

SEVENOAKS SCHOOL



APPOINTMENT OF **BURSAR**



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sevenoaks School is a leader in education and innovation. The first UK HMC school to fully adopt the IB, Sevenoaks has long been a pioneering institution operating at the forefront of educational excellence. A world-class, co-educational school, Sevenoaks provides an exceptional education for c.1,200 day and boarding students from over 45 countries, developing independent, intellectually curious and compassionate global citizens.

With the arrival of Jesse Elzinga as Head in September 2020, Sevenoaks is embarking on an exciting new stage in its development. The new Bursar will provide strong strategic, financial, and operational leadership and will be a proactive contributor to the wider direction of the School. S/he will ensure the efficient and imaginative delivery of the School's support services in advancing its educational aims, partnering strategically with the Head and Governors to ensure the School's continued success.

The appointed candidate will bring substantial generalist leadership and management experience with a track record of success in managing complex, multi-disciplinary and sizeable support functions. An accomplished strategic leader, the new Bursar will combine financial acumen and commercial nous with the interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence to contribute as an integral part of the Senior Leadership Team. S/he will have a strong personal ethos of service to others and a commitment to developing people. Applications are encouraged from candidates with education, commercial, charitable, private-sector and public-sector backgrounds.



AN INTRODUCTION TO SEVENOAKS

Sevenoaks is a lively, cosmopolitan and open-minded community. Boarding is an important element in the School's daily life and ethos, while its 600-year history, location and day student body ensure that the School remains firmly grounded in the local community. There are around 400 boarders and around 800 day pupils. International students join the School from over 45 countries worldwide.

Sevenoaks enjoys a position as one of the world's leading independent schools. The School has taught the IB since 1978, and its IB cohort is the largest and one of the most successful in England. The School has been named Independent Secondary School of the Year twice by the Sunday Times (2008 and 2018). It was the second highest achieving large-cohort IB school in the world in 2018 and 2019.

The School was inspected by ISI in 2017 and found to be excellent in all areas in the educational quality inspection and meeting all standards in the regulatory compliance inspection. The inspection report can be found [here](#).

Mission

To provide students with the knowledge, understanding and confidence to be world citizens, empowered to make a profound difference.

Vision

To be a global exemplar for a holistic, independent, co-educational and international education.

Guiding Principles

1. Enquiry
2. Analysis
3. Openness
4. Courage
5. Integrity
6. Wellbeing
7. Empathy



SEVENOAKS SCHOOL FOUNDATION

Sevenoaks is a sector leader in terms of fundraising and development. Over the last six centuries, philanthropy and support from the wider community have been pivotal to the development and advancement of the School.

The Sevenoaks School Foundation was formed in 2004 as a separate charity with independent Trustees.

The campaign for Sevenoaks

The campaign for Sevenoaks School has achieved its target of £15 million by 2018 in support of four strategic priorities. These were: to lead in STEM and IB education with a new Science and Technology Centre and Sixth Form Global Study Centre; to deliver wider access through enhanced bursary provision; to remain innovative in teaching and learning with the launch of the Institutes; and to secure the future of Sevenoaks School through endowment.

The future

Whilst celebrating the success of this campaign, Sevenoaks remains ambitious in its philanthropic goals. The School is committed to addressing the major strategic challenges of access and affordability in a meaningful way. The continued expansion of bursary provision and the establishment of an endowment are key priorities for the Headmaster and Governors. The procurement of a sustainable institutional endowment will be key to ensuring Sevenoaks is able to maintain its position at the forefront of education, providing an exceptional experience for current and future generations.

The new Bursar will work closely with Foundation Trustees and the Executive Director of Advancement with particular focus on the development of a sustainable endowment.



THE CAMPUS OF THE FUTURE

Sevenoaks has an extensive, 100-acre campus with abundant gardens and a charming mix of heritage buildings and cutting-edge architecture. There are over 30 buildings, 100 classrooms, 14 sports pitches, 12 lawns and 1,000 trees. It is a beautiful and spacious learning environment and its location, at the top of Sevenoaks High Street and in the heart of the old town, makes it easily accessible, underpinning the School's connectivity with its immediate local community.

Sevenoaks offers world-class facilities and there has been significant investment in the campus over the course of the last 15 years. The Sennocke Centre, Sevenoaks's sports centre, was opened in 2005, and the Space, the School's performing arts centre, was completed in 2010. In November 2018, the new Science and Technology Centre and Global Study Centre were opened. Finally, in September 2019 we opened Aisher House, a new boarding house for boys. The School plans to begin building a new boarding house for girls in 2021. These transformational new buildings are of exceptional quality and are designed to foster curiosity, experiment and innovation.

Sevenoaks has a strong reputation across humanities, arts and STEM, and aspires to further develop its position as an innovative sector leader across a broad range of disciplines. The recent investment in the campus means these academic ambitions are underpinned by university-quality facilities. The Global Study Centre brings together into the same space for the first time Higher Education, social areas, Sixth Formers and Pastoral staff.

An inspiring teaching and learning environment is critical to the achievement of Sevenoaks's bold educational aims, and the current Masterplan sets out exciting plans for further investment. These include the development of a new Mathematics and Philosophy building and an arts and wellbeing centre as well as the refurbishment of many of the School's heritage buildings.



GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND FINANCES

Governance

The Sevenoaks Governing Body is an ambitious, highly engaged group of individuals with a wide range of skills and professional backgrounds. The Governing Body determines general strategy for the School, delegating its day-to-day running to the Head and the Senior Leadership Team.

The current Chair of Governors is Alison Beckett. She joined the Governing Body in 2013 and became Chair in 2020.

Senior Leadership Team

The Bursar reports directly to the Head.

This is an exciting time to join Sevenoaks as the new Bursar will form a key part of a new Senior Leadership Team. A new Senior Deputy Head has just been appointed and the School is currently seeking a new Deputy Head (Pastoral) and Deputy Head (Co-Curriculum).

The Senior Leadership Team includes:

- Head
- Bursar
- Senior Deputy Head
- Deputy Head (Academic)
- Deputy Head (Pastoral)
- Deputy Head (Co-Curriculum)
- Deputy Head (Staff)
- Executive Director of Advancement (Sevenoaks School Foundation)
- Director of Finance
- Director of Operations



GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND FINANCES

Bursar's Team

There are around 550 staff in total and the Bursar is responsible for approximately 380 of the staff. This large team of full and part-time staff is managed through the following direct reports:

- Director of Finance
- Director of Operations
- Director of Property
- Assistant Bursar (Governance and Compliance)
- Head of IT

Finances

Sevenoaks enjoys a very strong financial position. The School has healthy reserves and generates a good level of cash each year to allow for investment. The campus buildings and land are owned by the Sevenoaks School Foundation and leased to the School.



ROLE DESCRIPTION

The new Bursar will have an exciting opportunity to play a pivotal role in the continued success of this leading independent school. The appointee will be responsible for the successful management of the finances, operations and support services of Sevenoaks, as well as making a significant contribution to the School's strategic direction and fulfilling the role of Clerk to the Governors.

This is a complex generalist remit spanning finance, estates, HR, IT, governance and compliance and the new Bursar will lead and inspire a large, high performing support team. The role requires thoughtful and effective management of these critical areas to ensure not only that the operation of the School runs to the highest possible standards and meets all regulatory and legal requirements, but also that every aspect of those operations serve to support the School in its strategic ambitions.

Key responsibilities

In greater detail, the Bursar's responsibilities will include:

Strategic leadership

- working in close partnership with the Head and the Governing Body to shape the School's short, medium and long-term financial, operational and commercial strategy;
- reviewing, leading and continuously improving the School's risk management and business continuity strategy;
- acting as a strategic partner to the Head and the Governing Body; and
- contributing more widely as a member of the Senior Leadership Team to the longer-term educational aims of the School.

Financial management

- overseeing all aspects of the School's financial management, including financial reporting, budgeting, cash flow, long term financial planning and estate development; and
- developing a strong partnership with the Director of Finance and adding value to this area of work through providing strong strategic and commercial financial leadership.



ROLE DESCRIPTION

Commercial and bursary fundraising

- contributing to the achievement of Sevenoaks's ambition to be a leader in widening access to independent education, ensuring that a Sevenoaks education is accessible to any pupil who might benefit from it, regardless of economic background; and
- working closely with the Executive Director of Advancement on fundraising whilst pursuing other opportunities for non-fee income generation.

People and team management

- providing outstanding leadership and management to the Directors of the multifunctional teams, ensuring that all are supported and challenged to deliver their remits to the highest possible professional standards;
- leading the recruitment and career development of Sevenoaks's 300+ support staff, and embedding an ethos of excellence; and
- ensuring that all support staff are fully aware of Sevenoaks's vision and aims, work in unity and are recognised for their significant contribution to the success of the School.

Operational management

- overseeing the development and maintenance of the campus, working with and through the Director of Property;
- maintaining a robust IT provision, which fulfils academic requirements and also supports all staff in fulfilling their duties;
- ensuring that the School is at all times fully compliant with relevant financial, health and safety, employment and other legislation and regulations;
- acting as the primary point of contact for all legal matters; and
- overseeing the work of the Head of HR and acting as the Head's advisor on all staff matters.

Governance

- as Clerk to the Governors, ensuring both the Governing Body and Foundation Trustees undertake their duties – including legal obligations – in accordance with the appropriate regulations, producing documents on their behalf and servicing meetings of the Board, its sub-committees and the Foundation;
- providing proactive support and advice to the Governing Body, particularly in matters of technical governance; and
- overseeing the Charity Commission and Companies House requirements, as well as internal Governance and compliance policies and regulations.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

The successful candidate will be a highly skilled generalist with a proven track record of success in managing finance, people and resources in a large, complex setting.

A collaborative team player, the new Bursar will deliver strategic and operational developments through outstanding leadership and engagement of others, playing a key role in positioning Sevenoaks to thrive for generations to come.

The School seeks an individual with most or all of the following qualifications, experience, skills, knowledge and personal attributes.

Qualifications and experience

- Education to degree level or equivalent.
- A proven capacity to contribute strategically to the wider development of an organisation while retaining a strong grasp of operational detail.
- A strong track record of managing a range of support services to a high standard.
- Extensive people leadership experience, including the recruitment and development of multi-disciplinary teams.
- Experience of working with a Board of Governors or equivalent committee structure.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Skills and knowledge

- Strong financial literacy with first class analytical skills and the ability to develop long-term financial plans.
- Highly developed interpersonal and communication skills.
- Well-developed commercial skills with strong entrepreneurial instincts.
- An understanding of the Bursar's role as a strategic partner to the Head and Governors.
- Knowledge of charity law and commercial law.

Personal attributes

- The ability to lead by example, empower others and command respect.
- An accomplished communicator at all levels, able to balance robustness with discussion and diplomacy, and able to manage sometimes conflicting priorities.
- The ability to work both independently and as a key team member, with a purposeful, proactive and collegial leadership style.
- A flexible, visible and solution-focused approach, combined with a keen eye for detail and the ability to manage a significant and varied workload. This includes the ability to prioritise and manage unexpected issues calmly, efficiently and in a way which inspires the confidence of all stakeholders.
- A strong sympathy with the School as an academic environment, a charity and a business, and a genuine identification with the values and ethos of Sevenoaks.



APPOINTMENT PROCESS AND HOW TO APPLY

Sevenoaks has retained the services of Perrett Laver to help identify the widest possible field of suitable candidates and assist in the assessment of applicants against the requirements for the role. An executive search exercise is being undertaken alongside the public advertisement of the post.

Candidates should submit a CV (including comprehensive details of key achievements and responsibilities) along with a covering letter, which fully addresses the competencies outlined in the job description and person specification, and outlines their interest in Sevenoaks.

Completed applications should be uploaded at: <https://candidates.perrettlaver.com/vacancies/> quoting reference number **4975**. The closing date for applications is **08:30 GMT on Thursday 25 February 2021**.

The longlist of candidates will be determined in the week commencing 1 March 2021 and longlisted candidates will be invited to interview with Perrett Laver during the weeks commencing 8 and 15 March 2021.

The shortlist of candidates will be selected in the week commencing 22 March 2021 and shortlisted candidates will be invited to have informal interactions in the weeks commencing 29 March and 5 and 12 April 2021 and will attend first round interviews on Thursday 22 and Friday 23 April 2021. Successful candidates will be invited for final interviews in the week commencing 26 April 2021.

Sevenoaks is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The successful candidate must be willing to undergo an enhanced disclosure through the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Protecting your personal data is of the utmost importance to Perrett Laver and we take this responsibility very seriously. Any information obtained by our trading divisions is held and processed in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation. The data you provide us with is securely stored on our computerised database and transferred to our clients for the purposes of presenting you as a candidate and/or considering your suitability for a role you have registered interest in.

As defined under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Perrett Laver is a Data Controller and a Data Processor, and our legal basis for processing your personal data is 'Legitimate Interests'. You have the right to object to us processing your data in this way. For more information about this, your rights, and our approach to Data Protection and Privacy, please visit our website www.perrettlaver.com/information/privacy/

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