



Barnard Castle School
ESTD 1883



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School Secretary

For October 2026

Welcome from the Bursar

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the School Secretary position.

We are looking for someone who is approachable, dependable and enjoys working with people to join our Admin Team.

The ideal candidate will be comfortable working independently while also being an active and supportive member of a close-knit team.

We are looking for someone who is able to remain calm and organised in a busy environment where priorities can change quickly. You will be confident communicating with parents, pupils, colleagues and visitors and understand the importance of discretion when dealing with sensitive or confidential information.

You will need to be comfortable using technology and willing to learn new systems and ways of working as the School's administrative processes continue to develop.

If you are interested in being part of our busy, friendly school, we look forward to hearing from you.

With kind regards

Suzanne Metcalf

Bursar



About Barnard Castle School

Barnard Castle School is a place where young people discover who they are and what they can become. They develop intellectually, socially, emotionally, and morally. Our students do not just leave with results; they leave ready for life.

We are proud to combine high standards of academic achievement with a deep focus on personal growth. Whether they are trying something new, bouncing back from setbacks or standing up for others, our pupils learn that success is about more than outcomes. It is about character.

At Barney, we teach our students how to think, not what to think. We help them go further by helping them understand who they are. We believe in nurturing pupils who are confident and kind, ambitious, and grounded. This is not a school that chases perfection, but one that fosters courage, humility, and resilience.

Our operational staff play a significant role within the school, and every member of staff is a valued part of the wider community.

Job Description

Job Title: School Secretary

Reporting to: Prep School Head

Role Type: Full-Time, Term Time, Plus 6 Weeks During the Holidays

Start Date: November 2026, or sooner

Location: Based primarily in the Prep School, with requirements to work in Senior School as necessary.

Role Summary:

We are looking for a friendly, highly organised and professional School Secretary to join our busy school administration team.

The School Secretary plays an important role at the heart of school life and is often the first point of contact for parents, pupils, visitors and colleagues. We are therefore looking for someone who will provide a warm and professional welcome and reflect the friendly ethos of Barnard Castle School.

Based primarily in the Prep School, you will provide day-to-day administrative support to the Headmistress of the Prep School, while working closely with our existing Secretaries, the Headmaster's PA and colleagues across the wider School.

This is a varied and busy role, encompassing parent and pupil communication, diary and meeting coordination, school administration, maintaining accurate pupil information, supporting events and activities, and providing general administrative assistance to the Headmistress and teaching staff.

The successful candidate will be confident using digital systems, comfortable working in a busy environment and able to manage competing priorities while maintaining excellent attention to detail, confidentiality and discretion.

Key Responsibilities

Support to the Headmistress of the Prep School

- Provide efficient and proactive administrative support to the Headmistress of the Prep School.
- Assist the Headmistress with a wide range of day-to-day administrative tasks, correspondence and communications.
- Coordinate the Headmistress's diary, appointments and meetings as required.
- Prepare documents, information and materials for meetings and School activities.
- Assist with meeting arrangements and take notes or actions where required.
- Support the Headmistress with communication to parents, staff and the wider School community.
- Handle confidential and sensitive information with a high level of discretion.
- Anticipate administrative requirements and provide support to help ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the Prep School.

Reception & Communication

- Provide a warm, professional welcome to parents, pupils, visitors, contractors and other guests.
- Manage visitor sign-in and identification procedures in accordance with safeguarding and School policies.
- Answer and manage incoming telephone calls, emails and enquiries, ensuring they are dealt with efficiently or directed to the appropriate colleague.
- Act as a helpful and knowledgeable first point of contact for pupils, parents and staff.
- Respond appropriately to day-to-day parent and pupil enquiries, including messages, changes to arrangements and requests for information.
- Ensure important messages and information are communicated promptly to the appropriate members of staff.
- Coordinate appointments and ensure relevant information is communicated to attendees.
- Receive and coordinate post, deliveries, parcels and courier collections where required.

Pupil & School Administration

- Provide efficient day-to-day administrative support to the Headmistress, teaching staff and wider Prep School.
- Support the administration of pupil attendance, registration and absences, ensuring information is accurately recorded and communicated to relevant staff.
- Maintain accurate pupil and School information using iSAMS and other digital systems.
- Support colleagues in their use of iSAMS and assist with the annual iSAMS rollover.
- Produce and distribute communications to parents, pupils and staff, including email and SMS communications.
- Support the administration of new pupils and leavers and changes to pupil information, ensuring records remain accurate and up to date.
- Assist with the preparation and coordination of School documents, reports, certificates and other materials.
- Maintain well-organised and accurate digital records in accordance with School procedures and data-protection requirements.
- Maintain and update shared calendars, administrative information and digital resources used by the Prep School.
- Assist the Deputy Head with the administration of teaching staff cover, including updating information and producing reports.
- Maintain accurate pupil and staff information required for emergency and fire procedures.

- Monitor office supplies and ensure essential resources are available when required.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues across the Prep and Senior Schools to ensure effective communication and continuity of administrative support.

Trips, Events, Activities & School Life

- Support the organisation and administration of parents' evenings, academic information events and other School events.
- Assist with the administration of educational visits, trips and activities where required.
- Assist with the administration and coordination of major School occasions and activities.
- Coordinate and produce information relating to the School's extracurricular programme.
- Support the preparation and distribution of information to parents relating to events, trips and activities.
- Provide administrative support for activities that contribute to the wider life of the School.

Safeguarding, Confidentiality & Data Protection

- Understand and follow the School's safeguarding and child-protection procedures at all times.
- Ensure visitor and reception procedures are followed consistently and appropriately.
- Escalate any safeguarding concerns promptly to the appropriate member of staff in accordance with School procedures.
- Handle pupil, parent and staff information sensitively, confidentially and in accordance with UK GDPR, data-protection requirements and School policies.
- Maintain the highest standards of discretion and confidentiality in all aspects of the role.

Candidate Specification

Essential Criteria:

- GCSE English and Maths, or equivalent.
- A recognised Business Administration qualification (NVQ or equivalent), or relevant equivalent experience.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Strong interpersonal skills and a professional, approachable manner.
- Excellent organisational and time-management skills.
- Ability to prioritise and manage several tasks simultaneously.
- Strong attention to detail and commitment to producing accurate, high-quality work.
- Confident user of Microsoft 365, including Outlook, Word, Excel and related applications.
- Comfortable learning and using digital systems and databases.
- Ability to work independently, anticipate requirements and use initiative.
- Ability to work collaboratively and contribute positively to a team.
- Resilience and the ability to remain calm and professional in a busy school environment.
- A flexible and positive approach to work.
- High standards of confidentiality, discretion and professionalism.

Desirable Criteria:

It would be advantageous, although not essential, to have:

- Previous experience in a school or educational environment.
- Experience using a school Management Information System (MIS), particularly iSAMS.
- Previous experience providing administrative or PA support to a senior colleague.
- Previous experience in a reception, administration or customer-facing role.
- Strong digital administration and keyboard skills.
- Experience handling personal information in accordance with UK GDPR and data-protection requirements.
- A current First Aid at Work qualification, or willingness to undertake appropriate training.

As a member of Barnard Castle School staff:

- Demonstrate consistently high standards of professionalism, reliability and conduct.
- Build positive and respectful relationships with pupils, parents, colleagues and visitors.
- Communicate clearly, professionally and sensitively.
- Support an inclusive, welcoming and collaborative working environment.
- Promote the School positively to current and prospective families and visitors.
- Support and uphold the School's policies, including safeguarding, confidentiality and data protection.
- Take an active interest in School life and contribute ideas for improving the way we work.
- Be willing to support the wider School community and School events where appropriate.

Support and Professional Development

The School Secretary will be supported and appraised by the Bursar and Headmaster's PA, with day-to-day direction from the Headmistress of the Prep School.

This job description outlines the principal duties and responsibilities of the role. It is not intended to be exhaustive.

The duties may be reviewed periodically and amended following consultation with the post holder to reflect the changing needs of the School. Employees will be expected to undertake other duties commensurate with the level and responsibilities of the post as reasonably requested.

Terms and Conditions

Type: Full Time, Permanent, Term Time Only Plus 6 Weeks

Hours: 40 hours per week, term time only, 8.30 am – 5.30 pm Monday to Friday, plus alternate Saturday mornings on a rota with other secretaries in Senior School during term time, and additional 6 weeks (30 working days) during school holidays.

Salary: £25,789

Paid Holidays: 20 days plus bank holidays deemed to be taken during school holidays

Pension: In accordance with current pension legislation, Operational Staff are automatically enrolled in The Pensions Trust Flexible Retirement Plan scheme unless they choose to opt out. More information is available on request.

Other benefits: The School offers a pension package, use of our gym, sports facilities and swimming pool, free meals during term time, free parking, and access to various social activities throughout the year.

Recruitment Process

Enquiries

If you have any questions about the role in advance of applying, please contact Suzanne Metcalf, the Bursar, on SMM@barneyschool.org.uk who will be pleased to have an informal discussion.

Applications

If you feel that you can meet the above requirements, then please submit a letter of application along with the Barnard Castle School application form to the Bursar. Only applications containing the requested information will be considered.

Applications should be sent to:	
Mrs S M Metcalf Barnard Castle School Barnard Castle County Durham DL12 8UN	Telephone: 01833 696098 Email: hr@barneyschool.org.uk
Application Dates:	Deadline for applications: 12 noon, Monday 5th October 2026 Interviews in School: Week Commencing 11th October 2026

Applicants should read carefully the application procedure – guidance for applicants, Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders and the Disclosure policy and the Safer Recruitment policy.

*Barnard Castle School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, and all applicants will undergo child protection screening, including checks with past employers and an enhanced DBS and Barred list check with Disclosure and Barring Service.
Barnard Castle School is an equal opportunities employer.*

