



Information for candidates applying for the role of:

Teacher of religious studies

Permanent, full time
Salary: MPS/UPS outer London
Required: September 2025



Highlands
School & Sixth Form



Dear candidate,

I am delighted that you are considering applying for the position of teacher of religious studies at Highlands School. Highlands is a very successful and popular school with a thriving sixth form. Our students come from a range of socio-economic and cultural backgrounds and we are proud to be one of the most popular and high achieving schools in London.

Our stated goal is “To provide a world class educational experience for our students. In whatever we do, to be held as an example of best practice to other schools.” This is an aspirational goal, but one we judge ourselves against at all times. If you are successful in your application you will play a key role in improving Highlands towards achieving this.

We are judged ‘Outstanding’ in all areas by Ofsted. When we were recently inspected in November 2024, [the Ofsted report](#) highlighted the excellent curriculum, behaviour, safeguarding and personal development the school offers. The report said that students “thrive in this diverse and inclusive school”. Academic achievement is excellent at Highlands and we are featured in the Times ‘Parent Power’ lists of the top schools in England.

I am committed to developing staff and supporting their wellbeing. We have two hours of CPD every Wednesday; no other meetings are held during the week. We use centralised collaborative resources to support planning. Pastoral leaders oversee centralised detentions to free up other teaching staff. We have a two week October half term break.

Our approach to curriculum and teaching is influenced by the writings of theorists such as Christine Counsell and the principles of Rosenshine - yours should be too. We want to recruit a hard working and driven colleague with very high standards, someone who wants to make a real difference at Highlands. The successful candidate will be ambitious and we will support them towards fulfilling their own career potential.

Before reading on, I recommend you watch this [video](#), which will introduce you to our school. I look forward to receiving your application and meeting you in person,

Vincent McInerney, Headteacher



History, ethos and values

Highlands was opened by Tony Blair in 2000, the first PFI school in the country. It is set in beautiful grounds and has a modern building in excellent condition. Mr McInerney is the third headteacher at Highlands. The previous head, Mr Goddard, led the school on a successful journey from 'Satisfactory' in 2007 to 'Outstanding' twice. The school's Outstanding status was confirmed in the November 2024 Ofsted inspection. The school has a strong reputation in the area for high academic standards and high standards of behaviour.

Our stated goal is "To provide a world class educational experience for our students. In whatever we do, to be held as an example of best practice to other schools." We take this very seriously and we have very high expectations of ourselves and each other. We are outward facing and research focused. We look at what the very best schools are doing nationally and internationally and then try to do it better here.

Our values are determination, aspiration, respect and equality (DARE) . These values underpin all of our work, and are our guiding principles. They summarise what we expect from students and staff. Our motto is 'Dare to flourish'. We chose this very carefully. The word 'dare' was chosen as it links to our values. The word 'flourish' was also carefully selected. The origin of the idea of flourishing dates back to Aristotle, who believed that the human purpose is to try and flourish, or live well. The modern spelling of the word is derived from the Latin, *flos*, which means flower. We like this word because we want all of our school community to grow and to develop. We know not everyone will grow and develop in the same way, but we will support them and be proud of them regardless.

Curriculum

Our curriculum has been carefully sequenced by highly skilled heads of department and faculty with the support, where appropriate, of nationally recognised experts such as Christine Counsell and David Didau. Our curriculum intent statements will give you a good sense of our philosophy towards the curriculum:

The Highlands School curriculum is highly ambitious and designed to educate students in the best that has been thought and said in each subject and to build cultural capital. At Key Stage 3 the curriculum goes beyond the requirements of the National Curriculum, introducing students to carefully sequenced core knowledge and ideas that will allow them to participate in the community of educated citizens.

The Highlands School curriculum supports a culture of reading. Reading and literacy open the doorway into the other subjects in the curriculum and to future success. The curriculum at Highlands encourages reading for pleasure and ensures students can access texts across the curriculum.

The wider curriculum at Highlands is an entitlement, not a privilege. All students take part in 28 days of carefully selected trips and visits over their seven years at Highlands to support the learning in lessons, build cultural capital and broaden their horizons to a world of opportunities.

The taught and wider curriculum, particularly through PSHE, teaches students about diversity, equality, inclusion and British values.



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Teaching, Learning and CPD

Our approach to teaching is underpinned by Rosenshine and the principles of direct instruction so, before applying, we advise potential candidates to be familiar with the principles and comfortable using them in the classroom. We value the teacher as the subject expert and we expect key knowledge to be delivered to students in a scaffolded and 'chunked' manner. We expect understanding to be checked throughout the lesson with the use of hinge questions, no hands up questioning and mini whiteboards. We buy all students mini whiteboards at the start of the year so they can all participate. Paired discussion is encouraged as a carefully planned part of the learning process. All departments have shared resources that are collaboratively developed and which staff are expected to use. This significantly reduces planning time for staff and means that every class has access to the same high quality resources.

Staff have CPD every Wednesday and this is built into the school day. This is a valuable opportunity for staff to share best practice, and work on curriculum development.

Highlands staff have unique access to a range of professional development opportunities, delivered by the school. These include middle and senior leadership programmes. Uptake on these programmes is high amongst our staff. For ECTs, the school offers the early career framework.

We are committed to developing our staff. You can watch some of our current staff talk about their professional journeys by clicking on the videos below [Alice](#), [Mia](#)

For more details of our benefits package and tailored CPD programme you can read our [people offer](#) here.



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Enrichment

At Highlands we think about more than exam results. The extracurricular provision at the school is excellent. In recent years Highlands students travelled to Barcelona, Morocco and New York. This year students studying physics will be visiting Cern in Switzerland, language students will be visiting Madrid and there are international trips to Morocco and Eswatini planned. Our students take part in the Duke of Edinburgh programme and other visits locally and nationally.

The performing arts are a strength at the school and the shows and performances are very popular. Last year students performed in the school show, Matilda, at the Millfield Theatre. Sports are another area of success at the school; girls' football at Highlands is amongst the strongest in the region.

At Highlands students leave with excellent results but also with experiences and an appreciation for the world beyond school that will stay with them forever.

All students at Highlands participate in 'DARE days'. These are four days each year when all lessons are suspended and students and staff participate in a range of trips and activities designed to enrich their learning experience and broaden their horizons.

When school finishes early on Wednesdays for staff CPD, we run compulsory Ed-Extra for year 7 and 8 students. These range from rugby to fashion, from dance to judo. It is a good example of an area in which the school does something that other schools look to as an example of best practice and innovation. We believe our extracurricular programme at Highlands should rival that of any other secondary school in London.



The Sixth Form

Highlands has a high performing and oversubscribed sixth form. The summer 2024 results put Highlands Sixth form in the top 10% of schools nationally for a third year in a row. Students go on to a range of destinations including top universities (Oxford, Cambridge, UCL, King's college London), others have gone on to do degree apprenticeships at companies like Blackrock and law firms such as Allen and Overy and others have gone onto to pursue apprenticeships. Whether it be A levels or BTECs we support students to the next stage of their life.

At Highlands it is not just what students achieve academically that matters, but what type of young people they become and what they choose to do when they leave. It is for this reason that we have built a diverse and challenging curriculum, along with excellent enrichment opportunities for our students. We are an inclusive sixth form, with a welcoming, diverse and grounded community in which our students feel cared for and supported.

Supporting students to make the right university or career choices is a priority at Highlands. We have a dedicated team of staff who bring outside speakers into the school to develop students' understanding of the world of work. We have a flourishing enrichment programme which encourages sixth form students to take up leadership opportunities. We have a special pathway for students wishing to enter careers such as law or medicine, study at Russell Group universities or who wish to study at Oxford or Cambridge. We are committed to supporting each student into the career or university of their choice.

Learn more about the sixth form on our [sixth form website area](#).

School priorities

Our goal is to provide a world class educational experience for our students. In whatever we do, to be held as an example of best practice to other schools.

To achieve that the school has three strategic priorities:

1. Achieve academic excellence, underpinned by a curriculum that meets the needs of all learners.
2. Create a culture that celebrates diversity and equality and that supports inclusivity and excellent behaviour.
3. Promote a culture of leadership, self-reflection and professional development across all staff.



RS Department

The religious studies (RS) department at Highlands School is a thriving, successful department which consistently achieves outstanding results. The department is recognised as one of the top 10% of schools nationally for A-Level results, a remarkable achievement maintained consecutively. Offering a comprehensive curriculum across three key stages, the department also provides a robust core religious education (RE) program that engages all students, including those who do not take RS as a GCSE qualification. A key feature of the department's success is its inclusive approach, with whole-school debates and interfaith discussions that foster critical thinking and respectful dialogue on ethical and religious topics. Our rigorous, knowledge rich curriculum is carefully sequenced to explore religious traditions through a range of disciplinary lenses, including philosophical, sociological and theological enquiry whilst also encouraging students to explore moral and spiritual dimensions of their own lives. The RS department is seeking to appoint a new teacher to join the team to continue building our reputation for academic excellence and our commitment to nurturing open-minded individuals who can engage compassionately and intelligently with those who hold different worldviews to their own.



The Role: Teacher of religious studies

Job Purpose

To deliver consistently excellent lessons that lead to high levels of student progress and contribute to departmental lesson planning and curriculum reviews.

Job details

The position is permanent.

The successful candidate will report to the head of department.

The salary is MPS/UPS (outer London).

The post starts September 2025.



Job description

Key responsibilities

Curriculum and assessment

- Contribute to a rigorous and inspirational, knowledge rich curriculum.
- Engage with an evidence and research based approach to curriculum development that puts your department at the forefront of innovative curriculum design.
- To contribute to the curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of all students including SEND, gifted and talented and EAL students.
- Work with the head of department to ensure that GCSE and exam courses are planned in line with department expectations.
- Be accountable for student progress in your classes, ensuring that every student achieves better results in line with, or better than, national expectations.
- Track student progress and make intelligent use of assessment to identify underperformance, plan appropriate support and achieve excellent outcomes for our students.
- Predict student outcomes as required.
- Monitor student progress through formative and summative assessment and ensure assessment records are kept at a departmental level.
- Participate in a range of intervention strategies are in place to respond to underachievement and to promote best possible outcomes for all students.

Professional development

- Participate fully in the school's CPD programme, weekly CPD programme and INSET days.
- Attend specific CPD and keep up to date with subject specific developments.
- Support and mentor colleagues as appropriate.

Teaching and learning

- Teach consistently high quality lessons and participate in collaborative planning and development, including the sharing of resources and best practice within the department.
- Reflect on the effectiveness of your teaching and adapt accordingly.
- Engage in quality assurance processes and systems.
- Ensure provision for students you teach with individual needs, and develop differentiated learning and teaching methods and resources.
- Keep up to date with developments in pedagogy, research and teaching practice relevant to the department's subject area.
- Teach a timetable as allocated.
- Set high expectations so that all students are inspired, motivated and challenged to reach their full potential, and in doing so meet their progress and attainment targets.
- Plan and teach well-structured, scaffolded lessons that are aligned to the school and/or network curriculum and cultivate every student's intellectual curiosity.
- Use assessment to inform teaching and learning, identify areas for intervention and provide feedback to students, staff and families in order to promote progress and outcomes.
- Manage behaviour effectively to create a safe, respectful and nurturing environment so that students can focus on learning.

Other responsibilities

- Actively promote the safety and welfare of our students.
- Ensure compliance with the school's data protection rules and procedures.

Job description continued:

- Liaise with colleagues and external contacts at all levels of seniority with confidence, tact and diplomacy.
- To undertake, as required, the duties of a form tutor, taking responsibility for the support, guidance and welfare of a group of students.
- General cover as necessary.
- To undertake, as required, the duties of a form tutor, taking responsibility for the support, guidance and welfare of a group of students.
- To undertake weekly duties as directed, including the supervision of pupils at the beginning of school, during break times and at the end of the school day.
- To follow school policies and procedures as laid down in the staff handbook and guidelines as provided by line managers and the school's senior management team.
- To attend meetings, parents' evenings and other functions, as required by the Headteacher, within directed time.
- To uphold agreed standards of dress, behaviour and discipline around the school and when supervising pupils outside the school.

Equal opportunities

To work within and encourage the school's Equal Opportunities Policy and contribute to diversity policies and programmes in relation to discriminatory behavior. Click [here](#) for our equal opportunities statement.

Review Arrangements

The details contained in this job description reflect the content of the job at the date it was prepared. It should be remembered, however, that it is inevitable that over time, the nature of individual jobs will change, existing duties may no longer be required and other duties may be gained without changing the general nature of the duties or the level of responsibility entailed. Consequently, the Headteacher will expect to revise this Job Description from time to time and will consult with the postholder at the appropriate time.

All schools in Enfield are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Therefore, all employees working at this school are expected to share this commitment as and when required.

Person specification

The following outlines the key knowledge, skills and experience required for this position. As part of the shortlisting process, the selection panel will assess each candidate against the criteria listed below.

Knowledge, skills and experience

- To have qualified teacher status and appropriate qualifications in religious studies or related disciplines.
- Successful teaching experience across a range of key stages.
- The ability to motivate students and staff (teaching and non-teaching).
- Good interpersonal skills: the ability to work well with a wide range of people and also to use initiative - taking the lead when necessary.
- The ability to work flexibly and share in workloads, particularly during periods of pressure.
- Experience of working with pupils from a diverse range of backgrounds.
- Experience of improving the quality of teaching and learning through curriculum development and high quality resources.
- A belief in and commitment to the school's equal opportunities policy.
- The ability to demonstrate a pro-active approach in taking responsibility for quality of own work and that of others, problem solving and using one's own initiative as appropriate.
- Confident use of technology to promote learning.

Personal Qualities

- Ability to work well under pressure.
- Ability to prioritise and meet deadlines.
- Commitment to continued personal development.
- Commitment to contribute to the wider life of the school.
- A sound understanding of safeguarding.
- An acceptance of the need for continuing development and training, particularly in ensuring a proactive approach to planning CPD.
- Rigour.
- Very high expectations of oneself and students.
- High levels of personal integrity.
- A passion for promoting and celebrating diversity.
- A willingness to give and receive respectful and candid feedback on the quality of work.

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The application process

Please apply by visiting the [vacancies page](#) on our website and complete an application form (at the bottom) in full with a personal statement of no more than two sides of A4 outlining how you meet the person spec. This can be typed in the space on the application form or as a separate document.

Closing date: 9am on Monday 31st March 2025. Interviews will be held shortly afterwards.

If you have any questions, please contact Trudi Steiner, HR Officer, at hsjobapp@highlearn.uk or **020 8370 1166**.

The Governing Body are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The successful candidate will be required to undergo an enhanced DBS check.



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