



Appointment of Head

November 2025



Summary

Wellington School is the only independent school in Ayrshire and it has provided a first class education in the town of Ayr since 1849. This is an all-through, coeducational school with pupils aged 3-18 and a current school roll of approximately 400. The Governors are seeking to recruit an exceptional individual to succeed Simon Johnson, who retires in June 2026 after 11 years of dedicated and inspiring service.

Wellington occupies a beautiful site in Ayr consisting of three substantial Victorian buildings adjacent to the beach, overlooking the Clyde and the Isle of Arran. A separate sports campus is located a short distance away close to the historic Brig O'Doon. Originally a boarding school for girls, the school transformed 30 years ago into the co-educational day school that it is today, attracting pupils from a large catchment area extending as far as Largs, the south side of Glasgow and Stranraer.

Pupils at Wellington are encouraged to work hard, get involved and look after themselves and one another. The school's ethos is summarised by the words Care, Commitment, Confidence, Challenge and Creativity, and pupils of all ages benefit from access to a broad curriculum and a high level of individual support. Most pupils go on to study at leading universities in Scotland or other specialist

institutions throughout the United Kingdom. The programme of overseas exchanges and trips offered is second to none and Wellington is proud to have been granted 'International School' status by the British Council multiple times.

Pupils begin their journey in the Nursery, which benefits from excellent indoor facilities on the main campus and a beautiful woodland site adjacent to the school's sports fields. The Junior School then provides a first-class experience for pupils in small classes from P1 through to P6. Thereafter, P7 is a transition year when pupils benefit both from time with their class teacher and lessons delivered by subject specialists from the senior school. Senior school pupils follow a wide range of courses leading to SQA qualifications at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher levels.

The Head leads the Senior Management Team (SMT), which is made up of the Deputy Head, the Assistant Head (Pastoral), the Assistant Head (Academic), the Head of the Junior School, the Finance Manager and the Operations Manager.

The Head is accountable to the Board of Governors, which currently consists of 13 committed individuals with relevant skills, many of whom are parents of pupils or former pupils of Wellington School.



Role Description

Vision and Strategic Leadership

- Provide inspiring and purposeful leadership that reflects the school's ethos, aims, and values.
- Articulate and implement a clear strategic vision for the school's future development, growth, and pursuit of excellence.
- Ensure a seamless educational journey from Nursery through to S6, promoting academic ambition, and personal development and wellbeing.
- Work closely with the Board of Governors and the Senior Management Team to shape long-term plans and policy.

Educational Excellence

Work in conjunction with members of the Senior Management Team to:

- Oversee the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school, ensuring consistently high academic standards.
- Foster a culture of intellectual curiosity, creativity, and independent learning appropriate to each stage of education.
- Lead curriculum development to provide a coherent, engaging, and progressive programme from age 3 to 18.
- Monitor and evaluate pupil outcomes, ensuring that each pupil achieves their potential in both academic and co-curricular areas.
- Promote a commitment to professional excellence and innovation in pedagogy and assessment.

Pastoral Care and Pupil Wellbeing

Work in conjunction with the Senior Management Team to:

- Ensure that every pupil is known, valued, and supported within a caring and inclusive school community.
- Uphold the highest standards of safeguarding and child protection across the school and ensure compliance with national legislation and guidance.
- Promote positive relationships, good conduct, and the emotional and social wellbeing of pupils.
- Champion equality, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of school life.

Leadership and Staff Development

- Lead, inspire, and support a dedicated team of teaching and support staff.
- Recruit, retain, and develop high-quality staff, fostering a culture of collaboration, respect, and professional development.
- Encourage leadership at all levels and ensure the effective professional development of all staff.
- Maintain open communication and a visible, approachable presence across the school.

Community, Admissions, and External Relations

- Serve as the public face and chief ambassador of the school.
- Build and maintain positive relationships with parents, former pupils and the wider community.
- In conjunction with the Marketing Manager, lead marketing and admissions initiatives to maintain healthy enrolment and to promote the school's distinctive ethos and strengths.
- Represent the school effectively within the Scottish independent education sector and the local community.

Appointment of Head

Financial and Operational Management

- Work closely with the Finance Manager and the Board of Governors to ensure sound financial management and strategic use of resources. Alongside the Finance Manager, the Operations Manager and the Board of Governors, oversee budgeting, staffing, and facilities planning to ensure long-term sustainability and efficiency
- Alongside the Operations Manager, ensure compliance with all statutory and regulatory requirements, including health and safety, data protection, and employment law.
- Alongside the Operations Manager, maintain the school's buildings, grounds, and facilities to provide a safe, attractive, and stimulating environment for learning.

Governance and Accountability

- Report regularly to the Governing Body on the school's performance, priorities, and progress.
- Implement policies and ensure readiness for HMI inspection.
- Support the Governors in exercising their strategic oversight and act as the key link between governance and the Senior Management Team.



Person Description

The successful candidate will demonstrate:

Inspirational Leadership

- A visible, confident, and compassionate leader who inspires trust, loyalty, and respect.
- The capacity to articulate and embody the school's ethos, values, and vision.
- A genuine commitment to the intellectual, social and emotional development of pupils.

Strategic Thinking

- The ability to think creatively and strategically about the long-term direction of a small, all-through independent school.
- Sound judgement in balancing educational ideals with practical and financial realities.
- A clear understanding of the current independent school landscape in Scotland and the challenges and opportunities it presents.

Educational Passion and Insight

- A deep understanding of teaching and learning across all stages of the school.
- A commitment to academic excellence alongside personal growth and wellbeing.
- Intellectual curiosity and openness to innovation and best practice in education.

Emotional Intelligence

- Warmth, empathy, and a genuine enjoyment of working with young people and their families.
- The ability to listen carefully, respond thoughtfully, and manage difficult situations with fairness and discretion.
- A strong moral compass and integrity in all relationships and decisions.

People Management and Team Building

- The ability to lead, motivate, and empower staff at every level.
- A collaborative approach that values and develops others' strengths.
- Confidence in making decisions and the resilience to handle pressure with grace and good humour.

Communication

- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, both written and spoken.
- The ability to act as an articulate and persuasive ambassador for the school.
- Confidence in engaging with parents, governors, former pupils and the wider community.

Commitment and Personal Qualities

- The highest levels of personal integrity, professionalism, and discretion.
- Enthusiasm, energy, and a sense of purpose.
- Flexibility, adaptability, and the willingness to be fully involved in the life of a busy, vibrant school community.



Appointment Process

Applicants must either be registered with GTC Scotland, or eligible for registration. All appointments are subject to clearance through the Disclosure Scotland Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme.

Applicants should complete the school's Job Application Form and provide a covering letter, both of which should be sent by email to vacancies@wellingtonschool.org. A CV is optional and may also be included.

The salary for this post will be competitive and depend on the skills and experience of the successful applicant.

The post is available from August 2026.

The closing date for applications is Monday 24 November.

First round interviews will take place in Ayr during the week beginning 1 December.

Anybody with questions regarding the post or the process is invited to contact the current Head, sjohnson@wellingtonschool.org



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Wellington
SCHOOL