



LONGACRE SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT PREPARATORY SCHOOL FOR BOYS AND GIRLS AGE 2-11 YEARS

Brief for the appointment of

# HEAD



ODGERS BERNDTSON

# READY FOR THE NEXT ADVENTURE



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# BACKGROUND

Longacre School is a leading, co-educational preparatory school for boys and girls aged 2 to 11 years.

Situated in a beautiful rural location on the outskirts of the picturesque village of Shamley Green, between Guildford and Cranleigh, the School offers a vibrant and nurturing environment where children flourish. Longacre has strong pupil numbers which have grown over the last five years. The School's financial standing is robust allowing the community to look to an exciting future with real ambition.

The school buildings comprise the large original house, dating back to 1902, which is complemented by modern, purpose-built classrooms. Facilities are impressive and include a beautiful and naturally lit dining room, sports hall, creative arts studio, drama yurt, woodland, astroturf, sports fields, an adventure playground and climbing wall. Longacre has a proud history and the motto of the school's founder, Ursula Fairfax-Cholmeley, "a happy heart goes all the way" is still very much part of the school's ethos.

The purposeful atmosphere at Longacre is apparent as soon as you enter the school. Children are valued as individuals

and are encouraged to fulfil their potential in every facet of school life. Personal and social development is highly valued, enabling pupils to grow in confidence as they mature.

Longacre is a community where parents are welcome. The School has a supportive PTA. Parents are kept well informed about school events and their children's progress through a weekly photography based newsletter, formal and informal meetings and written reports. The Head and Staff work closely with parents to ensure that their children are happy, successful and fulfilled.

The School welcomed the Independent Schools Inspectorate in the Summer Term of 2022 as part of their regular schedule. This comprised an Educational Quality Inspection, wherein Longacre was adjudged to be Excellent in both Personal Development and Academic and other Achievements. There was also a focussed compliance inspection, in which the School was compliant in all areas.



'A HAPPY HEART GOES ALL THE WAY'

## SCHOOL VALUES AND AIMS

- Longacre believes that every child has **excellence** that should be celebrated and every child should receive **support** in other areas where required.
  - Longacre believes childhood needs to be **protected** and children deserve to have **fun** at school.
  - Longacre believes in a **holistic** education.
  - Encouraging problem solving, critical thinking, outdoor learning, teamwork and leadership for all.
  - Running a large range of extracurricular clubs and activities to support children's interests.
  - Making sure that all children are involved in music, art, drama and performance.
  - Working with parents to ensure the best possible outcomes for their children.
  - Making sure children have fun as well as being prepared for 11+.
  - Treating all children as individuals, from supporting their learning to enabling them to go to the widest range of destination schools.
- Longacre aims to ensure that children are ready for the next adventure. The School achieves this by:
- Providing a holistic education – core subjects, as well as languages, humanities and science – both in the classroom and outdoors.
  - Stretching children who are flying, and igniting the spark where this has dimmed.



## Learning Philosophy

Longacre's learning philosophy is inextricably linked to the school motto: "a happy heart goes all the way". Children can be happy when they feel that they are learning, progressing, finding fulfilment, challenge, recognition and excitement in their studies. Critical to this is the relationship between the pupil and the teacher, with regular feedback, clear targets and aspiration without pressure, all being hallmarks of a Longacre education. The learning philosophy is most apparent in Longacre's 7 Cs, which feature in every lesson and which are understood by the children from their start in Early Years to the top of the School in Form VI. Longacre's learning philosophy is fun and exciting, with a strong emphasis on imagination and practical activities. Children come to school to discover, not to be lectured.

## Curriculum and Co-curriculum

Longacre seeks to deliver an outstanding core curriculum, ensuring that children have the best possible foundation to their education. Maths and English are of utmost importance in their own right and as the benchmark subjects for 11+ tests. However, Longacre is committed to holistic learning, with languages (French and Spanish), humanities and science all featuring prominently. Physical activity is crucial, with children receiving PE and games time as well as Outdoor Leadership sessions.

The commitment to outdoor learning sees many lessons happening outdoors. Every year, pupils enjoy an empty classroom day, staying outside for all their lessons that day.

This wide-ranging curriculum, and co-curriculum, underpins the School's existing high academic standards and provides significant opportunities for

every pupil to succeed. There is a strong ability of using standardised data to track pupil progress and the school is committed to evidencing the 'value added' nature of its education. As part of this, the School is on course to secure NACE accreditation over the next twelve months.

The children are predominantly classroom based up to the end of Form III and taught by specialist subject teachers thereafter. French and Computing are taught from Reception onwards and all Pre-Prep children are taught Forest School, Games and Music by specialist subject Staff. Children are extended wherever possible through 'chilli challenges' and regularly progress ahead of the National Curriculum guidelines.

Children who would benefit from additional help can receive specialist one-to-one tuition. This is provided by the Learning Support Department and peripatetic teachers where appropriate.

Children are exceptionally well prepared for 11+ entry to a range of senior schools and Longacre pupils have an excellent track record of achieving their first choice of senior school. In addition, Longacre pupils achieve an array of scholarships including academic, art, music, sport and drama. Pupils are supported in their transitions to traditional public schools as well as to the local excellent state schools.

Despite being an all-embracing school, pupils consistently gain entry to a wide range of prestigious senior schools. There's no such thing as a perfect senior school, but we pride ourselves on finding the right 'fit' for children to be able to thrive.

2022/23 Form VI leavers went on to no fewer than 20 different senior schools, with very nearly half of them being offered academic or other scholarships.

## Pastoral Care

The School continues to advance its educational remit, whilst at the same time having wellbeing at the centre of its ethos and a high level of pastoral care. The Teachers work hard to ensure that all the children are catered for as individuals. Children are provided ample time with their Form Teacher to share any anxieties and, equally, celebrate their successes.

The School is inclusive and provides education to children from a diverse range of backgrounds. Children with a broad range of abilities are supported. The School works in partnership with parents to ensure the development of every pupil in the School, with additional support from external providers when required. Longacre believes that self-confidence, emotional intelligence and mindfulness are invaluable assets that can be learned at this age and thus position the pupils for success in their future lives.

Longacre was recently shortlisted for the Muddy Stiletto award for 'Outstanding Pastoral Care'.





## BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

### Performances and Concerts

All children are given the opportunity to perform in concerts and plays during their time in the Prep School. All Pre-prep children feature in the annual Nativity plays, as well as there being smaller scale opportunities for performance. This does not mean that every child will want to be involved in the limelight; some may find designing scenery, working on lighting and sound desk or being a stagehand preferable and all of this is supported.

### Educational Visits

Longacre welcomes a multitude of visitors into school from authors and artists to guest speakers and representatives from local charities. Pupils also regularly visit residents of Elmbridge Village proving them with an ability to share experiences and learn from people outside their normal surroundings.

The children journey out of school at least once a term on outings designed to further complement the curriculum. The youngest pupils visit an aquarium and the planetarium whilst older children visit art galleries in London, historic dockyards and the battlefields in France.

### Residential Trips

Residential trips are offered to children in Forms III, IV, V and VI.

In Form III the children spend two nights at the Sayers Croft centre in Ewhurst. In Form IV the children spend two nights at the Lodge Hill centre near Pulborough. Both venues are outdoor pursuits centres which have a wide range of activities from archery and abseiling to sand karting and team building exercises.

In Form V the children spend a week at 'Land and Wave' in Dorset where they undertake a range of water-based sports such as coasteering and kayaking and learn a host of bushcraft skills. In their final year, the children spend a week in France where they visit the French battlefields and learn to apply the conversational French they have been learning in lessons.

### Clubs

Longacre currently has eighty-five clubs on offer every week. Following input from pupils, further clubs are introduced and offerings adapted. There is an 85% uptake of pupils attending clubs across the wide range on offer and on average each pupil attends five clubs each week.



## Leadership and Governance

There are currently thirteen Governors whose experience covers a wide area of expertise, including education, corporate business, law, property, finance, medicine, safety, HR and recruitment. The full Board meets termly. There are four committees. Education, Welfare, Finance and Estates, and Governance, all of which meet regularly during each term. The Governors are actively engaged in the School, with particular involvement and assistance by the Chair of Governors with the Head.

In addition to the Head, the Senior Leadership Team comprises eight individuals for whom the Head has line management responsibility: the Bursar, Deputy Head, Director of Studies, Assistant Head (Wellbeing), Head of Pre-Prep, Director of Marketing and Admissions, Registrar and Head's PA, and the SENCo.

For further information, please visit the School's website at: [www.longacreschool.co.uk](http://www.longacreschool.co.uk)



# THE ROLE

## Overall Aim

The Head is responsible, directly and by delegation, for the leadership and management of the School.

The Head is also responsible for the care and development of each pupil, the pastoral care and welfare of all pupils and Staff and for maintaining excellent academic standards within the School.

Longacre School's new Head will lead, motivate and develop the School and its Staff so that it fulfils the academic, pastoral and social needs of pupils whilst promoting the School's ethos of 'a happy heart goes all the way'. The Head will provide excellent, broad-based education in line with the School's ethos, celebrating every child's success as well as providing support. The Head will therefore enable pupils to gain the maximum they can from their holistic education, which is not only measured by academic results.

## Key Duties and Responsibilities

The Head is responsible, directly and by delegation, for:

### Strategic Vision and Direction

- Developing and articulating the School's vision for the future, in consultation with the Governors.

- Developing the School's strategic plan together with the Bursar, and ensuring it is implemented.
- Always fostering and promoting the School's ethos, standards, values and culture, for Staff, parents and pupils.
- Continually seeking ways to enhance and develop the School, making recommendations to the Governors as appropriate.
- Being aware of and responding to strategic considerations and the wider external environment, being agile and able to adapt plans as necessary.
- Preparing and updating the School Development Plan, its associated Implementation Plan and Self Evaluation Form.
- Leading on and implementing, in partnership with the Bursar, the School's Estate Masterplan.
- Reporting to the Board on progress towards the strategic priorities and the achievement of Board policies.





### Professional Leadership and Management

- Providing overall leadership to all Staff within the School.
- Ensuring that roles, responsibilities, expectations and standards of performance for members of the Senior Leadership Team are clear and delivered upon.
- Providing support and guidance to line reports, whilst empowering them to work independently.
- Taking an open and trusting approach to leadership, inspiring colleagues to drive the successful operational and academic functioning of the School.
- The appointment of all Staff, with the exception of those Staff who report directly to the Bursar.
- Leading, managing and motivating all academic and support Staff with, and through, the Senior Leadership Team.
- The assessment, appraisal, guidance, support and professional development of all Staff both directly and through delegation.
- Hold Staff to account, monitoring and evaluating their performance.
- Have an open and participative style, with an inclusive and empowering approach to management, and an ability to build trust and engender team spirit.

### Marketing, Admissions, Communication and Engagement

- Ensuring effective marketing and admissions strategies are in place across all media types.
- Recruiting a full complement of pupils, and overseeing admission and entrance procedures.
- Developing and maintaining good relationships with local nurseries and both local state and local independent schools.
- Acting as a figurehead and being personally visible and actively involved in the School's many events and activities.
- Establishing and maintaining good relationships and regular contact with all senior schools, especially local ones, and advising parents on suitable choices for their children.
- Maintaining a detailed understanding of the selection and admissions processes at 11+, and supporting parents and pupils in navigating the entrance to their next schools.
- Maintaining good communications and relationships within the School and with key stakeholders including neighbours, the local community, professional bodies and former pupils and parents.
- Personally promoting the successes of the School, Staff and pupils.
- Developing good professional relationships with parents of existing pupils.

**Academic and Educational Leadership**

- Ensuring an environment that promotes ambitious, outstanding and inspirational teaching and effective learning.
- Staying fully up to date in trends of education, the requirements of secondary schools and the National Curriculum and where appropriate recommend policy changes to Governors.
- Determining, organising, implementing and monitoring the School's academic curriculum and extra-curricular programme.
- Developing and ensuring a wide-ranging programme of co-curricular activities, including sport, drama, arts and music.
- Ensuring all required arrangements are in place for inspections of the School and ensure that the School's excellent inspection record is maintained.
- Maintaining and monitoring an environment that promotes and safeguards the welfare of pupils and Staff as a priority.
- Planning and implementing an effective curriculum and School timetable.
- Strong understanding of pupil data analysis and working with Staff to utilise this for academic and pastoral planning.
- Planning and implementing the academic organisation of the School.
- Monitoring pupils' progress and ensuring that parents are provided with regular feedback.
- Creating the appropriate balance between all areas of School life and activity, including traditional academics, art, drama, music, sport and community involvement.

**Management of School Finances and Operations**

- Working in partnership with the Bursar to set budgets and to ensure the Governors are fully briefed on the School's resources and development needs.
- Ensuring that financial governance procedures are followed including consultation with the Governors and in accordance with delegated authorities where needed.
- In collaboration with the Bursar, being responsible for the overall financial management of the School and being accountable for the use of all funds and resources.
- Being an effective and supportive leader for the Bursar who manages the School's non-academic functions, and for the Director of Marketing and Admissions.
- Ensuring operational matters are dealt with efficiently and effectively, whilst also securing value for money.
- Maintaining a strong grasp of financial planning and budget management of the School and ensuring its sound financial performance.
- In collaboration with the Bursar, prioritising capital expenditure, ensuring appropriate recommendations to the Governors.
- In conjunction with the Bursar, ensuring the School's continuing compliance with its loan obligations in terms of covenant adherence, interest payments and capital repayments.
- Overseeing the overall financial performance of the School, in which he/she will be assisted by the Bursar.



**Governance**

- Working closely and openly with the Chair of Governors.
- Maintaining open lines of communication to develop and maintain good relationships with all Governors, in particular the Chairs of the Board committees.
- Providing all relevant information, highlighting risks, offering recommendations and advice to the Board of Governors, in a sufficient and timely manner, to enable them to meet their responsibilities.
- Ensuring risks are identified, monitored and mitigated, taking responsibility for the School's risk matrices.
- Ensuring the School meets all its legal and compliance obligations, for example but not limited to, compliance with Safeguarding, Keeping Children Safe in Education, employment law, and all Health and Safety regulations.
- Setting the highest standards for governance within the School.

- Submitting policy proposals for consideration by the Board.
- Assisting the Board in the development of tactical and strategic policies and implementing these policies.
- Implementing policies agreed by the Governors and contributing to the ethos and vision for the future through strategic leadership and planning.

**Accountability**

- The Head is appointed by the Governors and is accountable to them, with particular contact and accountability with the Chair of Governors.
- The Head will work with the Board of Governors, drawing on their experience and expertise, to fulfil all the duties and responsibilities for the proper governance of the School.
- The Head must ensure that the Chair of Governors and the Board receive timely and appropriate information on all relevant matters.
- The Head and Bursar attend all meetings of the Board of Governors and its Committees.



# THE PERSON

## Candidate Person Specification

The successful candidate will have the personal qualities to lead, motivate and inspire the School, and will have:

### Qualifications and Experience

- A good university degree with additional management and leadership qualifications an advantage.
- Successful teaching experience, ideally with a teaching qualification in a leading preparatory or junior school setting.
- A proven track record of effective senior leadership and management gained in a successful school.
- Substantial and successful teaching and curriculum development and delivery experience.
- Substantial experience in giving pastoral support to children and Staff to be able to continue to lead Longacre's award-winning pastoral care.
- In depth understanding of the 2-11 age group and the opportunities available to them.
- Experience of engaging, building and maintaining good relationships with the whole School community including third party providers.
- Experience of strategic planning and implementation.
- Experience of building an inclusive and supportive working environment.
- Experience of the management of people, with a track record of building effective and motivated teams.
- Be a member of IAPS and able to represent the School on other bodies that the Governors deem suitable.





### Skills and Qualities

- The ability to lead the School and the Senior Leadership Team.
- Excellent knowledge of the academic requirements of an independent school across the 2-11 age range.
- The ability to delegate and empower Staff whilst retaining sufficient knowledge and interest.
- A leadership and management style that values the contributions of others.
- The ability to coach Staff according to needs and to flex the style accordingly.
- Excellent communicator.
- Detailed knowledge of the most up to date safeguarding legislation and requirements.
- Working understanding of Early Years and learning through play, as well as the Pre-Prep and Prep age groups.
- The ability to be robust when needed and comfortable in dealing with the range of matters that a Head faces.
- Be computer literate, and a confident user of IT for communications and management purposes.
- The ability to, and experience of, supervising operational management responsibilities, for example but not limited to financial, human, and physical.
- Excellent presentational skills including the ability to undertake planned and impromptu public speaking to audiences of varying size and age groups.
- Excellent decision making and problem-solving skills.
- The ability to oversee a significant range of areas of expertise on an ongoing basis with appropriate prioritisation including academics, HR, admissions, pastoral, finance, estates, SEN.
- Understanding of technology requirements and developments within education.
- The ability to work with conflicting demands and timescales.
- A sound understanding of financial projections, monitoring and budgetary control.
- The ability to establish within the parental body the confidence that the education of their children is in professional and caring hands.
- A demonstrable understanding of the rapidly changing aspirations of parents and needs of children aged 2-11 years.
- The ability to market and promote the School effectively through excellent written and verbal communication.
- The ability to construct written material for marketing, presentations and to clearly and appropriately get a point across.
- The ability to plan and think strategically, and actively contribute to Board discussions on organisational imperatives, priorities and strategy.
- To have the self-discipline to work within predetermined budgets and an understanding of the School's financial environment.
- Show a commitment to sound principles of management through the establishment of clear standards of effective delegation, time management and deliverability of performance.

### Personal Attributes

- Commitment to the ethos of Longacre School.
- A passion for the intellectual, cultural and extra-curricular development of children aged 2-11 years and the desire to prepare pupils for the world.
- Have a passionate commitment to the academic, personal and social development of pupils, and understand the needs and concerns of pupil age groups, ethnic backgrounds and parental ambitions.
- Demonstrable commitment to his/her own continuing development in order to bring up to date thinking to their leadership.
- Enthusiastic and dedicated leader with gravitas.
- Have appropriate self-confidence, and inspire confidence, whilst remaining considerate of the needs of others, with an ability to deal sensitively with conflict.
- A visible, empathetic, and approachable leader.
- Display energy and imagination, with the courage to innovate, and an unwavering commitment to the continued development of the School.
- Promoter of equality and diversity.
- A strong commitment to the pupils and Staff.
- Outstanding judgement, integrity and sense of fairness.
- Creativity.
- Kindness and understanding.
- Possess a strong sense of humour.



# HOW TO APPLY

Longacre School has engaged the services of Odgers Berndtson to assist with the recruitment of their next Head.

The closing date for applications is **Friday 13 October**.

Following a shortlist meeting of the Selection Committee, successful candidates will be invited to the shortlist interviews with the Selection Committee on **Monday 30 October**.

Briefing visits will take place on **6, 7 and 8 November** and final interviews will take place on **Friday 10 November**.

To apply, please submit a comprehensive CV along with a covering letter which sets out your interest in the role and encapsulates the aspects of your experience relevant to the required criteria. Please include current salary details and the names and addresses of three referees. Referees will not be approached until the final stages and not without prior permission from candidates.

The preferred method of application is online at: [www.odgers.com/89611](http://www.odgers.com/89611).

All applications will receive an automated response.

For an initial discussion, please contact:

**Peter Lawrence: +44 (0) 207 529 3055**  
[peter.lawrence@odgersberndtson.com](mailto:peter.lawrence@odgersberndtson.com)

**Isabel Howard: +44 (0) 207 529 3925**  
[isabel.howard@odgersberndtson.com](mailto:isabel.howard@odgersberndtson.com)

## Personal data

In line with GDPR, we ask that you do NOT send us any information that can identify children or any of your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, data concerning health or sex life and sexual orientation, genetic and/or biometric data) in your CV and application documentation. Following this notice, any inclusion of your Sensitive Personal Data in your CV/application documentation will be understood by us as your expressed consent to process this information going forward. Please also remember to not mention anyone's information or details (e.g. referees) who have not previously agreed to their inclusion.

*Longacre School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. A background check, including criminal records check and/or police clearance, will be conducted on all successful applicants.*



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