



PENNTHORPE



APPLICATION PACK

BURSAR



ISI

Independent Schools Inspectorate

EXCELLENT

IN ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT
AND
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

E: enquiries@pennthorpe.com

W: www.pennthorpe.com

Dear Applicant,

I am delighted that you have shown an interest in our vacancy for a new Bursar.

Pennthorpe is situated in a large village on the Surrey/Sussex border, with tardis-like modern facilities that are set in 20+ acres of grounds and woodlands. We educate almost 300 children aged 2 to 13 (Year 8).

We have a simple aim: to offer children an environment in which they want to learn and can discover their strengths and passions. We pride ourselves on finding the spark in each child, wherever it is, and whether it lies in the classroom, in music, art or design, or in sports or other activities.

Our business side is in great shape and pupil numbers have grown since the start of the pandemic, with local parents recognizing how we adapted while other schools proved unable to do so. Sadly, our current Bursar is now retiring and we are looking for his successor, someone who will relish the breadth of a traditional prep school Bursar's role.

This is a key role in our senior leadership team and I am looking for someone who will be an energetic, supportive and visible champion of the School's business as well as guardian of its facilities and manager of its infrastructure. A key part of the role is to help develop our future plans and turn them into reality.

The ideal candidate will be someone who genuinely welcomes variety and can spin lots of plates without breaking too many of them. You will be financially savvy, a strategic thinker who also understands the practicalities of life, a skilled and sensitive communicator, and a can-do team player who enjoys facilitating others. You must be happy with big ideas and small detail, have excellent admin skills and good attention to detail, and high levels of computer literacy. If that's not enough, it would be a bonus if you already know something of how schools work, of facilities management and of regulatory compliance, but the sort of person we are looking for will soon pick up what is needed.

The role requires passion, good humour and a sense of humour, and a willingness to be fully immersed in a busy but exceptionally happy school environment, working with a phenomenal support team.

This application pack and our website will support you in understanding the context of our school and our vision and culture. If you would like to apply for the post, please return the Application Form (no CVs) to my fabulous PA, Mrs Tilly Strong, complete with a covering letter outlining why you feel you are suitable for this role, and how your current experience and skillset will benefit this position.

Thank you again and I very much hope that you will consider making an application for this genuinely exciting opportunity.

Alexia Bolton MEd MA
Headmistress

About Pennthorpe

Pennthorpe is an independent day prep school located on a beautiful site of 20+ 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, with a relentless focus on the welfare of every individual child.

The majority of our pupils continue with us until the end of Year 8 and sit Common Entrance at 13+ for entrance to a large number of independent senior schools, and we are particularly good at matching individual children to the school that is best suited to them. Academic standards are high, with an impressive track record of Common Entrance results, and our pupils regularly win scholarships to major senior schools such as Wellington, Brighton College, Hurstpierpoint, Lancing, Eton, Harrow, Cranleigh and Seaford.

Children enjoy a broad and contemporary curriculum, delivered by a passionate and committed staff. Pupils are encouraged to enjoy and develop their strengths and passions in a diverse range of arenas: sports, arts, academics or music and drama.

Our facilities are first rate. We have modern classrooms and a full-size Sports Hall, along with acres of playing fields. Our performing arts studio provides an excellent performance space for the drama and music departments. Our Art and DT Centre incorporates some of the latest technology, while we also have specialist facilities for Food Technology. There are two very high quality Science Labs: A Sky Lab fully kitted out to secondary standards and a Dry Lab for the more theoretical learning.

Pennthorpe's staff are sparky, innovative, dedicated but friendly, always looking for new ways to engage the children's interest in their subject. With a mentoring programme for every new member of staff and excellent career progression opportunities, all staff are encouraged to develop and extend themselves and to get involved in all aspects of life at Pennthorpe.

Working conditions are good and a hot lunch or salad bar is provided during term time. Parking is available on site.

More information can be found on our website at www.pennthorpe.com

The Importance and Context of the Bursar

The Job Description and Person Spec that follow are somewhat dry and, of necessity, formal, but the reality is that this is a truly exciting role with wonderful breadth. With responsibility for the School's business and the whole of its infrastructure, the Bursar is involved in literally everything the school does. Even more importantly, perhaps, they are a key colleague and confidante for the Head, and (as Clerk to the Governors) they are also a close supporter to the Chair of Governors and the Board.

The Bursar plays a leading role in planning the future of the School and making those plans happen, so the job is about looking forward as well as managing the present.

Pennthorpe has an annual turnover of £3.5-4 million, making it large enough to be a significant player within the local prep schools sector while small enough to remain a school where individual children and staff members matter. The present Head, Alexia Bolton, joined in 2017 and has spearheaded an exciting period of re-energising and development. The business has responded accordingly, with growing pupil numbers, fee income and annual surpluses, alongside increased investment in capital resources and staff development.

The School is not in any way complacent, but it is stronger than many others and in a better position post-pandemic than a number of its competitors. A key responsibility for the Bursar is to help use this financial strength to move further ahead. There are some very exciting plans.

Pennthorpe operates to high standards and staff work hard as a mutually supportive team. The Bursar therefore must be used to working empathetically and collaboratively with colleagues at all levels, and they must be able (and happy) to provide a "can-do, will do" approach.

BURSAR - JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB PURPOSE:

To provide strategic and financial leadership and, working with the Senior Leadership Team, develop and deliver the vision for Pennthorpe School: securing the future stability and success of the School, and progressing its position in line with the marketplace, protecting and enhancing the school's reputation, profile and business strategy.

This is a Senior Leadership position. The post holder will continue to pursue excellence in the day-to-day operation of the school for which they will be accountable and is required to work independently but within policy, professional standards and budgetary limits.

Working Hours: Full Time

Salary: Pennthorpe Leadership Scale

REPORTING LINES:

Responsible to: The Governors of Pennthorpe

Reporting to: The Head of Pennthorpe

FINANCE AND ACCOUNTANCY:

In conjunction with the Assistant Bursar:

- Advising on general financial policy within the school.
- Preparing 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.
- Monitoring income and expenditure in relation to budget and presenting regular management reports to the Governing Body.
- Keeping the accounts of the school and preparing Statements of Financial Activity (SOFA) and balance sheets in accordance with the charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP).
- Maintaining cash flow projections for the current and future years.
- Producing monthly management accounts, maintenance of the nominal, purchase, parent and pupil ledgers.
- Reconciling monthly, PAYE, NIC and pension contributions.
- Administering the direct debit, and standing order fee collection and payments.
- Working with the debt collection agencies and within the schools' policies to recoup bad debt.
- Advising on investments in consultation with the school's brokers or investment managers.
- Preparing pupils' bills and collecting all fees and extras.
- Payment of all salaries and wages, including PAYE, Superannuation and National Insurance Contributions and compliance with regulations for benefits in kind.
- Administering pension schemes for teaching and non-teaching staff.
- Scrutinising and passing for payment all invoices received in the school.
- Organising special appeals for capital projects or endowment funds.
- Keeping analyses of costs and other statistical records.
- Preparing forecasts for the future financial performance of the school; usually over a period of five years.
- Preparing financial appraisals of particular projects.
- Advising on taxation matters generally and, where appropriate, ensure compliance with regulations for VAT.

- Advising on the financial implications of the charitable status of the school.
- Dealing with the school's income tax and rating assessments.
- Operating any Advanced (Composition) Fees Scheme.
- Advising on scholarship and bursary funds and undertaking assessments of parents' income and assets prior to issuing bursary awards.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION:

- Ensuring compliance with all relevant aspects of employment law including employment protection, equal pay, minimum wage, Working Time Directive or discrimination on the grounds of sex, race or disability.
- Acting as the Head's adviser on employment matters including disciplinary procedures and ensuring that the school has appropriate disciplinary and grievance procedures.
- Liaising with the school's solicitors over all legal matters and procuring legal advice to the Governors and Head on such issues as they may request.
- Ensuring that all relevant staff have contracts of employment and keeping the school's standard contracts up-to-date as new legislation takes effect.
- Managing the employment, terms and conditions of service, supervision and welfare of all non-teaching staff.
- Formulating, monitoring and implementing the school's policy to comply with the requirements of health and safety legislation. This includes acting as the Health and Safety assistant within the school and as Chair of the internal Health and Safety committee.
- Carrying out risk assessments where appropriate and monitor all departments to ensure that they are carrying out risk assessments. Take professional advice as required.
- Overseeing the maintenance of the school's Major Risk Register.
- Ensuring that the school has adequate insurance cover at all times to include employer's liability, buildings and equipment cover, personal accident, travel insurance and other relevant cover. Professional advice should invariably be sought.
- Purchasing, either directly or through a purchasing group, all goods and services for the school ensuring high quality and value for money.
- Arranging for staff accommodation and dealing with the letting of property to school employees and third parties; ensuring that the appropriate leases and licenses to occupy are signed by the tenants.
- Letting of school premises to outside organisations.
- Acting as correspondent with the Department for Education (DfE) DBS, Companies House, the Charities Commission and other similar bodies and being responsible for the records, compilation and submission of annual returns required.
- Advising on and taking the appropriate physical security measures within the school for protection of both staff and pupils.
- Maintaining contact with the statutory authorities and other organisations.
- Overseeing the management of the catering in conjunction with Holroyd Howe.
- Overseeing the management of the cleaning in conjunction with the Estates Manager.
- Overseeing the management of the uniform shop.
- Minibuses and transport - compliance with the regulations for the operation of minibuses; driver training and assessments; servicing and vehicle inspectorate tests.

MANAGEMENT OF ESTATES AND RESOURCES:

In conjunction with the Estates Manager:

- Maintaining school buildings including the preparation of maintenance schedules and keeping of records.
- Ensuring the school meets the requirements of the Disability Act.
- Managing the security of the school at all times and the safety and wellbeing of the school community.
- Managing the installation and maintenance of equipment for the detection, warning, protection and escape from fire ensuring the necessary fire risk assessments are carried out.
- Maintaining the efficiency of the installations and plant for electric and gas supply, heating, domestic hot water, water softening etc. Letting of energy supply contracts at competitive rates, either directly or through a purchasing group. Promotion of energy conservation.
- Ensuring that catering areas meet the requirements for hygiene and food safety.
- Managing the maintenance of the lighting and ventilation in all school buildings.
- Drawing up outline specifications for new buildings, obtaining tenders, planning permission, liaison with school architects and builders.
- Maintaining the standard of playing fields, gardens, all weather surfaces, running tracks and tennis courts.
- Managing the sports equipment and facilities.
- Maintaining of boundaries, roads and rights of way.
- Overseeing any contracts that the School enters into.

CLERK TO THE GOVERNORS:

- Acting as Clerk to the Governors and secretary to various committees and trusts.
- Preparing and issuing agendas, minutes and other documents related to Governor' Meetings.
- Preparing any other papers requested by the Governors to inform their decision making on matters such as annual fee increases.
- Attending all Governor Meetings as requested, including all sub-committee meetings.
- Arranging the induction, training and processing of the appointment of new Governors.
- Liaising with Companies House accordingly.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Attend weekly SLT Meetings.
- Act as a point of authority, responsibility and reference after the Head in the smooth and efficient running of the whole school, deputising for the Head as and when necessary.
- Liaise effectively with the Head, Deputy Head and Assistant Head as part of the Pennthorpe Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- Assist the Head and Deputy Head with the planning and staging of major school events.
- Attend relevant training course and conferences and keep abreast of current legislation and practice.
- Fulfil other reasonable duties as directed by the Head.

Pennthorpe is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young children. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service. Please note that this will include a reference from two referees who, for shortlisted candidates, will be contacted prior to interview. If you do not wish for your referees to be contacted prior to interview, please ensure that this is stated in the relevant section of the Application Form, with your reasons for this.

CANDIDATE SPECIFICATION:

Candidate Specification	
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A recognised and relevant accounting qualification • Hold a Certificate or Diploma from the National College for School Leadership. • Degree in Business Administration
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good working knowledge of financial and accounting procedures • Knowledge of financial software packages and database structures • Experience of working within the independent schools' sector • Experience of contracts management • Proven experience of working in an organisation with a diverse range of functions and multiple stakeholders. • Knowledge of Employment Law • Knowledge of Health and Safety/risk assessment regulations and procedures. • Knowledge of the regulatory framework applicable to independent schools' education • Knowledge of Children and/or vulnerable adults' safeguarding requirements. • Proven experience of managing a team
Skills and Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to devise and introduce new procedures and systems. • Equanimeous: an ability to think and work calmly while under pressure and to tight deadline • Excellent communication skills both written and oral. • Good administrative and IT skills including Microsoft Excel and Word skills • Excellent communicator with high levels of initiative • Ability to plan strategically • Ability to generate solutions/new ideas that deal effectively with problems. • Make well-judged high-quality decisions which can be defended in front of a wider audience. • Very good interpersonal and communication skills (written and verbal) • Strong command of the English language with accurate and academic written skills • Integrity and tact are essential, together with an appreciation of the requirement and necessity to maintain complete confidentiality at all times • Self-motivation, initiative and organisational skills

Personal Characteristics	<p>The successful applicant will be able to demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approachable, friendly and patient • Demonstrates good business acumen • Highly motivated, maintains high standards • Good sense of humour. • Able to organise own work and supervise the work of others. • Able to get things done correctly and on time with minimal direction. • Able to impress those around him/her with a sense of purpose and commitment to the organization • Highly flexible in addressing evolving and changing priorities and hours of work • A committed and hard-working ethos and the ability to work as part of a team • An ability to establish and maintain positive relationships with parents • Appreciation of the nature of the business and the need to present the school as the consummate professional
Relevant Training	<p>Evidence of recent/relevant training in areas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Business Management, • Safeguarding • Health & Safety • Safer Recruitment • Child Safeguarding <p>Must be keen and willing to undertake future relevant training.</p>

