

PENNTHORPE



HEAD OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS
CANDIDATE PACK



THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN THE ROLE OF HEAD OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS AT PENNTHORPE!



I am delighted that you are considering joining Pennthorpe and becoming a part of the team that makes our school so special.

At Pennthorpe our mission is to give children the most compelling educational experience possible; to nurture their positivity, tolerance, resilience and collaboration; to prepare them to pursue their individual aspirations and contribute to the world; and to be the most successful and respected independent Prep school in the South East.

Whether it is academic achievement, consideration and kindness towards others, or an energetic and positive attitude – excellence underpins all that we do at Pennthorpe, and all that we strive to be together. Our exceptional staff team is integral to Pennthorpe's exciting environment; the foundation upon which our children's success is built.

Becoming part of our team requires passion, humour and a willingness to be fully immersed in our busy, and exceptionally happy, school environment. We are looking for an energetic, passionate and caring person to light up our children's faces each and every day. You will require a huge smile, bags of patience, a good sense of humour and a love of education.

At Pennthorpe, everybody is somebody. Each child and staff member is uniquely valued for who they are, and for their individual contribution to our community and beyond. With a genuine team spirit, we blend tradition, informality and innovation; working hard to offer a vibrant and stimulating environment for learning. I take great pride in Pennthorpe's success, and recognise that it is very much built on the charisma, commitment and skills of our staff, who are truly the champions of our children. Pennthorpe is a fantastic place to work; not only for its stunning location but primarily for all the team who work with us.

If you would like to visit Pennthorpe before committing your application or you would like to discuss the role; please do not hesitate to contact my PA, Chloe Wharton (recruitment@pennthorpe.com 01403 822391), who will make the necessary arrangements. Once you are ready to take the next step, you should apply for the post using the electronic application form on our website (www.pennthorpe.com/about-us/application-form).

I recognise that much time and thought goes into preparing an application, and therefore guarantee that we, in turn, will give your application serious consideration, offer feedback and a personal response, should you decide to apply. I look forward to hearing from you!

Mr Chris Murray BA (Hons) PGCE
Head

ABOUT PENNTHORPE

Pennthorpe is a truly independent prep school located on a beautiful site of 26 acres in the heart of the Sussex countryside, close to the Surrey border. With around 280 pupils from 2 to 13, Pennthorpe has a real family feel.

Pennthorpe pupils are happy, confident and engage in all aspects of learning, whether that be in the classroom, on the playground, on the sports field or outside of life at Pennthorpe. We nurture a joy of learning and discovery and create an exciting environment for our children to learn and flourish.

The Pennthorpe Purpose forms the backbone of our daily life, and is common vocabulary for all in our community. Our motto 'Non nobis solum nati' translates as 'Born not for ourselves alone', and together with the culture captured by the Pennthorpe Purpose, expresses that our reason for being is not selfish, but for the goodness of humanity. We do not exist just to serve our own intentions, but have a duty to positively contribute to the lives, and benefit, of others. By giving the best of ourselves to the world, we make it a better place.

Pennthorpe staff must think like talent scouts, striving to get the best out of our children, and helping them to find their place in the world. We're fiercely ambitious for our children's futures, and our goal is to give voice to their magnificent character, celebrate their burgeoning talents and provide a tailored learning programme to support their emerging aspirations. Through our web of diverse and successful relationships with over 40 Senior Schools, and in strong partnership with our parents, we help our children secure places at the right Senior School for them.

The broad and skills based curriculum requires our children to be authentic, independent learners; to trust their instincts and to be bold. We teach our children how to learn, and then give them the tools and inspiration to challenge themselves. A Pennthorpe education offers our children quality time to experiment and investigate, space for our learners' own interests, learning which is focused on grappling, thinking and exploring, all delivered through collaboration and interactive teaching.

Our facilities are first rate. Within the grounds you will find our superb teaching facilities, carefully tended sports fields, numerous gardens and play areas, in addition to the fabulous woodland. We have two fully equipped wet Science labs, a full sized sports hall, Multi Use Games Area, dedicated Music and Drama studios, a generously equipped Design & Technology centre, an Art studio complete with kiln, a Teaching Kitchen, dedicated Library and a Computing Suite. In addition, we have a published plan of future development of our facilities over the next 5 years.

OUR AIMS

- To inspire all pupils with the ambition to discover and achieve excellence
- To stimulate and nurture all pupils on a uniquely personal journey of self-development
- To build a community and develop relationships that make a positive difference
- To invest in the future of our children.

WHY JOIN US?

Staff come from a variety of backgrounds, and all find their place at Pennthorpe.



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MY PASSION, IDEAS AND OPINIONS ARE ACTIVELY ENCOURAGED AND SUPPORTED, AND I FEEL TRUSTED AND EMPOWERED IN DEVELOPING MY DEPARTMENT TO BE THE VERY BEST IT CAN BE.

Graham Shaw, Head of Science

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I LOVE WORKING AT PENNTHORPE; IT IS SUCH A TIGHT-KNIT COMMUNITY WITH A SUPPORTIVE AND DEDICATED STAFF, WHO VALUE THE EDUCATION AND GROWTH OF EACH INDIVIDUAL CHILD, WHILST GIVING THEM INCREDIBLE OPPORTUNITIES TO THRIVE. IT REALLY IS A WONDERFUL PLACE TO WORK.

Charlotte Gallina Breese, Head of Years 3 & 4



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WHAT HAS STRUCK ME MOST, SINCE JOINING PENNTHORPE IN AUGUST 2021, IS THE WARM, CARING AND CLOSE-KNIT COMMUNITY OF THE SCHOOL, WHICH INCLUDES PARENTS, CHILDREN AND STAFF. I LOVE THE COMMUNITY'S INCLUSIVITY AND OPTIMISM; IT IS AN INCREDIBLE PLACE TO WORK.

Tilly Strong, Head of Recruitment & Head's PA

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WORKING AT PENNTHORPE, WITH SUCH TALENTED AND PASSIONATE INDIVIDUALS, IS AN ABSOLUTE PRIVILEGE. THERE IS A GREAT SENSE OF CAMARADERIE WITHIN THE TEAM AND THE CHILDREN REALLY ARE AT THE CENTRE OF EVERYTHING WE DO. I HAVE NEVER WORKED IN AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE I HAVE FELT MORE AT HOME.

Jon Marler, Deputy Head



THE BENEFITS

There are many reasons to join Pennthorpe, including:

- An allocated mentor to help with all queries and concerns
- Friendly and supportive team and a busy staff social calendar
- Great autonomy to focus on things that make the biggest difference, and to enable all to bring their own personality and character to the workplace
- Staff wellbeing opportunities including dedicated staff wellbeing initiatives as well as an annual Whole School Wellbeing Week
- Support for working parents
- Dedicated staff work areas
- Professional development opportunities
- Numerous career progression opportunities
- Fee remission for staff children for the duration of employment
- Contributory stakeholder pension scheme
- School lunches, cooked on-site, are provided to all staff during term time
- Secure on-site parking



HEAD OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

The Head of Finance and Operations (HFO) takes responsibility for the financial and business affairs of the school including the financial systems, financial reporting, regulatory compliance, the facilities, buildings and estates.

The HFO reports to the Head and is a key member of the Senior Leadership Team, acting as Clerk to the Governors and working alongside the Head in advising the Governors on financial and operational matters.

Financial Management

- Provide effective management of the day-to-day operation of the financial systems at the school, maintain strong financial control, and be responsible for regulatory compliance in all relevant areas.
- Ensure that appropriate finance and support systems are implemented and maintained.
- Understand, identify and address financial opportunities and risks to the school and provide input into the long-term financial strategy and vision of the school
- Prepare forecasts for the future financial performance of the school; usually over a period of five years
- Prepare annual estimates of income and expenditure to include the preparation of departmental budgets within the school, the latter in consultation with the head and senior leadership team.
- Monitor income and expenditure in relation to budget, produce monthly management accounts, and present regular management reports to the governing body
- Keep the accounts of the school and prepare statements of financial activity (SOFA) and balance sheets in accordance with the charities statement of recommended practice (SORP)
- Produce timely statutory and internal financial reports, together with the co-ordination of audit schedules and liaising with auditors as required
- Control the school's cash effectively through working capital management and maintain cash flow projections for the current and future years
- Manage all aspects of the accounts payable process, including ensuring the authorisation of invoices prior to payment, the management of payment cycles and control of monthly payment runs
- Liaise with the head (and finance committee) regarding fee increases, staff salaries and benefits
- Work with debt collection agencies and within the schools' policies to recoup bad debt
- Advise on investments in consultation with the school's brokers or investment managers
- Maintain analyses of costs and other statistical records
- Prepare financial appraisals of particular projects as required
- Arrange and manage the school's insurance policies
- Deal with the school's income tax and rating assessments, advise on taxation matters generally and, where appropriate, ensure compliance with regulations for vat
- Advise on the financial implications of the charitable status of the school
- Operate any advanced (composition) fees scheme
- Advise on scholarship and bursary funds and undertake assessments of parents' income and assets prior to issuing bursary awards
- Manage the school's relationship with key external stakeholders and advisers, including bankers, auditors and solicitors
- Complete all relevant returns to regulatory bodies such as HMRC, charities commission, ISC, companies house and local authorities

- To work with/support the finance assistant and external agencies with:
 - Administration of direct debits, standing orders, fee collection and payments
 - Preparation of pupils' bills
 - Collection of all fees and additions
 - Reconciliation of monthly, PAYE, NIC and pension contributions
 - Administration of pension schemes for teaching and non-teaching staff
 - Payment of all salaries and wages, including PAYE, superannuation and National Insurance Contributions and compliance with regulations for benefits in kind

Estates Management

- Line management of the Estates team, ensuring the efficient running of the school site and facilities, and compliance with Health and Safety legislation
- Oversee building management, maintenance, compliance and day to day upkeep of all buildings, as well as grounds maintenance and security of people, buildings and property
- Oversee capital development projects

Catering

- Oversee the outsourced catering services contract, ensuring that KPIs are continually delivered

ICT and Infrastructure Management

- Work with the IT department to coordinate development, installation and maintenance of appropriate IT & Telecommunications infrastructure
- Work with the Head and the IT department to ensure IT development is in line with the school development plan and budget
- Ensure that adequate levels of IT support and cybersecurity protection and incident response are maintained at all times

Legal and Compliance

- Provide and procure legal advice for the Head and the Governors on all relevant matters such as employment contracts and property law
- Liaise with solicitors to address legal issues and bring these to the attention of the Governors
- Ensure that the school's policies and procedures are fully compliant with current data legislation
- The Head of Finance and Operations is the person responsible for Data Compliance

Clerk to the Governors

- Act as Clerk to the Governors and secretary to various committees and trusts
- Prepare and issue agendas, minutes and other documents related to Governor' Meetings
- Attend all Governor Meetings as requested, including all sub-committee meetings
- Prepare any other papers requested by the Governors to inform their decision making on matters such as annual fee increases
- Monitor developments in legislation affecting the conduct of charities and private companies and their liability to tax, and draw to the attention of the Governors any that may affect the School
- Arrange the induction, training and processing of the appointment of new Governors

General Responsibilities

- Share in the responsibility for the pastoral care, welfare of all pupils with reference to the school's commitment to Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies, including the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Comply with the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and ensure that any concerns relating to the safety or welfare of children are reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Head
- Read and comply with all school policies and guidelines including the code of conduct
- Attend staff meetings, open days, briefings, INSET days, and support other school events and productions, as required
- Communicate in a timely and appropriate fashion with parents, as and when necessary
- Maintain high professional standards of attendance, punctuality, appearance, conduct and positive, courteous relations with students, parents and colleagues
- Engage actively in the staff performance review process
- Undertake other specific duties which may, from time to time, be reasonably requested by the Head

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Qualifications

- Recognised accounting qualification (essential)

Skills, Experience & Knowledge

- Experience working within the Education sector (desirable)
- Strong financial management experience (essential)
- Effective working capital management
- Strategic leadership experience
- Strong inter-personal skills, energy and flexibility
- Good team player ready to work as a member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Demonstrate essential personal qualities which include absolute integrity, impartiality and discretion
- Detail focused with clear and concise written communications
- Strong IT skills including advanced Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Outlook) and databases
- Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal
- Ability to maintain the highest level of discretion in managing and dealing with confidential and sensitive matters (essential)

Personal Attributes

- An ability to juggle multiple tasks with a sense of humour and calmness
- Welcoming and friendly
- Well-presented, conscientious and reliable
- Able to display sensitivity, diplomacy and tact when dealing with internal and external stakeholders of all levels
- Constantly seek ways to streamline and increase efficiencies in policies, procedures and processes
- A calm and confident manner even in times of high pressure
- Integrity, honesty and reliability
- High levels of motivation, resilience and energy
- Confidentiality, discretion, tact and empathy
- Emotional resilience and professional approach
- Ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with colleagues, pupils and parents

HOW TO APPLY

If you are ready to take the next step and apply to become part of our inspirational team, please submit your application using our electronic Application Form (<https://www.pennthorpe.com/application-form/>) which includes uploading a covering letter by the application deadline.

- **Contract:** Permanent, Full Time
- **Start Date:** 5th June onwards
- **Application Deadline:** Thursday 25th April @ midday
- **Interview Date:** Longlist Interview (Zoom/Teams): Wednesday 1st May
Shortlist Interview (At Pennthorpe): Friday 3rd May
- **Responsible to:** The Governors of Pennthorpe
- **Reporting Line:** The Head of Pennthorpe
- **Management Responsibility for:** Finance Assistant; Head of Estates
- **Salary:** Competitive and dependent on experience
- **Hours:** 8.00am – 5.00pm, Monday – Friday



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Pennthorpe is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes diversity. We would love applications from appropriately qualified persons regardless of gender, marital status, sexual orientation, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, religion, disability of age.

SAFEGUARDING

Pennthorpe is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

