



# APPLICATION PACK



Director of Finance

Candidate Brief

**DOWNSIDE SCHOOL**

Stratton-on-the-Fosse, Radstock, Bath BA3 4RJ

[www.downside.co.uk](http://www.downside.co.uk)



Downside School's vision - as a leading Catholic school - is to be a bright light in the world of education, illuminating the lives of young people and inspiring service in the world through experience of Benedictine culture. It will enable pupils and staff to develop their own identity through experience of a community with Christ at its centre.



# THE SCHOOL & BACKGROUND

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Downside, as a leading Catholic school, maintains an ethos that is just as strong today as it was when the School was founded in 1606. The core aspects of Benedictine education are:

WELCOME  
LISTENING  
REVERENCE & HUMILITY  
TEACHING & LEARNING  
PERSONAL DISCIPLINE  
CONCERN FOR THE INDIVIDUAL  
BUILDING COMMUNION  
STEWARDSHIP OF GIFTS

The **eight aspects** provide a valuable perspective on the key qualities of a Benedictine education.

The Benedictine community of St Gregory the Great was founded at Douai, France, in 1606 by a group of English and Welsh monks who were in exile because of the penal laws in England against Catholics. The community received the protection of the Infanta **Isabella** Clara Eugenia of Spain and Portugal, the joint ruler of the Spanish Netherlands, and they were furnished with buildings by Philip de **Caverel**, Abbot of St Vedast's in Arras. By 1617 English Catholics were sending their boys across the Channel to be educated. The School has been in existence since that time, with the monks engaged not only in teaching but also in scholarly work, writing and lecturing, and in priestly and pastoral work.

Downside became a fully co-educational school, admitting boys and girls in all years, in 2005. Downside School is housed in magnificent buildings set in a 500 acre estate at the foot of the Mendip Hills, twelve miles south of the city of Bath. The Old House – formerly known as Mount Pleasant – dates from the 18th century; Isabella House was completed in 2007. The Abbey Church, partly designed by Giles

Gilbert Scott, lies at the heart of the School.

One of the notable aspects of our school is its love of scholarship, combined with a lively sense of tradition. While the school educates young people to thrive in the 21st Century, it also values individuality and character, as young people are guided to live together positively within the school community while achieving excellence academically, culturally, in sport and in the wider curriculum. Downside offers a Christ-centred education through which pupils can discover their true selves. As part of that project, staff act as role-models to the young people in our community, doing all they can to embody the values of the institution, living according to Christian values and working positively for the benefit of all. St Benedict refers to 'ora et labora', prayer and work; we aim at Downside to embody spiritual values in all that we do.

The School has excellent teaching, boarding and recreational facilities. There are purpose-built centres for the Sciences and Humanities, dedicated Music and Arts Schools, a 450 seat theatre, a comprehensive swimming-pool and sports complex, over 100 acres of playing fields with all-weather hockey, netball and tennis courts, six distinctive girls and boys boarding-houses and extensive buildings and classrooms set in rolling grounds and farmland.

As a national boarding-school, Downside takes pupils from far and wide but the boys and girls come principally from the South of England, London and the Midlands. Our classes contain a maximum of twenty pupils.

# JOB DESCRIPTION

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<b>Post Title:</b>	Director of Finance
<b>Department:</b>	Senior Leadership Team
<b>Location:</b>	Stratton-on-the-Fosse, Radstock
<b>Reports to:</b>	The Head Master
<b>Supervisory Responsibility:</b>	Finance Department staff including Senior Accounts Clerk and Accounts Clerk

## Role Summary

The Director of Finance is appointed by and accountable to the Head Master. He/She also has direct access to the Governing Body and will be required to attend committee meetings as requested.

The Director of Finance leads and manages all Finance Department functions. He/She is a member of the Senior Leadership Team, attending weekly meetings and, with the Head Master meets regularly with the Chair of Governors and the Chair of the General Finance and Resources Committee.

## Organisation

- As a senior manager responsible for the financial administration of the school and company secretary, the Director of Finance has direct access to the Chair of Governors and the Chair of the Finance Committee as well as the Board of Governors. The Head Master is responsible for all educational matters.
- It is essential that the Director of Finance and Head Master work in close co-operation and harmony to achieve the strategic direction and policy objectives of the Board of Governors. To this end the Director of Finance is required to advise the Head Master of the financial implications of all policy decisions, including educational ones. He/She is also required to work in close partnership with the Director of Operations.

## Finance

- Keeping the accounts of the school and preparing annual Statements of Financial Activity (SOFA) and Balance Sheets in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP).
- Safeguarding the School's assets and ensuring the overall business viability of the School over the long term.
- Responsibility, in collaboration with the Head Master and Governors, for all of the school's finances, ensuring the Head Master and Board of Governors are fully informed of the School's finances on a regular basis for example:
  - Provision of financial and other relevant information to Governors' meetings and committees, including monitoring of income and expenditure.

## JOB DESCRIPTION continued

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- Preparation and supervisory oversight of annual estimates of income and expenditure to include the preparation of departmental budgets (in consultation with the Head Master).
  - Prepare forecasts and business plans (usually over a five year period).
  - Maintain cash flow projections for current and future years, including analysing costs and other statistical records.
  - Advising on annual changes to fee levels, salaries, fee remission, and other prices and costs, and general finance policy.
  - Monthly management accounts, school payroll and credit control.
  - Identifying and managing tactical and financial risks (including insurance)
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- Managing the School's working capital
  - Managing the bank accounts and cash flow.
  - Ensure effective management of the petty cash account.
  - Managing the Finance Team on income, debtors and related matters.
  - Overseeing all transactions passing through the Nominal Ledger, Purchase Ledger and Fees Ledger.
  - Ensure the Purchase Ledger is used correctly and accurately and that suppliers are paid in a timely fashion, scrutinising all invoices received before passing them for payment.
  - Investigate any budget variances and liaise with Senior Managers over any excessive expenditure.
  - Administration of all pensions schemes including TPS, NEST and Stakeholder pensions.
  - Regular review and renegotiation of tenders and contracts and preparing financial appraisals of specific projects.
  - Advising on taxation matters generally, including compliance, VAT, Business Rates and Council Tax.
  - The administration of investments within the guidelines set by the Governors.
  - Advising on scholarship and bursary funds and undertaking assessments of parents' income and assets prior to making bursary awards.
  - Ensure Gift Aid is correctly claimed in a timely manner.
  - Leading the statutory accounts process.

### **School Fees – Billing and Collection**

- Timely preparation of pupils' bills and collecting fees and extras and operation of an Advanced (Composition) Fees Scheme.
- Ensuring timely payment of fees and the reconciliation and authorisation of balances on the Fees Ledger, keeping the Fees Ledger up to date at all times.
- Credit control.
- Advising on methods of accepting fee payments and implementing appropriate processes.
- All legal matters associated with billing and fee accounts.

# JOB DESCRIPTION continued

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## **Payroll**

- Oversee the monthly payment of all salaries and wages, including PAYE, Superannuation and National Insurance Contributions and compliance with regulations for benefits in kind.
- Analysis and reconciliation of all payroll accounts.

## **School Shop**

- To keep up to date accounts and ensure stock taking and cash checks are undertaken on a regular basis.
- To produce monthly management accounts and ensure VAT returns are completed accurately and in a timely manner.

## **Administration and Management**

- Acting as Company Secretary, liaising with the Governors and Clerk to the Governors and responsible for Memorandum and Articles of Association.
- Acting as correspondent with the Department for Education (DfE) and being responsible for the records and returns required.
- Maintain contact with all statutory organisations and authorities as appropriate, taking responsibility for timely submission of legislative returns and other aspects of legislative compliance on financial matters.
- Managing the Finance Department staff, meeting regularly and setting clear objectives.
- Member of the School's Senior Leadership Team.
- Responsible for Performing Rights and copyright.
- Responsible for the business and commercial operations of the School including letting of school premises to outside organisations, in partnership with the Director of Operations.
- Ensuring there is adequate insurance cover at all times including employer's liability, buildings and equipment cover, personal accident, travel insurance and other relevant cover, seeking appropriate professional advice as required.
- Responsible for overseeing all purchasing of goods and services for the School.

## **General**

- To take part in such staff training as may be agreed and be regularly appraised.
- To undertake such other appropriate duties as may, from time to time, be required.

The following duties are ones which all staff are required to perform:

- Observe health and safety procedures and work safely at all times;
- To be responsible for your own continuing self-development, undertaking training as appropriate to the working environment and location, and developments in your role;
- Promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young persons for whom you are responsible and with whom you come into contact;

## JOB DESCRIPTION continued

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- Undertake any other duties as required by your manager in order to meet the changing needs and demands of the Organisation.
- Conduct yourself with professionalism, tact and diplomacy at all times as a representative of the Organisation.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

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<b>ATTRIBUTES</b>	<b>ESSENTIAL</b> <i>These are qualities without which the applicant could not be appointed.</i>	<b>DESIRABLE</b> <i>This information could be used to differentiate applicants.</i>
<b>Qualifications</b>	Professional Qualification e.g. CIMA, ACCA or equivalent.  Degree level qualification.	Membership of relevant professional body.
<b>Knowledge &amp; Skills</b>	Demonstrable leadership of a highly effective finance function.  Excellent time management and organisational skills.  Excellent communication skills and ability to work effectively with a number of stakeholders at all levels.  Proficient in the use of Microsoft Office applications, in particular Excel, Word and Outlook as well as knowledge of using Finance/Payroll Management systems.  Strong commercial acumen.  Possess a good understanding of legal issues, handling of complaints and liaising with government and regulatory bodies.	Experience of using WCBS PASS  Experience of using iSAMs
<b>Experience</b>	Proven experience of senior management at a high level, either in education or in another sector.  Experience of providing robust strategic financial advice and management information to Board level.  Experience in all aspects of financial management and statutory reporting.	

## PERSON SPECIFICATION continued

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<b>ATTRIBUTES</b>	<b>ESSENTIAL</b> <i>These are qualities without which the applicant could not be appointed.</i>	<b>DESIRABLE</b> <i>This information could be used to differentiate applicants.</i>
<b>Personal competencies and qualities</b>	<p>A leader, team player and natural motivator who is adaptable, innovative, diplomatic, articulate, enthusiastic and resilient.</p> <p>Able to form an effective and supportive relationship with the Head Master and offer wise counsel, as well as inspire confidence among Governors, teaching and support staff.</p> <p>Able to lead and inspire the finance team.</p> <p>Have excellent interpersonal and communication skills including the ability to relate well to people on all levels.</p> <p>Can resolve complaints and issues in a sensitive manner.</p> <p>Possess strong analytical and problem solving skills.</p> <p>Are academically strong, emotionally intelligent, have intellectual rigour and vision, and an interest in educational issues.</p> <p>Are committed to the safeguarding and wellbeing of children and young people.</p> <p>Committed to ongoing learning and development for self and department.</p> <p>Support the Catholic and Benedictine Ethos of the School.</p>	



# TERMS AND CONDITIONS

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## **Salary**

The salary will be competitive, depending upon experience and qualifications.

## **Hours**

The post is all year round with a standard full time week of 35 hours, 9.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday with a one hour unpaid lunch break. The nature of the role will require a degree of flexibility in working hours.

## **Holiday**

Five weeks per annum plus all public and bank holidays in England.

## **Pension**

Provision of a stakeholder pension scheme with Standard Life.

## **Probationary Period**

There will be a probationary period of six months.

# OTHER BENEFITS

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## **Lunch**

We have an excellent catering facility, which offers all our staff a complimentary lunch.

## **Cycle Scheme**

All staff have access to a cycle to work scheme which enables staff to purchase a bike tax-free through a salary sacrifice arrangement.

## **Well-being**

We have an Employee Assistance Programme offering access to advice, information and counselling and we provide a range of spiritual, emotional and physical support mechanisms.

## **The Weld Café**

A great addition open to staff and pupils for drinks and snacks in the afternoon and evening.

## **Career Development/ CPD**

Downside is committed to the professional development of staff and will support training as required.

## **School Fee Remission Scheme**

Staff fee remission is granted to permanent employees with a workload of 0.5 FTE or greater.

## **Parking**

Free on-site parking is available.



## APPLICATION PROCESS

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**Closing date for applications:** Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October at 5.00pm

**Interviews to be carried out on:** Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2019

If you would like to have an informal discussion with Andrew Hobbs, Head Master or require any further information after reading the candidate brief, please contact Caroline Brawley, Director of Human Resources on 01761 235112 or by email at [cbrawley@downside.co.uk](mailto:cbrawley@downside.co.uk).

To apply, please complete an application form which can be downloaded and submitted through our applicant tracking system on our 'Working with us' page at: [www.downside.co.uk/working-with-us/](http://www.downside.co.uk/working-with-us/).

Please note, we can only accept applications made on the Downside School application form.

You should ensure that your application form provides sufficient information to enable us to follow your complete employment and other history since leaving school.

We look forward to hearing from you.

*Downside School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening, including checks with past employers and the DBS. We are an equal opportunities employer. By car, we are within 40 minutes of Bristol, 30 minutes of Bath and 15 minutes of Wells.*

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