

Full time

Director of Finance and Operations

(Permanent)



Abbey Gate College

The College

Abbey Gate College is the longest-running coeducational independent school in the Chester area, catering for circa 485 pupils aged 4-18 years. Set in the idyllic rural villages of Saughton and Aldford on the outskirts of Chester.

Our pupils are at the heart of everything we do. We believe education is about building self-esteem, a love of learning and igniting a desire in all our students, to ensure they fulfil their academic and personal potential. We strive to guarantee our children leave Abbey Gate College as confident, articulate, respectful and happy young high achievers.

From the youngest in Foundation to our Sixth Formers, we aim to develop skills for life; core values such as respect and compassion within the framework of an excellent education. Developing talents and skills in a wide range of areas are encouraged, success is celebrated and endeavour is recognised.

Abbey Gate College is committed to the safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff to share this commitment.

Director of Finance and Operations

This is an exciting opportunity for a motivated, dynamic and people-orientated individual to join our exceptional College as Director of Finance and Operations.

In this role, you will provide strong leadership and direction to all business-related aspects of the College's operations, including all financial matters, estates management, Health and Safety, ICT and GDPR, ensuring that all legal, regulatory and governance requirements are satisfied. Together with the Head, you will be instrumental in delivering the strategic aims of the College with particular ownership for non-teaching aspects of the strategic plan.

You must be adept at building strong positive relationships with a variety of stakeholders including staff, governors, third party contractors and parents, and have the ability to foster respect and trust easily. A sharp business acumen is essential, together with a strong analytical ability, to provide financial analysis and management information to support key business decisions and major projects.

You will have direct line management responsibilities for all staff in the Finance, Estates and ICT functions as well as provide support to the Administration and HR functions.

The role will be actively involved in reporting to the Board of Governors, particularly on financial management and estates matters. Active participation will be required at all Committee meetings, Board meetings and College Open days.

Role Reports to: Head of College

Role: Full time, permanent, all year round.

To start: September 2019* (although possible flexibility for the right candidate)



Job Description

Main Responsibilities

Finance:

- To ensure the College has appropriate financial systems and processes and that these are working efficiently and effectively.
- To manage and monitor the financial systems, working with the Finance Manager.
- To ensure that financial regulations are observed.
- To oversee the preparation of annual revenue and capital budgets and monitor expenditure against the budgets reporting, jointly with the Finance Manager, on financial outcomes.
- To develop and execute the College's Five Year Business Plan and work together with the Leadership team and Governors to ensure targets are delivered.
- To take the lead in the collection of overdue debts.
- To manage the staff benefits scheme and payroll including pension provisions.
- To liaise with auditors, banking officers and other third parties in relation to accounts, investments, lease agreements and other renewals.
- To assist with and oversee the submission of statutory accounts, annual returns and other requirements to the Charities Commission, Companies House, the ISC and other bodies.
- To review and authorise monthly payroll, approve purchase orders requested by non-teaching staff and authorise invoices.
- To negotiate, manage and monitor contracts for the supply of goods and services including insurance arrangements and contracts for major capital projects.
- Ensure correct insurance policies are in place to cover all College operations and reviewed annually.
- To identify and manage alternative revenue streams from use of the College facilities outside of school hours.

Estates:

- Overall management of buildings, equipment and grounds on both College sites.
- Lead all major capital development projects.
- To be the primary point of contact with the landlords of the College, the Grosvenor Estate.
- To be responsible for the physical security of pupils, staff, visitors, College property and equipment.
- To manage the provision of all catering services in the College.
- To be responsible for negotiation, management and monitoring of third party contracts, suppliers, tenders and agreements for the provision of support services to obtain best value for the College.
- To manage the College's transport requirements to maximise efficiency of vehicles and ensure health and safety standards are met.
- To ensure that strategies are in place to minimise the environmental and ecological impact of the College and its operations.

Health & Safety:

- To take the lead in effective management of Health & Safety within the College, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and openness
- Work collaboratively with our external Health and Safety consultant to ensure regular audits and reviews are taking place, and any actions arising are dealt with in a timely manner.
- Be responsible for all Health and Safety-related policies to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and that they are effectively implemented.
- Chair the Staff Safety Committee and ensure concerns are dealt with promptly and effectively. Working closely with the College's Health & Safety Co-ordinator, formulating, monitoring and implementing the College's Health and Safety policies to comply with all relevant legislation.



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Human Resources:

- To work in partnership with the HR & Regulatory Compliance Manager to deliver best practice HR across the College.
- To actively 'people manage' direct reports and ensure that they motivate, engage, develop and encourage high performance and a culture of continuous improvement in their respective departments.

ICT:

- To deliver a digital strategy which delivers a consistent IT proposition to manage the school and education needs.
- To take overall responsibility for the provision of effective ICT and telephone networks in support of the curriculum and administration, delivered through the IT Director.
- To work with College staff to ensure an effective ICT strategy is in place and is implemented effectively.
- To co-ordinate and plan ICT resources and the efficient running of the ICT Support team.

Management of Support Staff:

- To ensure that appropriate training and professional development of support staff is maintained and regular reviews are taking place.
- To manage the recruitment and selection of support staff in accordance with the College's policies and procedures.
- To play a key role within the Leadership Team for the support staff structure and the performance management of all support staff.

Membership of College Leadership Team:

- To be an active member of the College Leadership Team (LT).
- To be responsible for and give advice to the Head and LT on all operational matters.
- To monitor and implement policies and procedures to ensure all legislative and regulatory requirements are adhered to.
- To work with LT colleagues to promote a 'value for money' culture and efficient and effective use of resources.

Risk management:

- To take responsibility for the monitoring and implementation of the Governors' strategic risk management policy, and keep the College's Risk Register up to date.
- To be responsible for data protection/ GDPR within the College and to act as Data Controller.
- To ensure that college is compliant with GDPR requirements and ensure that all staff are adequately trained.

Policy Review:

- To review all policies and procedures in areas of College activity other than teaching, to make recommendations for change, implement agreed changes and keep future effectiveness under active review.

Other duties:

- To attend all Board meetings, Finance, Safeguarding, Education, Estates and Health & Safety Committee meetings, advising governors as appropriate.
- To implement the Board's responsibilities as a Charitable Trust, including public benefit.

Other:

- To carry out any other reasonable duties as directed by the Head, the Chairman of the Governors, or the Chairman of the Finance Committee.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Previous experience of working in a school environment is helpful but not essential. However, a strong commitment to independent education is essential.

Qualifications/Education

1. Educated to degree level or equivalent (essential)
2. Clear evidence of continuing professional development aligned to the requirements of the post.
3. A recognised accountancy/financial qualification is desirable but not a pre-requisite.

Experience

1. Significant experience at a senior level in business administration, financial or operational disciplines within the last three years. (*knowledge/experience of working in the Education Sector – desirable but not essential*)
2. A clear understanding of strategic planning and development processes.
3. Evidence of involvement as a member of a leadership team with clear strategic responsibility for organisational developments.
4. Management of finances, ICT administration and estate management services including associated budgeting and value for money delivery of services.
5. Significant experience of leading complex cross-functional projects.
6. Evidence of effective asset and resource management at a senior level.
7. Experience of leading, motivating and managing teams in a performance-focused environment.
8. Experience of financial and budgetary management.
9. Experience of negotiating contracts and developing partnerships with key stakeholders.
10. Experience of managing and effectively communicating change.

Knowledge and Understanding

1. Sound knowledge of financial procedures in running a small/medium enterprise (SME) business (essential).
2. Knowledge and understanding of current developments in education and how they could impact upon the provision of effective support services in schools.
3. Knowledge of financial management systems and the performance-monitoring of budgets.
4. An understanding of ICT support systems, packages and services as they relate to the management of the organisation.
5. An understanding of buildings maintenance and facilities management. Ability to secure, maintain and manage appropriate contracts.
6. Knowledge of and conversant with current Health & Safety legislation.
7. Knowledge of Human Resource legislation and best practice implementation.
8. Understanding of current relevant regulations and legislation and a preparedness to invest time and effort in keeping up to date with regulations and legislation.
9. How to lead, monitor and evaluate all aspects of support services including the use of data to review performance.
10. An understanding of the responsibilities of a charitable trust and a company limited by guarantee



Skills and Abilities

1. An ability to lead and manage the support team effectively, generating high expectations, enthusiasm and commitment from staff. Can organise and performance-manage a diverse team, and can also work well as a member of the College's Leadership Team.
2. An ability to think strategically, forward plan and contribute effectively to the College Strategic Plan.
3. An ability to plan and deliver value-for-money initiatives.
4. An ability to communicate effectively across a wide range of key stakeholders (including teachers, support staff, parents, pupils, suppliers, contractors, the Governing Body).
5. Can rapidly absorb, analyse and interpret complex information presented in written format or observed, and be able to respond by compiling reports, programmes of work or action plans.
6. Can work creatively and innovatively to support the development and implementation of College initiatives and policies within agreed timescales, budgets and performance targets.
7. Can problem-solve effectively, think logically and take effective decisions having considered all the parameters. Can identify opportunities and alternatives, and generate imaginative and radical solutions, and implement change appropriately.
8. Can influence appropriately, working well with others to influence a change of behaviour or thinking. Can gain the co-operation of others in an effective way. Has excellent negotiation skills with a wide range of stakeholders. Can manage conflict positively in a professional manner.
9. Is results-orientated, self-disciplined, following through implementation of plans to a successful conclusion and within agreed timescales and budgets.
10. Highly computer literate - experience of using MS Office especially Excel, Word and PowerPoint is essential.
11. Highly organised with excellent time management skills.
12. Decisive, willing to take the initiative yet be able to work as part of a team.
13. High level of attention to detail.

Attitudes and Values

1. Commitment to promote and support the vision, values and ethos of Abbey Gate College.
2. High expectations of personal and team performance.
3. A commitment to provide an exceptional support service to the College.
4. A commitment to Continual Professional Development.
5. Customer and results orientated.

Personal Qualities

1. Personable, professional and with high integrity.
2. Assertive, driven, willing to constructively challenge him/herself and others to improve performance.
3. Influential, persuasive, strong interpersonal and negotiating skills.
4. Self-starter, energetic, resilient, able to multi-task and work under pressure to meet tight deadlines.
5. A team player with a customer service attitude to strive to deliver the best possible support service to the college.
6. Flexible, willing and able to embrace change and deliver continuous improvements.
7. Pays attention to detail and quality.

Terms and Conditions of Employment

The salary and benefits for this position are competitive (£65-75K per annum) and will depend upon the qualifications and relevant experience of the successful candidate.



Child Protection

Abbey Gate College regards as paramount the welfare and safety of children. Whilst criminal convictions are not necessarily a bar, this safety consideration will be key to all decisions regarding the employment of staff. An enhanced criminal check will be completed as part of the pre-employment checks of the successful candidate.

Equal Opportunities

We are committed to treating all employees with dignity and respect regardless of race, ethnic background, nationality, colour, gender, transgender status, pregnancy, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief. We therefore welcome applications from all segments of the community.

Applications

Candidates should complete an Abbey Gate College Application Form and submit this together with a letter explaining their interest in and suitability for the post addressed to Mrs Tracy Pollard, Headmistress. Applications should be emailed to the HR & Regulatory Compliance Manager at Rebecca.Upton@abbeygatecollege.co.uk

The interview process will include long list and short list interviews; There will be the opportunity for an interview with the Headmistress, Chair of Governors plus selected Governors/advisors and a tour of the College. The candidate may be asked to complete a series of tests relevant to the post. The process will be confirmed to the candidate once selected for interview.

References **will be taken** up prior to interview, please inform your referees.

Closing date for applications is: Wednesday 12 June 2019 at 4pm

Please visit our website at www.abbeygatecollege.co.uk .