

Our schools team

Sue Singer Consultant and Head of Schools Practice

Our schools practice is headed by Sue, who brings wide and active experience of the sector to leading our work. Sue joined the team in 2002 after a career in education culminating in the Headship of Guildford High School. In addition, she was president of GSA (Girls' Schools Association), chaired the GSA/HMC Education and Academic Policy Committee and the Joint Associations Curriculum Group and was a member of the Steering Group for the Post-14 Inquiry into Mathematics. Sue has both current and past experience as a governor of several schools.

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Jonathan Morgan Consultant

Jonathan has worked in search for over eight years. He joined the consulting team at Saxton Bampfylde after heading our education research. He has advised on executive and non-executive roles across the commercial, public and not-for-profit sectors. He also leads our competition practice across the firm, which has included work with clients as diverse as Severn Trent, the UK Cards Association and Ofgem. Jonathan read Chinese at Edinburgh University, has a diploma in management from Cambridge, and is an alumnus of Kellogg School of Management. Jonathan is a governor of Purley Nursery and Children's Centre.

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Jo Llewelyn Associate

Jo has six years' experience in executive search both in the UK and New Zealand. She works across a range of sectors and has a particular interest in the firm's work with schools and children's organisations. In addition to this, she was involved with the launch of a charity looking at leadership in the Church of England, currently volunteers with Absolute Return for Kids (an academy sponsoring charity), and has assisted both organisations with appointments of key individuals.

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Tessa Dain Project Coordinator

Tessa joined Saxton Bampfylde in 2005, and provides administrative support to the Schools practice. As a central point of contact for both clients and candidates alike, she is responsible for supporting the process to ensure its smooth running. Tessa read Classics at Durham University.

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Executive
Search
for Schools

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The year has been a challenging one both in terms of the economic climate and the new rules and regulations imposed on schools.

As economic stringency has become a reality for all, the effect on parents, whatever the pressure on the family budget, is a desire to do their best to ensure both stability and high quality in their children's education – but they also seek real value for money.

The recruitment of an outstanding new Head whose personal qualities, skills and experience match the particular needs of the school continues to be one of the most important challenges faced by a governing body. One for which they may have little time to prepare and little previous experience. In this situation the support of a trusted and experienced executive search partner can be the key to a smooth process and a successful outcome.

We specialise in working with our clients to ensure that we help them to identify what is really important for their new head; that we are

equipped to provide the best possible advocacy on their behalf; and that our fully accountable research process reaches the widest market. Screening longlisted candidates through informal interview helps us not only to assess professional fit, but also to gauge the genuine level of interest – so that candidates coming forward for formal interview are a known quantity. Telephone references ensure that we can check our own findings through confidential conversations when referees will speak more freely than they might direct to a potential employer. Our detailed research report is also greatly valued by our clients for its market feedback as well as for the assurance that we have covered the ground on their behalf.

Our role as an advisor to schools is also important in relation to the “safer recruitment” guidance that schools need to consider when recruiting a new head, or indeed any new personnel. Clearly it is important that schools operate recruitment and selection procedures, that help deter, reject

or identify people who might abuse children, or are otherwise unsuited to working with them. If safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is an integral factor in managing the school, then a safe environment for children and young people will be created. But in addition to this the new regulatory and inspection procedures mean that it is vital that governing bodies make sure they are compliant when recruiting a new head. We have therefore made sure not only that we understand the new arrangements but that we also have consultants who have the appropriate safer recruitment certificate. If necessary we can ensure that they are present throughout the final interviews conducted by the Governors to ensure compliance with the regulations.

A trusted and experienced executive search partner has, therefore, never been so important for a school seeking a new head.

For further information or for an initial discussion please contact Sue Singer
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Additional Services

Psychological Assessments

Our team of qualified occupational psychologists have extensive expertise in the design of bespoke assessment centre solutions for strategic management selection and development across central government, not-for-profit and commercial sectors. In the past year we have also worked on a number of assessments across the schools sector.

We provide services for the administration and interpretation of psychometric ability tests and personality profiles and our bespoke job simulation exercises are tested with equivalent senior management populations before use. In addition we design and maintain assessment centre processes for internal promotion and selection decision making for clients.

Our experience

A snapshot of some recent appointments:

Abingdon School
Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Wakefield
Shrewsbury School
St Swithun's School
Dunottar School
Alderley Edge School for Girls
Harrogate School for Girls
Bromley High School
Wakefield Girls' High School
Ackworth School
Edgbaston High School for Girls (prep)
Burlington Danes Academy
ARK Academy
The British School of Paris
Bolton School (Boys' Division)
St Leonards School, St Andrews

Other school-related appointments have included:

Chair, Independent Schools Council
Chief Executive, Independent Schools Association
Bursar, Sedbergh School
Chief Executive, Future Leaders

“They were an excellent team. They knew the business and presented professionally. They knew the schools sector but they listened to us as well, and that was very important. They could have steamrollered me through but they didn't at all.”

**Chair
Independent Schools Association**