



Peponi House School Nairobi, Kenya

Deputy Head - Academic

Required for SEPTEMBER 2025

Please apply as soon as possible so we have time to consider your application.

Closing date is 12 noon on Monday 17th February 2025, but please apply as soon as you can. Initial interviews will be held online when mutually convenient.

Simon Shneerson is assisting Peponi House with this appointment and will be delighted to answer any questions.

Please contact him via email at peponihead@btinternet.com.

www.peponischool.org/house

Welcome from the Head

Peponi House is a fabulous place with the happiest, bubbliest children who enjoy an incredibly rich and broad education. Staff are happy and enthusiastic, and the ethos “A school of many nations, a family of one” sums things up perfectly.

We have a wonderfully friendly, positive atmosphere where anything is possible and everyone is encouraged. We have just completely rebuilt the school’s premises, a massive project which has given us truly exceptional teaching spaces and some world-class specialist facilities. The result is that we do amazing things and the sky is genuinely the limit.

I’m now looking for an exceptional Deputy Head – Academic who can provide expert leadership to an already excellent team of teachers and support staff. You’ll bring vision and energy and be really excited about developing the academic side of a top school that is moving forward at a pace.

Along with our new buildings and resources, we are already enhancing our teaching practice with sharpened pedagogy and a thematic transdisciplinary curriculum. Children (and staff) are encouraged to be curious, to explore themes and ideas, and to develop real conceptual understanding as well as skills and knowledge. A full ISI Inspection in March judged us as “excellent” in every category.

This academic year we have been broadening the curriculum, developing inquiry-based learning and further integrating advanced technology throughout the school. September will see the next steps forward, which is where you will come in.

You’ll bring solid experience in a quality primary or prep school setting, with broad knowledge of all aspects of managing and developing teaching and learning at this level. You’ll now be ready for a fresh challenge, with ideas and enthusiasm, and in return we will really welcome your ideas and your experience.

Education is changing, as is the world, and if all this appeals, please get in touch. Kenya is an exciting country and very different from most other places. You can struggle with what’s possible somewhere else, or you can help us achieve a lot more here.

Tracy Handford

Head



Our Values

Family values

First and foremost, Peponi was founded by a family to become a family. From the very beginning, we committed to putting all pupils first and promoting the sound functioning of the family structure to help strengthen the fabric of society and give back to the world. We promise to protect and keep learners safe, model high standards of behaviour, respect, and conduct, treat all with care and understanding, provide the best education and ensure a nurturing environment so that pupils are empowered to become the best version of themselves.

Teamwork

Peponi values teamwork, a sense of belonging and pride in being a part of something bigger than themselves, where respect and care for others is the priority. We encourage joy in serving others and of giving back to the wider community.

Diversity in learning

An international family of multiple faiths and cultures, where pupils are taught respect for those considered different to themselves, gender, race, religion, faith, socio-economic status, talents, abilities, lifestyle choice, opinions, and perspectives. To appreciate the value of difference while strengthening awareness of their distinctiveness, enabling success in our integrated community and across the world.

Child-centred

Every child matters and has something to offer. We aim to tap into their unique potential, build on their strengths, and weaknesses, to develop the whole pupil in a nurturing yet demanding community that strives to enable all to be their best.

Spiritual foundations

We foster spiritual values whilst showing respect and understanding of all other faiths.

Nurturing

The child is at the centre of everything we do. We nourish intellectual curiosity, creativity, respect, confidence, and an enduring sense of belonging to develop confidence and the knowledge they need to become well-rounded global citizens that continue to inspire and service the broader communities around them.

A World-class education for all

We are a first-class co-educational boarding school founded on the 'best practice' of the British Independent School system. We are high achieving in academic, athletic, pastoral, and social fields. Our emphasis is on holistic excellence through broad and balanced schooling, which aims to maximise the potential of each pupil's strengths and produce a true global citizen.

Innovation and creativity

We proactively reflect and introduce new teaching strategies, always doing better tomorrow than we did today to improve academic outcomes and promote equitable learning.

Courage, confidence, and independence

We encourage our pupils to think independently giving them the courage and confidence to determine right from wrong and have genuine respect for all.

Resilience, and the power to adapt

We inspire pupils to enjoy challenges (growth mindset), and become willing contributors to society, whilst developing a sense of service and respect for the people around them.

Empowerment

Our pupils are encouraged to become inspirational leaders and to achieve their full potential with mutual respect, integrity, courage, and the productive exchange of ideas. They are empowered to contribute to the world once they leave the safety of school to become global citizens.





Overview

Peponi House is the prep school in a family of three schools, nurturing excellence and focussing on the whole child.

We strive for well-rounded and intellectual global citizens of the future, unlocking their ultimate potential through an exciting, high quality, British international education, enhanced by an African setting.

Kenya cherishes education and most of the independent sector follows the British model. Prep schools are highly regarded and Peponi House is recognised as one of the leading prep schools not just in the country but in East Africa as a whole. It was rated “Outstanding” in its most recent UK inspection.

There are currently 480 children from Years 1 to 8 (age 6 to 13), representing a rich diversity of over 40 nationalities and coming from Kenyan and expatriate families. The family ethos runs through everything we do and the atmosphere is cheerful and friendly, with a real sense of community and excellent relationships with happy and supportive parents.

The school is located in Lower Kabete, a leafy suburb of Nairobi, on a spacious campus that has just been completely rebuilt. The “new” school has bright, well equipped classrooms and some world-class specialist facilities, all supported by advanced IT. This huge investment in premises and resources is just one part of an overall strategy to make the school “the best in sub-Saharan Africa”, an ambitious goal that has also seen much work on re-designing and enhancing the curriculum, teaching and learning, extra-curricular activities, and other aspects of school life.

The sister senior school, Peponi, is situated some 20km outside Nairobi. The majority of the prep school children continue their education there, while others go to leading boarding schools in the UK and elsewhere. Also part of Peponi House is Kabete Kindergarten, which has its own campus near the prep school and covers the three years from Kindergarten to Reception.

The three schools have their own leadership and are able to focus directly on their own needs and priorities. However they share the same ethos, values and educational philosophy, and they regard themselves as “a family of three schools, yet a family of one”.



Ethos

You will already have read the page about the school's values.

The overall ethos is strongly child-focussed and everything the school does is aimed at caring for the children and giving them the best possible education and care.

Academic teaching, skills development and individual encouragement are taken extremely seriously, but having fun is also critically important and the atmosphere is happy to the point of being visibly bubbly. As a result, the children have a real love of learning and are excited about exploring new things and new ideas.

As a big family, the school community contains many nationalities and faiths and the children, staff and parents appreciate and celebrate the beliefs, practices and cultures of others. We are united by our shared values of respect and inclusivity.

In overall terms the school maintains traditional values, though with a modern slant. The education is forward-thinking, preparing the children for success and happiness in the future world, not the world of the past. Values such as integrity, reliability, resilience, and "can do" are important, along with care for others, sensitivity, and enjoying childhood.



The education

Peponi House aims to offer an exciting and enjoyable education that develops children in the broadest sense of the word.

The emphasis has moved way beyond entrance to senior schools and is now very much on giving the children an excellent grounding for life. The school goes beyond the British National Curriculum, adding a distinctly Kenyan feel which includes teaching Kiswahili from Year 1 and field trips to a range of places, making the most of what Kenya has to offer.

In line with the Kenyan education system generally, “soft skills” and an understanding of how and why things happen are now much more important than knowledge of obscure facts and figures. Thinking skills, learning skills and leadership skills have long been among the strengths of a Peponi education and the school has been working to enhance these areas, along with developing self-directed learning, creativity and innovation, and problem-solving abilities. Pastoral care is also an area of strength.

The school caters for a wide range of abilities and is very good at helping expatriate children settle in when they arrive. Teaching is excellent and the strongest children gain numerous scholarships at senior schools, while those with individual needs are supported through specific intervention programmes led by expert teachers.

The school had a full ISI Overseas School inspection in March 2024. It was fully compliant and met every required standard. Educational quality was graded “excellent” across all areas of teaching, learning and personal development.



Class sizes and teaching

The school has 480 pupils from Years 1 to 8. In broad terms there are three forms for each year group, with approximately 20 children per class.

Year 1 typically consists of 30-40 children who have joined from our sister school Kabete Kindergarten (KK), together with 20-30 from other settings.

From Years 1 to 4, most subjects are taught by form teachers, using specialist staff for ICT, music, swimming and Kiswahili. The curriculum and teaching style is very similar to that found in a quality UK prep or primary school, with the same IT, resources and child-focussed approach. Teachers have expert classroom support.

From Year 5, we make much greater use of specialist teachers, with children placed in sets in some subjects. Specialist teachers work from their own classrooms, which are very well resourced.

All teaching makes extensive use of IT and electronic resources, including one to one devices for the older pupils.



Curriculum

The Peponi House curriculum emphasises aspiration and ambition as a core value.

This is based on the UK National Curriculum but goes very much further and wider. For historical reasons it has also reflected the requirements of the ISEB's 13+ Common Entrance, but these have become increasingly less relevant. The creative arts, sport and drama sit alongside the traditional academic subjects, as well as design, technology and computing. Modern languages include Spanish, French and Kiswahili, and Latin is also an option.

Music is very strong at Peponi House, with nearly all pupils learning an instrument in addition to class music lessons. There are junior and senior choirs, a large school orchestra and various ensembles, and children regularly perform at "Teatime Concerts". Art and Design Technology are provided in specialist studios, and the new Drama Studio and performance hall gives even more opportunities for keen thespians.

It is central to Peponi's philosophy that education is not limited to the classroom, and the sports programme is extensive, using several specialist coaches. It includes all the usual team and individual sports and, of course, numerous matches and events with other schools. The school's location encourages outdoor learning, and there are many trips and outings. Finally, there is a comprehensive extra-curricular programme, with every child taking part in sports, cultural and creative activities.

Being in Kenya means that everyone is immersed in the natural world around the school. African geography, environmental topics and sustainability are inherent in everything we do. The school community includes parents who are international specialists on key themes, and everyone learns from everyone else.



Senior schools

The majority of pupils at Peponi House leave at the end of Year 8 and continue their education at our highly regarded sister school, Peponi, located approximately 20 km outside Nairobi.

Peponi Senior School offers both day and boarding options, providing pupils with a flexible and nurturing environment as they transition to senior school life and continue through to IGCSE and A levels.

Additionally, some pupils take Common Entrance or other exams and proceed to other leading senior schools in Kenya, or to boarding schools, predominantly in the UK. Peponi House is proud of its strong track record of securing places and scholarships at top senior schools in both Kenya and the UK.

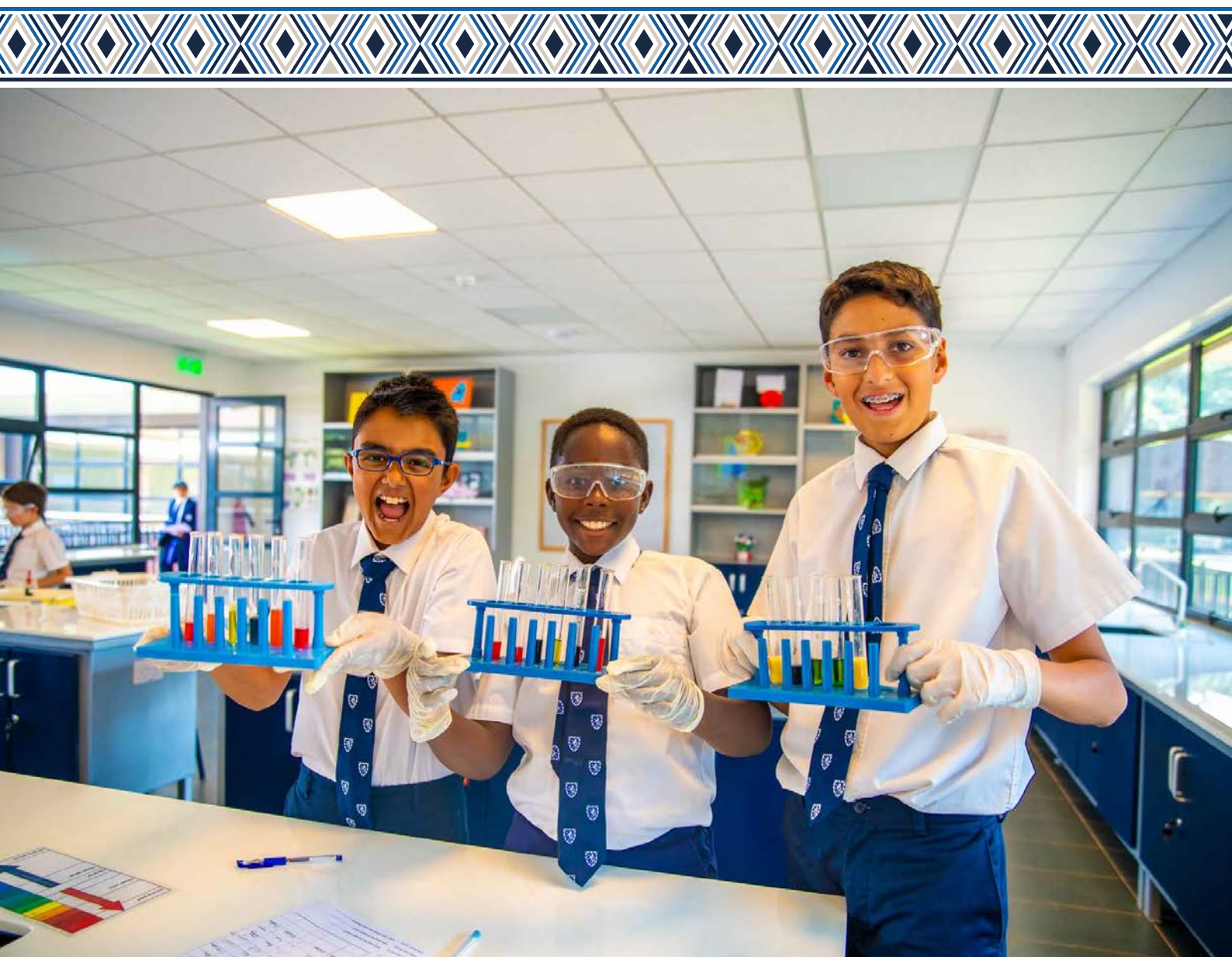
While Peponi House and Peponi Senior School are independently managed, our teachers and leadership teams collaborate closely, ensuring a seamless educational journey that supports each pupil's growth and success.

Staff

Peponi House has a larger staff team than one would find at a comparable prep school in the UK, which gives everyone more scope and more support.

There are approximately 40 teachers, 11 teaching assistants, and specialist technicians for IT, Science and Art. The Music department includes 15 peripatetic music teachers, while the Sports and PE team has nine specialist coaches and two interns. Swimming is very important, with a dedicated team of coaches.

There is a very capable support team, covering admin, catering and maintenance.



Facilities and resources

Peponi House has a spacious 11-acre site and the whole school has just been completely rebuilt.

We now have fabulous new classrooms along with a host of other specialist teaching facilities. A major focus has been placed on STEAM, with a dedicated complex which integrates science, creativity and innovation.

For the performing arts we have a multi-purpose hall and theatre, a drama suite, and dedicated rooms for group and individual music.

The whole school has state-of-the-art IT and technology is highly integrated into teaching at all levels. Years 6 to 8 have 1:1 devices in a managed system, and there is wide onsite access below this age. Our Digital Innovation Lead is nationally recognised as being at the forefront of the use of IT, AI and so on. He is currently developing our digital strategy and by September 2025 there will have been further substantial investments in technology and applications.

For sports, there are grass pitches, a swimming pool and all-weather tennis courts. A new sports pavilion will be the final stage of the school rebuilding project.

Staff facilities are also excellent, with a spacious staff room that combines relaxation and preparation areas, and extensive refreshments on offer throughout the day.



Governance and direction

The school is owned and run through a limited company, School Operators Limited. There are three Directors, each bringing considerable personal and professional ability.

The schools in the group run separately, but clearly with a lot of collaboration. The Board provides overall direction and oversight, and the Heads and the schools each have one Director as their key link with the Board. There are strong partnerships between the Heads of the prep and senior schools and between them and the Directors, and both schools have flourished as a result of this high-level teamwork.

Rounding off this top team, a very good Bursar who provides specialist financial input to all parties and reports directly to the Directors. He is highly regarded as an expert friend and facilitator, and also manages day-to-day finances and business administration.

The Head, Tracy Handford, joined in September 2023 and has a very strong background in UK prep and senior schools. The SLT is an energetic and enthusiastic team, consisting of the Head along with the Academic and Pastoral Deputies and the Head of the Pre-Prep. Below this, the SMT consists of the key middle leaders.

At all levels the senior teams have a friendly and collaborative style, using their own in-depth experience to guide, support and encourage colleagues and children.



Life in Kenya

Kenya is a beautiful country that is full of rich experiences.

As a member of our teaching staff you would enjoy an excellent quality of life, not least the satisfaction of seeing the difference you can make to the happiness, development and achievements of the children at the school.

Nairobi is a cosmopolitan city with all that entails, the climate is pleasantly warm but not too hot, and you would enjoy a very good lifestyle and access to world-class healthcare. You'd work hard but could also play hard, and the Mombasa coast is a world-class destination for time off in school holidays.

But life in Kenya can also have its frustrations. Power cuts do happen, there can be government bureaucracy, and goods imported from abroad can take a few days to arrive. Real poverty exists in many areas and the contrast with prep school life can be upsetting. Personal security requires a degree of caution in some areas, as it does in almost every country. The roads are busy and inevitably dangerous, and driving can be challenging.

All this is not for everybody, but Kenya and Nairobi offer a dramatically more pleasant living and working environment than many other countries and many other cities. At Peponi you would be part of a large and friendly community, with excellent opportunities for family life and, if you have children, for their own education and growth.



Person profile

Essential

- A fully qualified teacher (QTS) with a teaching registration
- Bachelor's degree or equivalent, with a postgraduate qualification demonstrating additional study in a relevant area (eg Master's, NPQ)
- Minimum 5 years' experience teaching British or International Curriculum
- Strong awareness of curriculum and pedagogy options at primary/prep level
- Minimum 3 years' experience of leading a department, or other relevant academic leadership experience
- Well versed in preparation for transfer to selective senior schools, including scholarship programmes
- Experienced user of technology, aware of current and emerging applications for data management, Management Information Systems and technology integration in learning
- Collegiate team player, effective in an SLT as well as leading own teams and individual staff
- Experienced at using data and systems to analyse and manage performance
- Strategic abilities and financial/budgetary awareness
- Strong organisation skills, good at planning and executing change as well as managing day to day activities
- A good communicator, able to gain the confidence of staff and parents
- An interest in education and child development, beyond the academic
- Adaptable, reliable, resilient, "can do" mentality
- You enjoy being with children and are keen to facilitate their success and happiness
- Energy, enthusiasm, drive and determination
- Considerate, kind and approachable, with patience and a sense of humour
- Professional in all respects, an expert practitioner and a role model to colleagues and children alike
- Be aware, be considerate of and follow best practice in safeguarding
- Willing to support school events and be generally visible as a key senior leader

Desirable

- Advanced qualifications in education or school leadership
- In-depth exposure to Years 7 and 8 within a prep school
- Relevant experience and able to support or participate in enrichment activities



Job description

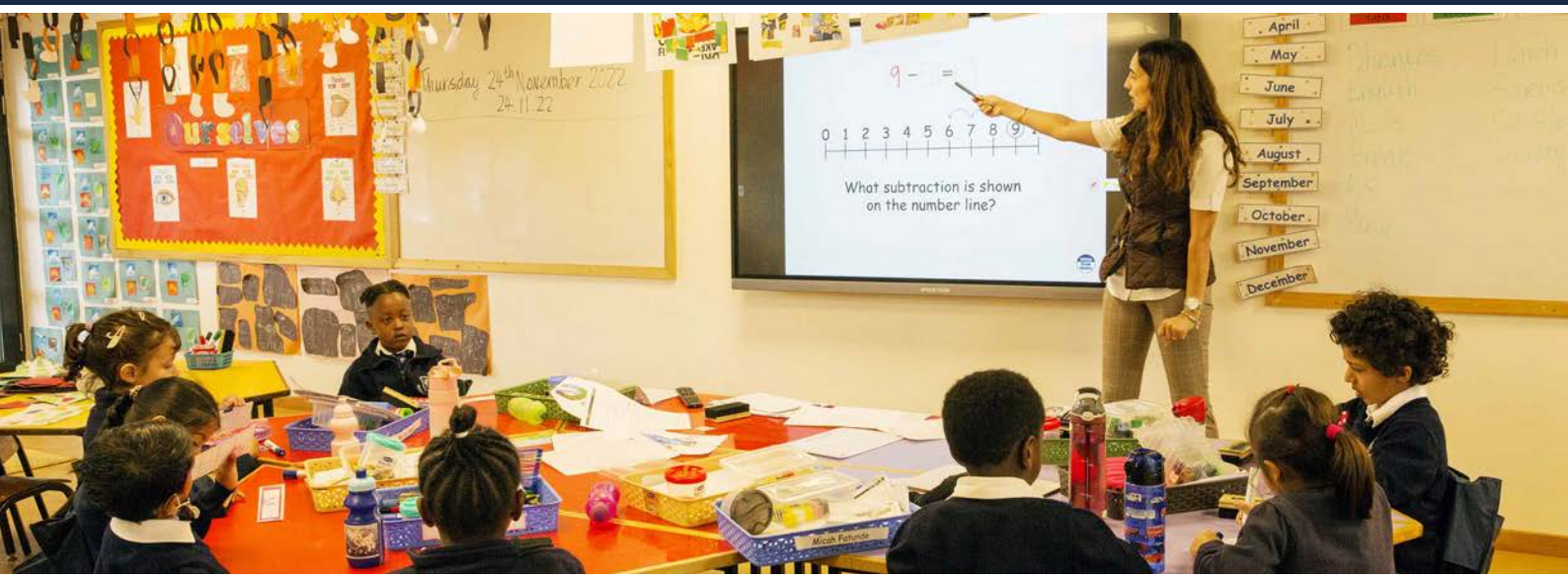
The Deputy Head, Academic is a key member of the SLT with all the usual responsibilities this role implies.

Peponi House is the largest prep school in Kenya, which gives this post huge scope as well as the highest of expectations. Reporting directly to the Head, the role has responsibility for overseeing and developing the school's curriculum, timetable and teaching, as well as assessment, reporting and teaching staff performance. There is strong and expert support from two SMT-level posts, the Head of Academic Subjects and the Head of Creative Arts.

Academic leadership covers all aspects of managing pupil progress, including assessing each child's performance as well as how individual teachers teach. The role line manages all Heads of Department (HODs), co-ordinates cross-curricular activities and whole-school initiatives and plays a major role in determining and arranging staff CPD.

A key challenge is to envision, with the Head, the world of the future that the children will live and work in, and to plan how to deliver the most modern forward-thinking education. The Deputy Head, Academic is then tasked with making everything happen, supported of course by HODs and other experts such as the Head of Digital Innovation and the Head of Inclusion and Assessment.

The role also has personal class teaching content, in order to maintain your active classroom experience and involve you directly in the learning environment.



Job description (continued)

Summary of responsibilities

Strategic Development

- Assist the Head in translating strategic objectives into actionable plans
- Lead on curriculum management and support pastoral initiatives
- Collaborate with the Head on policy development

Academic Leadership

- Develop and manage the timetable, deploying staff from Nursery to Year 8
- Lead initiatives to improve academic standards, including technology integration, data analysis, curriculum development, and progress meetings
- Lead communication with parents and pupils on academic matters
- Represent the school together with the Head at open days and special functions

Leadership and Management

- Chair the Academic Committee and line manage HODs
- Co-ordinate academic and co-curricular programmes with SLT and SMT colleagues
- Prepare and present the annual academic budget

Operational Responsibilities

- Support and deputise for the Head and SLT in the day-to-day running of the school
- Communication with senior schools
- Monitor the effectiveness of marking, record-keeping and schemes of work
- Oversee internal and external examinations
- Liaise closely with the Head and the Learning Support team

Teaching and Learning

- Lesson observations and personal classroom teaching



Job description (continued)

Review, Amendment and Conditions of Employment

A full job description will be provided later and should be read in conjunction with the school's staff handbook and the academic policies document. Any job description and allocation of particular responsibilities may be amended by agreement from time to time, either at the request of the Head or the post holder, but only after consultation.

The above responsibilities are in accordance with the requirements of the Teacher's Pay and Conditions Contract in terms of duties and working time.

Safeguarding

The post holder's responsibility will be to adhere to and ensure compliance with the School's Safeguarding Policy at all times. This means promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children for whom they are responsible, or with whom they come into contact with. If in the course of carrying out their duties the post holder becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children in the school, they must report any concerns to the school's Designated Safeguarding Leads or to the Head.



Remuneration, terms and conditions

The initial contract is for two years, renewable thereafter.

The two-year contract term is for tax reasons and renewal is normal; many staff at Peponi are long-serving.

All members of the teaching staff report to the Head.

Salaries are according to the School's own scales and staff are paid at the highest levels of any teachers in Kenya. Pay reflects the role and responsibilities, as well as the length and nature of a candidate's previous experience.

An excellent benefits package includes:

- subsidised housing, subject to availability, or a housing allowance
- membership of school pension scheme
- medical insurance
- interest-free car loan
- generous educational concessions (for teachers with children of prep/secondary school age)
- flights for expatriate teachers at the beginning and end of a two-year contract and annually thereafter

Employment offers and appointments will be dependent on:

- two satisfactory references including one from your current or most recent employer
- an ICPC and/or UK DBS Enhanced Clearance and barred list check and/or the equivalent in other countries
- a satisfactory medical examination
- proof of qualifications
- proof of your entitlement to work in Kenya and the granting of a work permit, if necessary

The school's proprietor is a private Kenyan company, School Operators Limited.



Application process

To apply, simply download the Application Form, which is easy to type into. Don't worry about page breaks or formatting.

When you have finished, please e-mail it to Tracy Handford, Head, at peponihead@btinternet.com.

Please apply as soon as you can, and in any event by the final closing date which is noon on Monday, 17th February. We will arrange online or face to face interviews at a mutually convenient date and time.

We do not need a cover letter, as the form includes a personal statement, but do use the e-mail to mention anything that we can do to help you.

Confidentiality

- References will only be requested at interview stage and we will let you know before we approach referees
- Please let us know if you have any specific concerns about referees being contacted

Further information

The school website contains lots of other information, which will give you an excellent flavour of the school and its atmosphere. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our advising consultant, Simon Shneerson, in strict confidence, using the e-mail address above.

Thank you for your interest in Peponi House. We look forward to hearing from you and, hopefully, to meeting you in person.

Peponi House is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Applicants will be subject to child protection screening, including checks with past employers, the UK Disclosure and Barring Service and/or authorities in other countries.