

BRIEF FOR THE POSITION OF

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & OPERATIONS

WOLDINGHAM SCHOOL



February 2024



The school

Set in 700 acres of beautiful Surrey countryside, Woldingham is one of the UK's leading day and boarding schools for girls aged 11-18. Our vision is to provide an outstanding education that empowers women to change the world for the better.

As one of the UK's oldest girls' schools, Woldingham is proud to be a pioneer of women's education. With 580 students on roll, our single-sex environment is supportive and stimulating.

Students achieve outstanding GCSE and A Level results opening doors to exciting careers.

Students leave Woldingham to take university places at prestigious institutions in the UK and overseas. Around 75% go to courses at Oxbridge or Russell Group universities. In the past five years we have had 26 Oxbridge offers. In recent years some of the most popular UK universities for students have included Bristol, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Manchester and UCL. Woldingham students have also taken up places at a range of universities overseas including Princeton, NYU and Cornell in the USA.

Academic excellence in all subject areas goes hand in hand with learning beyond the classroom. Our exceptional extra-curricular programme of sport, clubs, performing arts and outreach into our local community enables students to develop a wonderful range of skills, expertise and interests, alongside high-level academic achievement. Every student is unique. Our aim is to "write your own story" at school and throughout life.

Around 50% of students board – full, weekly or flexi. Around 40% of our students live locally, 40% come from London and 20% from overseas. Our global community is very important to us and students from more than 30 different nationalities attend Woldingham. Our 700 acre estate is currently undergoing a multi-million pound development, including a new sixth form centre and other exciting projects.



The Board of Governors agreed a new strategic development plan for 2019-2024, with a refreshed vision and mission underpinned by the school's Sacred Heart values of faith, community, intellectual values, social awareness and personal growth. The plan has been extremely well received and the school has made a positive start to achieve the ambitious vision.





HISTORY

Founded by Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat in 1842, Woldingham is one of the oldest girls' schools in the UK. Initially based in Acton, the school later moved to Roehampton and in 1946 moved to our current home at Marden Park. Initially a full boarding school, Woldingham now has a well-balanced mix of boarders and day students.

As the first Sacred Heart school in England, Woldingham was initially called the Convent of the Sacred Heart. It became Woldingham School in 1985 when it moved to lay leadership.

ETHOS

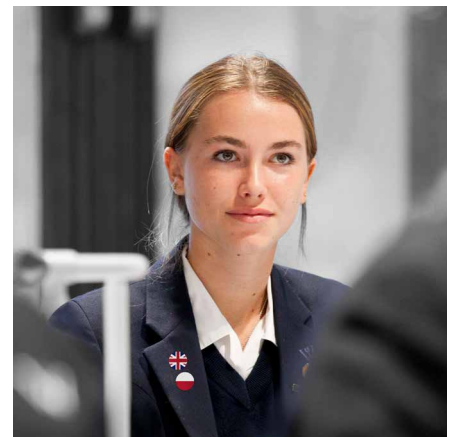
Woldingham is a happy and successful school where we develop confident, compassionate and courageous young women.

Students are encouraged to nurture respect for self, each other and for the environment. The Woldingham community is strong, forward-thinking and kind. Students leave Woldingham with academic results that open doors, values to navigate successful careers and family life ahead, and friendships that last a lifetime.

Woldingham is a Catholic school, where we welcome girls of all faiths or none. Woldingham is part of the Sacred Heart Network, which has schools in more than 40 countries around the world.

Woldingham has a strong sense of community based on a set of shared principles which are:

- Faith and living responsibly in the world today.
- Social justice and an awareness which impels to action.
- Community and sharing friendships with those outside it.
- Scholarship and a deep respect for intellectual values.
- Personal responsibility and growth in an atmosphere of wide and appropriate freedom.





ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Woldingham is committed to fulfilling the academic potential of every student. A selective school, Woldingham is proud to be in the top 1% of schools in the UK for 'value added education.' In 2023, 73% of A Level grades were A*-B and 66% of GCSE grades were 9-7.

Teaching and learning are centred around our unique WOLD model, which sets out our expectations of every lesson.

Willingness

to work hard and
make mistakes

Opportunities

to maximise
all learning

Learning

is a life-long
process

Determination

to succeed

The school offers a broad curriculum with 27 A Level choices available in the Sixth Form. There is an excellent academic enrichment programme for all students, as well as a dedicated programme for academic scholars and intensive support for students applying to Oxbridge, medicine, dentistry and veterinary science.





PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral care is at the heart of the school. At Woldingham every student is known and supported as an individual by both teaching and support staff. The school supports – and expects – students and staff to be kind to each other. Woldingham's single-sex environment is supportive and stimulating. It enables students to be themselves and to grow into independent women who will make a positive contribution to the world. Relationships amongst the students and the staff are excellent. Tutors provide excellent academic and pastoral support and guidance for students, in close conjunction with Heads of Year, teaching and support staff.

WELLBEING

The school's WELLBEING/THRIVE programme promotes emotional well-being and enables every student to develop the growth mindset, resilience and self-worth to enjoy success

as well as learn from setbacks. It helps students face changes with flexibility, meet failure with resilience and manage their own busy lives calmly.

As part of the THRIVE programme, students develop study skills. Study skills are developed as girls move up through the school, with the strong foundations built in Years 7 and 8 carried on through to the Sixth Form.

THRIVE focuses on the importance of wellbeing. Students learn about handling social media, self-esteem and body image. They learn how to deal with pressure, responsibility and making the right choices. All skills needed to be successful at school and as an adult.

BOARDING

Woldingham's boarding tradition remains strong with the school providing a flexible approach to boarding to meet the needs of families today. Around half of

current students board with options including full, weekly and flexi-boarding.

Boarders live in their own year group and are cared for by a dedicated Head of Year, housemistress and assistant housemistress.

Boarders in Years 7 and 8 live in Marden and Years 9 to 11 in Main House, with individual study bedrooms from Year 10 upwards. Students in the Sixth Form live in purpose-built modern accommodation, providing the perfect transition from school to university.

There is a busy range of evening and weekend activities with students in the older years provided with greater independence.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR

Woldingham has a rich and varied extra-curricular programme with more than 80 clubs and activities to choose from. Students are encouraged to balance study with activity, and to be committed and proud of their wider abilities.

The House system fosters community across the school, with a busy programme of activities and competitions. Woldingham has four mixed-age Houses, each of which promotes a spirit of community among students of different ages and staff. Students belong to one of four Houses named after Patrons with a close association to the Society of the Sacred Heart. Houses organise a wide variety of activities including charity fund-raising events, inter-House competitions and, a highlight of the year, the House Festival in September. House assemblies are held fortnightly. Each House has its own Mass and feast where students and staff celebrate together and focus their fund-raising efforts.

Woldingham has an active outreach programme to give back to the community – both locally and more widely.



SPORT

Sport is extremely important to life at Woldingham and plays a vital role in supporting physical and emotional health and wellbeing. Sport is about enjoyment, inclusion, team spirit, fitness, competition and performance. By the time our students leave, our aim is for them to have a lifelong commitment to sport and healthy living. We rightly celebrate the achievements of our athletes, some of whom represent their county and even country, and our school teams who do well in local and regional competitions.

Woldingham has excellent sports facilities including a sports centre with a large sports hall, two squash courts, fitness studio and a dance/gymnastics studio. We have extensive outdoor courts and pitches, an indoor tennis dome, an indoor swimming pool and an all-weather pitch.

In the autumn and spring terms, netball and hockey are our major sports. In the summer we play cricket, tennis and athletics. In addition, students compete in sports such as swimming and cross country. We place great value in being part of a team as well as excelling as an individual.

The school has a busy weekday and Saturday fixture list and participates in district and county tournaments. There are strongly contested House

sport competitions throughout the year, culminating in our annual sports day. We also offer a fantastic range of sport trips within the UK and overseas.

CREATIVE AND PERFORMING ARTS

Woldingham's Millennium Centre has some of the best facilities for music and drama performance of any school in the country. The 600-seater acoustically designed Dineen Auditorium includes an orchestra pit and fully computerised sound and lighting system. The Millennium Centre also has recital and rehearsal rooms, a studio theatre, wardrobe room, dressing rooms and fantastic foyer area.

Woldingham School has an outstanding reputation for drama. The industry standard facilities and specialist drama staff support students to create productions of the very highest standard. The school has high specification technical support with state-of-the-art sound and lighting run by a highly-qualified technical crew.

The Music Department is well resourced, dynamic and busy, providing many and varied opportunities for our musicians to perform. Standards and expectations are very high. In each term there is a large-scale concert and a number of informal and formal

recitals. Our musicians perform in the numerous joint productions with the Drama Department and the choirs lead the singing at Westminster Cathedral for Masses and the school carol service.

Woldingham's art facilities are outstanding with purpose-built accommodation comprising two studios, a 3-D area equipped with a range of power tools and two kilns, a dark room and a textile room. Student artwork is displayed throughout the school.

LOOKING FORWARD

The current strategy action plan (2019-2024) is nearing completion and a new one is to be set with the new Head and new DFO - the post holder will play a key role in this.

The school's vision is to provide an outstanding education that empowers women to change the world. Woldingham's mission is to be a happy and successful school developing confident, compassionate and courageous young women.

The plan centres around six key strategic objectives: developing people; developing learning; developing ethos and community; developing infrastructure and operations; developing sustainability; and developing communications.



The role

Job title: **Director of Finance and Operations**
Responsible to: **Head**

ROLE AND PURPOSE

Everyone who works at Woldingham, regardless of their role, plays a part in helping make the school the dynamic place that it is. Commitment to professional development is an important part of that, but it is also something that is ingrained in the culture and ethos.

Everyone works together, sharing ideas, responsibilities and ambitions for the school.

THE POSITION OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & OPERATIONS (DFO)

This role, which is the most senior support staff position in the school, is an important strategic appointment. The DFO will be closely involved in the School's strategic planning and the delivery of its operational excellence.

The DFO reports directly to the Head and, as a member of the School Leadership Team (SLT), is responsible for the major functions of Finance, HR, IT and external enterprises.

The DFO manages the Head of Estates and the Head of Facilities and Operations, who are responsible for key Estate's management functions.

The DFO supports the education aims of the school through the effective management of the school's resources and facilities.

The DFO works closely with the Governors, particularly the Chair of Governors and Co-Chairs of the Resources Committee.

THE STRATEGIC ROLE

The DFO will play a major role in the school's strategic direction, working with the Head to implement and evaluate the School Strategic Development Plan. The strategic priorities of the school fall into six key areas:

- Developing people
- Developing learning
- Developing ethos and community
- Developing infrastructure and operations
- Developing sustainability
- Developing communications

Major future projects under the DFO's remit, following the launch of the School Strategic Development Plan (SSDP) 2019-2024, include:

- Following the review of the school's estate, implementation of infrastructure changes to provide a first-class education for boarding and day pupils in a changing educational market

A multi-million pound development programme including :

- New Sixth Form Centre and Library Occupancy
- Swimming pool refurbishment

The DFO will need to be entrepreneurial in their contribution to safeguard the future of the school - looking nationally and internationally for opportunities

A commercially managed vineyard has been planted and we look forward to its fruition.

Other major projects include:

- With the Head, leadership of the change management identified in the SSDP Pursuit of changes in technology to drive productivity
- The School's digital strategy



THE OPERATIONAL ROLE

Key areas of responsibility include:

- Membership of the SLT
- Clerk to the Governors
- Responsible for the development and empowerment of the Bursary Leadership Team -encouraging them to be confident and collaborative leaders within the school
- Financial management of the School, including the Woldingham School Foundation
- Management of the outsourced catering contract
- Compliance for H&S and HR within a demanding regulatory framework
- Human Resources, Payroll and pensions
- IT and related technical services
- Risk management and insurance
- All development projects
- Commercial opportunities
- Grounds, Maintenance, Caretaking, Security, Domestic Services, and Transport.
- Strategy for environmental sustainability
- The DFO has an Executive Assistant who also supports the Governors.

With the Head of Finance:

- To effectively manage the School's finances ensuring that timely and accurate financial information including a ten year financial forecast, cash flow projections, an annual budget, and monthly management accounts are provided to the Head and Governing Body for approval
- To ensure that an annual programme of capital expenditure is developed and implemented that provides on-going improvement to the estate together with a rolling replacement programme, and to prepare financial appraisals of major capital projects
- To develop and implement systems for cost control and to work with budget-holders to assist them in effective management of allocated budgets

- To advise on the projected level of fee income, ensure systems are in place for the timely collection of fees and the allocation of scholarships and bursaries, and manage systems for dealing with debtors
- To maintain close liaison with the Registrar in respect of the present and predicted School pupil roll
- To maintain close liaison with the Foundation Director in respect of the Woldingham School Foundation
- To ensure that the statutory accounts are properly prepared, audited and presented to the Governing Body each year

With the Head of Estates and the Head of Facilities & Operations

- To provide oversight of all aspects of the site including maintenance, security, grounds and facilities
- To lead on developing and implementing the School's Environmental Sustainability Strategy, developing short, medium and longer-term plans to reduce the School's carbon footprint
- To work closely with the Head to ensure the overall site development plan is aligned to financial planning and the School's sustainability aims
- To ensure effective project management, particularly in relation to capital expenditure projects
- To provide effective contract management, ensuring that the award of all operational contracts to external suppliers is handled appropriately and offers excellent value for money

As the School Safety Manager, and with the Head of Facilities & Operations:

- To oversee the school's risk management register, and policies and procedures for compliance with Health & Safety, Independent School Standard Regulations and NMS Boarding Regulations
- To ensure the School Emergency Plan is current and fit for purpose

As Clerk to the Governors:*

- To support the governors in their roles as directors and trustees of the school
- To prepare agendas, papers and minutes for the Board of Governors and for Governors' Committee meetings
- To support the Board of Governors in the recruitment, induction and training of new Governors

With the Head of HR :

- To oversee safer recruitment, terms and conditions, employment, welfare and overall management of support staff

With the Director of IT:

- To oversee IT provision within the School and, in consultation with the Head, to support the school's digital strategy
- To ensure GDPR compliance; the DFO is currently the school's Privacy Officer and is responsible for compliance and best practice in this area

With the Foundation Director and Head of Events:

- To oversee the strategic direction of the commercial opportunities

General Responsibilities:

- The DFO is expected to be present at all major School functions
- The DFO is expected to carry out any other reasonable duties as requested by the Head

This job description contains an outline of the typical functions of the job and is not an exhaustive list of all possible job responsibilities, tasks, and duties. The job-holder's actual responsibilities, tasks, and duties might differ from those outlined in the job description, and other duties commensurate with this level of responsibility may be either permanently or temporarily assigned as part of the job. This will be decided in conjunction with the Head.

*the role of Clerk to the Governors' is under review and will be discussed with candidates



PERSON SPECIFICATION

- The successful candidate will have a proven track record of leadership, with significant experience in implementing strategic change in an independent school or commercial organisation
- Candidates will have a strong knowledge of financial management, ideally with a professional qualification, and experience of budgeting, forecasting and strategic business planning
- Experience of balancing the demands of developing and implementing strategic change within a busy operational environment
- Experience of managing complex projects within the strict budgets and demanding timetables
- Experience of leading and managing staff in a wide range of disciplines
- Highly computer literate

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

- Committed to the ethos and principles of the school, and understanding of the needs and challenges facing independent education
- Leads by example and holds the respect of Governors, staff and parents
- Stamina in this busy working environment, and a clear understanding that life in a boarding school is not a 9 to 5 job
- Energetic, dynamic and unflappable; excellent time management and the ability to 'get the job done'
- Where appropriate, lightness of touch and humour
- Fair and empathetic
- Sets high standards; strong attention to detail
- Fluent and accurate written and spoken English; excellent oral and written communication skills and strong presentation skills
- Committed to the Woldingham School vision and the Sacred Heart values, and to operating as part of the School community
- Committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people
- A satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure from the DBS

REMUNERATION:

- Salary will be negotiable, subject to experience, recognising the degree of responsibility associated with this post
- Employer contributory defined pension scheme.
- Accommodation on-site may be available
- The School offers a private medical health insurance scheme which the DFO will be eligible to join
- The DFO is expected to attend the ISBA Annual conference and any induction course. The School will meet the full cost of the annual subscription/membership fee of ISBA
- Any daughter of the DFO, who having satisfied the entry requirements, is admitted as a pupil to the school will receive the benefit of the staff discount on the school fees





How to apply

WOLDINGHAM SCHOOL IS RECRUITING FOR A NEW DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & OPERATIONS

Woldingham School is being assisted in the recruitment of this key position by the Independent Schools' Bursars Association (ISBA) Recruitment Team, from whom an application pack can be obtained by sending an email to recruiting@theisba.org.uk

Alternatively, if you would like to speak with ISBA, please contact **Lucy Wyatt** on 07817 038009.

Closing date for applications is Friday 15th March 2024

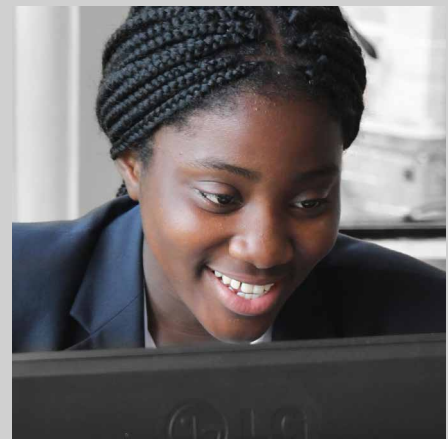
Screening interviews will be held for long-listed candidates which will be conducted by ISBA Recruitment and short-listed candidates' interviews will be held in school.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND STAFF WELFARE

Our professional team of staff is Woldingham's greatest asset, and we want to ensure that everyone is supported to work in an effective, enjoyable and fulfilling way. Staff Development is a high priority, with induction and mentoring programmes, plus an annual cycle of Personal Professional Development planning for all colleagues and new leadership programmes that have been established since September 2021.

Staff are welcome to use our range of outstanding facilities including the gym, tennis courts and the swimming pool. Our Staffroom Committee organises regular social events, and a range of wellbeing initiatives support staff in their working life.

Woldingham School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.





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