



ST JOHN'S PRE-PREPARATORY

CANDIDATE BRIEF

Head of St John's Pre-Preparatory School



The Council of St John's College is seeking a dedicated, inspirational and innovative new Head to lead St John's Pre-Preparatory School into its next phase of development, building on the progress made by our current Headmistress, Mrs Jane Lane, who is retiring at the end of the Michaelmas Term in December 2025 after 28 years of dedicated service and leadership, over 12 of which will have been in this role.

Working closely with the Headmaster of the Preparatory School, the successful candidate will be an individual who can lead, direct and motivate a staff team that is mandated to deliver world-class teaching and learning strategies in the Foundation Phase. The personal development of each staff member, in an environment where the Pre-Preparatory School values are lived each day, will be of paramount importance.

Whether you are a successful Head seeking a new challenge or an experienced Deputy Head looking to take the next step in your career, you will require the skills, experience and vision to push for progress in meaningful and measurable ways. Strengthening St John's position as a world-class Christian African school will be a key imperative.

The 'Description of the Role' outlines the responsibilities of this important role in more detail. The 'Candidate Profile' also outlines the qualifications, skills, experience and personal qualities that the ideal candidate should possess. However, above all, we are looking for someone who:

- Has an intimate appreciation of the Anglican Ethos and identity of St John's College;
- Has the vision and strategic ability to lead the school in a way that is appropriate for and sensitive to its 21st Century context, that is both global and uniquely African;
- Has a clear understanding of and unwavering commitment to Transformation & Diversity imperatives;
- Will ensure that the high standards for which St John's is known are maintained;
- Shares our passion for delivering a holistic, multi-faceted foundation phase experience that combines academic, sporting, cultural and musical opportunities, which are always underpinned by the traditional Christian values of the school;
- Is boundried and firm, but is also kind, empathetic and fair;
- Inspires trust and confidence in all school stakeholders;
- Has the leadership ability to be both collaborative and decisive in their approach;
- Can bring relevant experience, educational expertise and fresh insight to St John's Pre-Preparatory School to achieve excellent outcomes for all Johannians in their care.

We look forward to receiving your application on or before the close of business on **Friday 7 March 2025**.

Yours faithfully,

Stuart West
Executive Headmaster



ABOUT ST JOHN'S COLLEGE

St John's College is a world-class Christian, Anglican school that was founded in 1898. The school accepts boys from Grade 0 to Grade 12 into the Pre-Preparatory School, Preparatory School and the College. St John's also accepts boys and girls in The Bridge Nursery School (Gr 0000 – Gr 00) and Sixth Form (AS and A Levels).

St John's can be counted among South Africa's most eminent private schools, with a reputation for academic excellence well beyond the country's borders.

Based in Houghton, Johannesburg, St John's follows the rich traditions of the Anglican Church. Teaching is based on sound values and morals. The Anglican ethos sits at the heart of the school. The school acknowledges the traditions of other faith-based communities and celebrates diversity, which is key to fostering mutual respect and understanding. St John's endeavours to ensure that our students are rightly trained in body, mind and character – whereby we aim to equip them with the skills and the desire to lead and serve society in a public-spirited manner.

St John's is an African centre of excellence. Its strong commitment to academics is balanced by a rich extra-curricular cultural and sporting offering, to produce young individuals who are inquiring, enthusiastic and resilient in the face of change and challenge.



Vision

St John's College aims to create an enabling environment in which our students are given the best opportunities to achieve academically, thrive on the sports field and fulfil their potential as individuals and as well-rounded, responsible citizens – not only of our country but globally too.

Mission

St John's College aspires in the service of God to be a home of:

- Religious discipline – meaning that defined parameters are fairly applied and consequence is tempered with compassion.
- Sound learning – St John's will always be benchmarked against the best educational institutions, both locally and internationally.
- Goodwill – Involvement in charitable acts of service is the hallmark of all Johannians.

It is the school's aim that all students leaving the College are to be:

- Rightly trained in body: Participating in sports, exercise and enabling healthy choices is part of the curriculum.
- Rightly trained in mind: Creativity, enquiry and the ability to think critically and independently are critical assets that must be developed to augment the academic experience.
- Rightly trained in character: Integrity, compassion, sound judgment and an exemplary moral compass, speak to personal characteristics St John's aims to instil in all its students.



Ethos and Spirituality

St John's College is an Anglican Diocesan College of Johannesburg, and its Christian spiritual practice is an integral part of school life. Founded by St Mary's Anglican Church in 1898 to provide Christian education in the growing mining town of Johannesburg, the school's roots in the faith were deepened when the Anglo-Catholic Community of the Resurrection took over the College in 1906. The Benedictine 'Rule of Life' – prayer, work, rest, recreation and study – and the Anglican ethos of 'scripture, reason and tradition' continue to form the foundation of the school's spiritual integrity to this day.

The celebration of annual liturgical feasts, the daily reading of scripture and prayer, coupled with the weekly mass and Divinity/ Social and Civic Justice through Christ (SCJC) classes, form a critical counterbalance to the academic and co-curricular programmes provided at St John's. This rhythm – and especially regular worship – reminds us that we are a community that is grounded in a reality deeper than knowing and more enduring than time: the reality that is the Creator God.

The life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is foundational to the evolving Christian theological traditions. The dignity of each human person, the sacredness of the Earth as our common home and the call to act for justice and peace are tenets that urge us to emulate the nature of Christ, which inspired the school motto: *Lux Vita Caritas* – Light, Life and Love.

Grounded in this faith, the school seeks to grow each student in a community characterised by inclusivity, respect and courage. St John's College seeks to provide an environment that will enable the emergence of bright young people who can embrace and navigate the unique challenges facing contemporary South Africa – who are brave enough to envision and act to create a different and better world for all.



ABOUT ST JOHN'S PREPARATORY SCHOOL

St John's Preparatory School was the first school to be established when St John's was founded in 1898. The Prep began life in downtown Johannesburg as a parish of St Mary's Anglican Church on Eloff Street. As demand for enrolments grew in the early 1900s, the school was relocated to its current site on Houghton Ridge. The purchase of the land was made possible by the generosity of diamond magnate Sir Thomas Cullinan and Johannesburg Consolidated Investments, which sold the land to St John's for half its market value at the time. Herbert Baker was commissioned to design the new school buildings, along with his partner Frank Fleming. The Prep school building, with its original classrooms, offices and quad, was the first structure to be erected on the site after the foundation stone was laid on 12 January 1907.

Now, as then, St John's Prep aims to deliver a world-class, multi-faceted preparatory school experience that grows boys who are rightly trained in body, mind and character. Lessons are prepared and delivered in ways that enable boys to learn best, born of the insight that boys need a unique approach and a dedicated environment in which to thrive.

The Prep aims to ensure that its students are all well prepared for the demands and rigours of College life.



ABOUT ST JOHN'S PRE-PREPARATORY SCHOOL

St John's Pre-Preparatory School was established in 1969. It is a school where the structure associated with formal education is introduced gently and kindly, setting strong foundations for an optimal foundation phase experience that is tailor-made for boys.

The Pre-Preparatory School is situated off Joe Slovo Drive and is accessed via the St Patrick Road gate. The school consists of ten modern classrooms following a major renovation and building project that was completed in 2015.

In this phase, boys are equipped with the cognitive, physical, emotional and social skills they require for a happy and confident start to their school careers. Creative learning experiences contribute to the development of academic skills, higher-order thinking ability, multicultural understanding, and self-esteem and help boys to engage meaningfully with their peers and their teachers.

Reading is a key imperative at the Pre-Prep, from the introduction to the phonics programme in Grade 0 to learning to read for meaning and pleasure in Grade 2. In addition to the formal curriculum, boys are introduced to Art, Drama, Music, IT, and a wide range of sports at the Pre-Prep, laying the foundations for the holistic and multi-faced preparatory school experience, which continues when they move up to the Prep in Grade 3.



ABOUT THE BRIDGE NURSERY SCHOOL

The St John's Bridge Nursery School was founded in 2002 in a joint venture between St John's and Roedean School (SA).

The Bridge is situated in a heritage house adjacent to the Pre-Preparatory School and can be accessed via the St David Road West gate. It is the place where our littlest Johannians begin their St John's journey.

Teaching concepts at The Bridge combine attributes of traditional whole-child development and ECD imperatives as well as Waldorf, Montessori and Reggio principles, creating a well-rounded, stimulating environment in which the boys and girls flourish. Teachers are passionate about play, and each day, students are exposed to activities designed to encourage sensory exploration, creativity, curiosity, imagination, and a love of learning. At The Bridge, the aim is to recognise and value each child's unique qualities and gently encourage growth at his or her own pace.

The Bridge aims to provide a loving and caring environment where inquiring minds are developed and happy, confident little boys and girls are well-prepared for their big school adventures.



ABOUT THE AFTERCARE CENTRE

The Aftercare Centre is situated at the Pre-Preparatory School and provides a safe, fun and happy space where children can continue to grow, play and learn after their school days have ended. It welcomes students from The Bridge Nursery School, St John's Pre-Preparatory, Roedean Junior School and St John's Preparatory.

Experienced staff are on hand to ensure that homework is completed after a hot lunch provided by the school. There are also structured activities arranged for the children to enjoy, both indoors and outdoors, as well as plenty of opportunities for free play. The Aftercare is open until 17:30 during the week. It is closed on weekends and during the school holidays.



ABOUT THE COUNCIL OF ST JOHN'S COLLEGE

The Council is the Board of Governors of St John's College. Council members are elected to be the representatives of the key constituencies within the school, including the Anglican Church, the staff, members of the Old Johannian Association (OJA), parents and students. The Council consists of nominated and co-opted members with a wide range of skills needed to fulfil the Council's mandate. In particular, the Council is responsible for:

- The school's vision and strategic plan;
- The policies, procedures and governance structures of the school;
- Oversight of the financial affairs and general administration of the College;
- The acquisition, maintenance and insurance of all buildings and major assets;
- The delegation of leadership responsibilities to the Heads of the various schools on the St John's College campus;
- The future sustainability of the College.

The Council has an Executive Committee as well as a number of sub-committees to help carry out its work. Key sub-committees include Transformation & Diversity, Nominations, Finance, Building, Human Resources, Scholarships and Bursaries, Brand, Marketing and Communications, IT and the Heritage Committee. The Chair of Council is in regular contact with the Executive Headmaster of the College and meets with the other Heads from time to time.

The Diocesan Bishop of Johannesburg is the Visitor to the College and must approve the appointment of all Council members, the Executive Head and the Chaplains. For more information, please visit <https://www.stjohnscollege.co.za/about/council>



DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLE

The Pre-Preparatory Head, who reports to the Headmaster of St John's Preparatory School, is responsible for the leadership and management of the Pre-Preparatory School, as well as The Bridge Nursery School and the Aftercare Centre.

The Pre-Preparatory Head is responsible for the strategic priorities of the Pre-Preparatory School and implementing the plans, policies and procedures designed to deliver them. It is their responsibility to ensure that the Pre-Preparatory operates and grows to maintain the high standards of education and service for all its stakeholders.

In consultation with the Preparatory Headmaster, the Pre-Preparatory Head is responsible for the leadership of the Pre-Preparatory School team, as well as all activities associated with the day-to-day administration of the school, acting within structures and frameworks already in place. Delivering exceptional value to all stakeholders will be of paramount importance, including innovation and responsiveness to the needs of both the school and our community. It is incumbent on this individual to provide the Preparatory Headmaster with the information, advice and recommendations he/ she needs to perform the role professionally, as well as to provide insight into how the Pre-Preparatory School is performing.

The Pre-Preparatory Head will also be expected to interpret, communicate and implement the imperatives of the current five-year strategy, which is determined by Council.

The main areas of accountability associated with this role are as follows:

Strategic Leadership and Direction

- a. Working with the Senior Executive Committee & Preparatory Headmaster to develop a strategy in accordance with the Council's strategic plan and taking the school's ethos, values and heritage into account.
- b. Securing internal and external stakeholder commitment to the strategic plan.
- c. Implementing the strategic plan in the Pre-Preparatory School and guiding its implementation in The Bridge Nursery School and Aftercare Centre.
- d. Ensuring that the Christian, Anglican faith, ethos and values of the school are upheld and are intentionally embedded in every aspect of school life.
- e. Delivering the school's transformation and diversity agenda.
- f. Leadership of the Pre-Preparatory Staff team, as well as the Headmistress of The Bridge Nursery School and the Head of the Aftercare Centre.
- g. Striving for excellence in all aspects of school life.
- h. Keeping abreast of developments in the macroeconomic environment, and course-correcting timeously and appropriately.
- i. Maintaining open, productive and collaborative relationships with other Heads and thought-leaders in the ECD and Foundation Phase arena.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLE

Management, Motivation and Recognition of Staff

- a. Attracting and retaining the best teaching staff to ensure that an excellent standard of teaching is maintained.
- b. Building a professional integrated team to ensure that the vision, mission and strategy is delivered.
- c. Ensuring that roles and responsibilities for all staff are well articulated, delineated and executed, so that accountability is clear and high standards are maintained.
- d. Designing processes are robust and efficient, so that staff understand where their input begins and ends, with clear handover points and have a clear understanding of what good looks like.
- e. Ensuring that appropriate policies are in place for the recruitment, remuneration, reward and development of his/ her staff during their time at St John's Preparatory School, The Bridge Nursery School and the Aftercare Centre.

Academic, Educational and Pastoral Excellence

- a. Overseeing the implementation of a considered, holistic educational programme, which is not only academic but is also designed to support the development of the boys' characters and spiritual lives.
- b. Overseeing the development of a world-class academic curriculum and co-curricular offerings.
- c. Ensuring that each boy can fulfil his academic potential and is supported in line with his individual needs.
- d. Adopting an innovative approach to education and implementing best practice.
- e. Monitoring the nature, frequency and outcomes of assessments to ensure that standards are being maintained and boys are progressing in line with expectations.
- f. Maintaining oversight of a pastoral care system that supports each boy and enables him to integrate, socialise and belong at St John's Pre-Preparatory School.
- g. Creating an environment in which diversity is celebrated and the benefits of difference are valued.
- h. Implement all school policies in a way that feels appropriate in the context of the foundation phase.
- i. Applying the school rules consistently and fairly, striking a constructive balance between restorative and disciplinary practices so that boys can flourish in a system with healthy boundaries.
- j. Ensuring that boys who require additional support, either academically, socially, emotionally or psychologically, are assisted timeously and appropriately, either within the school or externally.
- k. Ensuring that the boys' introduction to the visual arts, dramatic arts and other cultural aspects is of the same high standard as the academic curriculum.
- l. Ensuring that the boys are introduced to a wide range of sporting codes, through which they learn good skills, healthy habits and good sportsmanship.
- m. Implementing the school's Safeguarding policy and undertaking the role of 'in loco parentis' diligently and vigilantly.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLE

Financial Management

- a. Working diligently to ensure the financial sustainability of St John's Pre-Preparatory School, The Bridge Nursery School and The Aftercare Centre by:
 - i. Managing admissions and withdrawals to ensure that the schools' capacity is optimised.
 - ii. Budgeting appropriately to ensure that the strategy can be delivered efficiently and cost-effectively.
 - iii. Ensuring that the necessary financial controls are in place and that accounting processes are being rigorously adhered to.
 - iv. Tracking expenditure against the budget on a monthly basis.
 - v. Recommending ways to achieve economies of scale and efficiencies across St John's Pre-Prep, The Bridge Nursery School and the Aftercare Centre.
 - vi. Finding meaningful and relevant ways to demonstrate value, for both the students and their parents, in all the schools' offerings.
 - vii. Updating the Prep Headmaster regarding the financial health of his/ her portfolio on a monthly basis.
 - viii. Supporting the fundraising activities of the Advancement Office and the Foundation as required.

Stakeholder Engagement

- a. Creating a nurturing, positive, productive and energising environment for all **students**, underpinned by grace, kindness and care.
- b. Building productive and open relationships with **parents** by encouraging a home and school partnership approach to achieve the best possible outcomes for their sons.
- c. Leading and motivating a combined staff team that is committed to the boys, their parents, the school, and each other.
- d. Collaborating with the **Preparatory School staff** to realise synergies and streamline the 'St John's Journey' for the boys.
- e. Actively working with all **shared service teams** (including Finance, Admissions, HR, IT and Estate) to ensure that the schools and the Aftercare Centre are being run effectively and efficiently.
- f. Collaborating with the Marketing and Communications and Events teams to build the school's brand and promote the Pre-Preparatory School, The Bridge Nursery School and the Aftercare Centre.
- g. Network effectively with the **heads of other preparatory/primary schools** to stay abreast of trends, understand the issues that they are facing, and secure applications and admissions.
- h. Maintain strong relationships with the **heads of all feeder schools**, including creches, nursery schools, and other preparatory schools in Johannesburg.
- i. Keeping application processes simple and channels of communication open with all **prospective parents**.
- j. Maintaining contact and relationships with **past students/ 'old boys'** through the Old Johannian Association
- k. Building relationships with **friends and supporters** of the school through St John's College Foundation.
- l. Supporting the work of the **St John's Preparatory Academy**.



CANDIDATE PROFILE

The successful applicant for this role will be an energetic, forward-thinking individual who is passionate about teaching and education.

Candidates should have a proven track record of successful leadership experience as either a Head or a Deputy Head, with a passion for developing young minds. He or she should have the ability to lead by example and inspire students, staff and parents alike. The incumbent will be a naturally collaborative leader and team player who is intent on contributing to the development of the St John's College strategy and being part of the legacy that the school will leave for future generations of Johannians.

1. Essential Qualifications & Experience

In order to be considered for this prestigious position, candidates will need to be able to prove that they have:

- a. Tertiary qualifications in Education, or a directly related discipline, preferably at a post-graduate level.
- b. Demonstrated leadership qualities in building high-performing teams and organisational culture.
- c. At least five years' experience in a senior leadership role in the Education or a directly related sector.
- d. The ability to engage confidently with a wide range of stakeholders, possessing superior judgement and intuition.
- e. The ability to think strategically, critically and creatively, with a track record of successfully introducing innovation in the education sector.
- f. Strong financial literacy and analytical ability.
- g. Experience in the ECD space and/ or the independent schools sector would be advantageous.
- h. Experience of, or an affinity for, working in an educational environment with a strong faith-based orientation would also be beneficial.

2. Knowledge & Skills

Fulfilling this role optimally requires that the successful candidate has:

- a. Outstanding people leadership skills, with a willingness to be decisive whilst delegating meaningfully and appropriately, are critical.
- b. Excellent communication skills across the board - both written and oral – enabling the successful candidate to act as the 'face of the organisation' in any context or setting.
- c. Gravitas and the personal authority to act as an outstanding ambassador for the St John's College brand.
- d. An instinctive understanding of how to create an environment that is conducive to the growth and development of all stakeholders.
- e. The ability to devise and implement strategy, prioritise effectively and hold the tension inherent in a complex environment in mind and balance.
- f. Clear commitment to the Council's strategic agenda and the ability to reinterpret these imperatives as they apply to the Pre-Preparatory School, The Bridge Nursery School and the Aftercare Centre.
- g. Strong interpersonal skills with the ability to engage with and inspire the St John's community, including students, parents, staff and Old Johannians.
- h. The ability to interact meaningfully with all stakeholders, including those from a wide variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, to achieve the aims of the school's transformation and diversity plan.
- i. The ability to balance the big picture (strategic imperatives) with the detail (tasks and outcomes) required for organisational growth and progress.
- j. The ability to listen well, negotiate and manage conflict situations to resolution.
- k. The ability to view feedback as a gift (and to be able to give and receive it in the spirit in which it is intended) is vital.
- l. An enduring intellectual enthusiasm for wider developments in education and a willingness to be a participant in the growth and development of the sector.

CANDIDATE PROFILE

3. Personal Attributes

Given that schools are highly relational environments, it is particularly important that the new Head must:

- a. Love working with young children and be intentional about creating an environment that delivers positive experiences and happy memories, which become synonymous with childhood.
- b. Be ready to act in the best interests of his/ her students and staff at all times.
- c. Hold himself/ herself, and others, to the highest possible standards.
- d. Be self-motivated with a can-do attitude and a strong problem-solving orientation.
- e. Have a strong sense of integrity and fairness.
- f. Be accountable and ethical.
- g. Be firm and boundried.
- h. Be confident and self-assured.
- i. Be organised and structured.
- j. Be open to feedback.
- k. Be kind, empathetic and compassionate.
- l. Be gracious and thoughtful.
- m. Be inspirational and motivational.
- n. Be loyal and dedicated, willing to go the extra mile.



Interested candidates should submit their CVs, along with a letter of motivation and the details of three contactable references to carel@cnandco.com by Friday 7 March 2025.