

SEVENOAKS SCHOOL

JOB DESCRIPTION



Brief for the position of Director of Finance, Sevenoaks School





The School

Founded in 1432, Sevenoaks School enjoys the distinction of being one of the UK's leading schools. A tradition of innovation and excellence has seen Sevenoaks develop into a large co-educational HMC day and boarding school, its constituency extending both locally and across the globe. The school now offers a rigorous as well as a rounded education for over 1,000 pupils from the age of 11 to 18. The campus affords a safe, attractive, and in parts spectacular environment in which to learn and grow. Sevenoaks earned the accolade of Sunday Times Independent Secondary School of the Year in 2008, adding to its worldwide reputation as a centre of excellence and as a flagship for the International Baccalaureate.

The school aims to continue its outstanding record of academic achievement, pastoral care and co-curricular opportunity. Academic excellence is achieved by bright, motivated students, inspired by highly qualified and dedicated teachers in well-resourced classrooms. The school has over 150 teaching staff, who are well supported by a large number of support staff. A professional team of specialist tutors, boarding house staff and year heads ensures that the pupils are happy and receive expert care and support, while the mutual respect shared by students and staff helps to generate a harmonious and purposeful atmosphere. State-of-the-art facilities, together with high level instruction, provide opportunities for pupils to participate in a wide variety of sports and the performing arts and other activities.

Every pupil is encouraged to be curious, creative, critically

aware, and to develop his or her passion and talent to the full. Life is fast-paced, dynamic, and expectations are high. At the same time, the school seeks to cultivate in its pupils the habit of reflection on their learning, and on how they contribute to society more broadly. A powerful global network of alumni participates in a varied range of events in support of the school.

The school's global outlook promotes the principles of tolerance and open-mindedness. Regular assemblies, tutor group meetings and a programme of talks help to foster the social and emotional welfare of the pupils, while a long tradition of service and local and international charity projects advances a core set of values across the student body. Ambitious but principled, confident and compassionate, the pupils are prepared for leadership in an ever more complex world.

About 350 pupils board in the seven boarding houses, including the Girls' International House, opened in 1977, and the International Centre (for boys) which was founded in 1962. Students originate from some 40 countries worldwide.

All of the 400 plus Sixth Form students pursue the International Baccalaureate Diploma, a programme the school has delivered for over 30 years. The Diploma is an ideal preparation for university and for work in a world of global competition. All 210 leaving students each year progress to the world's top universities, including around 40 to Oxford and Cambridge, and 25 or more to the US. They do so with an enlarged capacity for independent thought and intellectual risk-taking, a strong appetite for learning, and equipped with the skills and personal qualities necessary for a happy and successful life.



Further information about the school can be found at: www.sevenoaksschool.org .

The Campus

The school is situated in the Kent market town of Sevenoaks, and has a prime position at the top of the High Street. The 100-acre site, which includes a number of listed buildings, is beautifully landscaped and adjoins the medieval deer park of Knole, yet London is only a 30-minute train journey away. Gatwick Airport is only 30 minutes away, and there are good transport links to other London airports and the Channel Tunnel.

The school has first class resources and facilities, including a superb sports centre (The Sennocke Centre) opened in 2005. A new state-of-the-art performing arts centre (The Space), which provides four outstanding venues for music and drama, was opened in 2010. The next major projects will be a Science and Technology Centre and a Sixth Form Centre, which the school plans to open in 2018, and new boarding accommodation which it is planned should be ready for occupation by 2019.

Governance

There are three meetings of the Governing Body annually, and each of the committees (Governance & Nominations, Education, Finance & Property), meets two to four times annually. The Governing Body is responsible for the strategic direction of the school and oversight of its operation and

control of its property and funds. It is a company limited by guarantee (4908949), as well as a registered charity (1101358). Working groups are also set up from time to time to examine particular issues and, in this context, there is a Masterplan Steering Group and a Bursaries Working Group. The Head and Bursar, to whom the day-to-day running of the school is delegated, attend the meetings of the Governing Body and its sub-committees. The Director of Finance attends meetings of the Finance & Property Committee and the full Governing Body.

Sevenoaks School Foundation is a separate registered charity (307923) and has similar objects to those of the Governing Body of Sevenoaks School. The primary role of the Trustees of the Foundation is to hold in trust the assets of the Foundation, having due regard to their long-term development. Accordingly, the Foundation has concentrated on the development of new facilities, including raising the necessary funds, both from banks and donors. The Trustees meet on at least two occasions each year. The Director of Finance is the Financial Accountant to Sevenoaks School Foundation and attends meetings of the Trustees.

Finance

The school has an annual turnover of over £27million. Staff costs represent 60% of expenditure and the aim is to generate a surplus of between 15% and 20% per annum which can be applied to capital investment.



Sennocke Services Limited is a subsidiary company of Sevenoaks School that carries out enterprise activities outside the objects of the school.

Sevenoaks School Foundation receives buildings rental income from the school and raises income from fundraising activities which, together with borrowed funds, is applied to major building projects and other strategic aims of the school.

The Role

Reporting to the Bursar, the Director of Finance is a senior member of the school staff and is responsible for all financial matters including:

- Production of management and financial accounts and liaison with the school's auditors, bankers and investment advisers
- Preparation of budgets, control of expenditure, credit control, and observance of VAT and HMRC regulations
- Medium and long range financial planning, including sensitivity and scenario analysis and the formulation of long term funding requirements
- Preparation of ad-hoc financial analyses and reports
- Management of funds and investments
- Leading a finance team that is currently made up of 4 people, including a Finance Manager

- Together with the Bursar and Director of Personnel, determining the salary budgets and forecasts and advising on the appropriate capture of salary information for management accounting purposes

- Together with the Bursar, the preparation of financial briefing papers for meetings of Governors and Trustees

- Together with the Bursar and other colleagues, in particular the Director of Information Systems, determining the way forward in modernising financial systems, presenting the case for funding and implementing authorised new or updated systems, alongside any associated changes in staffing and working practices.

The Person

The successful candidate will:

- Be a qualified accountant, and demonstrate a high level of management accounting expertise, in addition to the expertise needed to produce annual financial accounts
- Have a good track record in leading a finance team, working closely with other senior colleagues as part of a wider management team, and have excellent interpersonal skills, including the ability to communicate with non-finance staff about financial matters
- Easily able to produce, analyse and interpret financial information, and provide appropriate advice to the Bursar, Governors, Trustees and colleagues



Experience and qualities

- Have excellent broad based digital skills and be able to support development of these in others. A high level of expertise in Excel is essential plus a good level of competency in Word. Database report writing skills would be an advantage.
- Have strong analytical and problem solving skills and a proactive and positive approach to change management.
- Have excellent interpersonal and communication skills able to relate well with people at all levels in the school.
- Be a leader and team player, adaptable, innovative, enthusiastic, resilient, have energy and drive.
- Prior experience in an educational environment would be an advantage but is not essential, provided an interest in and understanding of the sector can be demonstrated.

Working Hours

The contractual hours for this role are 40 hours per week, usually 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, all year round. However flexibility in these hours will be required of the successful candidate, not only to ensure meeting key deadlines but also as Governor and Trustee meetings often end after this time.

Information for Applicants

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- The position will attract a salary of up to £70,000
- Membership of the school's defined contribution

pension scheme for support staff is available, which includes life insurance. The school will match personal pension contributions up to 6% of salary

- Personal private health insurance is available, if required
- Holiday entitlement is 33 days per annum, including statutory public holidays. Holiday can only be taken during the school holidays
- Fee discounts are available for the children of members of staff (subject to them meeting the entry requirements)
- Lunch is provided together with membership of the school's fitness centre

Child Protection

Under the Protection of Children Act 1999, as amended, employment at Sevenoaks School is classified as a regulated position and exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. An Enhanced Disclosure Certificate from the Disclosure and Barring Service will be obtained before the successful applicant is permitted to start work.

The post-holder's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children with whom they come into contact will be to adhere to and ensure compliance with the School's Child Protection Policy Statement at all times. If in the course of carrying out their duties the post-holder becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children in the school he/she must report any concerns to the Deputy Head (Pastoral).



How to Apply

To apply please visit the school's website, www.sevenoaksschool.org/vacancies to complete an online application form.

Please contact gtj@sevenoaksschool.org by email if you have any queries about the role or the application process.

The closing date for applications is midday 15th August 2016.

Sevenoaks School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.