

Hills Road Sixth Form College

Appointment of: Head of IT Services

Location: Cambridge



Shape
the
future



Hills Road
Sixth Form College
Cambridge

Welcome from the Principal and CEO Designate



Thank you for your interest in Hills Road Sixth Form College and in this post. I hope that the information in this booklet will help you to decide whether this role and our college might be the right next step for you. I sincerely hope it is!

As I prepare to take up the role of Principal in September, this marks an important moment in the College's continuing journey. Hills Road enjoys a strong national reputation and has led Sixth Form College performance tables for many years. But we are not complacent. In an ever-changing world, excellence is a moving target and we are ambitious - for our students, for our staff and for the future of post-16 education. We respond thoughtfully, continually reflecting and evolving to ensure that what we offer remains exceptional.

Working in a Sixth Form College brings distinctive rewards, not least the privilege of engaging with bright young minds who challenge, question and inspire. It is an intellectually rigorous environment grounded in collaboration and shared purpose. Everyone here has a role to play in helping every young person who comes through our doors to realise their potential – sometimes in ways they may never previously have been able to imagine.

I am fortunate enough to know first-hand the transformative impact that Hills Road has on our students and, as a former student, I am deeply committed to ensuring that it continues to flourish as a centre of academic excellence where kindness and integrity remain at the heart of everything we do.

We recognise that staff wellbeing is fundamental to student success and we pride ourselves on being consultative. In response to colleague feedback, we have introduced a two-week October half term and redesigned professional development. Staff consistently speak of the strength of our community. Our core values – Diversity, Kindness, Integrity, Respect, Community and Excellence – are not slogans, but lived commitments that shape how we work, how we lead and how we support one another. Hills Road is ambitious, yet humane; high-performing, yet deeply caring.

I hope I have been able to give you a flavour of Hills Road. If you would welcome an informal conversation about the role or about the College more broadly, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Finally, thank you for considering our college and for the commitment that an application entails. Whatever the outcome, I wish you every success in your future career.

With very best wishes,
Ali Kirkman
(Principal Designate)

Head of IT Services

Permanent, Full-Time – 37 hours per week

Salary from £57,263 to £59,810 per annum

(Support Staff Pay Spine Point 37 to Point 39)

The College is seeking to recruit a Head of IT Services. This is a distinct and exciting opportunity, leading our IT team consisting of one Deputy Head of IT Services, two experienced IT Services Engineers, a degree level IT Apprentice and our Reprographics Technician. There is also a strong possibility that this role could evolve further, with increased responsibility and remuneration for a suitable candidate, as part of succession planning within the next 1 to 2 years.

Providing the very best student and staff experience is at the heart of our IT service, and we support both academic and administrative users (approximately 500 staff and 3000 students).

This is an exciting time to be joining the College in an IT role. We have plans to further grow the digital capability of our staff and students in teaching and learning activities. The Head of IT Services will play an integral role in ensuring our IT infrastructure continues to support the needs of staff and students and provide technical advice to help us realise our goals in relation to digital teaching & learning. The College continues to make the case for increased provision of 16-19 places in the region and lobby for a second Hills Road site. In the event that such a new site comes to fruition, the successful applicant would play a key role in ensuring it was fully equipped from an IT and digital perspective.

In return, we offer great team-work and a varied workload, an attractive salary, 24 days annual leave rising to 27 days after 5 years' service, plus bank holidays, generous pension scheme, free use of our on-site sports centre, including a newly refurbished gymnasium, wellbeing activities, discounts on all our Adult Education courses, free onsite parking, cycle to work scheme and ongoing professional development.

Flexible working is available for this role, with WFH opportunities available, depending on requirements to provide sufficient on-site technical and operational support from the team at critical periods.

Closing date: Thursday 16th July 2026 at 9.00am

Interviews: Friday 24th July 2026

Details and an application form for the above post may be obtained from our website www.hillsroad.ac.uk

The college is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its students and staff and expects all members of the college community, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment. The college actively promotes equality and diversity and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

Job Details

The Head of IT Services post holder provides:

- Strong team leadership, with excellent communication and documentation skills.
- Secure in-house expertise across all our core IT Service technologies.
- A technical 'backstop' for assuring an uninterrupted service to all users through management of business continuity, security and service updates etc.
- Professional networking to inform technical development – e.g., via JISC, local IT Service managers' groups and other forums.
- Team membership of curriculum digital strategy and innovation groups.
- Detailed operational team leadership on a day-to-day basis for the engineers.
- Stretch, challenge, mentoring and growth opportunities for the IT team.
- Prioritising, delegation, and workflow management delivered through projects (of varying size and complexity) and the IT support ticket service.
- Technical leadership for all IT budget planning and IT capital bids.
- Technical leadership for high level strategic development, providing opportunity for regular technical discussion in relation to the continually evolving IT environment.
- Management of contracts and support cycle for appropriate services (e.g., Firewall, telephony, 365).
- Reprographics management.

We are a Microsoft Campus (A3 license), having moved to 365 many years ago, it is fully embedded all services. OneDrive, Teams and SharePoint are the primary document and resource areas for all academic and business teams. We are extensive users of 365 Teams and were extremely well equipped to maintain a quality remote IT environment for all users during the pandemic lockdown periods. Many of our core business services are cloud based external contracts, e.g. finance, HR, payroll.

Over recent years the College has invested in substantial upgrades to our systems. We have a Hyper-V virtualised server environment (50 servers), fully redundant twin internet services connecting to two Fortinet firewalls and twin HP core switches. We have a fully mirrored failover for the Hyper-V service delivered from separate physical locations (on site). We also have IP telephony and full site Cisco Merak Wi-Fi, connected to Eduroam which supports 16-19 students who all bring their own devices to college to access resources and support their learning inside and outside of lessons. We are also mid-way through a three-year network switch upgrade plan.

The onsite environment hosts our MIS system which is used extensively by all staff and students (ProSolution/SQL). The MIS service is delivered by a team who share a location adjacent to the IT Services team.

All teachers, tutors and some key support staff use College laptops with Microsoft AO-VPN. Across the estate we have approximately 550 fixed PCs. These are mainly in classrooms and student access areas.

Job Description

Head of IT Services

Purpose:	To lead the effective operational management and technical development of IT Services, ensuring that the College's IT infrastructure, systems, support services and technical processes are secure, resilient, well documented and aligned with College priorities, including in relation to teaching & learning and developments in digital pedagogies identified by curriculum colleagues. To provide senior technical leadership across IT Services, including service improvement, project planning, risk management, prioritisation, reporting and communication with CST. To ensure that IT Services provides reliable day-to-day support while maintaining the planning, follow-up and technical assurance required for the College's future digital resilience.
Reports to:	Director of Digital Strategy
Direct Reports:	Deputy IT Services Manager, Senior IT Service Engineers, IT Service Engineers and Apprentice, Reprographics Technician

Main Accountabilities:

1. IT Services leadership and service delivery

- Promote a collaborative, customer-focused culture that encourages innovation, shared responsibility and continuous improvement across the IT Services team.
- Lead the day-to-day operation of IT Services, ensuring that technical support is effective, timely, customer-focused and aligned with College needs.
- Provide operational leadership for IT Services and reprographics staff, including leading regular IT Services team meetings to review workload, priorities, service performance, staff cover, knowledge sharing and continuous improvement.
- Support the professional development and performance of IT Services staff through professional development reviews, coaching, CPD planning and regular progress checks.
- Monitor satisfaction levels, and use feedback and service metrics to drive improvements to IT Services.

2. Technical leadership, resilience and security

- Provide secure in-house expertise across core IT Service technologies, including networking, virtualisation, Wi-Fi, servers, storage, Microsoft 365, endpoint management and related systems.
- Act as the College's senior technical lead for IT infrastructure, cyber security controls, service resilience, business continuity and disaster recovery arrangements.
- Maintain and review an IT Services risk register, identifying key technical, security, supplier, lifecycle and capacity risks, with clear mitigation actions.
- Carry out regular and documented IT audits, risk assessments and service reviews to identify weaknesses and strengthen systems, processes and controls.
- Support the College's technical digital safeguarding provision in relation to relevant statutory guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

3. Planning, projects and follow-up

- Maintain a clear system for tracking actions, decisions, deadlines and follow-up points across IT Services.
- Contribute technical expertise to wider College projects, ensuring that IT implications, resourcing, risks and dependencies are understood at an early stage.

4. Reporting, communication and senior advice

- Translate technical issues into clear, accessible advice for senior leaders, setting out options, costs, benefits, risks and consequences.
- Support College Strategy Team (CST) in its oversight of IT Services by providing structured reporting, professional judgement and evidence-based recommendations.
- Communicate planned IT changes clearly and in good time to staff, students and other stakeholders.

5. Systems, processes and documentation

- Ensure that key IT systems, technical procedures, operating processes and support arrangements are clearly documented, reviewed and kept up to date.
- Maintain documentation that supports business continuity, staff cover, technical handover, service resilience and effective troubleshooting.
- Ensure routine maintenance activities, including backups, updates, patching and monitoring, are completed in line with agreed procedures and policies.

- Oversee the creation and management of user accounts, permissions and access controls in line with College procedures and data protection requirements.
- Manage the SQL server environment, including upgrades, access controls and appropriate backup arrangements.

6. Budget, procurement, contracts and technical roadmap

- Act as technical lead for IT budget planning, lifecycle replacement planning and IT capital bids, in line with College policies and priorities.
- Develop and maintain a medium-term technical roadmap for IT infrastructure, systems, security improvement, lifecycle replacement and service development.
- Develop and implement the IT Services Department Development Plan aligned with the College's strategic priorities.
- Manage relevant IT contracts and supplier relationships, including firewall, telephony, Microsoft 365, security testing and infrastructure support.
- Ensure procurement recommendations are technically sound, financially responsible and aligned with College policies, sustainability considerations and public finance requirements.

7. Technical service responsibilities

- Install, configure, monitor and maintain hardware, software and network systems to agreed schedules and standards.
- Monitor, diagnose and resolve faults relating to hardware, software, infrastructure and core systems, working with the IT Services team and external suppliers as appropriate.
- Oversee effective deployment of Active Directory, group policy, departmental software and device management.
- Manage the internal penetration testing service, including follow-up of identified vulnerabilities.
- Support the ongoing operational delivery of the College Access Control system, including maintenance, permissions, troubleshooting, reporting and security monitoring.

8. Professional development and internal and external engagement

- Maintain up-to-date technical knowledge through appropriate CPD, professional networking and engagement with relevant sector groups, including Jisc and local IT Services networks.
- Keep informed about emerging technical risks, infrastructure developments and sector practice relevant to the College.

- Identify opportunities for relevant emerging technologies, including AI-enabled services, to improve operational efficiency and security.
- Engage proactively with representatives of other College departments, notably but not limited to teaching & learning, to maintain a strong understanding of their emerging digital and IT needs and lead the IT team in responding to these needs.
- Undertake any special tasks that may be required from time to time, commensurate with the level and purpose of the role.

Accountabilities that relate to all staff at the College

- To demonstrate behaviour and values consistent with the person specification for this role.
- To promote equality of opportunity in accordance with the College's Single Equality Scheme.
- To maintain high standards of attendance and punctuality.
- To have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the College.

Working arrangements

All IT Services contracts include an on-call Service Level Agreement to support business continuity and disaster recovery situations.

IT Services staff may be required to work occasional evenings to support College events, including open events, and may also be required to support core services such as public examinations. Where additional hours are required, these should be planned and managed through appropriate time off in lieu.

Succession Planning

As part of ongoing succession planning, there may be the opportunity from September 2027 to take up additional responsibilities, with appropriate additional remuneration to reflect the enlarged role, for a suitably qualified candidate. Subject to review, this may encompass responsibilities being added to the Head of IT Services Job Description, such as:

- Take an outward-looking approach to digital and IT developments in the education sector, working alongside relevant teaching & learning colleagues and senior leaders to identify, evaluate and where appropriate implement new and emerging technologies.
- Lead the planning and delivery of IT-led projects, ensuring that agreed priorities are supported by clear project plans, milestones, dependencies, risk assessments and communication plans.

- Escalate project progress, slippage, risks, resource pressures and decisions required to CST.
- Complete appropriate post-project reviews, identifying lessons learned, benefits delivered and any further actions required.
- Provide regular written updates to CST on IT priorities, service performance, project progress, technical risks and decisions required.
- Present at staff meetings and contribute to wider staff training where required.

Such a change to the role is also likely to also include the post holder reporting directly to a member of the College Strategy Team.

Person Specification for Head of IT Services

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications, training and experience	• Level three qualification, e.g. three A levels at grade C or above or BTEC merit • Minimum grade C in GCSE English and Maths or equivalent • Project leadership experience • Experience of design, installation and configuration of networks including switches and firewalls • Virtual server experience (especially Hyper-V) • Proven work experience as a team leader or supervisor • Experience of working with IT in an educational environment	• Professional IT Certification - Microsoft, CISCO, HPE or equivalent • Experience of using AI-enabled technologies • Experience of supporting an institution in: ○ learner BYOD or 1:1 device approach ○ developing and embedding a digital teaching and learning culture

In addition, the successful candidate will demonstrate, or have potential to develop, strengths in the following areas.

Skills and ability	• Excellent analytical problem-solving skills • Confident communicator with excellent verbal and written communication skills: must be able talk tech details and internals with IT engineers and to communicate to non-technical co-workers • An ability to assess and create documentation for the activities undertaken providing clear audit trails of process to demonstrate compliance
Knowledge	• An understanding of the legal and ethical issues surrounding the use of computers and the data that they create and store • A good awareness of the implications of Artificial Intelligence in the education sector, including what it means for the IT Services team in the provision of IT and digital infrastructure. • Extensive knowledge of Microsoft Desktop/Server operating systems including AD, DNS, DHCP, Hyper-V, Exchange server, clustering and failover technologies. • Extensive in-depth knowledge of Networking and concepts including IP addressing, VLANs, routing, IRF, VSF, failover technologies and ACLs. • Solid knowledge of network protocols including TCP, UDP, HTTPS, SSL, TLS.

	• Knowledge or understanding of Cyber Security methods and best practice. • Sound knowledge of Firewalls including failover and high availability. • Excellent knowledge of wireless technologies. • Excellent knowledge of backup systems in particular Veeam. • Good working knowledge of Apple systems. • Excellent knowledge of IP telephony. • Knowledge of SAN, NAS systems. • PowerShell and scripting ability. • Excellent knowledge of Office 365, SharePoint and OneDrive. • Some knowledge of Moodle • Knowledge of CCTV. • Knowledge of network printing and papercut. • Mobile phone configuration and maintenance. • Experience of SIEM and other Syslog and monitoring software.
Organisation	• Able to organise and motivate the team and ensure that work is completed to a high standard and on time. • Able to manage own time effectively to meet deadlines and to develop contingencies to cope with the unforeseen.
Disposition and approach	• A positive, flexible, 'can do' approach to responding to challenges and opportunities • Able to take the College priorities and goals and identify, prioritise and implement IT related actions required to supportive their delivery • A mature, proactive, outgoing personality, comfortable in dealing with staff and students. Note that the student body is not restricted to the sixth form but includes a considerable number of adult learners.
Focus on quality	• Commitment to high standards of work and accuracy, with strong attention to detail. • Commitment to the ethos and values of the College. • Commitment to the aim of the College to achieve quality and value for money in all aspects of its work. • Commitment to continuous improvement and willingness to attend appropriate training and development events.

How to Apply

Applicants are asked to do the following:

- complete the online [Hills Road Sixth Form College application form \(Part 1\)](#)
- complete the online [equality and diversity monitoring form \(Part 2\)](#)
- write a supporting statement of application (no more than 1,000 words)
- supply a brief CV

The online application forms (Parts 1 and 2) are available on the College's webpage for this vacancy. When completing Part 1, you will have the opportunity to upload your CV and provide a Supporting Statement of Application. Once you have submitted Part 1, you should then proceed to Part 2 (Equality and Diversity Monitoring form). All documents should be submitted by 9am on 16th July 2026.

Please note that applications received after the closing date may not be eligible for consideration. If Human Resources have not contacted you by 23rd July 2026, then unfortunately your application has not been successful.

Interviews will be held on Friday 24th July 2026.

Hills Road Sixth Form College will base its decision as to whether to invite you for interview solely on the details provided on your application and how well they match the criteria for this post.

In accordance with Home Office guidance, successful candidates will be required to evidence their right to work in the UK before commencement of employment. The successful candidate therefore must be able to demonstrate their right to work during the recruitment process.

Hills Road Sixth Form College is committed to ensuring equal opportunities in all aspects of employment and selects staff on merit, irrespective of race, religion, sex, disability or age. You are not obliged to complete the equal opportunities monitoring form, but any information given will help us to monitor the effectiveness of our equality and diversity policy.

If you have a disability, you are invited to request any special arrangements you may require for interview, or any adjustments you may anticipate would be needed in your working arrangements, by contacting the Human Resources Team on 01223 278063 (direct line). Further information about accessibility to the site can be found on our website under 'Equality and Diversity/Site Plan' and also from 'AccessAble:

www.accessable.co.uk.

Thank you for your interest in this post and in the college. We do hope that you will decide to apply, and we should like to thank you in advance for taking the time and trouble to do so. For more information about working life at the college, please go to our website <http://www.hillsroad.ac.uk>



**Shaping the
future through
opportunity,
quality and
achievement**

**Supported
by a caring
and learning
community.**