



FOREST HILL SCHOOL

ASPIRING TO EXCELLENCE TOGETHER

Headteacher: Michael Sullivan BSc (Hons)



Working at Forest Hill School

Dear Prospective Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in working with us at Forest Hill School.

It is my privilege to be the Headteacher of Forest Hill School, a unique and ambitious school with a well-established comprehensive and inclusive ethos. Our student intake is a genuine reflection of the community in our district of London and we are clear that they should expect the highest of standards in all aspects of their education. Our broad and creative curriculum gives them a firm basis on which to move forward to make choices for examination subjects as they progress through the school. A culture of aspiration and high expectations underpins this progression, with our students playing a key part in shaping the learning process.

Forest Hill's ethos is aptly summarised in our motto *Aspiring to Excellence Together*. We are a community in which mutual support and a spirit of relentless ambition drive a desire to ensure that we constantly strive to surpass previous achievements. All community members are encouraged and expected to contribute to this culture thus ensuring that the creativity and evolution of our student offer is maintained. We are a performing arts' school, but creativity does not simply apply to our performing arts' subjects; it also applies to the academic curriculum in which we promote engagement, enquiry and ingenuity. We want our students to emerge from Forest Hill School as engaged citizens and leaders of the future, fully equipped to confidently enter a competitive world.

We communicate and reinforce the vision and ethos of the school community through our Core Values (<https://foresthill.lewisham.sch.uk/motto-and-values/>), which were developed in consultation with all stakeholders:

- **Hard Work**
- **Ambition**
- **Respect**
- **Kindness**

All aspects of life at Forest Hill is underpinned by these values, and we promote them as the prerequisites of academic excellence and success. The values also encapsulate a sense of pride in belonging to Forest Hill, something which is shared by all students and staff.

In 2017, an Ofsted report judged the school as 'Requiring Improvement'. Despite the outcome, the school's many strengths were recognised and the Senior Leadership Team embarked on a journey of positive and rapid improvement to ensure future success. Forest Hill School is a place transformed since that inspection, with step changes in standards of behaviour, attendance and classroom experience for our students, and despite the Covid-19 pandemic, Forest Hill School received its highest number of applications for Year 7 entry in 2022. The school is oversubscribed for the first time in several years.

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Unfortunately, an Ofsted inspection in November 2021 judged Forest Hill School to be not yet good. Whilst we were pleased to receive 'good' judgements for personal development and sixth form provision, it was hugely disappointing that the inspection team did not recognise the many other strengths of the school, or the significant progress which has been made in all areas since the 2017 inspection. Their judgements and comments differed significantly from the overwhelmingly positive feedback given by Forest Hill parents in the annual parent surveys and in the Parent View survey carried out by Ofsted as part of the inspection process. They also did not match with the views of external support partners who work with the school.

Our improvement agenda is now fully focused on the areas for development identified by the Ofsted inspection team and all of the school's energies are directed towards ensuring that the next inspection yields judgements which are a true reflection of Forest Hill School.

Forest Hill School places a heavy emphasis on the holistic development of our young people. Our pastoral system is a real strength and we are recognised for this. The focus on performing arts broadens the curriculum but also gives many opportunities outside of it, with free music lessons available to all and a plethora of opportunities to become involved in music, drama and dance performances within the school and beyond. We have a strong tradition of sporting excellence with our representative teams regularly winning honours at local and London-wide levels, as well as nationally. In addition to this, sport is widely enjoyed at participation level as part of our extra-curricular offer, with many clubs, activities (including the Duke of Edinburgh's Award) and school journeys available to our students. We actively encourage staff to bring their passions and interests to add to our wider offer.

At Forest Hill School, staff wellbeing and professional development is very important to us. We have an early closure one day per week to provide dedicated planning time as well as identified slots in the meeting cycle for assessment of pupils' work. The school also provides all staff with high-quality personalised training linked to priorities identified in the performance management cycle.

I hope our values and standards strike a chord with you and that you will pursue your interest in joining our school.

We look forward to receiving your application.



Michael Sullivan
Headteacher