



DEAN CLOSE
SCHOOL
CHELTENHAM

HEAD DEAN CLOSE SCHOOL

Recruitment Pack and Further Information

Start date: January 2026

Deadline for applications 5th February 2025

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The Foundation, its Schools and Nurseries

The Dean Close Foundation is a growing, vibrant and diverse family of independent schools and nurseries, uniting around a shared vision and set of values. These spring from the origins of Dean Close School, which was founded in 1886 in memory of Dean Francis Close, Rector of Cheltenham and educational philanthropist. The Christian ethos of that original school continues today with the aim that every child should be given the opportunities to flourish, underpinned by our core values of courage, contribution and love which are the guiding principles behind our educational vision. The Foundation currently has five schools and six nurseries within its group, creating a strong community sharing best practice, ideas, resources and a secure future. Set on a beautiful 50-acre site on the edge of Cheltenham, Dean Close Senior, Prep and Pre-Prep schools are thriving independent, co-educational day and boarding schools with around 950 pupils from ages 3 to 18. Dean Close St John's School in Chepstow educates a further 130 pupils aged 3-13, and Dean Close Airthrie School in Christ Church Road, Cheltenham, has another 80 pupils aged 4-11.

The Foundation has diversified its activities and income and now runs six day nurseries under the brand Little Trees Nursery Group, as well as Dean Close Services Ltd which runs numerous courses, activities and events which making use of the schools' excellent sites and facilities.

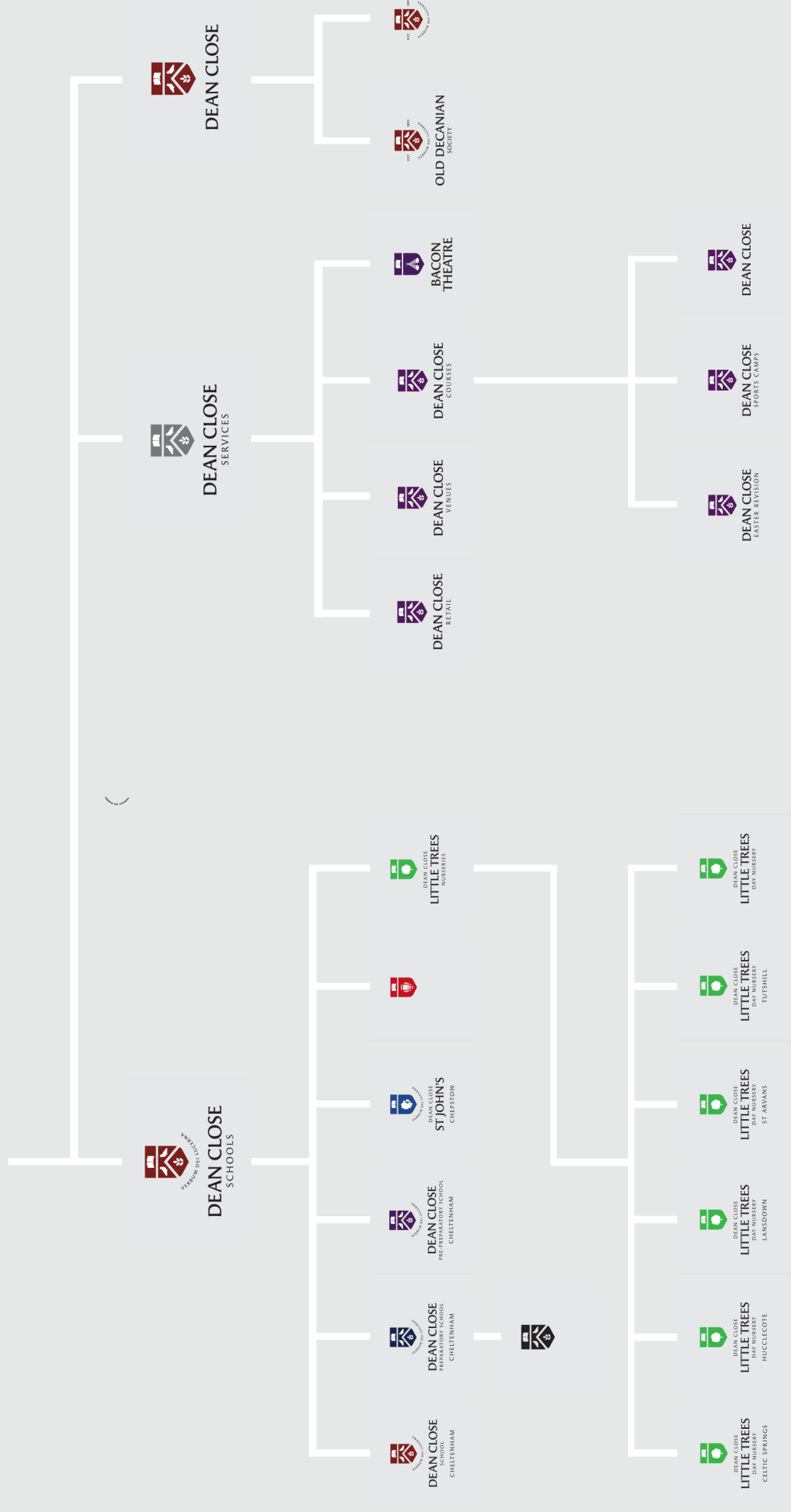
Alongside the Foundation's set of core values of Love, Courage, Contribution and Flourishing it has adopted a set of key Skills for the Future that each school incorporates into its curriculum (the 5Cs) of Collaboration, Creativity, Critical Thinking, Compassion and Communication. Across the schools, academic standards are high, with a broad range of abilities, and there is an exceptionally good range and quality of creative and sporting activity in addition to a strong programme of service activities.

Pastoral care is of paramount importance in all our schools, and we invest a great deal of time and resources in our young people's physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing.

The Foundation's evangelical Christian ethos remains a vital part of the School's distinctive character, although pupils of all faiths, and of none, are welcome in all our schools.



DCF Family Tree



The Executive Team

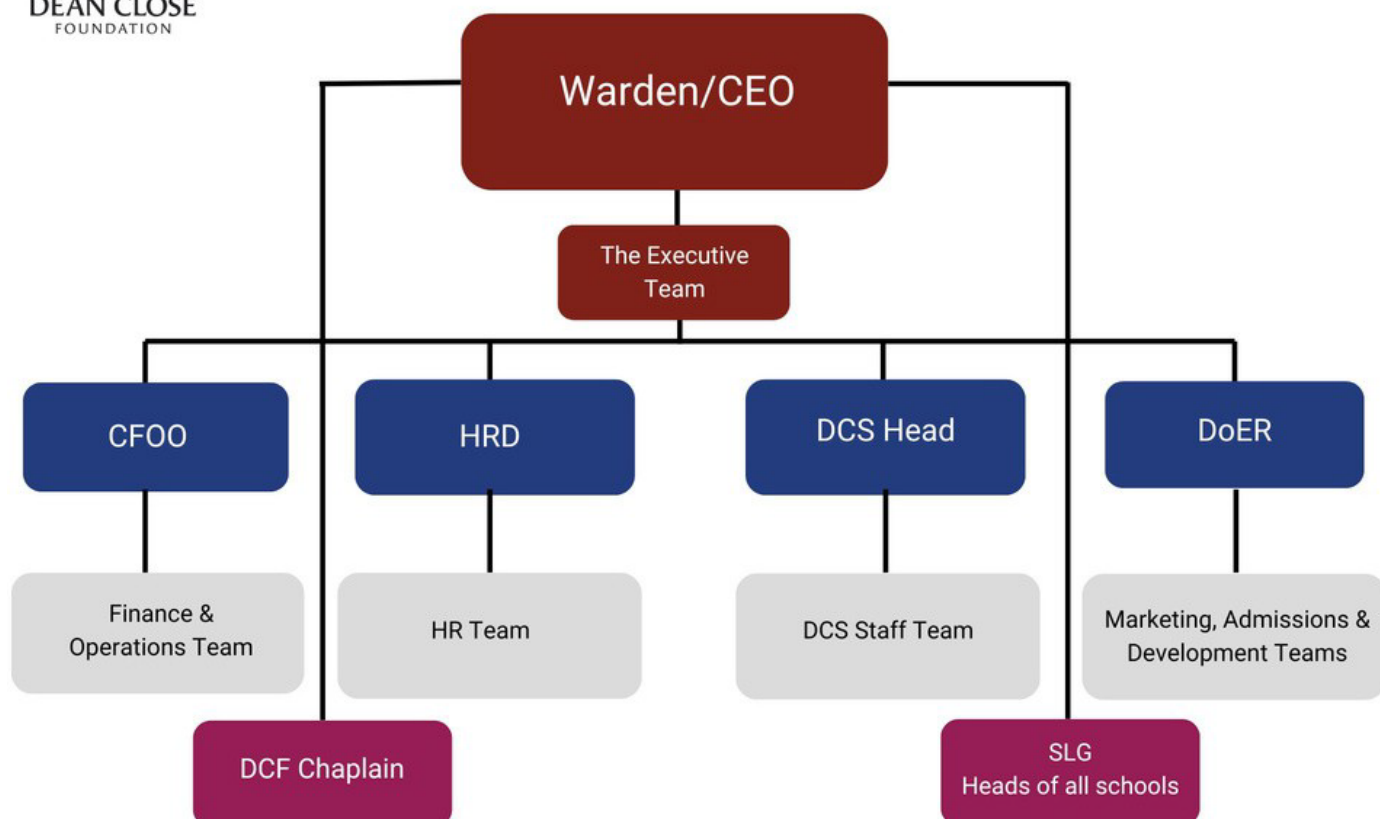
The Foundation's Executive team has responsibility for its overall leadership and direction as follows:

- Warden/CEO: Emma Taylor (until August 2025)
Areti Bizior (from August 2025)
- CFOO: Adrian Bowcher - responsible for the Finance Pillar of the Dean Close strategy
- Head of DCS: Bradley Salisbury (until December 2025) - responsible with the Warden for the Education Pillar of the Dean Close strategy
- Director of HR: Jennifer Thomas - responsible for the People Pillar of the Dean Close Strategy
- Director of External Relations: Dominic Neville - responsible for the Relationships Pillar of the Dean Close strategy
- Executive Assistant: Stef Hildick-Smith - EA to the Warden and the CFOO, Clerk to the Trustees, project support for the Executive Team

The Foundation's strategic objective is: to ensure the future flourishing of the schools and nurseries in the group by continuously improving the educational offering, diversifying the activities and income of the group, developing excellence in the staff team and growing the reputation and impact of the group.



Dean Close Foundation Warden's Team



The Role

The Head of Dean Close School reports to the Warden of the Dean Close Foundation. The Head attends Trustees' (governors') meetings as of right and is a member both of the Executive Team (along with the Warden, the CFOO, the Director of External Relations and the Director of Human Resources) and of the Schools' Leadership Group (with the Heads of the other schools in the Foundation). The Head appoints, leads and manages the Senior Leadership Team of Dean Close School.



The primary role of the Head is to provide strategic and operational leadership for Dean Close School, in line with the Foundation's values and strategy. As a member of the Executive Team, the Head represents Dean Close School and provides expertise to support the Education pillar of the Foundation strategy, ensuring that the strategic direction of the Foundation is well-informed in terms of educational practice and priorities, and that the interests of pupils are kept central in all major planning and resourcing decisions.

The Head is responsible for maintaining and improving levels of academic achievement, for ensuring the quality of pastoral care for all pupils, day and boarding, and for the range and standard of co-curricular activities throughout the school. The Head has substantial autonomy over all matters directly relating to Dean Close School, and will shape the structure, organisation and daily running of the school to ensure the very best outcomes for pupils.

Duties

Pupils

The Head has responsibility for recruiting and retaining the optimum mix and quality of pupils. The school currently has 500 pupils, with the majority of these being boarders. Targets for school numbers will be agreed annually with the Warden and Trustees, and the Head will work with the members of the Admissions and Marketing teams to ensure that these targets are met.

The Head is ultimately responsible for the welfare and flourishing of the pupils within Dean Close School. Pastoral support and care is directly the responsibility of a range of staff including the Senior Chaplain, the Housemasters, the Health Centre team and the Deputy Head Pastoral, but the Head has final responsibility for designing these teams and overseeing their work, to ensure that pupils are appropriately safeguarded and their well-being in the widest sense is promoted and fostered.

The Head will set the standards, provision and direction of the school in terms of the breadth and quality of the curriculum, co-curriculum and pastoral support available to pupils, and will promote the Dean Close values of Love, Courage and Contribution, ensuring that the school is inclusive and aware of the needs, talents and diversity of all its pupils.

The Head is expected to set, by example and through the appropriate development of sanctions and reward systems, standards for behaviour, presentation, courtesy, effort and aspiration for all pupils. Day-to-day management of pupil behaviour will be the responsibility of all staff, under the leadership of the Assistant Head Operations, but the Head will take the final decision on any major disciplinary decisions. Any permanent exclusion of a pupil should be discussed with the Warden before a final decision is taken, and the Trustees will be informed.



Duties

Staff

The Head is responsible for the recruitment, retention and development of the highest possible quality of staff, ensuring that the staff body has appropriate levels of qualification, experience and skill to meet the needs of pupils. With the Senior Leadership Team, the Head will ensure staff are appropriately deployed and that they have high quality and appropriate induction, training, appraisal and performance management. The quality of teaching is of paramount importance, as is the professional conduct, expertise and good practice of all staff; the Head will deal with underperformance or failure to act in accordance with the values of the Foundation promptly and with the support of the HR team.

The Head will meet regularly with key senior staff to ensure that they are supported in the performance of their responsibilities. These will include members of the Senior Leadership Team and also the Senior Chaplain, with whom the Head meets weekly to review the spiritual health of the school and to pray for the needs of the community.

Maintaining the engagement, commitment and morale of staff is an important aspect of the Head's role. The Head will be responsible for putting in place systems and provision to support the wellbeing of staff, to encourage a sense of loyalty to Dean Close and its values and for encouraging mutual support and the development of professional excellence among the staff team.

The Head will work with the Director of Human Resources on any significant restructuring or other major staff initiatives within Dean Close School, and make use of the Human Resources team to deal with any formal employee relations issues, as well as making use of the data and training offered by the HR team.

Parents

The Head is expected to communicate frequently and effectively with parents, both formally and informally, and is expected to maintain a high profile both in the school community and, on behalf of the school, in the local area and beyond. The Head will be responsible for ensuring that all communications between the school and parents is of an appropriate tone and is consistent with the Dean Close values, compliant with the law, especially in relation to data protection and the parental contract, and that all communications act to enhance the reputation of the school and build constructive and collaborative relationships with families. In the event of any complaint from parents, the Head will ensure the Foundation's Complaints Policy is followed and will endeavour to resolve concerns and complaints promptly and effectively.

The Head will work with the Warden on the communication of any major changes to the school offering, and with the Warden and the Director of Marketing and Communications on any communications on serious matters which might significantly impact the school's reputation and standing.

Duties

Alumni and the wider community

The Head will play an active role in maintaining relationships with alumni, meeting regularly with the Head of Alumni and Development. While this role reports to the Warden, the Head will be closely involved in the planning of OD events, especially where these take place at Dean Close, and will often be called upon to attend and to speak at alumni and Development events.

Responsibility for the Foundation's two subsidiaries, Dean Close Services Ltd and Dean Close Nurseries Ltd, lies with the Chief Finance and Operations Officer. Each of these has its own board of directors. The Head will be responsible for working with the CFOO and the Warden to ensure that the important work done by these two subsidiaries, and by the support staff across the Foundation, is well understood by the staff, pupils and parents who may be affected by their work.



The Warden has overall responsibility for the Relationships pillar of the Dean Close strategy, which includes partnerships with external organisations; however the Head will be responsible for initiating, developing and maintaining partnerships specifically focused in the School, working closely with other Heads and representatives of partner organisations for the benefit of young people at Dean Close and in the partner organisations. Examples mainly focused on Dean Close School are the Cheltenham Education Partnership and the link with Nyakatakura Memorial Secondary School in Uganda.

The Board of Trustees has oversight of all the Foundation's schools and activities, while the Link Trustees take a particular interest in each school. The Head should work with the Lead Link Trustee and other Link Trustees to ensure that these Trustees have a strong understanding of the school's direction, its achievements, the challenges it faces and the new initiatives the Head is introducing. The Head should invite the Link Trustees to visit, meet staff and pupils and familiarise themselves thoroughly with the life of the school. The Head may also wish to make use of the experience and wisdom of individual Trustees when forming action plans or introducing change.

Setting direction and strategy

The Head will be involved, through membership of the Executive Team, in setting the strategic direction for the whole Foundation, and for developing an effective strategic and improvement plan for Dean Close School. The strategic and improvement plan, which will be derived from the School Self-Evaluation Review document, will ensure the sustainability, development and flourishing of Dean Close School, considering internal and external opportunities and challenges, with a keen eye for educational developments and for the opportunities to develop the curricular and co-curricular offer as the needs of pupils change.

The Head will be responsible for communicating the Foundation Strategy, alongside the Warden and other members of the Executive Team, to the Dean Close School staff, pupils and parents, as well as giving clarity on the direction of Dean Close School itself, including the implications for curriculum, staffing, facilities and all other aspects of school provision.

The Head has responsibility for developing and enhancing the reputation of Dean Close School both locally and further afield, ensuring that it is seen as an outstanding educational provider. The Head will work with the Director of Marketing and Communications to ensure that the unique quality and nature of a Dean Close education is appropriately communicated in all its marketing and communication activities.



Budgeting, finance and estates

With the help of the CFOO, the Head will ensure that Dean Close School operates in an efficient manner. The Head will be responsible for controlling budgets for salaries, scholarships and all other areas of expenditure specific to Dean Close School.

The Operations Bursar, who has responsibility for maintenance and enhancement of the Dean Close estate and buildings, answers to the Foundation Bursar, but will be a member of the Dean Close School SLT, and will work with the Head and other senior leaders to establish priorities and planning for the school's buildings and grounds. The Head's responsibility is to ensure those priorities are agreed and taken forward for decisions by the Executive Team and/or Trustees, depending on the scale of the project concerned.

The CFOO has responsibility for the overall financial strategy of the Foundation, including budget-setting and management of major projects, as well as for financial matters such as billing and concessions. As the CFOO also line-manages key roles such as the Operations Bursar and Business Development Manager, whose work relies heavily on close collaboration with the school, good communication and close relationships are critical in this area. The Head and the CFOO must develop a strong working relationship and work collaboratively with them on these matters, referring any significant areas that need resolution to the Warden/Executive Team.

al development

The Head will attend the annual BSA Heads' Conference, and the Monmouth Group Heads' meetings. It is the Head's responsibility, with the support of the Warden, to maintain an up-to-date and relevant knowledge of issues in the educational sector.

Benefits

The Head will be provided with a suitable house on or near the school site, and will be expected to be resident at school during term time. A generous school fees discount is available for staff children of all ages; details are available from the bursary.



Person Specification

Qualifications

Essential: good honours degree, Qualified Teacher Status, evidence of recent and relevant training at senior level

Desirable: NPQH or equivalent, relevant further degree eg Master's in Education

Experience

Essential: Successful recent senior leadership experience in a school, likely to have been gained as a Head or Deputy Head.

Desirable: Experience of the independent school sector

Personal qualities

Essential: Evidence of a clear, evangelical Christian faith. Evidence of consistently high standards of principled and professional conduct. Evidence of the capacity to build strong professional relationships rooted in mutual respect. A clear commitment to serve the best interests of pupils, staff and the wider community. Evidence of a commitment to prioritise the protection and safeguarding of children and young people, and of reporting concerns appropriately. A commitment to uphold fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Excellent powers of communication, in written and oral contexts. Evidence of empathy, integrity and compassion. Ease in establishing relationships with others, a sense of humour and strong social skills. Evidence of a desire to make a contribution to the wider education system. Capacity to think strategically and to communicate vision and direction clearly



Benefits to all staff

Include:

- Health cash plan
- Community events
- Free three course lunch, during term time
- Free onsite parking
- Use of the gym and swimming pool, at specified times
- Discounted Bacon Theatre tickets
- Company sick pay entitlement
- Company pension scheme OR Teachers are automatically enrolled in the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS), alternatively they can join AVIVA APTIS scheme, minimum employer contribution 3% and employee contribution 4%
- Discounted golf fees at Brickhampton Golf Club

All staff are expected to

- Work towards and support the Dean Close Foundation stones/values of love, courage, contribution allowing pupils and staff to flourish.
- Demonstrate and develop the following skills:
 - Critical Thinking
 - Compassion
 - Creativity
 - Collaboration
 - Communication
- Support and contribute to the Foundation's responsibility for safeguarding pupils.
- Work within the Foundation's health and safety policy to ensure a safe working environment for staff, students and visitors.
- Promote equality of opportunity for all students and staff, both current and prospective.
- Undertake any other reasonable duties required that are related to the job purpose from time to time.

The post holder may be required to perform duties other than those given in the job description for the post from time to time. The particular duties and responsibilities attached to posts may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility entailed.

The Dean Close Foundation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

How to Apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is partnering with Dean Close on this appointment.


Candidates should apply for this role via www.saxbam.com/appointments using code LBMKB. Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application.

The closing date for applications is noon on 12pm Wednesday 5th February.

GDPR personal data notice:

According to GDPR guidelines, Saxton Bampfylde Ltd 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.



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