

For September 2026



CANDIDATE INFORMATION

# Head of Religious Studies

Westbrook Hay



Our mission is to develop academically successful, community minded, self-confident and well rounded individuals who are well prepared for their futures.

Westbrook Hay is a thriving co-educational independent day school. Pupils enjoy a broad curriculum, achieve excellent results and have the all-important confidence to succeed.

The school roll is currently at a record high of around 380 pupils and in September 2023 announced that it is growing its Senior Section of the school from Year 8 to Year 11 and will begin offering GCSEs. From September 2026 we will welcome our first Year 10 cohort.

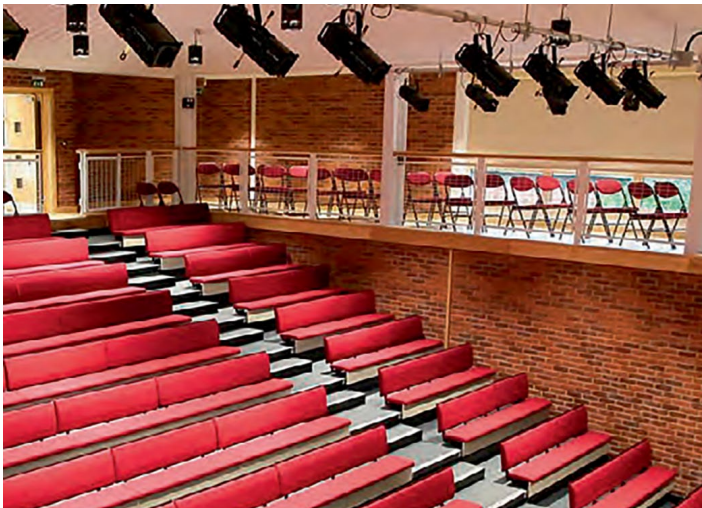
We are seeking an enthusiastic and committed Head of Religious Studies to lead and develop the department from September 2026. The successful candidate will deliver engaging and academically rigorous Religious Studies lessons across Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, including GCSE. They will inspire pupils to think critically about religious, philosophical and ethical issues, fostering curiosity, respect and thoughtful reflection. The role involves developing pupils' ability to analyse beliefs, evaluate differing perspectives and construct well-reasoned arguments. This is an exciting opportunity to shape and enhance a growing subject area within a vibrant and supportive school community that places the happiness, confidence and success of every pupil at its heart.

Our ethos is to be a welcoming, inclusive community that provides the best for, and expects the best from us all.

The school is well known locally for its warm and welcoming atmosphere. This is something we cherish and, even though we are potentially going to grow slightly in size, we do not want to lose this ethos. We believe our ethos separates us from larger competitor schools in our locality. This ethos is generated by the staff and their relationships with the pupils and parents. It has been regularly described as 'friendly and professional'.



# Our History



Westbrook Hay School, founded in 1892 by Augustus Orlebar in Bedford, has evolved over 130 years, relocating and renaming itself multiple times. Originally a small establishment with just two pupils, it grew under successive leaderships and moved to its current location at Westbrook Hay in 1963. It transitioned from a boarding school for boys to accepting day pupils and girls in the late 1970s.

Located between Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead in Hertfordshire, the school's beautiful location boasts 26 acres of parkland overlooking the Bourne Valley. For example, the school has a purpose-built Pre-Prep and has very recently upgraded many of its specialist facilities. The Performing Arts Centre, added in 2016, offers

impressive provision for dance, drama and music. Our new specialist facilities include two Science Laboratories with a prep room, a refurbished and modernised DT Workshop, a new ICT suite, an extended and upgraded Art Centre, six new changing rooms, and a state-of-the-art Food Technology room. These are in addition to our Sports Hall, Swimming Pool and modern, spacious classrooms.

Under various heads the school has expanded and modernised, while continuing to prepare students for prestigious senior schools such as Bedford, Berkhamsted, Haileybury, Millfield, Stowe and St Albans. The school now moves into a new phase of development becoming an all-through school to 16.

# Long Term School Strategy

In September 2023, Westbrook Hay announced that it is growing its Senior Section from Year 8 to Year 11 to begin offering GCSEs.

The decision was made in reaction to the changing local market, from a position of financial strength and due to demand from current and prospective parents.

This process has started extremely well with record numbers of pupils joining into Year 7 and new starters into Year 8. Our First Year 9 cohort are now in place and thriving.



# School Structure

The school is growing to form three main sections



**Pre-Prep:** for pupils from Nursery to Year 2, this section of the school is two form entry and consists of approximately 140 boys and girls.

**Prep:** for pupils from Year 3 to Year 6, this section of the school is two or three form entry and consists of approximately 190 boys and girls.



**Seniors:** currently just Years 7, 8 and 9 this section of the school consists of approximately 85 boys and girls. Under our long term strategy we will add Years 10 and 11, with the aim of having around 40 pupils in each year group.



# Overview of the Role

We are seeking a candidate with the dedication, enthusiasm and passion to lead the Religious Studies Department into the next phase of its development. This is a full time role, but for the right candidate a part-time contract might be considered; this can be discussed further at interview. The first Year 10 Religious Studies cohort will begin in September 2026, with the school expanding to Year 11 in September 2027.

The Head of Religious Studies will establish and lead the department across the school. Religious Studies will play a central role in Westbrook Hay's curriculum, equipping pupils with the ability to think critically about religious, philosophical and ethical questions, develop informed and respectful perspectives, and engage thoughtfully with a diverse and complex world. The ideal candidate will be forward-thinking, highly organised and committed to delivering rigorous and inspiring Religious Studies education.

The successful candidate will teach from Year 7 upwards, with one Religious Studies lesson per week for pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9. As the school expands its senior provision, the Head of Religious Studies will lead the development of a coherent and ambitious curriculum from Key Stage 3 through to GCSE Religious Studies, ensuring strong progression in knowledge, evaluation and written argument. Pupils at Westbrook Hay will be required to choose one Humanity for GCSE from Religious Studies, Geography or History, ensuring that Religious Studies remains a key pillar of the school's academic and pastoral ethos.

The Head of Religious Studies will work closely with the Prep Humanities Coordinator to ensure continuity, a shared vision and smooth progression of skills and knowledge from Prep through to Senior School. This collaboration will support a cohesive whole-school approach to humanities education and strengthen cross-phase curriculum development.

## Academic Leadership Team

The Head of Religious Studies will be a member of the wider Academic Leadership Team (ALT). This body is in charge of monitoring academic life at Westbrook Hay. This includes the progress of pupils across the school, reviewing the curriculum, undertaking learning walks, leading initiatives in staff teaching and learning and setting the assessment and reporting schedules. Led by the Deputy Head Academic, this team includes the Head of Learning Support, Senior Academic Lead, Prep Academic Lead and Pre-Prep Academic Lead. The Head of Religious Studies will be an important part of the wider ALT and will be expected to attend around three meetings each term.



# Job Description

*The purpose of this job description is to outline the main responsibilities of the Head of Religious Studies. It is not restrictive and includes any other reasonable requests that may arise.*

*The safety and well-being of the children in School is paramount at all times. The Head of Religious Studies is responsible for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children for whom they are responsible, or with whom they come into contact. The Head of Religious Studies will adhere to and ensure compliance with the School's Child Protection Policy at all times. If in the course of carrying out their duties, the Head of Religious Studies becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children in the School, it is their responsibility to report any concerns to the school's Designated Senior Lead for Child Protection or the Head.*

The Head of Religious Studies will be line-managed by the Deputy Head Academic.



## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

### Leadership and Management of Religious Studies

- Lead Religious Studies across the school: Pre-Prep (Nursery to Year 2), Prep (Year 3 to 6) and Senior (Year 7 to 11)
- Hold and manage a budget for Religious Studies
- Actively promote Religious Studies to parents and prospective parents
- With the Academic Leadership Team and other Heads of Subjects, monitor the standards of teaching and learning taking place in the school, ensuring that the highest possible standards are being reached
- Work closely with other Heads of Subjects ensuring that, individually and collaboratively, the targets within the School Development Plan, are being met

### GCSE Religious Studies

- Have a deep understanding and knowledge of the Religious Studies National Curriculum, GCSE Religious Studies
- Oversee the coordination of part-time or peripatetic staff within the Religious Studies department
- Plan and structure exciting and imaginative schemes of work to ensure that pupils are appropriately challenged, make strong progress and are enthused and inspired by their lessons
- Coordinate and analyse academic data, reporting this to the Deputy Head Academic
- Put into practice the agenda and standards set for their subject by the Deputy Head Academic through their own Subject Action Plan linked to the School Development Plan

## Relationship with Executive Group Members and Key Staff

- Advise the Deputy Head Academic on timetable requirements and staffing of Religious Studies
- Advise the Head on the provision and organisation of any events, clubs, competitions and trips linked to Religious Studies
- Attend and contribute positively to all wider Academic Leadership Team (ALT) meetings
- Organise all internal assessments and examinations with appropriate colleagues including the Exams Officer and the Deputy Head Academic
- Put into practice the agenda and standards set for their subject by the Deputy Head Academic through their own Subject Action Plan linked to the School Development Plan
- With the ALT and other Heads of Subjects, monitor the standards of teaching and learning taking place in the school, ensuring that the highest possible standards are being reached
- Work closely with other Heads of Subjects ensuring that, individually and collaboratively, the targets within the School Development Plan, are being met
- Work in collaboration with the Heads of Pre-Prep (Nursery to Year 2), Prep (Year 3 to 6) and Senior (Year 7 to 11) regarding the delivery and development of the subject in their sections
- Work with the Director of Marketing & Admissions to promote and publicise, both internally and externally, the work and achievements of the pupils in Computing
- Liaise with the Head of Learning Support to ensure that those pupils requiring support are identified and provided for

## Other Responsibilities

- Be prepared to teach other subjects if required
- Complete all policies relevant to the role
- Complete all risk assessments relevant to the role
- Potentially combine the role with other responsibilities from different tiers of the school's leadership and management structure
- Attend and contribute positively to all meetings to which they are required to attend
- Be proactive and interested in keeping the school up-to-date over the latest educational issues for their subject, attending courses as appropriate
- Be proficient in, and supportive of, using technology to support learning
- Ensure that all schemes of work are in place and up-to-date
- Potentially combine the role with other responsibilities from different tiers of the school's leadership and management structure
- Undertake any reasonable additional task in respect of the needs of the school at the request of the Headteacher

*No job description can cover all aspects of a role and consequently responsibilities are likely to evolve and change overtime.*



# Person Specification

## Skills, Experience, Qualifications, Knowledge and Personal Attributes

All staff at Westbrook Hay are expected to embrace and demonstrate in their professional lives the School's values of courage, independence, integrity, reflective learner, responsibility and togetherness.

**Essential:** the attributes, skills, qualifications and experience that a candidate **must have** in order to be considered for the role.

**Desirable:** those that would **strengthen an application** but are not strictly necessary.

**Advantageous:** nice to have, but not a key requirement of the role.

## Qualifications and Knowledge

Educated to degree or equivalent level in Religious Studies or other related subject	Essential
Evidence of ongoing professional development	Essential
Knowledge of current best practice in Religious Studies learning and teaching	Essential
Knowledge of safeguarding requirements within a school	Essential
Proven track record of delivering academic success in Religious Studies at GCSE	Essential
QTS or PGCE	Essential

## Skills and Experience

Ability to teach Year 7 to Year 11 Religious Studies	Essential
Ability and enthusiasm to teach both boys and girls	Essential
Ability to make accurate and productive use of assessment	Essential
Ability to nurture and develop an ethos of high standards, personal fulfilment and academic success	Essential
Ability to plan time effectively and meet deadlines	Essential
Ability to problem solve and offer solutions	Essential
Ability to work within a dedicated and hardworking team	Essential
Effective management of pupil behaviour	Essential
Excellent administrative and organisational skills	Essential
Excellent communication skills to a range of audiences	Essential
Experience of leading initiatives and measuring impact	Desirable
Experience of working in an 'all-through' school	Desirable
Experience of working in the independent sector	Desirable
Experience, or being willing, to teach a second curriculum subject	Essential
Experience, or being willing, to coach sport	Desirable
Line management of teaching colleagues over a significant period	Desirable
Planning and managing budgets	Desirable

# Salary and Benefits

The salary will be competitive and dependent on experience.

## What can we offer you?

- A fantastic team of staff to work with and be a part of
- Commitment to continuing professional development
- Enhanced Family Leave
- Cooked lunches and refreshments throughout the day provided
- Membership of the Employee Assistance Programme
- Opportunities to attend events organised by the Staff Social Committee
- Receipt of a 'golden ticket' for assisting with an overnight event, which enables staff to apply for a half day of leave either in the morning or afternoon
- Small class sizes, a beautiful rural location and excellent facilities
- 50% fee remission is offered (pro rata) for children of school staff subject to availability of place
- The security and opportunity that comes from working in a school that is part of a charitable group of school (Mill Hill Foundation)



# Application and Recruitment Process

The appointment is for September 2026, although the school may wait until the following term for the right candidate.

## Key Dates

**Application Deadline: Tuesday 19 May 2026**

**Interviews will be held w/c Thursday 21 & Friday 22 May 2026**

**We reserve the right to appoint before the closing date.**

Please note that we are unable to accept applications unless they are made on our own application form. Due to the number of applications the School receives shortlisted candidates will be contacted to be invited for an interview.

The Mill Hill Education Group reserves the right to interview candidates ahead of the closing date and applications will be considered as they are received.

The Mill Hill Education Group is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children. As part of our Recruitment Checks, the appointed candidate will be subject to a Social Media and Enhanced DBS Check.

The schools apply for an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for all positions at the schools which amount to regulated activity. The role you are applying for meets the legal definition of regulated activity with children.

If you are successful in your application you will be required to complete a DBS Disclosure Application Form. Employment with the schools is conditional upon the schools being satisfied with the result of the Enhanced DBS Disclosure. Any criminal records information that is disclosed to the schools will be handled in accordance with any guidance and/or code of practice published by the DBS. It is an offence for person barred from working with children to apply for this post.

The Mill Hill Education Group is committed to Equal Opportunities and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

Successful applicants will also be expected to keep up to date with annual safeguarding training, DfE guidance and School specific safeguarding information.

**If this new opportunity sparks your enthusiasm and you wish to be part of our team, please click the button to complete your Application Form.**

**APPLY**

# Compliance Requirements



The appointment is subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks in accordance with DfES guidance, to satisfactory references, satisfactory clearance from the DBS, proof of identity and qualifications and a satisfactory medical report. Westbrook Hay is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. All successful applicants will be required to undergo child protection screening including checks with current and previous employers and the Disclosure & Barring Service.



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