



CANFORD

Appointment of Head

Reference: LANFB | April 2024



ABOUT CANFORD

Canford School was founded in 1923 but occupies buildings with a rich history stretching back to before the Norman Conquest. The first written record of Canford Manor is an entry in the Domesday Book in the 1080s.

Now, Canford School is one of the UK's top independent coeducational senior boarding schools for pupils aged 13 to 18.

Canford currently boasts the highest roll in its history at 660 pupils, with a 65/35 split between boarding and day and an almost even allocation of boys and girls, resulting in a properly mixed school.

Children come from a wide range of local and regional preps including Castle Court, Dumpton and Walhampton, with many also coming down from London or further afield and around 10% overseas students.

Academically, students excel and Canford is leading the way both in the region and on a national scale whilst offering the breadth of opportunity to enable every individual to make the most of his or her talents and develop the skills and qualities to move on beyond school to rich and fulfilling lives.

“Our Mission is to build a community of open-minded people who are motivated to embrace learning in all its forms and committed to making a difference to their own lives and to the lives of others. Our exceptional education grants freedom to grow and creates opportunities for all to explore, to express and to excel”.



VISION AND VALUES

When the Reverend Percy Warrington founded Canford in 1923, his aim was to prepare pupils 'to take their place in the battle of life and develop their character in every way.' The Foundation was based on Christian values focused on building a tolerant, caring and compassionate society for all. A century later, those values endure. At Canford we are acutely aware of the need to ensure that, whatever pressures may exist or emerge, our educational offering is dynamic and relevant so Canfordians can survive and thrive in the 21st century.

Canfordians are often commented on as being rounded, grounded individuals, confident without being arrogant, with a real sense of purpose and holding true to the values below when they leave us ready to make their mark on the world.





Canford Vision

“A school community where all are inspired to explore, empowered to express and challenged to excel.”

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

We define excellence as taking many forms and want to inspire our pupils to excel to the very best of their own abilities. Our Mission is to build a community of open minded people who are motivated to embrace learning in all its forms. Canford is proud of its high quality teachers who are specialists in their field with a genuine love and enthusiasm for their subject.

We offer A Levels and GCSEs plus the opportunity to take an Extended Project Qualification, worth half an A Level. Exam results are important, and we set the academic bar unashamedly high, with tailored support for every individual pupil.

We go way beyond the confines of the exam curricula as we look to develop enquiring minds through our intellectual enrichment programmes. Academic life is complemented by our vast range of co-curricular options offering pupils opportunities to explore new experiences, develop leadership skills and prepare for life beyond Canford.

On average in the past five years, over 30% of all A Level grades have been at A* and over 65% at A*/A, while at GCSE 78% of all examinations have been graded 9/7 (A*/B).

44

OXBRIDGE OFFERS IN
THE PAST 5 YEARS

80%+

OFFERS EACH YEAR
TO RUSSELL
GROUP/SUNDAY
TIMES TOP 12
UNIVERSITIES

66%

A LEVEL A*/A GRADE
IN 2023

10

PUPILS TO US
UNIVERSITIES IN
PAST 2 YEARS

‘Best co-educational independent school in the South West for 2023 A Level performance.

SUNDAY TIMES PARENT POWER 2024



PASTORAL CARE

Our aim is one of joined up education, where supporting the wellbeing of all pupils goes hand in hand with formal academic and broader education which prepares them for life beyond Canford. Developing the individual within a warm, supportive school community is central to our core values. Fostering the capacity to cope with the demands of 21st century living, while encouraging pupils to understand themselves and develop emotional resilience is what we aim for through our extensive, multi-layered pastoral programme.

All pupils, whether boarding or day, belong to one of ten houses which are the bedrock of their pastoral care. Each house buzzes with a life of its own, but all are very much part of our one school, ten houses ethos. Canford is one of the few remaining UK full boarding schools – there is no weekly or flexi boarding - with day pupils able to take full advantage of all the opportunities afforded by 24/7 boarding school life. We believe this is why Canford is such a strong and supportive community.

The tutor system is a fundamental part of our pastoral care and is based around time dedicated for listening, monitoring, supporting and guiding. Pupils meet tutors regularly and the personal tutor becomes a mentor whose insight and constructive advice are vital so that pupils can make the best use of all their opportunities.

We recognise that often young people prefer to talk to someone their own age about their concerns and our mentoring programme offers mutual support and encouragement on a peer to peer basis. Canford welcomes those from a variety of faith backgrounds or none. The spiritual aim of the school is to nurture faith where it exists while arousing curiosity in all pupils towards their spiritual dimension. In addition to both formal and informal chapel services, societies and events, the work of the chaplaincy in our pastoral care is wide ranging.



“The wellbeing of our pupils is at the heart of all we do at Canford. We pride ourselves upon our warm, supportive and inclusive community, large enough to offer a wealth of opportunity to small enough for everyone to be known and valued.”

CO-CURRICULAR

Canford is a school of opportunities. We want pupils to be excited about learning, both through academic challenge and a rich and extensive co-curricular programme which offers a very wide range of options for creativity and self-discovery.

Creativity, problem-solving and critical thinking are essential skills in today's workplace and all the signs are they will be central to the workplace of tomorrow. One of the reasons why Canford is so successful is that we devote significant resources to the development of the whole child as we seek to unlock and build up intellectual, physical, creative and emotional skills and awareness.

We want our pupils to discuss and communicate in fresh, exciting ways. We work continually to weave in opportunities within the demands of the exam based curriculum, but also through provision of broader opportunities and challenges. Our aim is to produce the very best outcomes for all our pupils not just in term of academic and other achievements but through outstanding personal development opportunities and experiences for each and every Canfordian.

There are over 50 activities students have access to including archery, badminton, beekeeping, CCF, climbing, debating, engineering, kayaking, Ten Tors and volleyball.

20
MUSIC GROUPS AND
ENSEMBLES

40
PUPIL LEADER
ROLES EACH YEAR

1,000+
SPORTS MATCHES
EACH YEAR

50+
CO-CURRICULAR
ACTIVITIES, GROUPS
AND SOCIETIES



FACILITIES

Canford is located in Dorset, South West England. The campus sits alongside the beautiful River Stour, with easy access to footpaths to neighbouring town, Wimborne, and trailways providing off-road routes to parks and beaches. The schools boasts easy access to the Jurassic Coast, with its miles of coastline and second largest natural harbour in the world, along with stunning countryside and New Forest National Park.

Over the last 5 years, the School has invested almost £20M in new infrastructure, including a new Library and 2 boarding houses. A new 6th Form College will also come online in September 2026 providing a better transition to life beyond the gates and allow the School roll to increase slightly. You can read more about our plans [here](#).

Within the grounds are a boathouse, sports centre, including a 25 metre pool and modern gym facilities, outdoor education centre, climbing wall, 12 grass sports pitches, 2 full sized all weather pitches, 30 tennis courts, a 9 hole golf course and one of the few original Real Tennis courts in the country. The arts benefit from The Layard Theatre, seating nearly 300, the Music School, seating nearly 200, and there is a dedicated Coldstream Gallery space regularly exhibiting the latest pupil and staff art.





High Expectations

PROMOTE

A Commitment To Excellence

Canfordians are young men and women with extraordinary opportunities. Our hopes and expectations for them are great and we encourage every pupil to strive for excellence in all that they do, both as individuals and in a collective sense. Passing through the school unnoticed is not an option. Our pupils are taught to find their talents and confront their weaknesses.

OUR COMMUNITY

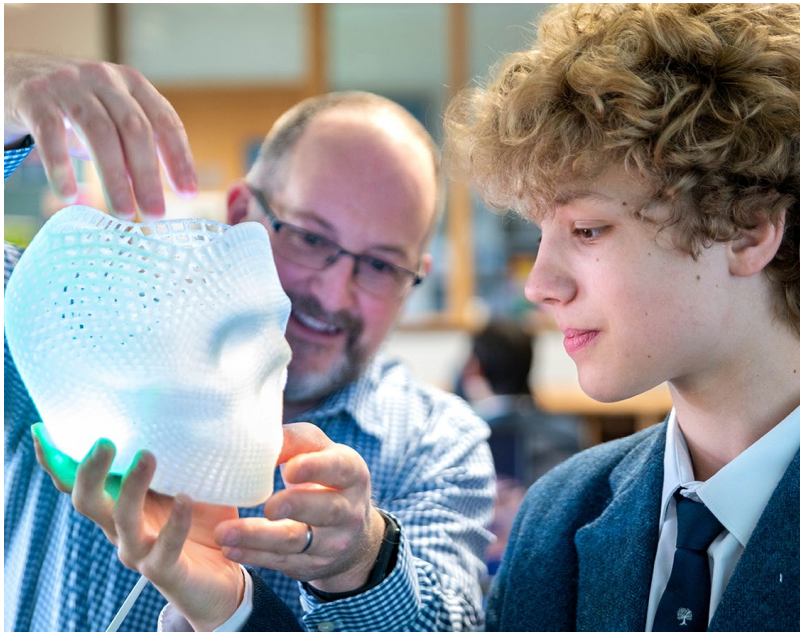
We are proud of our extensive Community Action work, which has been recognised nationally for both its extent and its high quality outcomes. Partnerships with individuals and groups beyond the school help define Canford's role in the wider world and instil in our pupils a more accurate understanding of wider society, highlighting their social awareness and fostering social responsibility.

Senior pupils work in primary schools and with disabled and disadvantaged groups, liaising with many local institutions. These weekly commitments can be challenging but are very worthwhile.

More ambitious programmes include a link with an inner city youth project in Southampton and the SHINE national gifted and talented initiative. There are also links with communities in India, Cambodia and Ghana. Taking part in a visit to one of these orphanages or schools can be life changing.

Canford is one of the few independent schools in the country lead sponsoring an Academy school. Involvement with The Bourne Academy in Bournemouth is demonstrative of our commitment to community partnerships.





“

The enthusiasm and attention to detail from the staff have nurtured what started as curiosity for the subject into a real passion

”

”

I can't fault my Canford experience. It has been the best place to help me grow and develop.

”

THE OPPORTUNITY

The Governors are seeking to appoint a highly motivated, inspirational and enthusiastic leader who has the strategic skill set to lead Canford through the next chapter in its history. Our new Head will inherit a thriving school, immersed in the local community and the rich diversity that it offers. The successful candidate will embrace working collaboratively with the Governors and SLT to navigate through the political, economic and social challenges which lie ahead for the independent school sector in order to ensure the school's long-term potential is fulfilled.

Key responsibilities and duties

Strategic Leadership

- Working closely with the Board of Governors, develop and deliver an ambitious vision and strategic plan.
- Inspire and lead the SLT to develop the operational plan which will ensure delivery of the strategic imperatives.
- Provide strong and visible leadership to the whole staff body, empowering all staff to perform at their highest level.
- Keep thoroughly up to date with all relevant external developments and opportunities which might inform the school strategy.

Business and Risk Management

- Working with the Bursar, ensure effective and robust risk management policies and procedures are kept updated, compliant and consistently implemented



THE OPPORTUNITY

- In collaboration with the Bursar, oversee the financial management of the school's resources, including maintenance of the buildings, grounds, facilities and operations.
- Ensure capital investment is aligned with the school's priorities and embraces commercial opportunities.

Educational and Pastoral Leadership

- Provide the intellectual leadership and educational vision to ensure continuity of our students outstanding academic achievements.
- Ensure that the school's digital strategy is driving the use of new and emerging technology and innovation
- Embrace the wealth of co-curricular offerings from the school to help fulfil the school's mission to provide a transformative experience for every student.
- Ensure excellence in the school's pastoral provision, providing the support required for all of our students to flourish personally, academically, and emotionally.

Management

- Oversee the creation, development and implementation of policies and procedures to ensure the organised and efficient running of the school
- Build positive working relations with staff in order to motivate them to always operate at their best.
- Work closely with the Director of HR to ensure that relevant policies help to employ and retain the best staff for the school.
- Ensure adherence to the school safeguarding policy by all staff and that required training is regularly undertaken in line with KCSIE.
- Champion professional development across the staff body.
- Promote staff wellbeing and involve interested staff in developing a wellbeing policy.



Marketing, Communications and Admissions

- Work collaboratively with the marketing team to ensure that the school has marketing, communications and admissions strategies that align with the aims of the school.
- Proactively uphold the continuing high standing of the school in both the local community and the broader independent school sector, including advocating for a full boarding environment.
- Oversee the fundraising strategy, working closely with the Head of Fundraising and Development.
- Champion and promote relations with the school's alumni.



THE PERSON

The Head will be an outstanding educational leader with proven academic credibility and strong communication skills to give confidence to governors and inspire staff to deliver the rounded educational framework demanded by the students in our local community.

The following key attributes are required for the role:

Qualifications

- Strong academic credentials, including a degree, with an additional leadership and/or management qualification e.g. NPQH, Masters.

Experience

- Senior educational leadership experience in a sizeable and complex school, ideally with a boarding environment.
- A proven track record in driving academic performance and delivering outstanding achievement.
- Demonstrable experience of successfully developing, implementing and monitoring strategic plans.
- Experience of driving significant change programmes.
- Experience of engaging and building relationships with key internal and external stakeholders.
- Experience of providing leadership in multiple areas of life, including diversity, equality and inclusion.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- A strong understanding of the current and future economic, political and societal challenges facing the independent school sector, with an innovative approach to dealing with these successfully.
- Supportive of the Protestant and Evangelical tradition and principles of the Church of England.
- Ability to handle the greater complexity of issues facing a Head in today's landscape.
- Excellent decision making and problem-solving skills.
- Highly efficient time management and organisational skills.
- Ability to work closely with and embrace all sections of the community, including the former and current student bodies, together with their parents, as well as the external community.
- Knowledge of, and ability to manage, financial, regulatory and legal matters.
- Emotional intelligence, a sense of humour and empathy.
- Intellectual rigour to drive educational debate.
- Ability to see plans and concepts through to delivery.
- Excellent communication skills (both written and verbal).
- Ability to lead, motivate, inspire and explain complex issues.
- Personal resilience and the ability to build it in others.
- Whilst respectful of school traditions and values, have an understanding of the change in technology, including AI and its impact in the educational setting.
- Strong delegation skills, together with the awareness and understanding of what can and cannot be delegated.

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

Start date: 1st September 2025

A competitive package accompanies the post, dependent on experience. Family accommodation is included, on site.

We offer a highly competitive DC pension Scheme and Medical Insurance.

Address: Canford Magna, Wimborne BH21 3AD

Safeguarding:

Canford is committed to safeguarding young people and promoting the welfare of children. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening and safer recruitment checks appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service. All positions within the school are exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.



HOW TO APPLY

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to Canford School on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role via www.saxbam.com/appointments using code LANFB. Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application.

The closing date for applications is noon on Thursday 2nd May.

If you would like a confidential conversation about the role please get in touch with our researcher Alice Brent-Smith at alice.brent-smith@saxbam.com

GDPR personal data notice:

According to GDPR guidelines, Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is 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.

KCSIE online checks:

In line with the latest KCSIE guidance, Saxton Bampfylde will conduct a search of online records that are publicly available on shortlisted candidates. These checks are used only to meet the intended purpose of the KCSIE's recommendation in relation to whether an applicant is suitable to work with children and young people. All data will be held in line with data protection regulations.



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