



CLAREMONT
FAN COURT SCHOOL



OPERATIONS DIRECTOR (COO)

JOB INFORMATION

THE SCHOOL



‘They (pupils) become respectful and tolerant young people, ready for their next steps and appropriately prepared to contribute to society in whatever way they can.’

ISI REPORT (December 2024)

Welcome to Claremont, a thriving independent coeducational HMC day school in Esher, Surrey, educating approximately 1,200 pupils aged 2 to 18, with an even balance of girls and boys. Founded in 1922, Claremont was built from small but very significant foundations which has shaped our current mission, vision and ethos today. Nearly fifty years ago, we became fully co-educational and are now a school of choice for families seeking a high-quality, well-established and caring co-educational education.

At Claremont, we recognise and nurture the potential of every individual, helping each pupil to achieve more than they ever thought possible. Our entire philosophy is underpinned by goodness, with core values of courtesy, respect, trust, moral integrity, and self-discipline guiding all that we do.

Claremont is known for focusing on the academic potential of our pupils, but never at the expense of their pastoral wellbeing; for a culture that nurtures pupils’ limitless potential,

not just in exams but also in equipping them with the skills to shape the world around them at university, in their careers and in the wider society beyond.

We prioritise, too, an understanding of character and the way in which our relationship with others are fundamental to our successes in life, university and careers. The focus on building character qualities ensures that our pupils leave as positive, caring members of the global community.

Teachers, staff, pupils and their families are expected to support and extend the atmosphere of respect, courtesy, the love of learning and the value of friendship that is held dear at Claremont. This peaceful and purposeful intent extends throughout every lesson and into the pastoral and co-curricular activities we offer.

WELCOME FROM THE HEAD



Thank you for your interest in the role of Operations Director. I am delighted that you are considering joining our community.

The past eight years have been transformative for Claremont – our sixth form has doubled in size; our whole school role has increased by 50% to around 1150 pupils; our governance has widened, diversified and strengthened its skillset, and we now offer a seamless 2–18 educational journey shaped by a nurturing vertical structure.

Last year 53% of A levels were graded A* or A, with 75% of leavers heading to Russell Group universities. Recent growth in academic outcomes, pupil numbers and our reputation reflects the way in which the wider community has responded to Claremont's evolution. Our staff and pupils, past and present, will tell you that Claremont has always been a special place: a genuinely welcoming community where goodness underpins our values. This long-established ethos now sits alongside a clear step change in our academic ambition.

With pupil growth largely complete we have great ambitions to unlock Claremont's full potential, and the new Operations Director will be instrumental in delivering further

enhancements to the pupil experience. The Operations Director pulls together strategic development of all non-teaching aspects of a pupil's learning journey, be that their travel here, the facilities they enjoy, their experience of daily life, or the development of an ever-competitive campus in which to learn and mature, supported by knowledgeable and excellent staff.

To apply, you will possess excellent budget management skills, together with significant experience of contributing at the highest strategic level. You will enjoy working in a fast-moving and ambitious school environment, which values the collaborative and supportive culture that defines Claremont.

As we look ahead to the next chapter in the School's development, this is an exciting opportunity to make a lasting impact. I very much hope you will consider joining us.

William Brierly, Head

MISSION, VISION, AND ETHOS



Mission

Our mission guides the ethos of the school and is a primary document for all who work at the school.

- To provide an environment where the God-given potential of every individual is recognised and valued. With this recognition comes the expectation of high personal achievement and moral standards and a developing awareness of our individual responsibility to each other and our world.
- To maintain a broad and forward-looking curriculum in which pupils are encouraged to think independently to meet the demands of a rapidly changing world.
- To encourage our pupils to awaken to all that is good and true within and around them in their spiritual journey of self-discovery.
- To equip our pupils with a strong set of values for future decision making.
- The following values are fundamental to everything we do: courtesy, respect, trust, moral integrity, self-discipline, love for God and man.
- The School embraces the whole Claremont family: pupils, parents, guardians, staff and governors in its mission, vision and ethos.

Vision

In accordance with our mission, Claremont Fan Court develops individuals who are outstanding citizens, aware of their responsibility to others and contribute positively to global society.

We realise this by being a high-quality school of choice where young people achieve more than they think is possible.

Ethos

Goodness underpins this school. Teachers, staff, pupils and their families are expected to support and extend the atmosphere of respect, courtesy, the love of learning and the value of friendship that is held dear at Claremont. This peaceful and purposeful intent extends throughout every lesson and into the pastoral and co-curricular activities we offer.

Young people leave Claremont as confident, contributing and caring members of the global community. They cherish the values that equip them to make a positive contribution and be a force for good in the world.

WORKING AT CLAREMONT



Claremont is more than just a school; it is a community. We are dedicated to creating a supporting, caring, and welcoming workplace where every employee can thrive. Diversity is celebrated, individuality is valued, and professional growth is encouraged and supported.

Our dedicated staff are our greatest strength. From the moment you join, you will receive a comprehensive induction and ongoing opportunities for professional development. Whether you are in a teaching or support role, you will be part of a team that works collaboratively to make a real difference.

We strive to attract outstanding individuals to join our teaching and support teams: our teachers are highly qualified, passionate professionals committed to inspiring every pupil and our support staff are integral to the success of the smooth and effective operation of our school. Above all, we are all dedicated to nurturing each pupil's unique talents and unlocking their limitless potential.

We welcome applications from candidates with a variety of professional backgrounds, both within and beyond education, recognising the strength this diversity brings to Claremont as an inclusive and forward-looking community.

Location

Set in 100 acres of historic grounds in Surrey, Claremont is conveniently located just outside Esher town centre, with easy access to the A3, M3, and M25, and excellent rail links to central London, Guildford, Hampton Court, and Reading from Claygate or Esher stations. There is ample free parking, cycle storage, and local bus services are readily available.

The area combines the space and natural beauty of the Surrey countryside, including the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, with the culture, shopping, and entertainment of London, Kingston, and Guildford just a short journey away. Outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy walking along the River Thames, exploring Richmond Park and Bushy Park, or visiting neighbouring National Trust properties such as Claremont Gardens, or cycling and hiking at Box Hill.

Local attractions include Hampton Court Palace, RHS Wisley Gardens, and Sandown Racecourse, as well as theatres, cinemas, music venues, and sports clubs, providing plenty of opportunities for relaxation and recreation.

THE ROLE



REPORTING TO

The Head

DIRECT AND JOINT REPORTS

Head of Human Resources

Head of Estate and Operations

Head of Information Technology

Data Manager (jointly reporting to the Finance Director - responsibility for business systems and processes only)

PA to Business Services (jointly reporting to the Finance Director)

PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

The Operations Director is a member of the Key Leadership Team and serves as one of the Head's principal strategic advisers. The postholder will provide leadership across key support functions, translating vision into practical delivery, fostering organisational effectiveness and ensuring that operational capability and performance keeps pace with the evolving needs of the School.

Claremont has a Business Services Department, which is led jointly by the Operations Director and the Finance Director. Together, they form a key strategic partnership within the School's key leadership team, working closely to lead and develop the School's support functions. Operating in a spirit of collegiality in their approach to planning and decision making, the Finance Director leads on financial management and commercial strategy, compliance and corporate governance while the Operations Director leads on estates and operational

strategy and delivery, risk management, IT strategy and delivery and the strategy and delivery for people across the whole school.

This role requires an accomplished strategic leader who combines commercial acumen, organisational insight and exceptional people leadership with the ability to manage complexity, drive change and deliver meaningful and impactful outcomes.

THE OPPORTUNITY

This is an exceptional opportunity to join a thriving independent school at a pivotal stage in its development, leading on the development and execution of an exciting Master Plan

Working closely with the Head, Finance Director and Governors, the postholder will help shape and deliver the School's long-term strategic ambitions, ensuring that major initiatives are appropriately planned, resourced and executed.

The postholder will lead significant organisational initiatives, oversee major capital and infrastructure programmes, support financial sustainability through rigorous planning and procurement strategies, and champion a culture of continuous improvement, innovation and accountability.

The role demands a visible and influential leader capable of balancing strategic foresight with operational pragmatism whilst maintaining a sustained focus on delivery, people and organisational performance.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES



The responsibilities outlined below are not exhaustive but are indicative of the requirements of the role.

Strategic Leadership and Organisational Development

- Work in partnership with the Head, Governors, Finance Director and senior leaders to shape and deliver the School's strategic vision.
- Lead strategic planning processes across operational functions, translating strategic objectives into coherent and deliverable plans.
- Develop and maintain effective frameworks for programme and project management across major initiatives.
- Provide robust analysis, challenge and advice to support strategic decision-making.
- Ensure organisational risks, opportunities and resource implications are fully considered within strategic planning processes.
- Promote a culture of accountability, innovation, continuous improvement and disciplined execution.
- Act as a trusted ambassador for the School internally and externally.
- Ensure that operational services, systems, recruitment practices, estates and technology support the School's safeguarding obligations and promote pupils' welfare.

Leadership and Management

- Provide inspiring leadership across all operational support functions.
- Develop high-performing teams through effective coaching, empowerment and succession planning.
- Foster collaboration across departments, promoting integrated working and the avoidance of silos.
- Build organisational capacity and resilience to support future growth and changing priorities.
- Lead and support organisational change programmes.

Estates, Infrastructure and Capital Development

In conjunction with the Head of Estate and Operations:

- Lead the strategic development of the School's estate and supporting infrastructure.
- Oversee design and delivery of the School's Master Plan and major capital investment programmes.
- Ensure estate development aligns with educational priorities, sustainability objectives and financial constraints.
- Support the effective maintenance, enhancement and utilisation of School facilities.
- Oversee outsourced service delivery arrangements and supplier relationships (e.g. catering and hospitality, cleaning and transport).

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

People, Culture and Organisational Development Strategy

In conjunction with the Head of Human Resources:

- Provide strategic leadership for the School's people agenda, ensuring that workforce capability, culture and organisational effectiveness support the delivery of the School's long-term strategic objectives.
- Act as a champion for the School's support staff, promoting their engagement, development, wellbeing and professional recognition, and ensuring their contribution to the School's success is reflected in strategic priorities and organisational culture.
- Oversee the development, delivery and evaluation of the School's people strategy, aligned to its vision, values and strategic priorities.
- Lead workforce planning, talent acquisition, succession planning and organisational development to ensure the School has the capability and leadership required for future success.
- Champion a positive, inclusive and high-performing culture that supports staff engagement, wellbeing and organisational effectiveness.
- Provide strategic oversight of recruitment, reward, performance management, learning and professional development.

- Use people analytics and workforce data to inform strategic decision-making and drive continuous improvement.
- Ensure effective employee relations, employment compliance and HR governance, working closely with the Head of Human Resources.
- Provide executive oversight of HR policies and procedures to ensure they reflect best practice and legislative and regulatory requirements.

Digital Strategy and Information Technology

In conjunction with the Head of Information Technology:

- Lead the School's operational technology, information systems and digital infrastructure strategy, ensuring alignment with the academic strategy for digital teaching and learning.
- Ensure technology supports educational excellence, organisational effectiveness and innovation.
- Oversee investment in systems, platforms and digital infrastructure. Promote effective and secure use of technology across the School community.

Risk and Regulatory Compliance

- Own the School's risk-management framework and Risk Register, coordinating assurance from individual risk owners and reporting to the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Full Board.
- Maintain oversight of operational risk management and business resilience.

- Ensure a strong operational governance framework.
- Provide executive oversight of regulatory compliance with relevant legislation, regulation and independent school requirements, including health and safety, fire safety, cyber security, incident management and the Single Central Register, ensuring inspection readiness.
- Lead strategic approaches to business continuity and crisis management planning.
- Ensure Governors receive clear, robust and decision-ready information.

Financial Stewardship

- Working closely with the Finance Director:
- Contribute to the development of long-term financial strategy.
- Ensure strategic initiatives are financially viable and appropriately resourced.
- Own agreed operational cost centres and lead the preparation, monitoring and forecasting of budgets across the Operations Director's areas of responsibility.
- Lead value-for-money, procurement and efficiency initiatives.
- Support the preparation of business cases and investment proposals.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

EXPERIENCE

Essential

- Significant senior leadership experience within a complex organisation.
- Experience of working with Boards, Governors or Trustees.
- Demonstrable success in developing and implementing strategy.
- Proven experience of leading multidisciplinary teams through periods of change and growth.
- Direct experience of overseeing multiple operational functions.
- Experience of risk monitoring and management of regulatory compliance.

Desirable

- Experience within education, higher education, charitable or mission-led organisations.
- Experience leading major capital projects or estate development programmes.
- Experience of digital transformation and technology strategy.
- Experience of managing complex stakeholder environments.
- Experience of providing strategic oversight of human resources and an understanding of the regulatory and compliance framework for independent schools, including safeguarding, safer recruitment and Single Central Record (SCR) requirements.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Essential

- Outstanding strategic thinking and analytical capability.
- Strong commercial and financial acumen.
- Ability to assess complex issues and develop practical solutions.
- Excellent communication, influencing and negotiation skills.
- Strong project and programme management capability.
- Ability to balance long-term priorities with immediate operational demands.
- High levels of emotional intelligence and interpersonal effectiveness.
- Strong understanding of risk management and mitigation, and governance.
- Ability to interpret and communicate complex information clearly.
- Knowledge of and empathy with the independent school sector.

Desirable

- Knowledge of or an interest in historic estates and listed buildings.
- Understanding of estates management, facilities strategy and capital planning.
- Understanding of current developments in educational technology and digital transformation.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

The successful candidate will demonstrate:

- Intellectual curiosity and strategic vision.
- High levels of integrity and professional judgement.
- Resilience, adaptability and sound decision-making under pressure.
- A naturally collaborative and collegiate leadership style with the ability to build strong partnerships and relationships, both internally and externally.
- Confidence to challenge constructively and influence at senior level.
- Strong commitment to excellence and continuous improvement.
- Empathy, humility and authenticity in leadership.
- A genuine affinity for education and the wider mission of the School.
- Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.
- Values and promotes equality, diversity and inclusion.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS



At Claremont, we are committed to attracting and retaining truly exceptional staff by offering a competitive benefits package that supports both professional growth and personal wellbeing:

REWARD AND RECOGNITION

- An attractive remuneration package is offered, reflecting the seniority and significance of the position. The salary offered will depend on skills and experience.
- Annual holiday entitlement of 30 days plus statutory bank holidays.
- Group personal pension scheme with 12% employer contribution matched by 3% minimum employee contribution (via salary sacrifice).
- Comprehensive life assurance.
- Staff fee remission for eligible employee's children at Claremont who satisfy the admissions criteria following successful completion of probationary period.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Claremont encourages ongoing training and personal development, and the school is a member of various associations who offer a wide range of opportunities for further training, education and networking, including ISBA and AGBIS.

WELLBEING AND SUPPORT

- Access to a confidential counselling service for employees and eligible family members (aged 18+), available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- Annual flu vaccinations provided free of charge.
- An active social and wellbeing committee organising a varied programme of regular social events and activities, from book clubs, running clubs and quizzes to sporting and social gatherings.
- Access to the school gym at agreed times.
- Family-friendly policies designed to support a healthy work-life balance, including enhanced maternity and paternity pay.

MEALS AND REFRESHMENTS

- Complimentary lunches during term time, freshly prepared by our outstanding catering team.
- Free tea, coffee, and refreshments available throughout the school day.

PARKING

- Free, onsite parking available for all staff.
- Cycle storage area.

CYCLE TO WORK SCHEME

- Access to Cyclescheme, allowing employees to purchase bicycles and accessories up to the value of £2,500.

SAFEGUARDING AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES



Equality, diversity and inclusion

We are proud to be an equal opportunities employer and welcome applications from suitably qualified candidates from all backgrounds. We are fully committed to providing a friendly, positive, caring and professional working environment in which equality, diversity and inclusion are actively promoted, and all members of the Claremont community are treated with dignity and respect, free from discrimination, harassment or inappropriate behaviour.



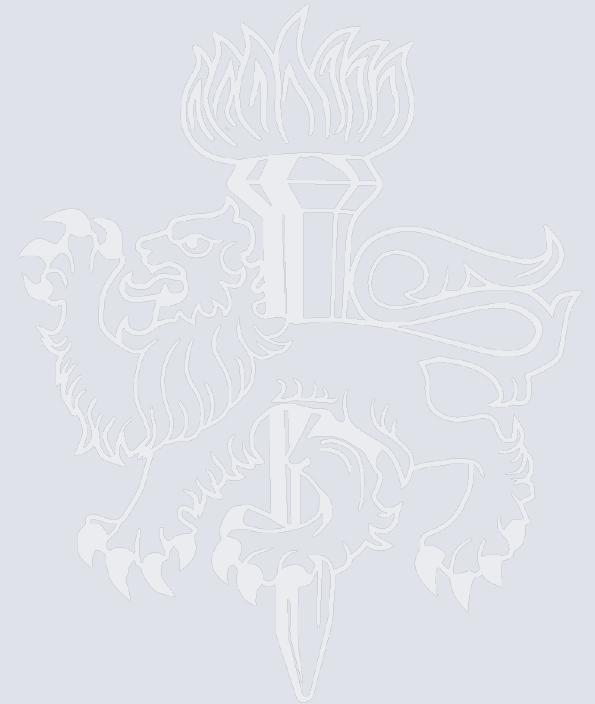
We value individuality and seek to build a workforce that reflects the diversity of the community we serve. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, we do not discriminate on the grounds of any protected characteristic, including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.



The school is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity throughout recruitment, employment and career development, making reasonable adjustments where required, and fostering an inclusive environment in which all members of the school community feel valued, respected, supported and able to thrive.

Safeguarding

Claremont Fan Court School and its staff are committed to safeguarding the welfare of children. Successful applicants will be required to undergo screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service. It is an offence for any person barred from working with children to apply for this post.



APPLICATION PROCESS



Interested applicants are invited in the first instance to contact David Stephens of Joining The Dots to arrange a confidential and informal discussion:

Contact details:

- 07739 4570000
- david@jtdrecruitment.com

The closing date for applications is **9:00am Friday 30 October 2026.**

Candidates will be required to complete the school's application form. Applications can be made via the school's recruitment portal.

Please ensure you read the school's Recruitment, Disclosures and Selection Policy, Safeguarding Policy and Applicant Privacy Policy on our website.

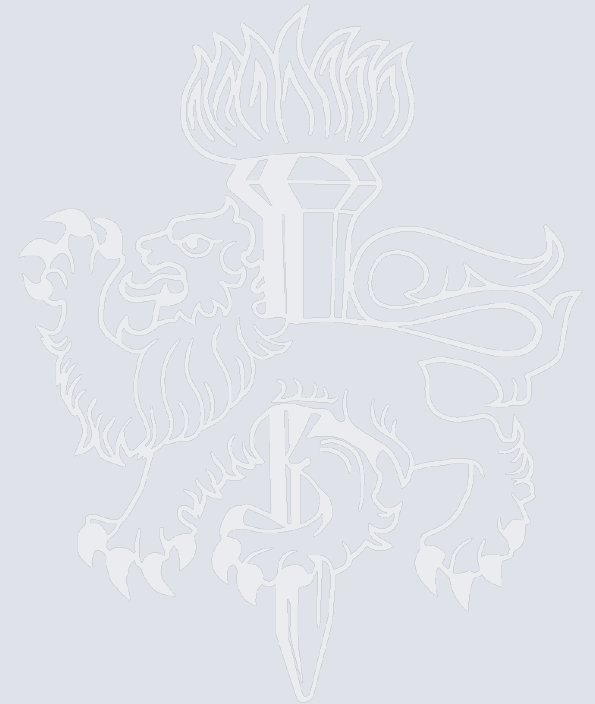
Applications for this role will be considered as they are received. Interviews, and any subsequent offers, may be made at any stage of the process. Candidates are therefore encouraged to submit their applications at the earliest opportunity.

References may be taken up at any stage during the recruitment process.

If you have any questions about the application process, please contact:
jobs@claremont.surrey.sch.uk.

Longlist interviews will take place at Claremont the week commencing **Monday 9 November 2026.**

Shortlist interviews will take place at Claremont the week commencing **Monday 16 November 2026.**





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www.claremont.net | jobs@claremont.surrey.sch.uk
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