



**APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR OF  
FINANCE AND OPERATIONS  
APPOINTMENT BRIEF**  
July 2019





## MESSAGE FROM THE HEADMASTER

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Dear Applicant,

Thank you for considering a position at RMS for Girls. I very much hope that reading this information pack will encourage you to make a formal application. Of course, before doing so you will wish to gather as much information as possible about the school and I'm sure that you will explore our website and perhaps even read our latest inspection report and accounts which are both publicly available documents.

But that will only provide you with part of the picture. I joined RMS two years ago and from the moment I walked through the door, I knew that it was the school for me, so I very much hope that the more you learn about the school the more you will find it to be a really desirable place to work.

RMS is spectacularly beautiful and, when you first arrive here, it is hard not to be seduced by the impressive architecture and our glorious grounds, which occupy a 200-acre parkland site. We are all incredibly proud of our stunning surroundings and the sense of history that pervades the school. It would be correct to say that we are steeped in tradition and never more so than when Drill takes place in the Michaelmas Term each year. But it is equally true to say there is nothing stuffy or old fashioned about RMS. We are a modern, forward thinking school, working to help our girls to prepare for the challenges of a world that is evolving at a pace that none of us could have envisaged just a few years ago.

As I walk around the school, I am constantly struck by our pupils' verve and zest for life. They are incredibly proud to be RMS girls and their energy not only drives what we do but is also highly infectious. A quick look at our Twitter feeds will show you that there is no such thing as an average day at RMS. The breadth and depth of opportunity available to the girls is extraordinary and, over the time that they are with us, it is a joy to watch their confidence grow as they fully embrace the many experiences the school offers. But, just as importantly, they are kind, thoughtful and compassionate young women. And they work hard with a commitment to self-improvement.

So what else can you expect if you were to join the RMS team? Well, we absolutely value our staff. We firmly believe in giving all our colleagues opportunities to develop their careers within the school. We support our staff in undertaking further training such as enrolling on apprenticeships and attending external CPD. We also provide internal training opportunities based on individual needs. As well as this there are 5 days per academic year dedicated to training staff, these are known as INSET days.

Like all schools, RMS is constantly evolving. In any organisation, a change at the top often brings change further down the food chain and we are no exception. I do not doubt that our current staff will tell you that there has been a not insignificant degree of change over the last two years and there is still much to do. You would be joining the school at an exciting time and we want all the team to get involved in helping to shape and deliver our vision going forward.

Many of our staff, both support and teaching, live on site: we have fifty residential properties spread around the grounds, and RMS has a strong family ethos. There are staff who have come here at the start of their careers as well as many experienced staff who have a wealth of wisdom and experience which they are happy to share. For those who want the bright lights, thirty minutes on the tube will get you to Central London, and for those who don't, a walk around our 200 acres of parkland on a summer evening is hard to beat. We are a friendly bunch and you would be made to feel very welcome very quickly whether you live on site or not.

Finally, in a highly competitive market, RMS is thriving. Not only were we delighted with our results last summer but this year we have the highest number of girls in the Senior School since records began. As such, RMS is financially strong and developing and growing our surplus will be one of the key strategic aims the DFO and I will work together to deliver. A new Performing Arts Centre will open officially in September and we are excited about the prospects for the next few years as we work together to move the school forwards.

I do hope that you will decide to make an application to join us on that journey and to come in to see the school for yourself so that we will have the chance to meet in person.

Very best wishes,



**Kevin Carson, Headmaster**



## THE SCHOOL

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RMS is a leading independent girls' day/boarding school with 1000+ pupils aged 2 to 18 and 317 teaching and support staff, situated on a 200-acre parkland site near Rickmansworth in Hertfordshire. It is located within easy reach of Central London (30 minutes by train/underground) and is just under a mile from Junction 18 of the M25 motorway. Potential candidates are strongly encouraged to visit the school website [www.rmsforgirls.org.uk](http://www.rmsforgirls.org.uk) for more information about this thriving school, with its excellent value-added results and inclusive community spirit that encourages both girls and staff to work to their potential and beyond.

RMS has an exceptional, unusual and distinguished history. One of the oldest girls' schools in the country, the school was founded by Chevalier Ruspini in 1788 with the purpose of educating the daughters of Freemasons who were unable to support their families through death, illness or disability. The school became an open fee-paying school in 1978 and accepts girls from all backgrounds and faiths. The majority of families associated with the school have no links with Freemasonry, with our name now largely being a reference to our past.

The School comprises Ruspini House Pre School for boys and girls aged 2 to 4, Cadogan House Pre-Prep and Prep Department for girls aged 4 to 11, the Senior School, and Hind House Sixth Form Centre.

RMS's public examination results are consistently impressive, and around 99% of girls leave the school to take up places at university, 92% at their institution of first choice.

The school today has a limited but positive working relationship with the Royal Masonic Institution for Girls (RMIG) Endowment Trust/ Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF), who are the school's landlord. The Board, Head and DFO therefore interact with the Trust / Foundation on matters relating to the lease of the land.

## THE RMS VALUES

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The RMS Values are embedded in the school's ethos and, as a community, they underpin the way those in the school community work, learn and grow together. There are nine core values, one for each month of the school year. The emphasis on these values permeates the life of the school and pupils who demonstrate putting them into action in their daily life are recognised and rewarded. The Ashlar is a 'polished cornerstone' and it is a valued award given to girls in recognition of their hard work, demonstration of the school values and contributions to school life.

Our teachers describe the girls as willing learners who ask lots of questions, not because they haven't been listening, but because they have boundless intellectual curiosity and the confidence to question and explore beyond the curriculum. The pastoral team are very strong and so issues are picked up quickly and the focus is on nurturing the whole child not simply their academic performance. The broad co-curricular offer at the school and the small class sizes mean that teachers get to know each girl well and can become more actively involved in what they are doing outside the classroom. Perhaps the most helpful description is that given by a member of staff, when they said, "working at RMS goes beyond my expectations, your days glide by and teaching here is a really rewarding and positive experience".

It is with enormous pride that, as a team, both academic and support staff work together to assist the girls on their journey through the school, helping them to learn personal and academic skills until they move onto the next phase of their careers as charming, confident, thoughtful young women.



## WORKING AT RMS

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At RMS there is a sense that the community depends upon and values each member of its staff for the contribution they make to the reputation and success of the school. At the start of the current academic year, there were 317 members of the RMS team, 137 teaching staff and 180 support staff. The extensive grounds, spectacular buildings and the 24/7 nature of boarding, make RMS much more than just a school. As well as having no less than seven chefs on the payroll, RMS also employs carpenters, plumbers, nurses and a Chaplain. The grounds team regularly trim 3.5 miles of hedge and the catering team serve 230,400 freshly cooked meals each year. Meanwhile at the weekends and during the school holidays, the school welcomes film crews, provides a venue for sports camps or residential courses for overseas students, and hosts weddings.

Staff Wellbeing is also high on the agenda and the team enjoys subsidised membership at the onsite Nuffield Health Centre; there is also a six-hole golf course and driving range within the grounds and termly Staff Massage sessions are available. The Staff Association arrange a variety of regular events to which all staff are invited; there is a Community Choir and weekly swim sessions.

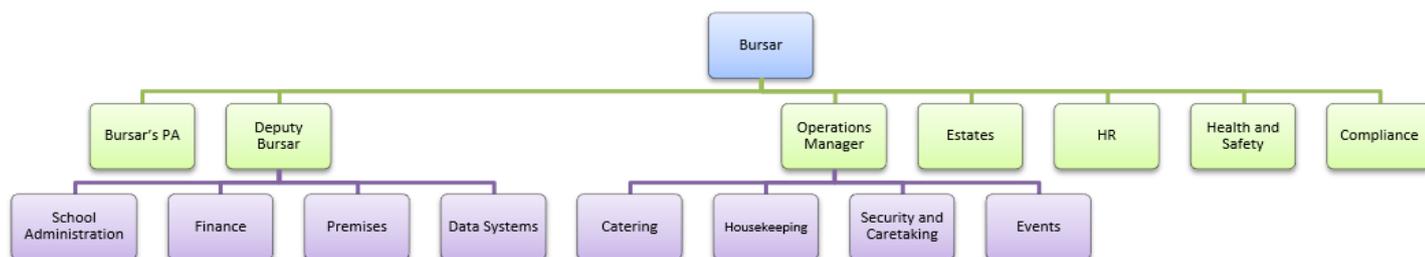
RMS is not only a successful school, it is a thriving community and a great place to work.



## THE DEPARTMENT

The Director of Finance and Operations has a large team to support and manage the needs of the School.

Currently, the Bursar has the following organisational structure, but this will evolve under the leadership of the new DFO. Whilst in the short term, clerking responsibilities will be undertaken by someone else, in due course the DFO will also resume the role of Clerk to the Board of Governors.



Of these direct reports:

- The Deputy Bursar line manages Finance, Premises and School Administration, which numbers approximately 29 staff
- The Operations Manager manages Catering, Caretaking, Housekeeping and Security numbering a team of approximately 70 in-house colleagues
- The Estates Manager, who lives on the school site, manages seven groundsmen
- The HR and Compliance leads also report directly to the Bursar



## THE ROLE

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Following the retirement of the current Bursar after 9 years, the appointment of the new Director of Finance and Operations (DFO) is a genuinely exciting opportunity to play a pivotal role in providing leadership across the operational, financial and commercial functions at RMS, and provide significant input to the development of school-wide strategy.

The school has a turnover of £16 million, employs 317 staff and educates over 1,000 pupils. As a member of the school's leadership team, the DFO will play a central part in contributing to the wider leadership of the school community, working closely with colleagues across the education, finance and operations teams.

Reporting to the Head, the DFO will lead and manage a diverse support staff and exercise oversight of the school's financial resources, including charitable provision for bursaries. They will have a strategic overview of: the estate and buildings, including boarding and staff accommodation; catering and soft-services; human resources and information technology. Managing the commercial and business aspects of the school, the postholder will need the vision and drive to lead the future planned development of the school's facilities, focussing on developing and implementing an ambitious Estate Development Plan to improve opportunities for all pupils in the school and to increase the commercial viability of RMS going forward.

The successful candidate will combine experience of managing complex, multi-disciplinary and sizeable support functions with a track record of successfully delivering change through outstanding leadership and effective collaboration. Dynamic and forward-thinking, the DFO will be a key member of the Senior Leadership Team, and will possess excellent relationship-building skills, a strong sense of team and the entrepreneurial and commercial instincts to ensure RMS continues to thrive. Working closely with a range of talented senior and middle leaders at the school as well as a committed staff and supportive Governors, the DFO will play an active part in school life ensuring RMS's aims and vision are realised for the community. Financial literacy and robust commercial judgement will be essential.



## JOB SPECIFICATION

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Working with a team of direct reports, the main areas of responsibility which attach to the position are set out below, although the list is not exhaustive, and the successful applicant may be expected to assume additional responsibilities as reasonably requested by the Head.

### **Main Responsibilities/Accountabilities:**

#### **People Leadership & Management**

- Manage all support aspects of the school under the direction of the Head
- Development and delivery of the Whole School Development Plan
- Liaison with the Royal Masonic Institution for Girls (RMIG) Endowment Trust/ Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF)

#### **Finance**

- Budgets, forecasting and sound financial management
- Fee collection
- Management of Bursary and means tested scholarships
- Statutory accounts
- Pensions and Investments
- Payroll
- HMRC compliance and submissions

#### **Enterprise**

- Management and development of all trading activity
- Property letting
- Identification of new markets and revenue generating opportunities

## **Governance**

- Ensure compliance with Charities Commission and Companies House requirements as appropriate
- Accurate and timely preparation and submission of all reports e.g. Governors meetings, Census data
- School Company Secretary

## **Risk Management & Compliance**

- Strategic and operational risk management
- Health & Safety
- Data protection including GDPR
- Safeguarding of children
- Policy development and management
- Statutory compliance

## **Estate**

- Ongoing maintenance of buildings, facilities and grounds
- Catering, Housekeeping, Caretaking, Security and school Administration
- Development of rolling cost plans for future maintenance of all buildings and facilities
- Driving the environmental agenda

## **HR**

- Compliance with employment law
- Remuneration and reward
- Support staff development and review
- Recruitment

## **IT**

- Management of all school IT
- Development of IT strategy and implementation

## **In due course, it is envisaged the DFO will assume responsibilities as Clerk to the Governors**

In this, the DFO will:

- Ensure all Governors' and Sub Committee meetings are administered and recorded effectively
- Provide Governors with timely and accurate information as required
- Keep Governors informed of compliance with, and changes to, the legal and regulatory frameworks
- Monitor the environment in which the school works in order to alert Governors to current and potential opportunities, risks and threats
- Help frame strategic thinking, strategic priorities, business plans
- Guide Governors, when necessary, to good governance practice

# PERSON SPECIFICATION

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The holder of this post will have to demonstrate flexibility and enthusiasm and enjoy working within a team with all members of the school community. The DFO should be able to challenge and support colleagues to do their best by inspiring trust and confidence and taking positive action. They will be calm under pressure, resilient and tenacious. They will also have a solid background of working well in a collaborative environment with excellent personal skills and will have demonstrated success in creating strong relationships with a variety of stakeholders is essential for this role. Additionally, the DFO must be committed to maintaining a high standard and a well-organised flow of information and communication within the school and to the wider community.

**It is likely that candidates for this role will demonstrate all or most of the following:**

## **Qualifications and attainments**

- Educated to degree level or equivalent
- An accountancy qualification (ideally ACA, ACCA, CIMA or equivalent), or relevant financial management experience at a senior level is essential
- Excellent computer literacy

## **Experience**

The successful candidate must be able to demonstrate;

- Inspirational leadership style and track record of having managed and built multi-disciplinary teams to reach successful outcomes
- Experience at board or senior management level with commercial and financial acumen
- Strong financial skills at both a strategic and operational level; can demonstrate a track record of having delivered an effective finance and operations strategy with measurable outcomes
- Proven track record of sound property and estate management
- Experience handling substantial building contracts, design and planning
- Experience of managing change successfully and sensitively
- Experience of working at both a strategic and operational level and a willingness to hold a range of responsibilities across this spectrum
- Understanding of charity regulation
- Knowledge of educational MIS (advantageous but not essential)

## Personal Attributes:

The successful holder of this post will need to demonstrate that they have:

- A clear understanding of, and affinity for, the school's ethos
- A genuine interest in education and the ability to support the educational aims and values of RMS; experience of working in schools is not essential
- The ability to write and orally communicate with a wide range of stakeholders in a professional, clear and engaging manner
- Confidence in group situations, including the delivery of presentations to students, parents, staff and external parties
- Experience of working in a collaborative environment, with an ability to build strong relationships across a community
- Outstanding interpersonal skills
- Well-developed organisational and time management skills with a keen eye for detail
- The ability to research and analyse situations, reach sound conclusions and resolve issues effectively
- Proven ability to lead and motivate teams and individuals successfully
- The ability to represent the school effectively to wide ranging audiences across all markets
- The ability to influence, motivate and persuade at all levels
- Enjoyment of working under pressure in a fast-paced environment, meeting timescales and deadlines.
- Administrative skills of report writing and record keeping
- Evidence of resourcefulness, thinking out of the box to contribute creatively with meaningful and workable solutions to problems
- The ability to relate well to young people with a genuine interest in delivering positive outcomes for them

- The ability to reflect on and improve own practice with the desire to undertake continuous professional development and engage fully in the performance review process
- A 'can do' attitude; are positive, enthusiastic, energetic and flexible
- An approachable, open and honest manner
- The ability to adapt to changing situations
- The ability to work independently and work on own initiative
- The ability to work to tight deadlines and remain calm under pressure
- The passion and desire to get involved with significant areas of school life
- A dedication to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people
- Enhanced Disclosure from the DBS

## TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

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The terms of employment include:

- This is a full time, 52-week a year role, where the demands of the job require the incumbent to have a flexible approach to their working hours, including some work in the evenings and at the weekend
- 6 weeks holiday
- Competitive Salary
- Staff Pension Scheme
- Health Insurance
- Free lunches when the school's catering facilities are open
- Free car parking
- Preferential gym membership
- School fee discount – subject to terms and conditions of the policy

The current Bursar is due to retire at Easter 2020, but the start date for the post is flexible and can be sooner than this if required.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service**

The school is a "Registered Body" under the provisions of the Police Act 1997 because employment at the school involves access to children under the age of 18. This post shall be subject to satisfactory references and the receipt of overseas criminal records check (where appropriate) and will require an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate (with barred list) from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before an offer of employment can be confirmed.

### **Safeguarding Children**

The post holder's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons for whom they are responsible, or with whom they come into contact, will be to adhere to and ensure compliance with the School's Safeguarding Policy Statement at all times. If in the course of carrying out the duties of the post the post holder becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children in the school they must report any concerns to the Head.

### **Revision of Job Description**

According to the development and requirements of the school, Job Specifications will need to be reviewed and updated periodically, after consultation with the Job Holder.

## The process

The Closing Date for Applications is **Wednesday 14 August 2019, noon.**

Following a longlisting meeting on **Wednesday 21 August 2019**, longlisted candidates may be asked to engage with Saxton Bampfylde for further conversations about the role.

Saxton Bampfylde will stand down candidates who are not longlisted.

Subsequent to a shortlisting meeting on **Friday 6 September 2019**, selected candidates will be invited to the first round of panel interviews on **Tuesday 17 September 2019**. Saxton Bampfylde will stand down candidates who are not moving forward.

Final round panel interviews will take place on **Tuesday 24 September 2019**.

If you have an issue with any of the dates specified, please let us know in your application.

## HOW TO APPLY

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to The Royal Masonic School for Girls on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at **[www.saxbam.com/appointments](http://www.saxbam.com/appointments)**, using code **GAIIB**.

Click on the '**apply**' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV, cover letter and application form.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Wednesday 14 August 2019**.

The Royal Masonic School for Girls is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. The successful candidate will be asked to apply for enhanced disclosure.

The Royal Masonic School for Girls is an equal opportunities employer.

The Royal Masonic School for Girls is a Private Limited Company, Registered No 1339867 England, Registered Charity No 276784.

### GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please **do not** include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

*The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.*