



HECKMONDWIKE  
GRAMMAR SCHOOL



# Headteacher Application Pack

Respect. Responsibility. Excellence.



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# Welcome from the Chair of Governors

Dear Applicant,

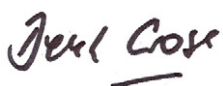
On behalf of everyone at the school, may I take this opportunity to thank you for your interest in leading the team at Heckmondwike Grammar School as the next Headteacher. I hope that you will find this pack helpful in your decision-making, should you choose to apply for this position.

The current incumbent, Peter Roberts has served the school for 16 years, 8 of which as Headteacher. During this time the school has grown from strength to strength in all aspects, including the school estate, its finances and most importantly the students' academic outcomes and progress they make as young adults. Following Mr Roberts's retirement from the school in December 2026, the time is right for a new leader to drive the school to further success and ensure its reputation continues to flourish for future generations to come.

Our reputation is strong locally and regionally and recognised nationally, as illustrated through our No. 1 ranking for the North of England in the Sunday Times "Parent Power Guide" for both 2024 and 2025. At GCSE, the school is ranked second nationally for state coeducational settings. This is an exceptional school.

The origins of the school can be traced back to 1898, and our primary focus is to serve the young people of the communities in the Heckmondwike area and increasingly, wider across Yorkshire, by providing a world-class education for our students. Our school is a high-achieving, oversubscribed, selective, 11–18, co-educational school operating as a Single Academy Trust. We are justifiably proud of the school's history and traditions, and our motto, "Nil Sine Labore" – nothing without work – underpins our core values of Respect, Responsibility and Excellence. With excellence being considered the norm in everything we do.

Why should you choose Heckmondwike Grammar School? All schools will claim to be "special" in some way, but Heckmondwike has a unique atmosphere which must be experienced to understand it: our students are positive, willing and confident young people; all staff – teaching and non-teaching – are committed to the school's success in guiding students to be the best they can be by equipping them with the skills and personal qualities they need to achieve their potential. Our extra-curricular offer should be highlighted as it is an exceptional one that was praised by Ofsted on their most recent visit and is highly valued by us all. Our Governing Body is both fully committed to, and passionate about the school and provides leaders with support and challenge as needed. If you believe you can sustain and develop the character, values and ethos of our school in the role of Headteacher, you should come to see us. I look forward to meeting you.



**Derek Cross**  
Chair of Governors





HECKMONDWIKE  
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

## About Our School

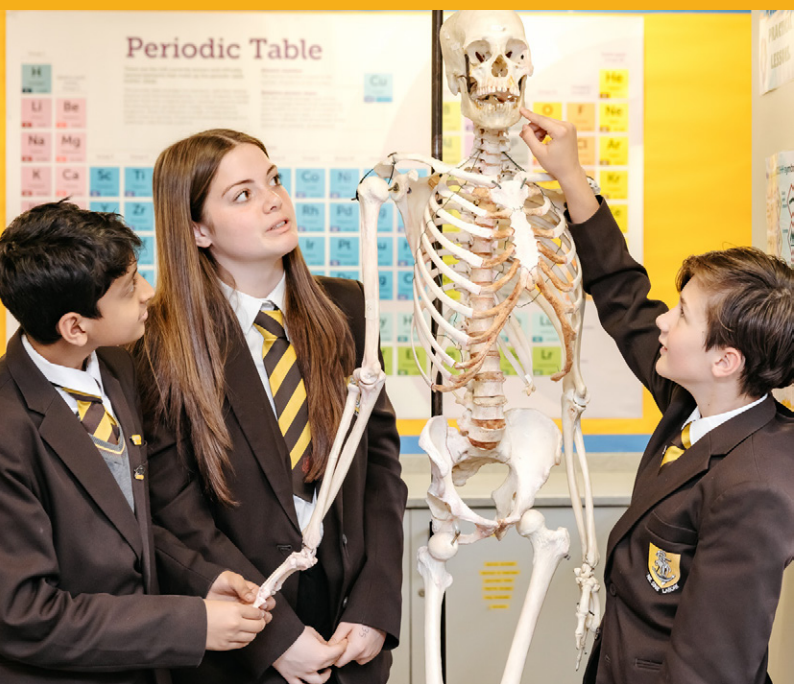
Heckmondwike Grammar School has a very strong reputation in the local area, regionally and nationally as a school which does all it can to support students in achieving the highest grades and progressing to the best possible destinations.

We have a philosophy based on over 125 years of tradition, that once a Heckmondwike student, always a Heckmondwike student, and our mutual support can stretch way beyond school years into adulthood. Every child really does matter and we work hard to ensure that no student is left behind. Our strategy involves a safety net made up of a combination of Subject Leaders working with classroom teachers to maximise progress, alongside Heads of Year, form teachers and pastoral support staff to ensure students' wellbeing. Support from parents and carers is first class and, with this, we present a coherent and united approach to achieving excellence for all.



“ Heckmondwike Grammar is a friendly and welcoming school. It is an exciting place in which to learn. ”  
- OFSTED, 2022

All our teaching staff are graduates and specialists in the subjects they teach. Many staff have been at the school a long time and are hugely experienced in teaching very able, aspirant grammar school students from Year 7 up to the highest standards of A level. These staff are the perfect foil for staff who are in their first few years of teaching, who are exceptionally enthusiastic and creative in the career they love. A significant proportion of staff work for exam boards, which is a measure of the high regard in which they are held. Operational staff are superb in their dedication to the cause, providing a framework and environment from which all those at Heckmondwike Grammar School can flourish and thrive. Governors are inquisitive, challenging and very supportive, and provide the final piece of the jigsaw which, alongside the motto of 'Nil Sine Labore' – nothing without work – creates a very positive ethos that enables us all to perform to the highest possible standard.



Not only do we encourage independent learning amongst our students as part of this approach; we also demonstrate it practically ourselves as an organisation. We were one of the very first outstanding schools nationally to open as an Academy on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2010. We believe that the greater independence the status provides us with allows us to go even further in realising our aim of providing first-class, best practice education for all.

The success of Heckmondwike Grammar School can be illustrated in many ways: our exam outcomes at both GCSE and A level are consistently excellent; we have a plethora of extra-curricular activities centred around the House system; typically over 80% of our students continue into the Sixth Form; and of these, a similar proportion progress into high-calibre undergraduate courses. However, most importantly, we want all of the children who come to the school to enjoy their school days and, from this foundation, become thoughtful, articulate, confident and responsible members of society.



*“ HGS is such a positive environment, there is an amazing sense of community and support. With so many clubs and activities to get stuck into around school I have found so many new interests and hobbies that are now a big part of my life. ”*

- STUDENT





### Our students and our staff are our strengths

Heckmondwike Grammar School is a unique school, with students who are eager to learn, keen to know more and want to enjoy their educational experiences. It is exceptional in many ways: a very diverse school community that produces results of the highest quality. We work effectively with young people, really care about them and their futures, and have an ultimate success measure of enabling them to progress to where they want to go. Excellent relationships between staff and students are the norm, expectations are high, and students perform very well as a consequence. Heckmondwike Grammar School has provided the best education for able students since 1898.

As we embrace the opportunities and challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we will continue to uphold the traditions, values and high expectations of an exceptional grammar school within an innovative, creative and progressive framework.

“ Leaders provide pupils with a huge range of experiences. These activities enrich and enhance pupils’ learning. They range from the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award to school productions. Clubs include such things as a dice game club, mindfulness, astronomy and ecopolitics clubs. Some pupils are proud to start and lead clubs themselves. This helps to develop their leadership skills. ”

- OFSTED 2022





“ Teachers are always so helpful, I can talk to them about anything and they are always willing to help. ”  
- STUDENT

The school is very popular and heavily oversubscribed, with well over 1000 students applying for entry into Year 7 each year and over 600 applying to join the Sixth Form. With one of the largest comprehensive Sixth Forms in the country of approximately 450, there are great opportunities for staff to practise their craft to the highest level, while also gaining a wide experience of teaching different year groups and courses. The Sixth Form includes roughly an equal number of students who join us from other local schools, and consequently collaboration is very important to us. We work in partnership with an extensive group of schools and have a significant reputation both locally and nationally. This means we offer our staff opportunities to be involved in professional development on a larger scale and see it as a sign of our high quality when members of our community are promoted to posts elsewhere or progress internally. As a result, staff typically feel very privileged to work here and to work with our young people.

Misbehaviour is rare, and excellent relationships between staff and students are the norm: teachers are able to 'get on and teach'. Working here is still challenging, however, but in different ways: expectations are high, and potential applicants will need to be able to operate effectively in a top-performing environment. However, one of the principal joys of working at this school is our eloquent and motivated students. Consequently, outcomes are amongst the very best in the country, and this is the result of able cohorts being provided with high-quality teaching that is supported by strong pastoral care for each student. The school is justifiably proud of the focus on academic attainment and knowledge of each individual that enables education to be tailored to every student's needs, but also prioritises the support it provides to enable any barriers to progress to be addressed. The focus is, and will always remain, teaching and learning in the classroom, with staff training and development being the main means of achieving this end.





# Ethos and Values

## Ethos

At Heckmondwike Grammar School our ethos for the whole school community is based on the school motto “Nil Sine Labore” – Nothing Without Work.

We expect a lot from our students and staff and recognise that hard work brings rewards.

## Values

The principal values of our school community are:

- **Respect**
- **Responsibility**
- **Excellence**



At Heckmondwike Grammar School, we work together as a team to achieve academic excellence and personal potential by:

Providing students and staff with every opportunity to flourish and develop their skills and talents as individuals.

Providing academic rigour and nurturing ambition and aspiration in our students, such that they become the leaders of the future in high calibre careers, via top university education or direct employment.

Celebrating diversity, by creating a vibrant, safe and happy school, with a strong sense of community, respect and responsibility to both ourselves and others.

Challenging and stimulating the minds of our students through excellent teaching, diverse learning opportunities, and a rich, balanced, academic curriculum, such that students develop a life-long love of learning.

Working hard and playing hard via an extensive extra-curricular programme based on the House system that enriches and extends the curriculum, encouraging students to explore and develop their personal interests and skills.

Working in close partnership with parents and members of the wider community to provide the best possible education for our students.





## Information About the Area

Heckmondwike is a town in the 'heavy woollen' district of West Yorkshire. The woollen mills have long since gone, replaced by various small industries and commercial activities. The town centre now offers a choice of services and shops to cater for all, including local independent stores and cafes, as well as a supermarket. Heckmondwike is also well known for the annual display of illuminations. This tradition dates back the early 1860's, the first display being in 1868. It is believed that Blackpool took its inspiration for their world famous illuminations from Heckmondwike. Heckmondwike is conveniently placed for access to the M1 and M62 and lies within 10 miles of Leeds, Bradford, Huddersfield and Halifax. Some of the most attractive countryside in Britain - the Yorkshire Dales - is a short distance away, whilst the Lakes, Peak District and North Yorkshire Moors are also easily accessible.



**In Heckmondwike you will find Victorian terraced homes and good sized semi-detached or detached family homes. The average price for property in Heckmondwike stood at £152,021 in December 2021. In terms of property types, flats in Heckmondwike sold for an average of £106,866 and terraced houses for £122,142. This is according to the current Zoopla estimates.**



## Fact File

Status	Standalone Academy - Grammar School
Location	Heckmondwike, West Yorkshire
Last OFSTED	April 2022 – Overall Judgement: Good
Website	<a href="https://www.heckgrammar.co.uk/">https://www.heckgrammar.co.uk/</a>
Admission Policy	Selective
Admissions Data	Approximately 1500 applications for 210 places each year in Year 7; approximately 650 applications for 225 places in Year 12
Gender of Students	Mixed
Age Range	11-18
Number of Students on Roll	1600 (450 in Sixth Form)
Headline Data GCSE	Progress 8 score above +0.1 for the last 2 years; average GCSE grade is Grade 8; ranked No. 2 nationally for state co-ed schools
Headline Data A Level	Top 20% nationally for grades AAB; 4% of cohort go to Oxbridge (more than 2x the national average); 85% progress to university, of which 48% go to Russell Group universities
Staff Turnover	Very low - for teachers, it is typically around 5% p.a.





# Benefits of Working at the School

Benefit Area	Details
<b>Pension</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For Teaching colleagues: Teachers' Pension Scheme</li> <li>• For Operational colleagues: West Yorkshire Pension Fund</li> </ul>
<b>Training and Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome pack prepared with key information</li> <li>• New staff buddy system (paired with an existing staff member from another department)</li> <li>• Regular professional development sessions</li> <li>• Annual performance development reviews to support training needs</li> </ul>
<b>Free On-Site Parking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large on-site car park with free parking for all colleagues</li> </ul>
<b>Cycle to Work Scheme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salary sacrifice scheme available</li> <li>• Cycle bays available on site</li> </ul>
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to Sovereign Health Care membership (money back on everyday health costs)</li> <li>• Free access to counselling and a Life Coach (fully confidential)</li> </ul>
<b>Free Flu Vaccinations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free annual flu vaccination provided on site for convenience</li> </ul>
<b>Social Events</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual staff golf event (open to all colleagues and followed by a meal)</li> <li>• Numerous ad hoc social events throughout the year</li> </ul>

“ There is a detailed programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE) for all pupils from Years 7 to 11. Specialist teachers plan the programme and produce resources. ”

- OFSTED 2022



## Job Description

<b>Job Title:</b>	Headteacher
<b>Accountable to:</b>	Chair of Governors/Trustees
<b>Salary/Grade:</b>	L37 to L43
<b>Contract Type:</b>	Permanent
<b>Contracted Hours:</b>	As required to complete the role successfully, with a view to establishing a positive work-life balance

*This Job Description is supported by the Headteacher Standards 2020 and applies them to the specifics of the role requirements to successfully lead Heckmondwike Grammar School Academy Trust.*

### Main Purpose of the Role

The Headteacher is responsible for improving learning and life chances for all students within the school by delivering our ethos, which is based on the school motto “Nil Sine Labore” – Nothing Without Work, and the values of Respect, Responsibility and Excellence.

Through inspiring leadership, they must ensure the delivery of sustained school improvement whilst overseeing the effective and efficient delivery of operational excellence across curriculum delivery, teaching and learning, behaviour, personal development and safeguarding.

Through an ambitious and inclusive approach, the Headteacher will ensure that our core values of respect, responsibility and excellence are evident in all aspects of school life and across all members of the school community.

### Qualities and Knowledge

- Hold and effectively articulate clear values and moral purpose, focused on providing a world-class education for the pupils and communities we serve.
- Demonstrate optimistic personal behaviour, positive relationships and attitudes towards students and staff, and towards parents, governors, members of the local community and wider stakeholders
- Lead by example, demonstrating integrity, creativity, resilience and clarity, drawing on your own scholarship, expertise and skills, and those of others.
- Maintain a wide and current knowledge and understanding of education and school systems locally, nationally and globally, and pursue continuous professional development and learning.
- Work with political and financial astuteness within a clear set of principles centred on the school’s vision, translating relevant local and national policy into the school’s context.
- Communicate the school’s vision compellingly and provide highly effective strategic leadership, empowering all students and staff to excel.
- Commit to a collaborative approach, working for the benefit of all pupils, staff and families within our organisation.



### Students and Staff

- Demand ambitious standards for all students in all that they do, overcoming disadvantage and advancing equality.
- Instil a strong sense of accountability in staff for the impact of their work on student outcomes and wider experiences across all key stages.
- Lead an evidence-informed commitment to continuing professional development and learning for all staff, ensuring everyone can contribute to provision and understands their value.
- Secure exceptional teaching through an analytical understanding of how pupils learn and of the core features of successful classroom practice and curriculum design, leading to rich curriculum opportunities.
- Prioritise the well-being, positive mental health and personal development of students.
- Establish an educational culture of aspiration for all and continuous improvement.
- Identify emerging talents, coaching current and aspiring leaders in a climate where excellence is the standard, leading to clear succession planning.
- Engage staff realistically and constructively, reviewing and managing pressures to support workload and well-being.
- Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of all staff within the school and deliver a developmental appraisal process that celebrates success, values individuals and promotes ambition.
- Hold all staff to account for their professional conduct and practice at all times.

### Systems and Process

- Work with those responsible for governance to further develop a shared strategic vision and plan that ignites a passion for learning, promotes ambition and motivates pupils, staff and the wider school community.
- Ensure that the school's systems, organisation and processes are well considered, efficient and fit for purpose, upholding transparency, integrity and probity.
- Plan, develop, monitor, evaluate and review the School Improvement Plan, engaging with other post holders to deliver clear evaluation and appropriate development priorities.
- Promote creativity, innovation and other transformational activities to raise standards in all areas of the school's work.
- Provide a safe, calm and well-ordered environment for all students and staff, focused on safeguarding and exemplary behaviour.
- Establish rigorous, fair and transparent systems for managing staff performance, addressing underperformance swiftly and valuing excellent practice.
- Welcome strong governance and actively support those responsible for governance in understanding and fulfilling their roles through transparent data and analysis.
- Enable those responsible for governance to set strategy and hold the Headteacher to account for student, staff and financial performance.
- Exercise integrated curriculum-led financial planning to ensure equitable deployment of budgets and resources, supporting pupil achievement and sustainability.
- Distribute leadership appropriately across the organisation, fostering accountability among teams.
- Ensure that all statutory requirements are met effectively.
- Ensure that the school is prepared to provide evidence for internal and external accountability frameworks.
- Develop, plan and deliver a digital strategy for the school with the support of experts.

### Self-improving School

- Create a culture of positive challenge to embed change management and deliver sustained school improvement.
- Develop an outward-facing school that works collaboratively with other schools and organisations, including other grammar schools, to share best practice and secure excellent outcomes for all students.
- Build effective relationships with professionals across education and public services to improve academic, career and social outcomes for all students.
- Contribute to the development of the teaching profession through high-quality training and sustained professional development and learning for all staff.
- Inspire and influence others, within and beyond schools, to recognise the fundamental importance of education in young people's lives and to promote the value of education.

### Other Responsibilities

- Be a role model for the whole school and the wider community.
- Hold colleagues accountable at all levels.
- Ensure that the management of the school through designated roles is efficient and effective.
- Develop and promote policies and procedures that ensure the school's distinctive ethos is reflected in all activities and that the Academy's policies are enacted.
- Promote the school's ethos and culture within the wider community and beyond.
- Represent the school in appropriate forums locally, regionally and nationally as required.

*The above duties are not exhaustive, and the post holder may be required to perform other duties that reasonably correspond to the general character of the post and are commensurate with its level of responsibility.*

*Your duties may involve access to confidential and sensitive information covered by the Data Protection Act 2018. All employees are expected to comply with this legislation when handling personal data, and confidentiality must be maintained at all times.*

*In addition, the post holder must be committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.*

*This Job Description will be reviewed regularly and may be amended following consultation with the post holder. It is not a comprehensive statement of procedures and tasks but outlines the main expectations in relation to professional responsibilities and duties.*



“ Being at HGS has allowed me to flourish and prosper. This school has a wide range of extracurricular activities to take part in. ”

- STUDENT

# Person Specification

	CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL (E)		WHERE ASSESSED
		E	D	
<b>A</b>	<b>EDUCATION AND TRAINING</b>			
1	Educated to degree level	✓		A
2	Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)	✓		A
3	National Professional Qualification for Headship or similar qualification		✓	A
4	Evidence of continuing professional development or further study relevant to Headship		✓	A, I
<b>B</b>	<b>PERSONAL QUALITIES</b>			
5	Provides inspirational leadership which maximises opportunity for all	✓		A, I
6	Recognises and respects the importance of creating a positive, collaborative and inclusive culture which impacts positively on all members of the organisation	✓		A, I, R
7	Demonstrates a strong commitment to the professional development of others	✓		A, I, R
8	A personal and professional commitment to an ethical approach	✓		I, R
9	Demonstrates resilience and optimism throughout their working approach, including a sense of humour	✓		I
10	Ability to empathise and engage with all stakeholders	✓		A, I, R
11	A demonstrable commitment to the wider life of the school	✓		A, I
12	Values aligned with Heckmondwike Grammar School	✓		A, I
<b>C</b>	<b>KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE</b>			
13	An understanding of how Grammar Schools operate	✓		A, R
14	Experience of senior leadership	✓		A



	CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL (E)		WHERE ASSESSED
		E	D	
15	Experience of leading in a Grammar School		✓	A
16	Extensive experience of highly successful leadership within the education sector	✓		A, I, R
17	Experience of leading effective and sustained school improvement resulting in improved provision and outcomes for pupils	✓		A, I, R
18	Clear knowledge of the secondary phase of education including the accountability processes	✓		A, I
19	Clear knowledge of the post-16 phase of education and the accountability processes	✓		A, I
20	Proven ability to effectively communicate and build strong and sustained relationships with a breadth of stakeholders	✓		A, I, R
21	Extensive knowledge and understanding of the evidence to support high quality and effective teaching and learning and effective implementation of an appropriate curriculum	✓		A, I
22	Knowledge and understanding of current educational issues	✓		A, I, R
23	Effective working with those responsible for governance	✓		A, I, R
24	Experience of managing organisational budgets, excellent financial management and effective deployment of resources	✓		I, R
25	Extensive knowledge and understanding of the barriers to learning for children and young people with disadvantage and SEND	✓		A, I
26	Expertise in monitoring and supporting classroom performance	✓		I, R
27	Experience of governance within either a Single Academy Trust or Multi Academy Trust with regards to financial decision-making		✓	I
28	Experience of creating and sustaining a robust culture of safeguarding across an organisation	✓		A, I, R



	CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL (E)		WHERE ASSESSED
		E	D	
<b>D</b>	<b>PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND QUALITIES</b>			
29	Strong commitment to the Nolan Principles and understanding of the moral purpose of public life	✓		A, I, R
30	The ability to motivate and enthuse a team and model best practice across the school	✓		I
31	Exceptional communicator in all aspects of professional interaction	✓		A, I
32	Promote high standards and high expectations	✓		I, R
33	A proven track record of high-level analytical skills, designing and implementing strategic plans as needed, informed by robust decision making	✓		I
34	Inspiring leader with strong evidence of innovation, creativity and success in the education sector	✓		A, I, R
35	Flexibility, openness and commitment to collaborative leadership	✓		A, I
36	Demonstrate a commitment and belief in supporting professional growth, attracting and retaining high quality staff	✓		A, I

**Key:** A = Application Form I = Interview and Assessment Tasks R = References

**Potential candidates are asked to address the relevant aspects of the Person Specification to support their written application**

**This Person Specification considers the requirements of the Headteacher Standards 2020**



“Pupils are happy and feel safe.”  
- OFSTED, 2022

## How to Apply

The Governing Body of Heckmondwike Grammar School, a single Academy Trust, is seeking to appoint a suitably experienced and inspirational Headteacher to lead the school, following the retirement of the current Headteacher, who has served in post for eight years and at the school for sixteen years.

Heckmondwike Grammar School is a popular and highly successful selective Grammar School, situated in the pleasant town of Heckmondwike in West Yorkshire, close to Leeds, Bradford, Huddersfield and Halifax, and within easy reach of the M62 and M1.

Applications are welcomed from experienced Headteachers or ambitious Deputy or Assistant Headteachers with the qualities and skills to lead the school in the next stage of its development. The school is friendly, welcoming and an exciting place to learn (OFSTED 2022), with a strong local and national reputation for high standards of achievement. The development of personal skills and the importance of extra-curricular activities are central to school life.

We are committed to evidence-informed practice in teaching and learning, curriculum, behaviour management and CPD. Academic achievement and pastoral support are given equal importance. Staff are valued as subject experts and benefit from high levels of trust and autonomy. We are also committed to staff wellbeing and reducing workload.

We are seeking a Headteacher who will:

- be an inspirational leader with excellent communication skills and the ability to work effectively with all stakeholders;
- be committed to raising educational standards whilst ensuring a broad curriculum for all students;
- contribute to and develop the vision and values of the school; and
- demonstrate a strong track record of success.

This is an excellent opportunity for a talented and motivated senior leader to lead a highly regarded school.

Staff benefits include a cycle to work scheme and access to a range of health and wellbeing support.

To find out more, please visit: <https://www.heckgrammar.co.uk/vacancies/>

If you are interested, please contact the Headteacher's PA, Mrs J Dunn, at [jdunn@heckgrammar.co.uk](mailto:jdunn@heckgrammar.co.uk) to arrange an informal visit. Visits will take place on **Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April, Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> May and Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May** at **11.00am**. Completed applications should be sent to [recruitment@heckgrammar.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@heckgrammar.co.uk)

**Closing date: 9.00am, Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

**Shortlisting outcome: Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2026**

**Interviews: Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June and Friday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2026**

This appointment is supported by [ASCL's Leadership Appointment Service](https://www.ascl.org.uk). Candidates wishing to discuss the role further should contact Peter Monk at [peter.monk@ascl.org.uk](mailto:peter.monk@ascl.org.uk)