



ST ALBANS
EDUCATION GROUP



DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

Applicant Information

PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME



It is my privilege to lead an outstanding group of colleagues across the St Albans Education Group, all of whom are devoted to preparing young people in our care to live lives of consequence and make a meaningful impact upon the world.

We are a new and expanding independent schools' charity initially formed from the merger of the thriving STAHS – St Albans High School Senior and Prep Schools – and Stormont School in 2024.

Our vision is to become a sector leading group of schools delivering an innovative and impactful education where our pupils will benefit from excellence in academics, personal development, leadership and service in environments designed to nurture creativity, individuality, innovation and enjoyment of learning.

The excellent work of STAHS and Stormont schools is already realising this vision. Their progressive approaches deliver outstanding academic curricula, forward-thinking approaches to pupil wellbeing and exciting co-curricular opportunities for 1,300 children, enabling them to flourish and make a positive impact by leading happy, healthy and intentional lives.

We believe that excellent education is the bedrock of pupils' future success and happiness and want our schools to lead the sector in providing outstanding education for our learners. We have the highest of expectations for our pupils and our staff alike. In return, we offer an excellent working environment with competitive pay and benefits, where staff professional development is valued and encouraged and career progression is supported.

In a rapidly changing and challenging environment for schools the St Albans Education Group looks to the future with confidence

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amber Waite". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Mrs Amber Waite, BSc Rutgers, BSc TAMU, MSc Oxon
Principal, St Albans Education Group

THE ST ALBANS EDUCATION GROUP

We are a developing group of strong, successful schools that together will become a leading voice and model for excellence in the sector.

St Albans Education Group schools come together from a position of individual strength and the knowledge that together we are more than just the sum of our parts. Each school has demonstrably strong, capable and prudent leadership and governors who recognise the opportunities afforded by joining a group of like-minded, high-achieving schools to the benefit of all involved.

Every STAEG school shares a common ethos of educational and pastoral excellence that instils in each pupil the values, knowledge, and skills to lead lives of consequence. We achieve this through a school's own vision, values and aims, maintaining their individual characters and identity.

As a charity, every surplus penny is reinvested in our schools and the outcomes of our pupils.

Our Mission

To develop young people who flourish and make a positive impact on others through leading happy, healthy, intentional lives of consequence.

Our Vision

To be a sector-leading group of schools delivering innovative and impactful education. Our pupils benefit from excellence in academics, personal development, leadership and service, in environments designed to nurture creativity, individuality, innovation and enjoyment of learning.

Our Values

Excellence: We pursue the highest standards in every aspect of our educational programmes.

Integrity: We conduct ourselves with honesty, kindness, and respect.

Diversity: We explicitly value others so everyone feels included and appreciated for their unique perspectives and talents.

Innovation: We encourage imaginative and critical thinking to solve problems creatively.

Leadership: We challenge and inspire pupils to make informed and courageous decisions that affect others.

Joy: We value joy in education and ensure that pupils develop a life-long love of learning, exploring ideas and engagement in a wide range of academic, creative, cultural and healthy pursuits.

Governance and Leadership

STAEG is led by a team of talented governors with extensive experience of the education sector and beyond, headed by the Chair, Alison Arnold. Day-to-day operational running and strategic planning for schools is overseen by the STAEG Executive Team chaired by the Principal, Amber Waite, and includes the Heads of the schools, the Chief Operating Officer, the Director of Marketing, Admissions and Development, and the Group Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Principal, Executive Team and Senior Leadership Teams work closely and collaboratively to ensure the efficient and effective running of the schools within the Group. The Principal reports to the Chair of Governors, and all other members of the Executive Team report to the Principal.

Teachers and support staff benefit from a framework of continuous improvement by being part of an education group, through multi-school INSETs and other collaborative ventures.

ABOUT OUR SCHOOLS

STAEG currently has three member schools: STAHS Senior, STAHS Prep and Stormont School.

St Albans High School for Girls (STAHS) is an independent day school for girls aged 4-18, situated across two sites. STAHS Prep accommodates approximately 330 pupils in Reception through Year 6 and is located on an extensive woodland site in the leafy Hertfordshire village of Wheathampstead, about five miles away from St Albans city centre. STAHS Senior educates approximately 820 girls across Lower School (Years 7 and 8), Middle School (Years 9, 10 and 11) and Sixth Form (Years 12 and 13). STAHS Senior is a vibrant city school, located in the heart of St Albans. STAHS is academically selective and oversubscribed at all points of intake.

Most girls in Year 6 will continue their education at STAHS Senior; as a through school, we offer automatic transition from Prep to Senior without requiring STAHS Prep pupils to sit 11+ entrance assessments. The majority of girls in Year 11 will also continue their education in the STAHS Sixth Form, where a place is guaranteed for all girls meeting the Sixth Form entry requirements.

STAHS pupils achieve exceptional results: in 2024, over 73% of all A Level grades were A*-A and 86% of all GCSE grades were 9-7. Each year, our Year 13 leavers go on to the best universities in the world, including Oxbridge, the Ivy League, Russell Group Universities, specialist institutions such as conservatoires, diploma and professional apprenticeship schemes and institutes for fine and performance arts.

Stormont School is a non-selective independent day school for girls aged 4-11 located in Potters Bar, Hertfordshire. Stormont educates approximately 140 girls, many of whom continue their education at STAHS from Year 7, whilst others take up places at a variety of independent and state senior schools mostly located in Hertfordshire and North London.



THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Reports to

Chief Operating Officer (COO)

Responsible for

Finance Team

Frequent working contact with

Finance Team, Executive Team, Business Leadership Team, Chief Operating Officer and Governors

Overall purpose of the role

The Director of Finance reports directly to the COO and is responsible for the delivery and improvement of all aspects of the Group financial service to support the COO, the Principal, the Heads of School and the Governors in pursuing the strategic objectives of the Group. The Director of Finance should have excellent financial skills and be able to communicate effectively with all members of the school community, including staff, parents and Governors.

Key Responsibilities

- Responsible for heading up the Finance team, the Director of Finance will manage the accounting, planning, budgeting, financial analysis, forecasting and internal control activities of the schools within the Group.
- Support the COO with developing and maintaining a long-term, strategic financial plan in line with the Group's operational development plans.
- Ensure the Group is compliant with all relevant VAT legislation and HMRC guidance and completes accurate VAT returns in accordance with agreed timetable.
- Ensure the maintenance of timely, accurate and complete accounting records within an appropriate control environment and in accordance with best practice.
- Compliance with legislative requirements (including tax and charity) and reporting deadlines.
- Minimise the Group's exposure to risk; identify and manage tactical and strategic financial risks and conduct modelling and feasibility studies as appropriate.
- Enable the production of timely, accurate and relevant budget, forecast and actual management information for a wide audience across the schools, from Heads of Departments to the Head and Governors. Help to establish a culture of financial accountability among departmental managers and others throughout the schools.
- Develop flexible financial models to enable scenario planning and modelling to ensure long term financial sustainability.
- Continually look to improve financial processes and use of systems, in particular IT. Lead on the implementation of new financial systems.
- Ensure processes are in place to enable the Group to maximise its cash flow and return on investments and manage working capital.



ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Oversee the systems delivery of all salaries and ensure that wages including PAYE, pension and NI contributions are paid correctly, ensuring compliance with appropriate legislation.
- Arrange appropriate reviews of financial advisers and service providers including auditors, bankers and investment advisers.
- Safeguard the Group's assets.
- Ensure the group has adequate insurance and timely/regular reviews of insurance requirements are completed.
- Provide leadership and professional development to all members of the Finance Team.
- Advise on annual changes to fee levels, salaries, fee remission, and other prices and costs, and general Finance policies.
- Support the COO in the administration of bursaries.
- Attend Governors' Finance Committee and Council meetings as required.
- Ensure the Finance Team offers a high quality and accessible service to both internal and external customers.

People Leadership and Management

- Manage and lead the Finance team, provide management of direct reports, further developing the strategic and operational capabilities within the team
- Recruit, induct and develop Finance staff and provide training and mentoring as necessary
- Monitor team performance and ensure all responsibilities and objectives are met through regular feedback, formal appraisal and setting SMART objectives

Financial Management and Control

- Oversee and manage the Finance budget, to include input in setting the annual budget (with the COO) and effective planning to optimise resources. Authorise expenditure within the limits of the budget

Strategic Planning

- Develop and implement a Finance strategy that supports business objectives and oversee delivery of key deliverables
- Design and implement effective Finance policies and procedures to help drive the development of Finance within The Group, leading on change and transformation throughout the school

Professional Development

- Participate in training and undertake any performance development activities as required for the position

Additional Information

- Support for the Group's mission, vision and values and strategic direction
- Participate actively in the wider aspects of school life across the Group.
- In addition to the above, the post holder will carry out any other professional duties as reasonably required by the Principal or COO



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Qualifications and experience

- ACA, CIMA, CIPFA or ACCA qualified
- Several years' experience in a finance role
- Knowledge and understanding of data privacy standards
- Experience of using Microsoft Word and Excel
- Clear financial awareness, and competence in budget management
- Proven team leadership and management experience
- Deep understanding of business principles and practices

Skills

- Ability to clearly and concisely communicate goals, tasks and other organisational needs
- Ability to make crucial decisions, sometimes with very little time
- Encourages innovation and a creative culture of continuous improvement
- Ability to think strategically and develop strategies and processes to benefit schools and area of responsibility

Personal qualities

- Takes an innovative approach to problem-solving
- Sets high standards of self and others
- Keeps abreast of sector developments and anticipates the need for change
- Resilient with the ability to manage competing and changing priorities
- Reflective, evaluates development and learning of improvement strategies
- Takes accountability and ownership for decisions and outcomes in own area of responsibility

Philosophy and Ethos

- A commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and to follow the child protection procedures detailed in the school's safeguarding policy
- Ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children
- Contribute positively to the overall ethos, objectives and aims of the school

Health and Safety

- Support and actively participate in Health and Safety training initiatives



Applicant Information



Director of Finance

OUR STAFF BENEFITS



COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPMENT*

a strong commitment to professional development, including whole school training and support with personal development projects



FREE LUNCH*

free daily hot lunch and beverages during term time



TUITION FEE REMISSION*

for children of STAHS employees



LEISURE FACILITIES*

free use of STAHS fitness suite, swimming pool, pitches and courts



PENSION

generous pension scheme



FREE COACH TRAVEL AND CAR PARKING*



CYCLE TO WORK

subsidised cycle to work scheme



ANNUAL FLU IMMUNISATION

reimbursement scheme provided for annual flu vaccines



PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE*

subsidised private medical insurance

*conditions apply

APPLICATION PROCESS

STAHS is a vibrant school supported by a diverse and enthusiastic community of governors, staff, pupils, parents and alumni. It is important that our staff reflect the diversity of our community, and we therefore welcome and encourage applications from people of all genders and sexual orientations, those from Black, Asian and other minority ethnic backgrounds, and those with disabilities. We recognise the importance of recruiting high calibre staff in order to provide the highest quality of education for our students.

STAHS is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Applicants will be required to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

STAHS recruits staff that understand and share our commitment to safeguarding and the provision of a happy, nurturing and supportive environment for all members of our community. We act to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly by reason of a protected characteristic as defined within the Equalities Act 2010.

To apply for this position, please complete the application via My New Term on the Vacancies page of our website:

www.stahs.org.uk/vacancies

Please note CVs alone will not be accepted.

Deadline for applications: Monday 20 January 2025

Interview date: Monday 27 January 2025

All questions regarding the STAHS application and recruitment process must be directed to the School's Human Resources Department on recruitment@stahs.org.uk.

Applications will be reviewed upon receipt and interviews arranged accordingly; early applications are therefore encouraged. We reserve the right to withdraw the advertisement once a suitable candidate is found.



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