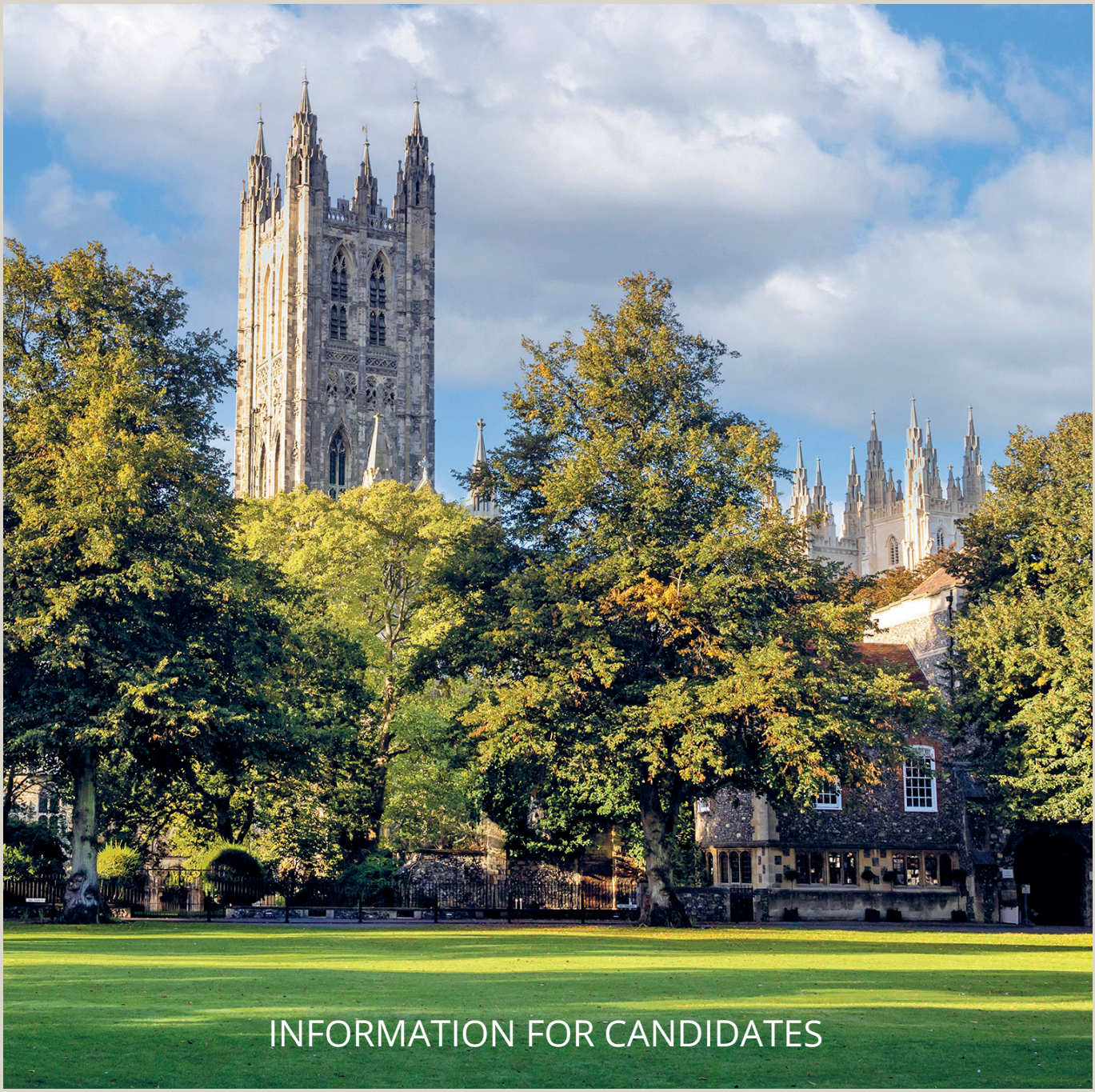
THE
KING'S SCHOOL
CANTERBURY

HR Manager



Welcome from The Head

Dear Candidate,

Many thanks indeed for your interest in this role as HR Manager at The King's School Canterbury.

King's is a simply wonderful place to live and to work. Since joining as Head in September 2023, I have been struck by the remarkable warmth of the welcome that I have received here and by the friendliness, mutual respect and authenticity of the relationships between staff and pupils.

Our incredibly rich and broad curriculum and co-curricular programme create an environment where it feels that anything is possible, where pupils are known and supported as individuals, and where they are encouraged to pursue their own unique path through King's and beyond.

Around 75% of our pupils are boarders (equal numbers of boys and girls) and our pupil body is drawn from a range of backgrounds both at home and abroad. We have a generous bursary provision and have recently launched an ambitious campaign to turbo charge this and to further widen access to our School. With this diverse and inclusive community, global mindedness and open-mindedness are hallmarks of our School. Pupils achieve excellent outcomes in external examinations, but a King's education looks far beyond this. Our remarkably broad curriculum and our enrichment programme serve to develop pupils as thinkers, and as learners, and prepares them to make a positive mark on the world beyond school. We also want to ensure that pupils enjoy their time with us – that their school days are filled with joy, exploration and discovery.

King's is also a wonderful place to work. Staff here are talented, committed and collegial, and there is a culture of mutual respect that runs through the whole community. Canterbury itself is a vibrant and beautiful city, with excellent transport links to London and the wider South East, and the School offers a strong package of benefits and professional development opportunities. We want the people who work here to feel as supported and stretched as our pupils do.

I do look forward to meeting you in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Jude Lowson, Head

About King's

The King's School Canterbury is one of the oldest schools in the world, tracing its origins to the arrival of St Augustine in England and the foundation of his monastery in Canterbury in 597 AD. Re-founded by Royal Charter in 1541, the School has been shaping young people for well over a thousand years. Today it is a co-educational, day and boarding school educating pupils from the age of three to eighteen, and the group comprises three schools based in and around Canterbury, alongside a growing family of overseas schools.

A King's education is inspired, not constrained, by tradition. Across all its schools, the emphasis falls on intellectual curiosity, the development of the whole person, and preparation for the lives pupils will lead beyond King's. The School is particularly celebrated for its music, the creative and performing arts, and the breadth of its co-curricular life. High levels of pastoral care run through everything the group does.

Our Schools

The King's School, Canterbury educates pupils from 13 to 18, with just over 915 pupils on roll, of whom around 650 are boarders. The School sits at the heart of one of England's most remarkable cities, occupying buildings in and around the Precincts of Canterbury Cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. There are six boys' boarding houses, seven girls' boarding houses and four day houses. King's has always welcomed pupils from across the world, and the diversity of its community is one of the hallmarks of the school.

Junior King's occupies 80 acres on the banks of the River Stour in Sturry, three miles from Canterbury. Originally founded in 1879 in the Cathedral Precincts, the School moved to its current site in 1929. Set around a sixteenth-century Manor House and Tithe Barn, the school educates over 365 pupils from Nursery through to Year 8. It is a school with its own distinctive character and ethos, offering exceptional pastoral care alongside a broad, creative curriculum and outstanding co-curricular provision. The great majority of pupils progress to King's Senior School at 13.

The International College, launched in 2018, provides a pathway into British education for international students aged 13 to 17. Located in a purpose-built, award-winning building on the Malthouse campus, it offers a one-year fast-track GCSE programme and welcomes over 70 students from across the world each year. Students integrate fully with the Senior School for co-curricular activities, and most go on to join King's for Sixth Form study.

Overseas, King's has established international schools in Shenzhen, China and Phnom Penh, Cambodia, with two further schools due to open shortly in Cairo and Bengaluru. Each school carries the King's commitment to academic and co-curricular excellence into its local setting, offering a British education with a genuinely global perspective.

HR Department

The Human Resources Department plays a central role in supporting the School's people strategy by delivering a professional, customer-focused and responsive HR service to more than 1,000 employees across the School. Working in partnership with leaders at all levels, the department ensures the School attracts, supports, develops and retains a highly skilled workforce while maintaining the highest standards of employment practice, safeguarding and legal compliance.

Led by the Director of HR (1.0 FTE), the department comprises the HR Manager (1.0 FTE), HR Manager (Recruitment) (1.0 FTE), Learning & Development Manager (0.6 FTE), three HR Officers (2.25 FTE), Junior HR Officer (1.0 FTE), HR Assistant (1.0 FTE), two Recruitment Assistants (1.0 FTE) and a part-time HR Systems Consultant (0.1 FTE).

The department provides expert support across the employee lifecycle, delivering operational HR services including onboarding, employee relations, performance management, absence management, policy development, learning and development, HR systems, workforce reporting and recruitment. Working collaboratively, the team supports both teaching and professional services staff across the School, providing practical advice and guidance to managers while ensuring compliance with employment legislation and safeguarding requirements.

The HR team is committed to delivering a proactive, efficient and solutions-focused service, developing management capability, supporting organisational change and driving continuous improvement. Through strong partnerships with leaders and a focus on operational excellence, the department helps create a positive, inclusive and high-performing working environment where employees are supported to thrive and contribute to the continued success of the School.

The Role

The HR Manager is a key leadership role within the Human Resources function, responsible for delivering an exceptional, customer-focused HR service that enables the School's strategic objectives, drives performance and encourages employee engagement.

Leading a team of HR Officers and HR Assistant, the postholder will ensure the efficient delivery of operational HR services across the employee lifecycle (excluding recruitment), while acting as a trusted HR business partner to senior leaders and managers. The role requires a strong employee relations focus, with responsibility for managing complex and sensitive casework, coaching leaders on people-related matters and driving best practice across the School.

While providing leadership and oversight of the HR Operations team, the HR Manager will also maintain personal ownership of a portfolio of operational HR activities and strategic projects, ensuring a hands-on, visible and responsive HR presence across the organisation.

STAFF

Key Responsibilities

HR Operations Leadership

- Lead, manage and develop a high-performing team of four HR Officers, one HR Assistant and 1 part-time Systems Consultant.
- Oversee the delivery of operational HR services.
- Establish, review and continuously improve HR processes, systems and service standards.
- Allocate workload effectively and ensure priorities are managed effectively.
- Monitor team performance, providing coaching, guidance and professional development opportunities.
- Ensure the accuracy, integrity and confidentiality of HR records and data.
- Develop and monitor key HR metrics, identifying trends and opportunities for improvement.
- Act as the escalation point for complex HR issues and operational challenges.

Strategic HR Partnering

- Develop strong and credible relationships with senior leaders, Heads of Department and managers across the School.
- Provide pragmatic and commercially sound HR guidance.
- Build management capability through coaching.
- Challenge constructively and influence decision-making to ensure alignment with employment law, policy and best practice.
- Partner with stakeholders to identify people-related risks and develop proactive solutions.
- Support organisational change initiatives and drive effective people plans.

Employee Relations

- Lead on complex and high-risk employee relations matters, including:
- Disciplinary and grievance cases
- Capability and performance management
- Absence management
- Workplace investigations
- Redundancy and organisational change consultations
- Safeguarding-related employment matters
- Support and advise managers through formal hearings and appeal processes.
- Ensure consistent application of policies and procedures across the School.
- Minimise organisational risk through proactive and legally compliant case management.

Operational HR Delivery

- The HR Manager will retain direct responsibility for a range of operational HR activities, including:
- Drafting employment policies and procedures and implementation of new or revised legislation.
- Producing HR reports, workforce analysis and management information.
- Supporting HR projects and service improvement initiatives.
- Delivering training and briefing sessions for managers.

HR Systems and Data

- Maintain oversight of HR systems and workforce data.
- Ensure accurate reporting and meaningful workforce insights.
- Identify opportunities to improve automation, reporting and operational efficiency.
- Support system enhancements and HR digital transformation initiatives where appropriate.

The Person

Essential Qualifications

- CIPD Level 7 qualification or above, or equivalent professional experience.
- Commitment to continuing professional development.

Essential Experience

- Significant experience in a senior generalist HR role.
- Proven experience of managing and developing HR teams.
- Extensive employee relations experience, including complex case management.
- Experience partnering with senior stakeholders and influencing decision-making.
- Experience leading operational HR services and process improvement.
- Strong understanding of and demonstrated application of employment law and HR best practice.

Desirable Experience

- Experience implementing or enhancing HR systems.
- Experience supporting organisational change and workforce transformation.
- Experience within an independent school, education or similarly regulated environment.
- Experience of safeguarding and safer recruitment requirements.

Knowledge and Skills

- Expert knowledge of UK employment legislation and employee relations practice.
- Strong coaching, influencing and relationship-building skills.
- Ability to balance demanding operational delivery with analysis and planning.
- Excellent investigation, analytical and problem-solving skills.
- Strong communication skills.
- Ability to manage multiple priorities in a fast-paced environment.
- High level of discretion, integrity and professionalism.
- Strong customer service ethos and commitment to continuous improvement.

Applications

Applications should be submitted online through the King's school website and should include a CV and Cover Letter by 27 July 2026. Provisional interview dates during w/c 3 August.

If you have any queries please contact the HR Recruitment Team: recruitment@kings-school.co.uk.

Working at King's

Hear from our staff what it's like to work at The King's School.

Benefits

Salary
£50,000 for a full-time position, all year round.

Professional Development
Funded training and CPD opportunities.

Annual Leave
25 days holiday, plus 8 bank holidays and 2 Bursary days.

Pension
The school offers a generous defined contribution salary sacrifice pension scheme with the option of enhanced contributions through Royal London.

Life Assurance
All employees are automatically enrolled into a life assurance scheme that pays benefits to dependents.

Enhanced family leave entitlements
The school support colleagues to balance work and live and offer enhnced maternity, paternity and adoption benefits.

Employee Assistance Programme
A free confidential helpline available 7 days a week, 365 days a year and the option of accessing face to face counselling.

Sports Centre
All employees have gold membership with access to the pool, gym and other facilities.

Cycle to Work Scheme
The school operate a salary sacrifice cycle scheme which could provide savings of up to 40%, dependent on salary and cycle cost.

Eye Care
Regular VDU users can receive a financial contribution to the cost of both eye tests and glasses.

Financial Advice
King's facilitates regular free impartial financial advice to all employees.

Lunch
Staff enjoy lunch together in our school dining rooms during term time.

Safeguarding

The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Applicants will be required to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The School may carry out online searches on shortlisted applicants and all applicants will be required to provide details of their online profile, including social media accounts, as part of their application.

The post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. The School is therefore permitted to ask job applicants to declare all convictions and cautions on a self-declaration form in advance of attending an interview (including those which are “spent” unless they are “protected” under the DBS filtering rules) in order to assess their suitability to work with children.

Our commitment to Diversity, Inclusion & Equality

King's is committed to fostering a welcoming and inclusive community where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect. We seek to recruit staff who share our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion, and who are dedicated to creating an environment in which every pupil and colleague can thrive.

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