEORGE  
WATSON'S  
— COLLEGE —

# Appointment of Principal

Candidate Information

January 2023



# Introduction

George Watson's College is one of the UK's leading and largest co-educational independent day schools, with 2,478 pupils and around 500 members of staff.

Our mission is to provide a world-class education for children and young people from Preschool (age 3/4) to S6 (age 17/18) and to encourage pupils to develop a love of learning through an inspiring curriculum and extensive and inclusive enrichment programme.

Despite our size, it is regularly remarked that we still have a small-school 'feel': the close-knit and friendly relationships embedded throughout our community are a hallmark of the School. Our motto – *Ex Corde Caritas* (Love from the Heart) – is central to our values as we seek to sustain what is described as 'The Watson's Family'. This tangible sense of togetherness is significantly enhanced by everyone being on one purpose-built 52-acre site, located in the attractive residential district of Morningside, to the south west of the centre of Edinburgh.

Edinburgh itself is the second strongest city economy in the UK, outside of London, with the highest percentage of graduates and professionally qualified adults in the UK and over 25% of school age children attending fee-paying schools. We are proud of our independent status and whilst remaining true to our Scottish roots, seek to sustain and develop an international perspective. Our curriculum is based on the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence and we present candidates for Scottish National Qualifications.

At Watson's we nurture the knowledge, skills and confidence our pupils will need to become engaged and successful citizens and make their own unique contribution to the world.

# Ethos & Values

*“A community that supports our pupils in discovering their own limitless potential”*



**Our values sit at the heart of our school. They are the standard we set to measure ourselves and our contribution to the strength of the community. We try to ensure these core values run through everything we do:**

**Aim High:** We are ambitious for ourselves and others, always seeking to be the best we can be as individuals and as a school.

**Join In:** We are inclusive in what we do and how we do it. We want our pupils to feel confident in taking part and contributing to all aspects of school life and we play an active part in the life of our wider community.

**Respect All:** Everyone is different and we celebrate that difference, respecting the unique contribution that each will make to our world.

**Be Kind:** Our Motto is *Ex Corde Caritas* “Love from the Heart” and we aspire to live up to that motto every day.



# Preschool

Designed to create flexible, collaborative spaces for children to learn both in the classrooms and outdoors, our Preschool offers an exceptional early years education for girls and boys from age three. Each of our Preschool classes are teacher-led and children are supported by a team of experienced Preschool practitioners. We focus on helping children develop the all important life skills of imagination, turn-taking, leadership and problem-solving. At the same time, the crucial early foundations of literacy, numeracy and language skills are embedded into our practice and supported by lessons with specialist PE, Art and Music teachers. All this ensures that children are in the best possible place to take the next steps in their education.

We make full use of our extensive one-site campus, available to all of our children, providing a range of areas to explore and discover, such as our all-weather astro pitches, allotment and wooded areas. This means that our Preschool combines the best of childcare with an environment that really encourages learning, enabling children to move successfully into our Junior School when they are ready to do so.



## Junior School

Our Junior School is the perfect setting for children to develop their early learning experiences and to prepare for the next step on their educational journey. We aim to provide a world class education for pupils from a wide range of backgrounds, abilities and interests, sustaining them with excellent support and providing a unique range of enrichment activities and opportunities.

We incorporate progressively greater challenges and expectations as pupils move through from our Lower Primary to the Upper Primary, including more classes led by specialist teachers. The rich and varied Junior School curriculum ensures that children acquire a deep understanding of individual subjects, whilst cross-curricular themes ensure that understanding is developed in interesting and rewarding contexts. By helping them to understand how they learn, we empower pupils to be happy, confident and successful in their learning.

Outside spaces are important in the Junior School. We make full use of our campus in providing outdoor learning experiences for our pupils, including a number of outdoor classroom spaces. There are dedicated playground spaces for younger and older pupils which provide quiet

zones as well as exciting adventure play equipment and areas for ball games.

There is also a well-established plan of trips and visits to enhance pupils' learning. In the Lower Primary School, classes make regular trips in and around Edinburgh with Upper Primary offering pupils the opportunity to travel outside of the city.

The pressure on children and young people has never been greater. At Watson's we know that our pupils will only succeed if they have an environment and the personal support to enable them to thrive. As children progress through Junior School, their mental and emotional wellbeing is supported in ways that are specifically catered for their age and stage of life. Class teachers have the prime responsibility for ensuring the health and wellbeing of the pupils in the class, but they have access to specialist support from colleagues, including our own Educational Psychologist.

# Senior School

**Our Senior School provides an outstanding preparation for pupils' future lives and careers, with a mix of the highly innovative and the reassuringly traditional.**

## **Academics**

Offering one of the broadest range of subject choices anywhere, with excellent specialist teaching, we provide a mix of the highly innovative and the reassuringly traditional, a curriculum broad and flexible enough to meet most young people's needs and an unparalleled range of opportunities that enhance and enrich our pupils' educational journey.

We prepare pupils for Scottish National Qualifications and provide an exceptional range of courses in combinations that are designed to suit the needs of the individual. We have one of the most comprehensive and advanced approaches to digital learning in Scotland and our teachers work to harness and shape pupils' use of digital learning to ensure that it is focused, effective and safe, and that pupils are prepared for the approaches that they will meet at university and in the workplace.

## **Performing Arts**

Built in the 1960s and extensively upgraded in the last decade, our stunning Music School provides an inspiring space for pupils pursuing a love of music. Classrooms, individual tuition rooms and an impressive 200-seat auditorium are available for use by pupils from across the Schools. The Drama Centre consists of specialist drama studios equipped with professional lighting and sound facilities and an outside performance space augments the facilities in the Senior School Assembly hall.

*“Academically, a highly successful senior school”*

## **The Good Schools Guide**

## **Sport**

Our Centre for Sport incorporates a swimming pool, two sports halls, three gym halls and a fitness suite with the latest equipment and a café area. Our outside facilities include the famous Grandstand Pitch and new contemporary Pavilion at Myreside, a full scale artificial hockey facility, tennis courts, squash courts, a target shooting rifle range and a boat house on the Union Canal.

## **Creative Arts**

Artistic life flourishes at Watson's. Our pupils enjoy opportunities to explore their imaginations, try out new techniques and find outlets for self-expression and creativity. The Art School provides a range of well equipped classrooms and studio spaces for S6 pupils, as well as exhibition space and specialist facilities. The mental and physical wellbeing of our pupils is a priority throughout their educational journey with us. One of the first schools in the country to be fully accredited as a Gold Rights Respecting School by UNICEF, we know that our pupils will only succeed if they have an environment and the personal support to enable them to thrive.

There is an extensive programme of Senior School trips and visits in the UK and abroad, including our renowned S3 Projects, a two week residential programme of outdoor education activities for the whole year group on 20 different projects in the Highlands and Islands and the north of England, regarded as a right of passage by many current and former pupils.



## Co-Curricular

Life at George Watson's College is about so much more than lessons. Our enrichment programmes provide an exceptional range of extra-curricular opportunities for pupils of all ages, interests and aptitudes. We believe in giving our pupils the freedom to find who they really are, what they really enjoy doing and how they are going to make their own contribution to the community around them and further afield. As a result they often get involved in activities they would never before have dreamed of trying out, and by challenging themselves in this way learn new skills, meet new friends, and gain resilience and confidence.

Amongst the enrichment activities available in the Senior School are: around 25 different sports, including Athletics, Hockey, Cricket, Rugby, Tennis, Football, Curling, Fencing, Equestrian, Hill and Trail Running, Mountain Biking and Rowing; over 20 choirs, music groups, orchestras and ensembles; and a range of other Clubs such as Debating, Bridge, Blogging, Scale Modelling and Scouts; and 70 clubs and societies.

# Governance & Leadership

## **Governance**

Together with the Erskine Stewart's Melville Schools (ESMS) on the northside of Edinburgh, George Watson's College is owned and operated by the Edinburgh Merchant Company Education Board, a charity registered in Scotland. The members of the Education Board are the charity trustees, but the management and operation of the schools are devolved to their respective Governing Councils. At George Watson's College, the Governing Council is supported by five main committees: Education and Pupil Wellbeing, Finance, Property and Facilities, External Relations and Development and Staff. The Chair of Governing Council, Principal and Bursar report to the Education Board on a quarterly basis.

## **Leadership**

The Principal is responsible to the Merchant Company Education Board (the Board) through the Governing Council of George Watson's College (the Governing Council) for the effective, efficient, safe and lawful leadership, management and operation of George Watson's College (the School).

The Principal is supported by the executive members of the Principal's Leadership Team comprising:

The Bursar

The Chief Operating Officer

The Director of Development, Communications and Marketing

The Head of Junior School

The Head of Senior School





# Financial Overview

George Watson's College is one of the largest schools in the UK. The School's gross income is just under £35m per year and the School budgets to make a modest surplus on income and expenditure each year. Borrowings in the form of a loan to fund the Junior School Development from 2018 - 2020 total about £3.5m and are well within the Schools borrowing capacity.

The Campus Masterplan completed in 2015 provides a framework for managing the long term capital development of the campus. The sector faces a number of economic and political threats over the next few years, but we are well placed to meet these.

The School does not publish its own accounts: they are consolidated with those of the Erskine Stewart's Melville Schools to produce the accounts of the Edinburgh Merchant Company Education Board, the charity which owns and operates the schools, and which are lodged with Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

George Watson's College has a long tradition of providing financial support to families who cannot afford school fees, even before the abolition of the Assisted Places Scheme in 1997. Today the Foundation Places and Financial Assistance to Parents Schemes provide means tested financial assistance to the families of more than 200 pupils in P6 and P7 and the Senior School, representing more than one in ten pupils in those year groups. We are working on widening access further by positively facilitating applications from sections of the community that have not traditionally considered a Watson's education.

Fundraising is embedded in the ethos at Watson's and pupils, staff and parents are encouraged to work together to support school fundraising projects, local charities, community partners and international charities. A highly effective Development Office maintains links with more than 18,000 Watsonians around the world and drives and coordinates fundraising for bursaries, capital projects and other school projects. The *No Limits* fundraising campaign is almost half way towards achieving its target of raising £25m by 2030.



# The Role

George Watson's College is now looking for an inspirational leader who can bring the vision, wisdom and intellect to this high profile, strategic leadership role.

Acting as a Chief Executive, the successful candidate will combine an impressive educational track record with the strong financial and commercial acumen necessary to manage a school of such size and complexity. Critically, their values and ambition will match those of George Watson's College as they work to build influence and generate impact in ways that promote and uphold the inclusive ethos of the School.

An outstanding communicator, the new Principal must be a strong networker and stakeholder manager across a broad spectrum of relationships. Internally, they will be visible, approachable and empathetic with both staff and the parent body. Externally, they will

engage with prospective parents and beyond to market the brand and forge partnerships with educational, governmental and business entities and policymakers.

They will appreciate the heritage of the School whilst also being an innovator; they will understand the Watsonian Family feel and how it sits in the context of the wider community and social purpose of the School; and they will be resilient, with the strength of character to deal effectively with challenging issues and decisions. They will also have an awareness of the issues particular to Scottish education and the Scottish regulatory environment.



## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

### Education and Pupil Wellbeing

The Principal is responsible to the Board through the Governing Council and its Education and Pupil Wellbeing Committee for the effective and efficient educational provision throughout the School and for the wellbeing and safeguarding of all pupils.

The Principal will provide clear, well informed and responsive leadership to the Head of the Junior School and Head of the Senior School. Working in collaboration with them, the Principal will:

- Design, develop and deliver a relevant and ambitious curriculum which ensures continuity of learning and personal development as pupils progress through the School;
- Ensure that pupils have access to a broad range of enrichment activities appropriate for their age;
- Ensure that as far as possible the curriculum and enrichment activities are available to all pupils equally irrespective of their gender or economic circumstances and take due account of issues relating to race, religion, gender, trans status and sexual orientation;
- Ensure that pupils have opportunities to experience outdoor education and to work in the service of others, including those outside the school environment and internationally;
- Ensure that appropriate forms of induction are in place for pupils (and their parents) as they join the School;
- Ensure that the School meets and where possible exceeds its legal and regulatory obligations with regard to the curriculum, child protection and safeguarding, GIRFEC (Getting it right for every child), prevention of bullying, prevention of extremism, contact and information of parents, health, sex and relationships education and religious education;
- Ensure that all pupils have a designated Named Person as required by the Children and Young Persons (Scotland) Act 2014;
- Ensure that there is effective support for pupils who require additional support for their learning;
- Ensure that there is effective support for pupils to help them to decide on an appropriate route for progression after school.



## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES CONTINUED

### **Financial, Human Resources and other Business Operations and Compliance**

The Principal is responsible to the Board through the Governing Council and its Finance, Staff, Property and Facilities, and Audit Risk and Compliance Committees for the financial performance of the School, for the efficient deployment and management of teaching and support staff and for compliance with all relevant statutory and regulatory requirements, including those imposed by the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974).

Working with the Bursar (in respect of finance and compliance) and the Chief Operating Officer (in respect of Human Resources, property and estates management, information technology and operational management) the Principal will:

- Ensure that appropriate and effective measures are in place for setting, reviewing and monitoring budgets;
- Ensure that any recommendations by the School's Auditors are acted upon promptly and effectively;

- Ensure that the School has appropriate mechanisms for meeting its responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), the Data Protection Acts and the General Data Protection Regulations.
- Ensure that the School has appropriate policies and procedures to discharge its responsibilities as an employer under the Employment Act and mechanisms for consulting and communicating with all staff irrespective of role or seniority in the School;
- Ensure that the School has a masterplan for the strategic development of the campus, a plan for planned maintenance of the School estate and an effective mechanism for the management of reactive maintenance and that these have due regard to the School's commitment to sustainability.



## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES CONTINUED

The Principal is responsible to the Board through the Governing Council and its External Relations and Development Committee for marketing the School, for the recruitment of pupils to the School and for the development of philanthropic giving and partnerships with community and other educational organisations. Working with the Director of Development, Communications and Marketing, the Principal will:

- Ensure that there is a marketing and communications strategy which reflects the nature of the School, its values and aspirations for its pupils and which is effective in bringing the School to the attention of the parents of potential pupils;
- Ensure that there is an efficient, effective and lawful admissions process for pupils joining the school which enables appropriate decisions about the admission of pupils to be made by the Head of Junior School and Head of Senior School;
- Take a leading role in the development of philanthropic giving by promoting relationships with the Watsonian community and otherwise;
- Provide leadership for the School's external relations and partnership work, acting as a personal ambassador of the School in many contexts within the City of Edinburgh, nationally and internationally;
- Take appropriate opportunities to promote the School through media, including broadcast interviews, articles in periodicals and online; foster, develop and sustain links with other schools, universities and other academic institutions, employers and political and government institutions in the interests of the School;
- Maintain a strong connection with the Royal Company of Merchants of the City of Edinburgh and its membership.



## CONTINGENT APPOINTMENTS

It is a requirement that the Principal be a Member of the Royal Company of Merchants of the City of Edinburgh.

The current Principal is a Member of the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference (HMC) and the School belongs to The Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS).

The Principal is also *ex officio*

- A Member of the Governing Council and its committees;
- A Trustee of the George Watson's Family Foundation (a Scottish charity);
- A Trustee of the George Watson's College Endowment Trust (a Scottish charity);
- A Director of George Watson's College Trading (UK) Ltd (a company limited by guarantee);

- A Director of the Watsonian Club (a company limited by guarantee) and a member of the Watsonian Council (the Board of Directors of the Watsonian Club);
- A Trustee of the Watsonian Benevolent Trust (a Scottish charity);
- A Trustee of the Watson's Malawi Partnership (a Scottish charity);
- A Member of the Kerr Fry Trust Advisory Board (an advisory committee of the University of Edinburgh);
- The Chair of the Advisory Board for the Swire Chinese Language Centre Edinburgh (a non-incorporated advisory board).

The Principal attends meetings of the Merchant Company Education Board as required.



# How to Apply

The expected start date for the new Principal is August 2024, depending on their notice period. We offer a generous salary to reflect the candidate's qualifications and experience and benefits including fee remission. A house owned by the School adjacent to the campus is available, but the Governors would not necessarily require the new Principal to live there, so the issue of accommodation would be the subject of negotiation with the successful candidate.

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to George Watson's College on this appointment. Candidates should apply for this role through our website at [www.saxbam.com/appointments](http://www.saxbam.com/appointments) using code CBGIA. Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter.

To discuss the opportunity with a member of the team at Saxton Bampfylde, please email [isabella.hendry@saxbam.com](mailto:isabella.hendry@saxbam.com) to arrange a call.

Candidates should provide full details of their qualifications, skills and experience. Candidates should submit a CV and cover letter addressed to the Chair of the Governing Council, Don Young. The letter should be no more than two pages. Please note that longlisted candidates will also be required to complete the George Watson's College application form. The closing date for applications is noon on 3rd February 2023.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Longlisted candidates will be interviewed by Saxton Bampfylde between 13th and 20th of February 2023. Candidates selected for the shortlist will be required to be available for interviews on the 12th and 13th of March 2023 with the George Watson's Selection Committee.



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## Safeguarding

George Watson's College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. George Watson's College meets the requirements in respect of exempted questions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. All applicants who are offered employment will be subject to Disclosure Scotland Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme checks before the appointment is confirmed. This will include details of cautions, reprimands or final warnings, as well as convictions. The cost of this application will be met by the School. Annually, every member of staff at the School is required to undergo, complete, and sign to confirm that they have received child protection training and will uphold it.

## GDPR personal data notice

*According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.*

Saxton Bampfylde

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