



Bursar

Bronte School and Nursery

1st September 2025

Details of the Post and Application Process

Structure of Bronte School and Nursery; The Appointment

Bronte School is an independent preparatory school for children aged 3 to 11. Bronte Nursery, the School's sister setting, located close by, provides care and education for children from 3 months to 4 years.

Bronte is privately owned, by Nicholas Clements. As Proprietor, he is responsible for the governance of the School and Nursery. The Headmistress of Bronte School, who is also the Director of Bronte Nursery, is Mrs Emma Wood.

The two settings, which work closely together, are part of a private company, Bronte School and Nursery Ltd.

The Bronte School and Nursery Advisory Board supports the governance of the School and of the Nursery.

The Bursar of Bronte School and Nursery is currently Miss Susan Allison. This appointment arises because, in September 2025, she is leaving Bronte, after 10 years of very dedicated and successful service. A new Bursar is thus sought, who will support the Headmistress in the business, administrative and logistical elements of the life of the School and Nursery, and lead and manage the bursarial staff and departments, upholding and promoting the ethos and purposes of both settings.

Bronte School

The School's operations and purposes are based upon the twin pillars of academic excellence and of being a family school. A stimulating and purposeful curriculum is accompanied by high quality academic management, which aims to provide inspiration and challenge for all the children of the school. The progress and attainment of each individual boy and girl are analysed in detail. Educational breadth is seen as complementary to depth and level of study. Art, drama, music and sport take their place alongside the humanities, languages, science, and the core subjects of English and mathematics.

The School has considerable success in supporting children through to a place at their first-choice school. For many this is a selective or super-selective grammar school, whilst others also go on independent schools or other types of state schools. Another route is to a major 13-18 boarding school, attending another prep school for Years 7 and 8.

Bronte is a small school, of around 150 pupils, in a single class entry, with maximum class size of 20. The teachers are dedicated, professional and supportive, caring deeply for the children and getting to know them very well. This personal attention forms a central part of the School's family atmosphere. Good

administration is seen as vital for the achievement of the School's aims. Pastoral care is very strong, being fundamental to the children's success, happiness and sense of self-fulfilment.

In its ethos, the School has a Christian tradition, at the same time as having extensive diversity in the ethnic and cultural composition of its families, reflecting that of the local area.

Bronte Nursery, the School's sister setting, is a large, high quality nursery, for children of ages 3 months to 4 years. It is located about 200m away, also on Pelham Road.

Bronte Nursery

Bronte Nursery aims to provide a happy, bright setting for childhood life and growth, giving children an affectionate, secure environment, at the same time as providing the best possible momentum in development, education and growth. A high priority is given to communication with parents. Childcare practitioners are encouraged to use their initiative and to look after the children in a caring, tender and devoted way, with warm, purposeful guidance and help.

The Nursery has a maximum capacity of 109 children. It is set in an attractive traditional building, on Pelham Road, Gravesend. Together with the five children's rooms, there is a hall/dining area. Outdoors, there is pleasant, well-equipped garden and play space.

The Nursery shares the ethos of the School, and in its purposes adopts similar 'twin pillars': upholding excellence in childcare and being a family nursery. Careful attention is given to early years education, with detailed monitoring of development and with excellent opportunities for the children created by a broad, varied curriculum. There is a distinctive family feel, so important for very young children, where all families are well-known and where, day-by-day, strong relationships are built up. Nursery staff are encouraged to use their initiative and to look after the children in a caring, tender and devoted way, with warm, purposeful guidance and help.

The Nursery Manager is Mrs Marie Pike, who leads a dedicated team of senior managers and well-qualified practitioners.

The Role of Bursar

1. Overview. The Bursar is a key senior role in the organisation, working closely with and in support of the Headmistress, in the pursuit of the aims and purposes of the School and Nursery.

It is a leadership role in itself as well, of the support staff and the bursarial departments, and as a senior member of the organisation.

The different areas of the role are as follows:

- leadership and management of the support staff and of the bursarial departments
- finance and fees
- governance matters and Companies House matters
- personnel and recruitment
- premises management, gardens and grounds
- project management
- catering; domestic; transport
- health and safety

2. Leadership and Management of the Support Staff and of the Bursarial Departments. The Bursar leads and manages the support staff and the bursarial departments. These areas are summarised as follows (departmental managers are given in brackets):

- finance and fees (financial controller)
- premises and site management (site manager)
- catering (catering manager)
- domestic (head cleaner (there is a contract cleaning company))
- transport (minibus driver)

3. Finance and Fees.

- Finance Structure.

- Financial Strategy and Policy. Financial strategy and policy is the remit of the finance committee (Proprietor, Headmistress, Bursar and Financial Controller).

- Day to Day Financial Management and Accounting. Day to day financial management and accounting is undertaken by the Financial Controller. The Bursar and the Financial Controller work closely together, and, currently, share an office ('The Bursary').

- Fees and Invoicing. The area of fees and invoicing involves detailed and sensitive work, mostly arising on a monthly (Nursery) of termly (School) basis.

More detailed tasks in this area are:

- School.

- termly invoicing (approx 150 invoices); overview of VAT elements of fees
- deposits and refunds; fees-in-advance scheme
- other invoicing (trips, holiday activities etc)
- liaison with Kent County Council (KCC) - EYFS funding and any SEND funding
- monitoring of parental accounts
- debtor management where necessary; late collection fees

- Nursery.

- monitoring of roll, and of sessions attended; monthly invoicing (approx 175 invoices)
- deposits and refunds
- liaison with KCC - EYFS funding and any SEND funding
- monitoring of parental accounts
- debtor management where necessary; late collection fees

3. Governance Matters; Companies House and Financial Compliance Matters.

- Governance. The Bursar is a member of the Governance Committee (Proprietor, Headmistress, Bursar, Nursery Manager). The committee co-ordinates governance matters, meeting twice per year. The Bursar also liaises with the Advisory Board.

- Companies House. Bronte School and Nursery Ltd is registered at Companies House. There is some correspondence each year, usually connected with returns. Similarly the company is registered with the Financial Conduct Authority, and other regulatory bodies associated with corporate function.

4. Personnel and Recruitment.

- General. The Bursar is responsible for the legal, documentation and compliance aspects of the employment of personnel at the School and Nursery. In parallel, in accordance with Bronte's ethos, the Headmistress and all senior staff seek, in dealings with individuals, to combine the necessary legal and technical aspects of employment and the need to uphold high professional standards, with a sense of encouragement and strong pastoral values towards all colleagues.

- Records and Files. Upkeep of staff records and files.

- Monitoring and Discipline. Drawing as necessary on legal advice, the Bursar advises the Headmistress on employment matters. Through heads of bursarial departments, the Bursar monitors general professional standards. Some more specific areas include monitoring of absence and return-to-work interviews.

- Recruitment. Some more senior teaching and management posts are usually steered by the Headmistress and the Proprietor. In general however, the Bursar undertakes and administers recruitment processes at the School and Nursery, from advertisement to contact and appointment, with the associated safeguarding and other documentation.

- Single Central Register. The Bursar is responsible for maintaining and updating the Single Central Register.

5. Premises Management, Gardens and Grounds. Working through the site manager, and gardening staff, as well as with outside agencies, the Bursar is responsible for the maintenance and proper upkeep, to a high standard, of the buildings and surrounding land and gardens. This includes responsibility for compliance matters, building regulations, regular checks etc.

6. Project Management. Infrastructure and maintenance projects are planned at the finance and governance committees. Minor and medium projects take place regularly, often during school holidays. Major projects take place from time to time.

7. Catering; Domestic; Transport. Working through the catering manager, head cleaner (or in liaison with the cleaning contract company), and minibus driver, the Bursar ensures high standards and proper compliance in each of these areas.

8. Health and Safety.

- member of Health and Safety Committee
- working with the Headmistress and all staff, general monitoring and common-sense overview to ensure the safety of children, staff and visitors.
- compliance in all relevant Health and Safety legislation

Qualifications and Personal Qualities

Suitable graduate-level qualifications are sought, although alternative educational pathways will also be considered.

The role involves high standards of leadership, and strong business management skills. Equally important are good people skills: understanding, warmth and empathy are sought, together with the integrity, firmness and clarity necessary in the life of any successful institution.

Sensitivity and care are required in the handling of parental enquiries and in the nurturing and upholding of good and trusting relationships with parents.

The Bursar is involved with much sensitive information, with respect both to staff and families, and to financial matters. The accompanying senses of absolute discretion and of appreciation of confidentiality are fundamental. A good eye for detail is needed in all aspects of the role, none more so than in the area of invoices, where there is a high degree of tailoring to individual families.

Specialist financial qualifications are welcome, but are not a requirement for the role: what is important in the financial area is a good level of numeracy, to allow appreciation and analysis of accounts and financial performance.

Reporting; Terms and Conditions

1. Reporting. The role reports to the Headmistress.
2. General Terms and Conditions. Terms and conditions are based upon those of a standard ISBA model contract. A NEST pension scheme is available, with a generous employer contribution. Holidays must be taken in School holidays. Where needed, a contribution would be made for removal expenses. Children of staff are eligible for a fee discount, at Bronte School and Bronte Nursery.
3. Time Allocation. This is a full-time role.

Appointment Process

Timings for the Start of the Role. The new appointment starts on 1st September 2025, the incoming Bursar assuming all the role's responsibilities from that date. Ideally some handover time will be found during the months prior to 1st September, probably over the school summer holidays. During September, it is not anticipated that Miss Allison will be regularly present. However, she will be locally based at home, and fully available for assistance and support.

Applications. Application forms are available from the Bursar, Miss Susan Allison (susan.allison@bronteschool.co.uk, 01474 368453). Applications, comprising the completed form and a brief covering letter, should be sent by Friday 21st February 2025 to the Headmistress, Mrs Emma Wood (emma.wood@bronteschool.co.uk, 01474 533805). The application form gives details about referees (three required). All applications will be acknowledged. The addition of a CV is welcome, but this is entirely optional and cannot take the place of the application form. The submission of a CV or otherwise will not affect the selection process.

Interviews. It is planned that there will be two rounds of Interviews. The first round will take place over the period Wednesday 5th and Thursday 6th March 2025, and the second over the period Thursday 13th and Friday 14th March.

Anyone who is giving serious consideration to an application is welcome to have a call with Mrs Wood. This should be arranged through the Headmistress's PA, Mrs Nicky Mason (nicky.mason@bronteschool.co.uk, 01474 533805).

It is expected that those being asked for first round interviews will be informed by the end of working hours on Thursday 27th February.

Bronte School and Nursery Ltd is an equal opportunities employer. The School and the Nursery are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and expects all staff to share this commitment. Online searches will be carried out for shortlisted applicants and the successful candidate for this post will be required to undertake Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

31st January 2025