



Croydon High School

for girls aged 3-18

GDST
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST



Meet our Senior Leadership Team

Sarah Raja - Head of Junior School

Following my education at a GDST school, I gained my BA in Primary Education at Canterbury Christ Church University and started my teaching career in the state sector. I moved to the GDST in 2007 and gained my MSc in Educational Leadership in 2011. I joined Croydon High School in 2015 as Deputy Head of Junior School, before taking up the post of Head of Junior School in September 2019.

I am incredibly proud of the Junior School, which delivers a dynamic and forward thinking curriculum alongside a huge range of co-curricular and enrichment opportunities, all underpinned by exceptional pastoral care. I feel very lucky to work with our talented staff and incredible pupils every day.



Sophie Bradshaw - Deputy Head, Sixth Form and Operations

Relationship building has been central in my 20 year teaching career. It is just as important in my work with Sixth Form students navigating the challenges of A level study and decision making about their university choices, as it was encouraging 3 year olds to step into school on their first day. Having graduated from the University of Exeter with a first class degree in Primary Education with Mathematics, I have taught in four schools in several different roles.

Out of school I am most likely to be found re-reading a Harry Potter and hoping it is not my turn to cook.



David King - Deputy Head, Pastoral

In my role as Deputy Head (Pastoral) I am privileged to be able to work with the Heads of Year and counselling teams as they support pupils throughout their time at the school. I was fortunate to read Experimental Psychology at Oxford University, before an Open University Maths Diploma as I started my teaching career in the mathematics departments of boarding schools, where I was also heavily involved in sporting and boarding house pursuits. My hockey was not bad once upon a time, and I was delighted when Croydon High PE began cricket rather than rounders as the major summer sport!



Phil Purvis - Deputy Head, Academic

I joined Croydon High School in 2018 as Head of Sixth Form before taking up the post of Deputy Head (Academic) in 2019. Previously, I was Director of Music and Head of Student Progression, Higher Education & Careers at d'Overbroeck's, a co-educational independent day and boarding school in Oxford. I hold undergraduate, masters and doctoral degrees in musicology from the University of Lancaster and I am soon to undertake a masters in educational leadership. I have a particular interest in curriculum design and the nature and use of assessment in teaching and learning. I maintain an active research profile alongside my teaching responsibilities; I have authored two books: *Masculinity in Opera* (2013) and *Music and Camp* (2018), and numerous journal articles. Away from school, I am a fan of opera, musicals, and twentieth-century fiction!



Kevin Murphy - Assistant Head, Digital Strategy

In 2022 I joined Croydon High School as Assistant Head (Digital Strategy) from Latymer Upper School in West London. Prior to this, I had worked at leading international schools in Egypt, China, Thailand and Germany. After gaining my PGCE in 2007, I worked at the secondary school I had attended as a teenager in Rochdale, before starting my teaching career internationally.

I have held numerous roles, from classroom teacher through to Assistant Head, where my focus has been to develop and establish good practice around the use of technology. I recognise the significance of technology and how it is permeating almost all aspects of our society, and feel it is important for our young people to be equipped with the skills needed to utilize, rather than be controlled by, the advancements they have at their disposal. I love problem solving, and as a keen coder I am always working on new projects, such as making smart devices to use in my home.

From my travels, I have developed a love of international food and I can often be found, with my wife, researching and planning dishes in the kitchen -though I still enjoy the consumption far more than the preparation!



Laura Threadgold - Deputy Head, Junior School

I joined Croydon High in 2019 as Deputy Head of Juniors and Year 6 teacher. I have previously worked in both the independent and state sectors in schools in London and Dubai and also in Cheshire, where I originally come from. I qualified as teacher in 2008 with a Bachelor of Education degree from the University of Chester which is where I discovered my passion for teaching. In more recent years, I have developed an interest in research-based education, particularly around teaching, learning and assessment pedagogy and methodology.

Outside of the classroom, I enjoy running, walking and spending as much time as possible seeing family and friends.



Emma Webb - Assistant Head, Extra Curricular

I arrived at Croydon High in September 2012 as Head of Drama and, following two years as Head of Curie House and another two as Deputy Head of Key Stage 4, I joined the SLT in September 2019 as Assistant Head (co-curricular).

With a degree in Performing Arts with Education Studies and an active involvement in drama, music and sport throughout my own school years and early teaching career, I recognise the impact of engagement in a range of enrichment activities for our pupils and the positive effects this has on their confidence, mental health and transferable skills.

I'm most proud of the range of fabulous Croydon High pupils, from Year 7 to the Upper Sixth, who now run clubs and activities as part of our co-curricular programme!



Fran Cook - Director of Philanthropy and External Relations

My degree in Psychology from the University of Southampton led me (eventually) to a career in advertising and marketing on both the agency and client side. It was a wonderful learning environment and an exciting place to work, but it was only when I joined Croydon High in 2010 that I felt I had truly 'come home' in terms of real job satisfaction.

My role has adapted over the years and I now oversee our Marketing, Admissions and Alumnae Relations activities and recently took on responsibility for developing our philanthropic aims as a school – something I really feel passionate about. Out of school, family, football, travel and theatre are on the favourites list – not always in that order.



John Nelson – Director of Finance and Operations

I joined Croydon High School in February 2018 as Joint Director of Finance & Operations with Sydenham High School GDST. After gaining a BA Accounting at Napier University in 1986, I moved to London from Edinburgh to join J Sainsbury as a trainee accountant. After qualifying as a Chartered Management Accountant I pursued varied careers in Retail, Logistics and Waste Management before joining G4S in May 2000 as Head of Decision Support. I progressed to other roles in eighteen years with G4S as firstly Finance Director and then Managing Director in G4S international Logistics, finally returning to G4S Cash Services as Finance Director.

My passion is football although as a season ticket holder at Crystal Palace, following Hibernian in Scotland and being Scottish no one can accuse me of being a glory seeker!

