

stChris

A day and boarding school for boys and girls aged 3 – 18. Asking interesting questions since 1915.

**A dynamic and
rewarding place
to work.**

Director of Finance

Full Time – 40 hours a week
for 52 weeks of the year

Apply by 5.00pm on 15 April 2024

Hello! Thank you for taking an interest in our Director of Finance role. Here at St Chris, we embrace the challenges of the modern world which necessitates the asking of interesting questions.

This job pack contains more details about what this position involves, personal specifications and total reward.



Director of Finance

Salary

£65,479 - £75,866 (Scale L17 - L23 on St Chris Academic Scale) dependent on skills and experience

Contract

Full Time - 40 hours a week for 52 weeks of the year

Location

On-site, Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire

Life at St Chris

St Chris is an independent day and boarding school for girls and boys aged 3 to 18 located in Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire. Our School was established in 1915 and, since then, has been working to do things differently if, and only if, it makes things better for our students.

There are currently around 550 pupils on roll and 200 staff.

St Chris seeks to be a continuously developing community of children and adults working together to enable everyone to achieve their best. All are valued as individuals and encouraged to develop curiosity, competence, judgement, kindness and courage. St Chris seeks to prepare pupils for happy and fulfilled lives in the service of others.

We treat young people as individuals, encouraging them to develop into capable, imaginative, responsible people with a zest for life.

Purpose of the Role

As a qualified accountant, the Director of Finance's prime responsibility will be managing the schools' financial and commercial strategy, infrastructure, and operations ensuring that the school meets the challenges of a rapidly changing and adapting economic and political landscape.

Reporting to the Chief Operating Officer, you will be accountable to them.

The key to success in this role will be active engagement and partnering to ensure that St Chris has first-class, reliable financial provision at all times.

You are to support a culture of continuous improvement across the school's operations, working to improve efficiency and effectiveness in all aspects of the school's support services.

Be integral in developing and then implement the agreed Operations Plan leading to delivery of the St Chris strategy.

Provide leadership, support, and performance management for staff in the Finance team, responding sensitively to a wide range of interpersonal demands.

Line Management Responsibility

This role will have line management responsibility over the following roles: Finance Manager, Payroll and Billings Officer, and Finance Officer.



“Every voice in our school is important to us; and perhaps this is what makes St Chris a unique place where you can truly be yourself.”

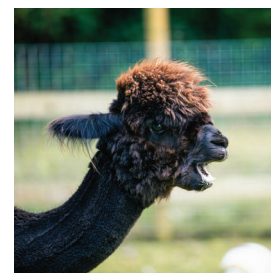
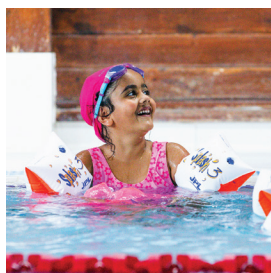
Nat, Deputy Head

What will the Director of Finance do?

Here's an overview of the Director of Finance's responsibilities and how they will be involved in the day-to-day running of the school.

Key accountabilities and responsibilities of the role:

- Act as an integral part of the newly formed Operations Senior Leadership Team driving forward the overall school strategy within the Operations Team;
- Lead transformational change to support delivery of organisational strategy;
- Lead on the transformation of the finance team into a critical business partner for the business;
- Lead the overall planning and financial performance ensuring that the school has a robust financial future and we are prepared and overcome the challenges of the sector;
- Attend Governors Meetings providing them with reliable and comprehensive information on which to base their decisions;
- Drive the strategic planning and execution of a commercial income generation plan to significantly reduce the school's reliance on fee paying activities;
- Develop and lead our planned reduction of our cost base to improve our resilience and free cash position;
- Lead of the school cash generating capacity including valuations, borrowing, asset management;
- Lead and direct the school's annual budget setting and longer term strategic financial planning, with a robust analysis and justification of intended expenditure, financial forecasts and cash flow;
- To deliver the COO, Board of Governors, Finance Committee and SLT with a high quality balanced scorecard, providing advice and support, in writing and verbally, as required;
- Encouraging innovation and seeking best practice from inside and outside the sector;
- Identifying and responding to long-term strategic risks, challenges and opportunities;
- Provide proactive assessment of opportunities to deliver efficiencies in collaboration with departments;
- To support the COO with undertaking negotiations with statutory bodies and other organisations on matters of funding, securing of resources and the service level agreements;
- To ensure that payroll is operated in line with current legislation and processed accurately and on time by the Finance team.



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Financial Systems, Control and Accounting

- Ensure the organisation operates robust accounting procedures and systems of internal financial controls, in line with current good practice;
- Lead the preparation of the organisation's accounts for audit in accordance with current accounting good practice and Charity Commission's Standards of Recommended Practice (SORP), liaising with the auditors and present the final accounts to the Finance Committee and Board for approval;
- To implement, oversee and review the school's systems of financial and business risk management and controls assurance including Anti-Money Laundering registration (AMLR) and Anti-Fraud compliance;
- In liaison with the school brokers and other advisers manage the organisation's insurance policies, advising on the range and levels of cover required and the most cost effective way of securing them;
- To ensure that an appropriate register of assets is maintained;
- To ensure that the school has adequate cash holdings and cash is moved to interest bearing accounts as appropriate.

Team and People Management

- Create, lead, manage, inspire and develop the team promoting a positive, inspirational and proactive culture, be visible, energetic and participative encouraging cross team working and initiatives;
- Effectively manage the performance of the team, ensuring they are working to agreed objectives, delivering outcomes and that they receive appropriate training and support;
- Develop and deliver integrated annual strategic aims, objectives and KPIs for all direct reports and their teams.

Additional Duties

- Demonstrate a continual commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people;
- To uphold St Chris policies to protect and safeguard pupils in order to secure their health, safety and wellbeing;
- Demonstrate a continual commitment to the promotion of equity, inclusion and diversity initiatives and the sharing of best practice in line with St Chris Equal Opportunities policy and procedures;
- Ensure the highest degree of confidentiality and data protection of all material.

This job description is not contractual or exhaustive but reflects the type and range of tasks, responsibilities and outcomes associated with the role. The post holder will be expected to also complete any tasks, as requested by their manager.





stChris

Person Specification



Qualifications, training and experience

- Professional accountancy qualification e.g. ICAEW, ACCA, CIPFA, CIMA;
- Experience of working at senior level within a team;
- Experience as a Director of Finance or equivalent role;
- Experience and knowledge of strategic planning and evaluation;
- Experience and ability to use financial management systems;
- Evidence of leading and managing budgeting and reporting processes;
- Exceptional leadership skills and the ability to motivate and inspire staff at the school;
- Experience of financial and accounting practice;
- Evidence of managing procurement processes in line with regulatory requirements;
- Knowledge of key financial information, e.g. education funding methodology, VAT, and contracting arrangements for various parties involved with education;
- Knowledge of audit requirements;
- Demonstrable experience of developing vision, strategy and plans for a business unit or team;
- Experience of analysing, explaining and disseminating information efficiently and effectively;
- Experience of line managing professional staff to deliver excellent service;

- Experience of working with and influencing senior staff;
- Experience of managing complex projects;
- Experience of policy development and implementation;
- Experience of producing clear and concise presentations, briefings, graphics and other written material on complex topics for a range of stakeholders and audiences;
- Ability to assess major issues affecting the needs of the academic environment.

Skills and Abilities

- Proven capability to build and sustain effective working relationships;
- Excellent interpersonal, influencing and relationship management skills
- Excellent written and oral communication skills;
- Evidence of taking an innovative approach and creative problem solving;
- Ability to use personal initiative;
- Ability to work both independently and as part of a team;
- Evidence of excellent personal organisation and time management skills;
- Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Benefits of Working at St Chris

“

The Finance
team works
really closely
together.”

Cleo

Payroll and Billings Officer



Welcome to St Chris

Schools are - in truth - nothing more than a collection of people working together, and it is on that understanding that all the incredible things achieved at St Chris come to be. So, 'Hello'; and we mean that.

***St Chris is a lot of things,
all at the same time.***

St Chris is an independent school for boys and girls aged 3-18.

St Chris is a community of young people from across the local area, the country, and the world.

St Chris is something unmistakably different from the moment you arrive.

St Chris is an outstanding, modern school with an important, progressive heritage.

1

Pension Scheme

Competitive pension scheme with 8% employer contribution plus an additional up to 4% personal sacrifice matched.

2

Westfield Health Plan

Complimentary opt-in Level 1 Westfield Health Plan with the option to scale up your plan with salary sacrifice.

3

Free Lunch

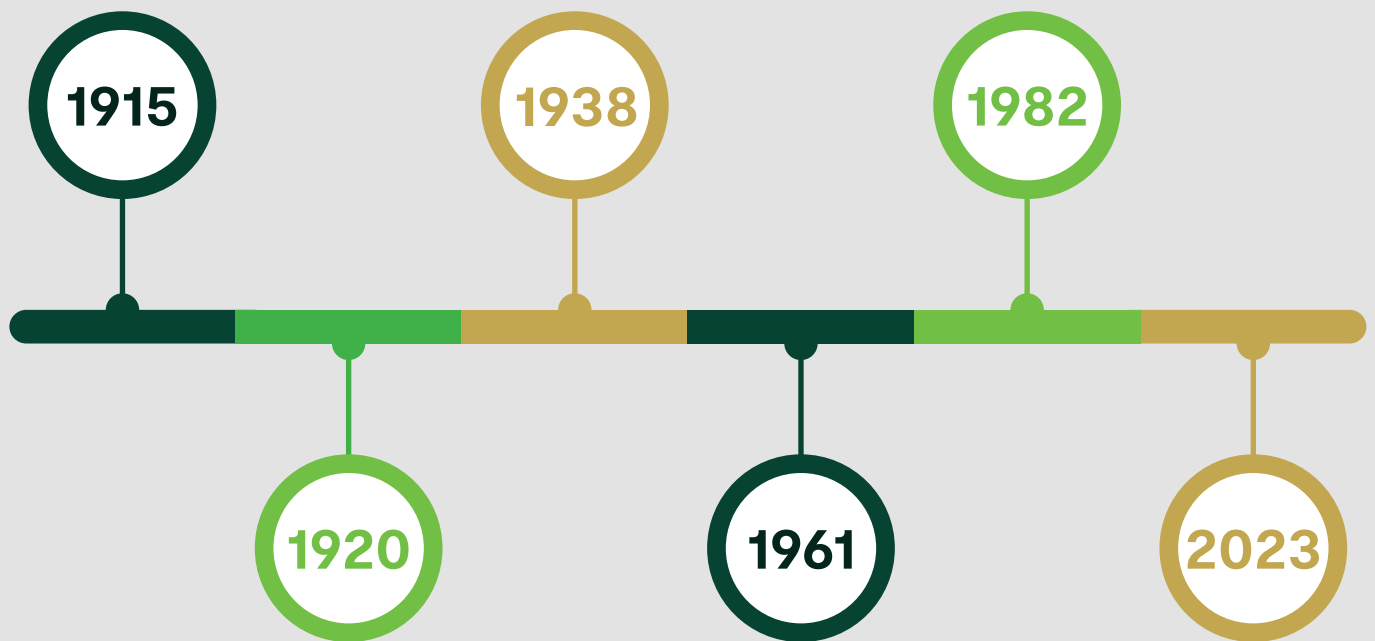
As part of a non-contractual agreement. Free vegetarian lunches are provided to staff during term time.

4

Facilities

Access to the school's on-site swimming pool and gym.

A Brief History of St Chris



St. Chris Established

St Christopher School (then known as the 'Garden City Theosophical School') was established in 1915 by headmaster, Dr. Armstrong Smith, ready for a new style of education.

Initial Meeting of the School Council

The Council consisted of 32 students and staff and met on a fortnightly basis to discuss and legislate on school matters. From December 1920, decisions made by the Council were later ratified by a meeting of the whole school.

Abolishing Uniform

Following a protest in the school magazine, the School Council discusses abolishing school uniforms for boys. The motion is, eventually, passed but no action is taken. During the war, clothing rationing and difficulties for parents meant that uniform was relaxed in 1938.

Swimming Pool Built

Parents contribute an initial £600 towards building the school swimming pool and pupils aim to raise £1000 themselves in 1961. The community pulls together to remove topsoil, excavate and build the pool. By 1968, the pool and changing rooms were completed.

Theatre and Sports Hall Open

A drama festival of eight plays marks the opening in 1982. Over the next decade, the enthusiasm of pupils allowed an average of five school productions each year, ranging from *Twelfth Night* and *Three Sisters* to *Blood Wedding* and *Accrington Paris*.

Present Day

Today, St Chris is a vibrant, thriving community working together. We believe in the benefits of an informal approach underpinned by the belief that all voices, from the youngest member of the nursery to the chair of governors, should be listened to and treated respectfully.



Let's work together.

Piqued your interest? We thought so.

At St Chris, we do things differently to benefit our young people and community. Looking for a new challenge? Looking to have an impact? Searching for a job that gets you thinking?

Apply for this role at www.stchris.co.uk/vacancies.

How to apply

To apply, please complete an application form (we do not accept CVs as an educational institution) and submit this, together with a covering letter to the People team at hr@stchris.co.uk. If you would like a conversation regarding this opportunity, please contact Zoe Weaver, Director of People at 01462 650962.

Please also complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring form which will be immediately detached from your application.

St Chris is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Applicants will be subject to child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

St Chris is fully committed to equality of opportunity and diversity and we warmly welcome applicants from all suitably-qualified candidates. We welcome applications regardless of race, colour, nationalist, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, disability or age.

The closing date for applications for this role is 5.00pm on 15 April 2024.
Interviews will take place on 26 April 2024.