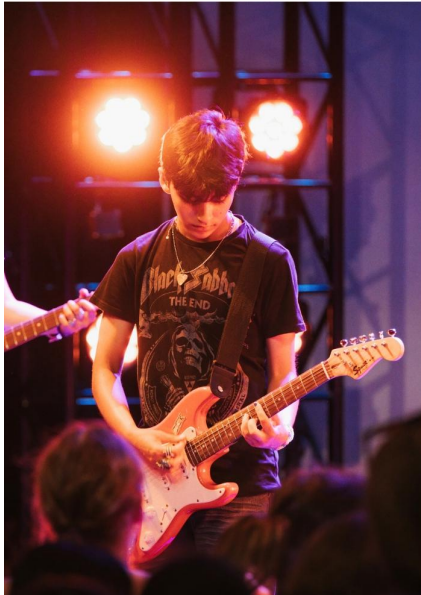




Director of Music
From January or April 2027



Information about the post for candidates

Our vision:

Girls Enjoying Success

Our mission:

We foster fearless learners through inspiring education, exceptional co-curricular opportunities and meaningful partnerships, creating bespoke outcomes for every child: “Each of us is intended to have a character all our own, to be what no other can exactly be and do what no other can exactly do.” (William Ellery Channing)



Our Unitarian ethos encourages our pupils to be intellectually curious, open-minded and respectful. We build on the power of an all-girls education to develop kind, confident, articulate young women who are ready for life's challenges.

Girls at Channing enjoy academic success from a tailored educational programme that encourages confidence, independent thinking and provides girls with life skills to take on the next stage of their education as thoughtful, responsive, socially aware adults, prepared for the challenges of the world today.

This emphasis on bespoke outcomes is at the heart of our five new strategic objectives, which you can find here: [Channing 2035](#).

Founded in 1885 by Unitarian sisters Emily and Matilda Sharpe and the Reverend Robert Spears, Channing School, named after notable American Unitarian William Ellery Channing, is well known as a successful, happy community. Remaining true to our Unitarian foundation, the School is an inclusive community that values the individual skills, spiritual beliefs, achievements and contribution of all members of the school community. Our success was endorsed by [our latest ISI inspection in November 2025](#).

Academic achievement

Academic results are excellent. Virtually all our sixth formers go on to University or other higher education institutions, some after a gap year. However, we believe that examination success is not solely the end goal of a pupil's journey through school, rather that it should be an enriching academic and extra-curricular experience that allows girls to develop skills, confidence, creativity and character, instilling in pupils a lifelong love of learning and a firm belief that anything is possible. Experienced, dedicated teachers offer a supportive, encouraging and challenging learning environment that allows pupils to achieve success beyond that which they might have thought possible.

Community spirit

The Headmistress and members of staff know every girl personally and as an individual. We have a strong family tradition and an enthusiastic and supportive parents' association. The atmosphere is calm, focussed and purposeful. We set high standards emphasising concern and respect for the needs of

others. A major feature of the school is the huge diversity of the extra curricular activities on offer to pupils and it is expected that all staff will contribute to this side of the life of the school.

Exceptional setting

The school is in an attractive part of Highgate, with convenient transport links by road and underground. Visitors are often surprised at how light, green and open our site is. We have preserved the character of the older buildings, but completely refurbished and redesigned them to provide bright and spacious teaching rooms. An ambitious building programme, completed in 2017, provided us with excellent dining facilities, a Music Department, a new Sixth Form Centre, Sports Hall with fitness suite and a state-of-the-art Performing Arts Centre. We are currently developing a STEM building complete with Design & Technology facilities which is due for completion in the Autumn of 2026.



Teaching & Learning

Channing is a collaborative learning community. We provide an excellent and relevant T&L CPD programme that inspires all staff and pupils to achieve their full potential. We support the ongoing development of outstanding teaching and learning which stimulates and challenges all pupils.

Our current whole-school Teaching and Learning focus is to develop a culture of ambitious and inspirational teaching, alongside a shared understanding of every pupil and how best to support them. Central to this is our use of the [Learning Pit](#), which recognises that deep learning involves challenge and productive struggle, and that pupils make the greatest progress when they are supported to persevere through difficulty.

To promote consistently excellent teaching across the school, we have developed the [Principles of Great Teaching at Channing](#) and the accompanying Trusted Techniques. Together, these provide a shared understanding of what high-quality teaching looks like in practice, using a common professional language. They reflect both educational research and our collective expertise, and emphasise teaching that stretches pupils intellectually and supports them to move from challenge to secure understanding.

In recent years we have had a focus on developing *Fearless Learners*. We believe that it is possible to teach pupils to become more confident, proactive, independent learners in such a way that they become more courageous, fearless learners. To this end we have worked with both teachers and pupils to develop a range of resources that support us all to become more fearless in our learning. These include:

- An Infographic generated from discussions with all teachers ~ [What do Fearless Teachers look like at Channing?](#)
- A student-friendly Infographic based on what our student body thinks [Fearless Learners look like at Channing](#)

'Spotlight' is Channing Senior School's Teaching & Learning publication. It supports the professional development of our teaching staff. It is distributed twice monthly and focuses on the development of classroom practice and current educational research. All teaching staff are encouraged to contribute, and it reflects our commitment to being a collaborative, learning community. The most recent Spotlights can be [found on our website](#).

T&L Briefings are held every other Monday. These are an opportunity for teaching staff to come together to discuss educational research and how it might impact on their pedagogy. Recent themes have included: *Protecting Thinking in the Learning Pit, Questioning that Deepens Learning, AI & Tech: Pedagogy First, Integrity, Intelligence, Creativity, and Safety and Strong Starts to Lessons Protect the Flow*.

The *TLC* is our *Teaching & Learning Community*. It is open to all teaching staff. We meet about once a month. It leads on a number of initiatives which support the development of T&L across the school. These include a Journal Club, systems for teachers to share learning with each other, peer observation and the curation The Teaching and Learning Knowledge Interactive Toolkit.

Music at Channing

'Music for all' is our mantra.

The Music Department provides a friendly, enthusiastic, and stimulating environment in which musical excellence is encouraged and celebrated. We help our students develop their musical potential and respond to a variety of musical challenges. Students are given the opportunity to perform individually and in ensembles, irrespective of age or musical ability.

Our facilities are fabulous and include 13 practice/teaching rooms. Often all rooms are in use, and the place literally buzzes with musical activity, even as early as 8 o'clock in the morning! All our rooms are equipped with high-quality upright pianos, mainly Yamaha or Kawai models. Our fully soundproofed percussion studio is a superb place for our rock bands to make music, and for those interested in technology, our Music Technology room is equipped with 26 iMacs and full-size Yamaha keyboards. Each week, we have 24 co-curricular musical activities from Theory Club to Jazz Band, and on most Fridays, we have 'Music at Lunchtime,' where pupils of any standard have the opportunity to play or sing a solo, whether they have their music lessons in or out of school.

The 28 members of the Visiting Music Staff give 400 individual lessons each week. Many of these teachers are performers in their own right. Some are ABRSM examiners, others play in or have led major national orchestras such as the Philharmonia, and others have written popular tutor books for their instruments. Their expertise is invaluable and inspires our girls to ever greater achievements.

Each year, we have around 160 students taking ABRSM examinations, and our average of 123/150 is significantly higher than the national average. We have 35 musical events that take place throughout the year, including regular formal evening concerts.

We pride ourselves on being able to provide a stimulating musical environment for the most able as well as those at an elementary level. We have several musicians who attend the four junior departments of the main London conservatoires and play in prestigious orchestras outside of school such as the National Youth Orchestra, National Children's Orchestra, National Youth Brass Band, and the London Schools Symphony Orchestra. Past pupils have led the NYO, and in recent years almost 50% of our A level students have gone on to study music at various universities and colleges, with Oxbridge, Durham and Leeds the most popular.

One of the Music Department's highlights is the foreign tours undertaken. Destinations have included Venice, Vienna, Boston, Madrid, and Lisbon performing in prestigious, historic venues such as St. Mark's Basilica and the Schönbrunn Palace. More recently tours have taken the form of an intensive music course rehearsing and performing in Seville (2023) and Split (2025).

Director of Music Job Description

Summary of Role

The Director of Music leads on all elements of academic and co-curricular music in the Senior School, and works closely with the Head of Music in the Junior School. They oversee the programme of weekly and termly musical activities and are a highly visible musical leader, personally directing significant ensembles and performances.

Reporting Line

The Director of Music will report to the Assistant Head Co-Curricular about day-to-day matters of music organisation and performance. The Deputy Head (Academic) line manages all academic Heads of Department. The postholder will also liaise with the Head of Music in the Junior School to ensure work in all areas of responsibility is planned in line with Junior School activities.

Management responsibilities for:

- Two further teaching members of the department (full time Assistant Director of Music and part-time Teacher of Music)
- Heads of Section (Head of Strings, Head of Vocal Studies and Head of Wind Studies)
- A team of 26 Visiting Music Staff in across the Senior and Junior School
- The Music School Manager

Main Duties and Responsibilities

Academic

- Teaching across KS3-KS5 including GCSE and A level
- Standard responsibilities of a Head of Department at Channing School (see below)

Co-Curricular

- Create a comprehensive annual programme of formal concerts to cater for all students, with exciting, challenging and enjoyable repertoire for all standards of musician
- Plan a weekly series of Music at Lunchtime Friday recitals as an opportunity for any individuals or ensembles to be able to perform

- Coordinate a programme of weekly musical activities from theory club to Concert Orchestra
- Participate in co-curricular activities weekly. The current postholder leads:
 - Symphony Orchestra
 - Cantemus Chorus (Years 9-13)
 - Conabor Choir (Years 7-8)
 - Spears Vocals (Years 5-6)
 - Rehearsing examination candidates (ABRSM /Music Theatre/GCSE/A level)
 - Rehearsing performers for lunchtime recitals
- Direct the music for the bi-annual musical
- Organise a bi-annual music trip for 50 students (choir and orchestra) in the form of an intensive music course

Please note, the successful candidate will be a pianist capable of accompanying Grade 8 and diploma level musicians.

Wider School Responsibilities

- Work collaboratively with the Directors of Sport and Drama to ensure a balanced and rounded provision of co-curricular music as part of the wider school co-curricular provision
- Support the Admissions department with recruitment of high calibre musicians, including through the Music Scholarship process, auditioning candidates and making recommendations, and providing music at open days
- Create a half-termly hymn list and accompany the hymn in assemblies

Oversee the work of the Music School Manager:

- Ensure all concerts and lunchtime recitals are either videoed or recorded with audio being posted on Soundcloud
- Ensure all concerts are reported with audio/video and photographs for SM and the weekly Word from the Head
- Ensuring the smooth organisation of all concerts e.g. inviting parents; risk assessments; refreshments; programmes; rehearsal schedules etc
- Oversee the organisation of ABRSM examinations
- Oversee the organisation of Music Theatre examinations
- Oversee the timetabling of VMS lessons
- Oversee the invoicing by VMS
- Oversee the charges to parents for individual music lesson fees
- Answer parental queries regarding lessons

Head of Department Job Description

Heads of Department (HoDs) are key academic middle leaders within the school, responsible for the quality, effectiveness and ambition of their subject departments. They provide clear educational leadership, promoting high standards of teaching and learning, strong academic outcomes and a culture of continuous improvement, in keeping with Channing's Unitarian ethos and vision of girls enjoying success.

HoDs lead with collegiate professionalism, combining a strong commitment to their subject with responsibility for the effective leadership of their department and an understanding of wider school priorities. They set and model high professional standards, support and challenge colleagues appropriately, and foster a culture in which staff and pupils can thrive. They are reflective practitioners, committed to their continuing development as subject specialists and leaders.

Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

- Define and articulate an ambitious educational vision for the subject, aligned with the school's strategic objectives and communicated through the Departmental Development Plan.
- Lead the design, implementation and regular review of an ambitious, coherent curriculum that inspires intellectual curiosity, fosters independence and develops creativity and critical thinking.
- Ensure consistently high-quality teaching across the department, enabling pupils to make strong progress and achieve highly.
- Monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning across the department and take appropriate action to secure continuous improvement.
- Ensure schemes of work, teaching and assessment reflect current subject knowledge, examination specifications and relevant developments in pedagogy.
- Liaise with the Junior School and other departments to ensure appropriate progression, continuity and cross-curricular opportunities.
- Promote thoughtful innovation in teaching and learning, including the purposeful use of digital technologies and ethical use of artificial intelligence.

Assessment, Data and Academic Outcomes

- Ensure that departmental assessment is purposeful, rigorous and appropriately standardised, and provides reliable information about pupils' attainment and progress.
- Make effective and meaningful use of assessment and other relevant data to evaluate pupil and departmental performance, identify patterns and areas for development, and inform appropriate intervention and departmental priorities.
- Evaluate academic outcomes critically, including whether pupils have achieved what could reasonably have been expected of them, and respond appropriately to the findings.
- Ensure that colleagues understand and use relevant pupil data intelligently to inform teaching, support pupil progress and maintain appropriately ambitious expectations.
- Analyse internal and public examination outcomes, draw appropriate conclusions, and use these to inform curriculum, teaching, assessment, and the Departmental Development Plan.
- Ensure rigorous preparation for internal and public examinations, including appropriate departmental standardisation and moderation.
- Maintain a secure working knowledge of the requirements of relevant awarding bodies and examination specifications, and ensure that departmental practice meets these requirements.
- Work closely and promptly with the Exams Manager and Deputy Head Academic on examination entries, administration and post-results processes, providing accurate subject-specific information and meeting published internal and external deadlines.
- Liaise with awarding bodies on subject-specific examination matters where required, including queries relating to assessment, specifications and post-results services.

Leadership and Management of Staff

- Lead, support and inspire departmental colleagues, creating a professional culture characterised by high expectations, trust, collaboration and shared responsibility for pupils' success.
- Set clear expectations for departmental practice and hold colleagues appropriately accountable for meeting them, addressing concerns promptly, constructively and with professional courage.
- Exercise sound professional judgement and appropriate middle-leadership authority, balancing support and challenge and taking colleagues with you through change.
- Induct, mentor and support new staff, ensuring clarity of expectations and effective professional development.
- Promote continuous professional growth in subject knowledge, pedagogy and leadership through collaboration, professional learning, research and reflective practice.
- Contribute to appraisal and provide regular, constructive developmental feedback.
- Hold purposeful departmental meetings that support effective communication, professional learning, coordination and collaborative problem-solving.
- Ensure that colleagues understand how their work and the priorities of the department contribute to wider school objectives.
- Communicate departmental successes, challenges and concerns to senior leaders with professionalism, accuracy and integrity.
- Balance effective advocacy for the department with an understanding of whole-school priorities and the needs of the wider curriculum.

Pupils, Enrichment and Communication

- Promote enthusiasm, ambition and intellectual curiosity in the subject, encouraging pupils to engage with it beyond the taught curriculum.
- Develop and support appropriate opportunities for subject enrichment and extension beyond the classroom.
- Promote and celebrate pupils' achievements and the work of the department within the school and wider community.
- Ensure effective communication with pupils and parents on significant subject-specific matters, engaging directly as appropriate on day-to-day matters relating to teaching and learning within the department
- Act as a form tutor, supporting pupil wellbeing and upholding the school's Unitarian ethos

Departmental Development and Resources

- Maintain and regularly review a Departmental Development Plan that identifies clear priorities for improvement, informed by appropriate evidence and aligned with whole-school strategic priorities.
- Exercise appropriate financial stewardship in the use of school resources, ensuring that requests for departmental expenditure are necessary, proportionate and appropriately justified.
- Ensure that departmental resources, equipment, materials and spaces are appropriately maintained, organised, fit for purpose and used in accordance with relevant health and safety requirements and school procedures.

Accountability

Heads of Department are appointed by and ultimately accountable to the Headmistress. They are line

managed by the Deputy Head (Academic), work closely with the Director of Studies, Exams Manager and other members of the Senior Leadership Team and support staff, as appropriate.

Head of Department Person Specification

It is essential that in your written application you give evidence of examples of proven experience in each of the criteria listed in the Person Specification.

Qualifications:	• Degree and teaching qualification in the relevant subject(s). • An experienced teacher with suitable qualifications who can motivate and inspire children and young people.
Experience:	• Proven ability to inspire, challenge and support young people to achieve their full potential. • Experience of delivering high-quality teaching and learning, with evidence of strong student outcomes. • Understanding of, and commitment to, safeguarding, child protection and promoting the welfare of students. • Awareness of data protection and confidentiality in an educational setting.
Attitude and Approach:	• A passion for working with young people and a belief in their potential. • Alignment with the school's Unitarian ethos, vision and values, and a willingness to contribute to the wider life of the school. • Personal integrity, resilience, adaptability and professional curiosity. • Positive, collaborative and open-minded, with the ability to both give and receive constructive feedback. • Enthusiastic about innovation and embracing new ideas in teaching and learning. • Able to provide evidence of recent, relevant professional development. • Demonstrate commitment to the Channing vision of Fearless Teachers and Learners and a willingness to embed this through leadership of the department
Knowledge:	• Sound understanding of 11-18 curriculum • Demonstrate a commitment to continuing professional development in order to provide up to date leadership to the department • Awareness of current educational research and evidence-informed practice. • Commitment to continuous professional learning and reflective practice • Knowledge of effective teaching, learning and assessment strategies that meet diverse learner needs.
Leadership and management:	• A person willing to work as a team member – giving as well as receiving advice, discussing ideas and experiences as a shared purpose. • An experienced teacher who is able to implement change in a sensitive way, and able to gain the commitment of others to their and the school's vision.

	• Ensure the maintenance and development of a high quality curriculum where teaching and learning are at its heart. • Ability to lead by example, demonstrating high standards of professionalism and commitment. • Strong organisational skills, including the ability to plan effectively, prioritise and delegate where appropriate. • Confidence in using data and digital tools to support teaching, monitor progress and drive improvement. • Capacity to contribute to curriculum development and support the strategic direction of the department.
Relating to and Influencing others:	• Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, with the ability to engage confidently with students, staff, parents and the wider community. • A team player who contributes positively to a supportive, inclusive culture. • Ability to build strong, respectful relationships and manage them with professionalism and empathy. • Confident in promoting the school and department within the community and beyond.
Organisational Skills:	• Demonstrate a high level of organisational skills and the ability to plan and organise effectively in leading the department. • Have effective project management skills including budgeting and strategic planning.
Decision Making:	• Reflective and evidence-informed in decision-making. • Able to balance initiative with consultation, seeing both the immediate and long-term impact of decisions. • Solution-focused and calm under pressure.
Communication Skills:	• An effective and open communicator - with children, adults, colleagues and professionals. • A firm commitment to consultation and communication both internally and externally, supported by excellent communication skills. • Able to promote the school and the department. • Excellent IT skills (Channing is a Google and Apple school) and proficiency in data analysis.

Salary & Benefits

- Competitive salary scale, point determined by qualifications and experience.
- Enrolment into the APTIS pension scheme with a 10% employer contribution and minimum 2% employee contribution
- Free lunch and refreshments are provided throughout the day
- Laptop and iPad provided
- Use of School sports facilities when available

- Annual Flu Vaccination
- Employee Assistance Programme provided by Education Support
- Extensive budget for INSET and CPD, with opportunities for internal progression

Applications

Applications are to be made via **TES.com in the first instance**. A CV will not be accepted in place of the completed application form.

Incomplete application forms will be returned to the applicant where the deadline for completed application forms has not passed. If you are unable to submit your application via TES please contact the HR department at recruitment@channing.co.uk.



Please note that once you submit an application via TES the system will automatically retain your details for a period of six months.

Deadline for applications: Monday 21 September at 5pm

Interviews: First round online interviews (max 1 hour) Friday 25 September
Second round in person interviews (all day) Friday 2 October

Channing School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. To assist in this, the school follows a formal recruitment procedure for the employment of all staff which adheres to the recommendations of the Department for Education (DfE) in "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education" and the school's Child Protection Policy. A copy of this procedure is available on request.

Subject to statutory provisions, no applicant will be treated less favourably than another on the grounds of a protected characteristic. Ability to perform the job will be the primary consideration.

In line with our Safer Recruitment Policy, all shortlisted candidates will be subject to online searches including social media and third party Safehire.

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