

MERCHISTON
EDINBURGH | Boys first



Information for Applicants

Merchiston Castle School, Colinton Road, Edinburgh, EH13 0PU, Scotland.
Tel: 0131 312 2200. www.merchiston.co.uk
Recognised by the Inland Revenue as a Charity, number SC016580



HISTORY, TRADITIONS AND ETHOS

Educating boys for over 185 years

Merchiston Castle School was founded in the centre of Edinburgh in 1828 by Mr Charles Chalmers. In 1833 the School moved to its second location, the old Merchiston Tower (now part of Napier University) with a total of 30 boys and the School started under the name of Merchiston Castle Academy. In 1930, the school moved to its current location, a 100 acre campus situated on the southern edge of Edinburgh, in the conservation village of Colinton; the buildings are surrounded by beautiful parkland which includes extensive playing fields.

Merchiston has a current roll of 456 pupils and the Sixth Form is 78% boarding. There are 75 members of the teaching staff, and admin and support staff number approximately 127.

In the Scottish private sector, boarding schools traditionally cater for pupils beyond the English norm of 13-18 and so Merchiston is an all-through 7-18 school. The 7-10 year olds have their own primary classroom teachers, although, in the case of the 10 year olds, Senior School Teachers augment the teaching. Therefore, it can be anticipated that teachers applying for any post within Merchiston will be expected to teach pupils from as young as age 10 to the rigour of the public examination year groups in the Fifth and Sixth Forms. We believe that this is a way of stretching boys.

Our Tradition

In today's school, traditional Scottish elements, such as the wearing of the kilt for formal occasions, are very prominent, and the Pipe Band features frequently in School life. Rugby is played enthusiastically throughout the School, and indeed the annual fixture against The Edinburgh Academy, which has now been played continuously for over 150 years, is the longest established inter-club match in existence anywhere in the world.

Our Ethos

The School's motto 'Ready ay Ready' features in the chorus of the School Song, which was last revised in the 1950s but is much older in origin. This refrain is still sung enthusiastically by the School on frequent occasions.

The School's ethos is based on people and relationships, and particular importance is attached to the development of personal character and moral values in the pupils. The atmosphere, although in some respects formal, is also one of pleasant and relaxed collaboration between pupils and staff.



MERCHISTON IN A NUTSHELL

Merchiston delivers an extraordinary, value-added academic experience

Merchiston continues to be the most consistent performer amongst the Scottish Schools at A Level. We were very proud to be the top A*-B grade A Level School in Scotland, 2016.

The 2016 A Level results were again outstanding, with many pupils successfully combating stiffer marking standards and tougher exams. The A Level results show 43% of boys achieving A* and A grades.

Maths, Further Maths, Science and Technology (including Electronics) are particular strengths, although Humanities and the Arts are also excellent.

Merchiston develops all-rounders, who, at one and the same time, have good academic platforms and who are also well rounded people

'A balanced curriculum, excellent pastoral care and a high A level pass rate make Merchiston one of the UK's leading independent schools.' – www.ukboardingschools.com.

"Our insider says that pupils are 'the sort of young men every mother wants her son to be'." - Tatler Schools Guide, 2016.

'In every respect – academic, sporting and pastoral – the school has exceeded our expectations, and continues to do so. In particular, the staff appear to have an almost magical ability to maximise the potential of every boy, irrespective of his natural talents. But above all, it is the Merchiston "end product" that impresses us year after year; the young men who leave the school for university each year are polite, confident gentlemen, whom any parent would be proud to call their son' – Current Parent.

Merchiston is a School for each and every type of boy, including those who are keen on sport, but also those who are not games players

There is a long and successful tradition of sporting excellence and we pride ourselves on fostering the pursuit of excellence in a sport for all environment.

In 2015/2016, there were 87 different sports teams, of all abilities, playing competitive fixtures across 16 sports; a total of 590 fixtures.

The School is currently represented nationally and internationally in many sports, such as athletics, cricket, golf, rugby and target shooting.

Over 64 Merchistonians have played senior international rugby, and we have also produced 24 cricket internationalists.

Music and Drama are major parts of life at Merchiston. These departments collaborate regularly and pupils of all ages have the chance to be involved, either performing on stage or working behind the scenes.

Merchiston is an extremely nurturing School with the highest standards of pastoral care

Merchiston is about relationships and partnerships – between the boys and the staff, and between the School and the home of each pupil.



LIVING AND WORKING IN EDINBURGH

Edinburgh is often described as 'one of the best places to live in the UK'; hardly surprising given the fantastic lifestyle, the shops, bars, restaurants, museums, galleries and, of course, the Festival.

From the iconic hill-top castle to the winding streets of the medieval Old Town and the 18th-century elegance of the 'New' Town, the city has history and style in abundance. Edinburgh has the highest concentration of listed buildings in the UK. The Old Town is a World Heritage Site, and the elegant New Town (also a World Heritage Site) is home to beautiful residences, upmarket bars and restaurants, and the famous shops on George and Princes Streets.

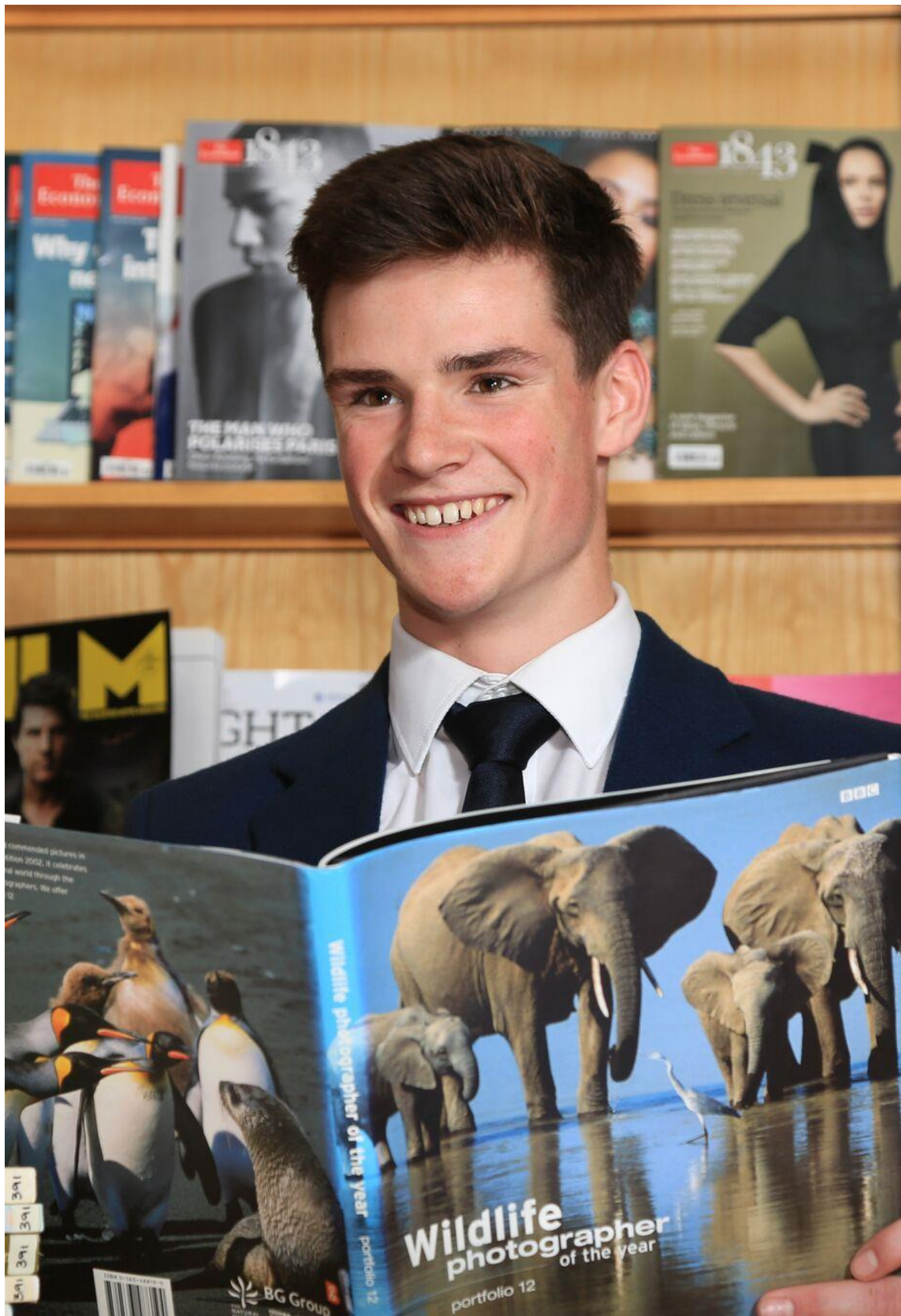
Edinburgh also has a rich literary history and was in fact the first ever city to be designated a UNESCO City of Literature back in 2004. Scotland's capital has inspired many of the world's best-loved authors including Sir Walter Scott, Robert Burns, Ian Rankin, Irvine Welsh, Arthur Conan Doyle and, of course, JK Rowling.

The city consists of a number of little self-contained communities or villages, each with its own distinct feel. Colinton is one such village. A mere fifteen minute drive from Princes Street, the Merchiston campus has a rural feel with the Pentland Hills as a backdrop and views to Edinburgh Castle through the tree line. The School is surrounded by woods and playing fields, and The Dell at the back gives access to a section of the Water of Leith.

Head further out of the city and you will find more scenic villages, beautiful beaches and rolling hills within easy reach.

Edinburgh simply has something for everyone.







OUR EXPECTATIONS

- **As a Teacher:** Every teacher in the School is expected to possess, or work towards possessing, the professional qualities and capabilities which are recognised nationally by the GTCS and in accordance with the School's policies.
- **As a Tutor:** All Merchiston boys have a personal tutor in addition to their Housemaster, who is responsible for their academic progress. All teachers are expected to contribute to this tutorial programme for which training is given, and supporting materials provided. The role of Tutor is integral to the life of the teacher and is an essential part of a boy's experience of Merchiston life. All members of staff are allocated to a pastoral House Tutor Scheme and many members of staff also serve as academic tutors to pupils in the Sixth Form.
- **As an Enthusiast:** A schoolteacher is far more than a classroom teacher and tutor, and the School expects its teachers to contribute whole-heartedly to other aspects of school life by drawing upon their own interests and enthusiasms. All members of the teaching staff are expected to involve themselves widely in the School's co-curricular activities and to be fully committed to the ethos of boarding education.
- **As a Coach:** Our major sports are rugby in the Autumn and Lent Terms, and cricket and athletics in the Summer Term. We also run extensive tennis and golf programmes with our Tennis and Golf Academies. Our other sports include: swimming, squash, Rugby fives, badminton, cross-country, golf, shooting, clay pigeon shooting, basketball, sailing, association football, hockey, skiing and sub-aqua. We have produced 63 rugby and 23 cricket internationalists and it is very common for us to have schoolboy internationalists in their chosen sports. As well as striving to achieve excellence, we also believe in teaching an understanding of the role of sport and physical activity in achieving an active and healthy lifestyle. The school week allows the boys to experience a range of sixteen to twenty sports and the boys are encouraged to be actively involved in many of these in the lower school to help find their interests and talents in school and beyond.



THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Applying for the Post

- Candidates for all posts will be asked to complete a standard application form, in order that they can be judged on the basis of comparable information.
- The Application Form should be completed as fully and effectively as possible. CVs are not accepted and application forms must be fully completed to ensure that the recruitment selection panel receives consistent and comparable information from all applicants. Incomplete information will reflect badly on the candidate.
- A full school, employment, voluntary and other history should be included. Any gaps should be explained and the reasons for leaving previous posts should be intimated.
- Candidates will be required to declare if they are related to any member of staff within the School, or indeed a member of the Board of Governors. Canvassing of members of the School/Board members is not permitted. No manager will be asked to interview a person to whom they are related.
- An Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form must be completed and returned. This will not be circulated to the shortlisting panel. The information collected will be solely used for the purposes of equality monitoring.
- All completed application forms are private and confidential and will only be made available to those directly involved in the recruitment and selection process.
- All application forms will be collated by the HR Manager and supplied to the relevant selection panel members.
- Candidates will be asked to specify whether they have any disabilities, as defined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, and whether there are any reasonable adjustments needed for them to attend an interview. Candidates with a disability who meet the essential criteria for a job will be considered on their merits.
- All candidates are required to complete a Self-Declaration Form with regard to previous criminal convictions, sanctions, disqualifications, investigations, suspensions and disciplinary action. This should be fully completed and sent directly to the Headmaster or Bursar.

Short listing

- All application forms received will be circulated to the Selection Panel who will read them carefully and consider their merits independently. A final short list will be drawn up in consultation with the full Panel.
- Candidates not shortlisted will be informed as soon as it is certain they will not be called for interview. This may not be until the interview process is completed.
- A shortlist of candidates will be drawn up for interview, based entirely on merit and suitability for the post, noting particular additional skills outside the classroom, and also taking account of the School's responsibilities in relation to the Disability Discrimination and Equalities Acts.

Interview and Selection Methods

- Interview methods will vary according to the position in question. Other than in exceptional circumstances, reasonable notice will be given to ensure that candidates have sufficient time in order to prepare for and make the necessary arrangements to attend the interview. Notes taken at interview will be dated and kept on file.
- Teaching staff are likely to be asked to meet a variety of staff according to their areas of expertise and they will be asked to teach a lesson, observed, where possible, by the appropriate Head of Department. A short panel interview, comprising of ideally three, but a minimum of two, members of the School Leadership Team will be part of the programme.



- All interviewers will encourage candidates to be at ease during the process, in order that they can give a fair and accurate impression of themselves.
- Where possible a set of questions will be agreed by the interview panel in advance and will be developed from the current job description for the post. The panel will seek to develop questions which ask the candidates to give examples of their previous relevant experience.
- Referees will be contacted prior to the interview.
- An interview is a two way process, and candidates will be given every opportunity to view the areas where they will work and ask questions about the School, to ensure that they have a full understanding of the post for which they are applying and the way the School operates.
- Candidates attending an interview will be reimbursed reasonable expenses incurred. Mileage will be paid at the school rate, ie 40 pence per mile up to a maximum of £150, ie 375 miles.
- All interviewed candidates will be notified of the outcome of the selection process as soon as possible, either by telephone, email or letter. A candidate who withdraws, or who refuses an offer of appointment for reasons considered by the School to be inadequate will not be reimbursed his/her expenses.
- All unsuccessful candidates' application forms and interview notes will be retained for one year from the date of interviews taking place. After this date they will be shredded.

Appointment of Successful Candidate

- All appointments will be made strictly on merit and related to the requirements of the job.
- The successful candidate will receive a verbal offer of the post and the conditions of the appointment will be discussed. After time for reflection, the successful candidate will be expected to confirm verbally their acceptance of the post or otherwise.
- Once verbally accepted, the offer of the post will be confirmed in writing and associated documents and forms will be enclosed: Job Description; Term Dates; Application to join the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme or Form for a Scheme Record Update, Policy and Guidelines; Salary Scales; Dress Code; Acceptable Usage Agreement for Computer and Internet Use; Health Questionnaire; SSSC Codes of Practice; Class teacher professional qualities and capabilities & GTCS Code of Professionalism and Conduct (where appropriate).
- A formal contract is issued in the first term at the School.

Conditional Offer of Appointment

- An offer of appointment will be made only after the candidate's referees have been telephoned to confirm they are bona fide. The letter will make it clear that the offer is subject to completion of all necessary Safeguarding procedures.

All offers of Appointment will be conditional upon satisfactory results from the following Vetting Checks and employment may not be taken up until all checks are complete:

- **References:** Two professional references must be provided. These will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support the appointment decision. Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. Direct contact by telephone is required with each referee to verify the reference.
- **Previous Employment History:** complete information about previous employment must be provided along with satisfactory explanations for any gaps in employment.
- Upon appointment, successful candidates will be asked to exhibit **Examination and Degree Certificates**.
- **Identity Checks:** all successful candidates must exhibit proof of identity in three forms, at least one of which must be photographic. Acceptable proofs of identity may include birth certificate, driving licence, passport and a utility bill or bank statement as proof of address (dated less than 3 months previously and for the address at which the candidate is currently residing). Photocopies



may be posted with the forms initially, but these documents must be exhibited to HR to validate their authenticity prior to taking up the post.

- **Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme/Barred List and Other Checks:** Membership of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme is required for all new appointments to the School. Successful candidates will be required to provide the necessary documentation in order to apply to join the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme and a record of all convictions will be obtained at this stage. As Merchiston is a boarding School, and safeguarding our pupils is of paramount importance, applicants will be asked to reveal details of 'spent' and 'unspent' convictions in terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007. Applicants are encouraged to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We ask that this information is sent under separate cover marked for the attention of the Headmaster. At interview, or under separate discussions, we undertake to ensure an open and measured discussion on the subject of any offences or other matters which might be considered relevant for the position concerned. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to a position working with children could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment and will be reported to the appropriate authorities.
- **List 99/Barred List and GTCS Register checks**
- **Self Declaration:** all successful candidates will be required to complete the Self Declaration Form with regard to previous criminal convictions, sanctions, disqualifications, investigations, suspensions, disciplinary action and medical fitness and disabilities to enable provision of appropriate aids. A copy of this form can be found on the school website for information purposes.
- An **Occupational Health Medical** may be required prior to taking up the post in order to assess the requirement for aids or adaptations.
- **Foreign Nationals:** applicants who are foreign nationals and have the right to work in the UK, should exhibit the Visa page in their passport at interview showing confirmation of the right to work in this country.
- **Overseas checks:** all new appointments where persons have lived outside the UK are subject to additional checks as deemed necessary.
- **Certificate of Good Conduct:** if the applicant has worked or lived outside the UK, the School will require a Certificate of Good Conduct from their country of origin. It should be noted that the person themselves is required to obtain this and not the School.
- **Pre-Employment Health Questionnaire:** to be completed to establish medical fitness and any disabilities to enable provision of appropriate aids

Probationary Period

- All teaching appointments into the School are probationary for the first year. Essentially, all teaching candidates must also prove themselves capable of gaining registration with the General Teaching Council for Scotland. This means that teachers should have completed a PGCE/PGDE before embarking upon a teaching position at Merchiston. However, Merchiston is also participating on the HMC Teacher Training Programme (www.hmcteachertraining.org.uk) which offers on the job training, whilst graduates undertake a PGCE via the University of Buckingham. In practice, newly-appointed teachers will be given a clear indication of their progress during their first term and an unequivocal decision about their future employment no later than by the end of their second term.
- All other appointments to the School will be made subject to a probationary period of six calendar months. After three months a review meeting will take place between the post holder and their line manager to discuss progress. At the end of the probationary period, and subject to a satisfactory report by the appropriate Head of Department or line manager, employees will be notified in writing that they have successfully completed their probationary period. The probationary period can be extended by a further 3 months should the individual's line manager consider this appropriate.
- All new staff, whether experienced or inexperienced, will have the benefit of guidance by an experienced mentor, whose role it will be to help them through the first few terms of their employment. The School believes in, supports and resources an extensive system of continuing professional development and all staff are expected to participate in it throughout their careers.



Salary and Benefits

- Salary will depend on the qualifications and experience of the successful applicant. Additional allowances are payable as appropriate.
- Pension auto enrolment is in operation at the School and subject to satisfying certain eligibility criteria you will be automatically enrolled into the Scottish Teacher's Superannuation Scheme or the School Pension Scheme. You have the right to opt out of either scheme.
- The School will pay 50% of the cost of membership of the BUPA Healthcare Scheme should staff choose to participate in this scheme.
- Merchiston has an Employee Assistance Programme which offers free confidential advice on both work and personal issues.
- Children of full-time members of staff who attend the School as day pupils may be eligible for up to an 80% discount on the fees, with a reciprocal agreement of up to 50% staff discount at St George's School for Girls. These concessions are means-tested. Children of part-time members of staff may be eligible for a discount of 50% of the day fee; again, this concession is means-tested.
- At Merchiston, we are committed to equality of opportunity and to following practices and providing a service which is free from unfair and unlawful discrimination. We aim to ensure that no candidate or member of staff is subject to less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, marital status, religion, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, age, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependents, physical or mental disability, or offending background, or is disadvantaged by any condition which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance.

