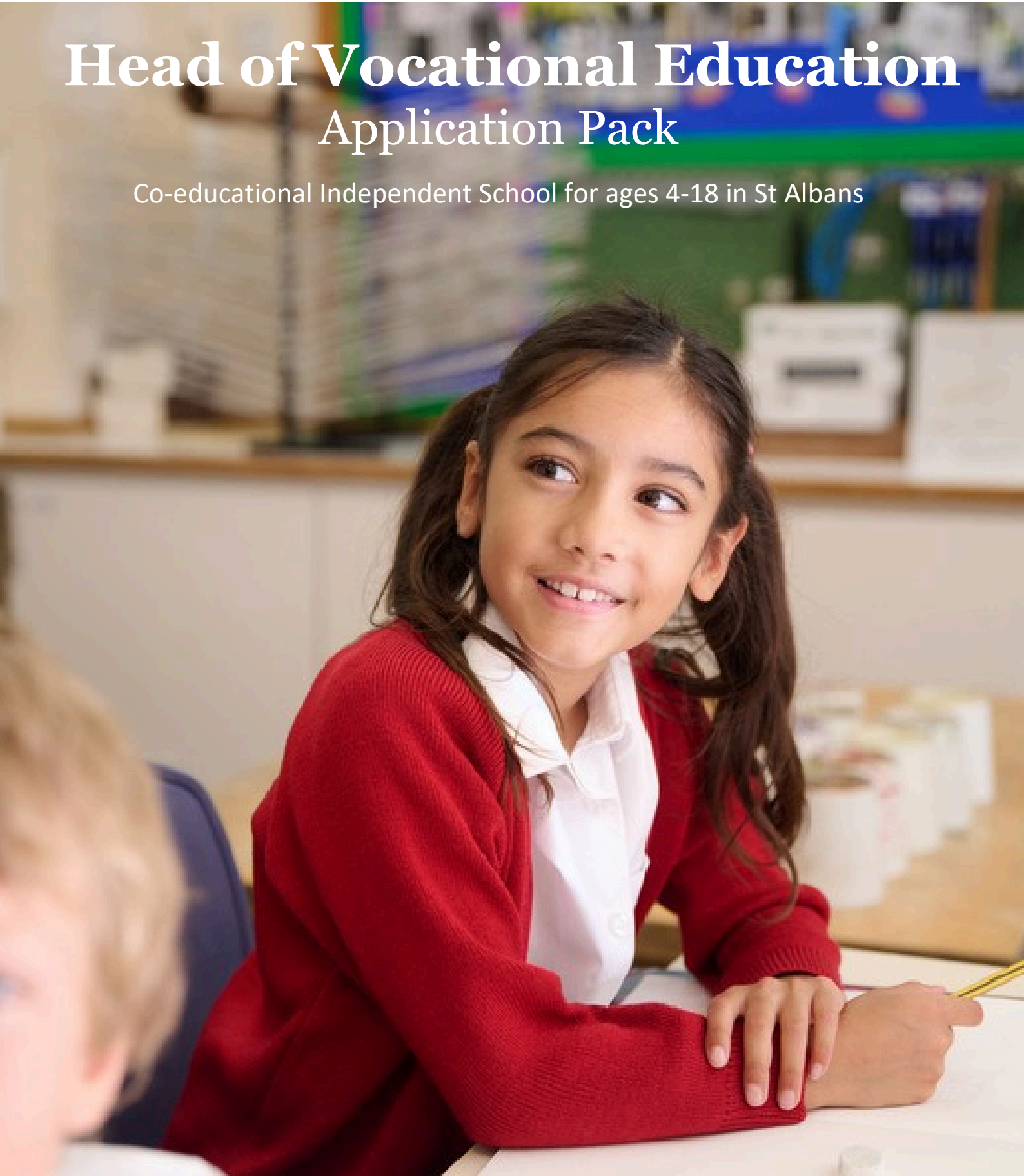




*Where young
people are*
**known,
valued &
treasured**

Head of Vocational Education Application Pack

Co-educational Independent School for ages 4-18 in St Albans





Welcome to St Columba's College

St Columba's College is located 25 miles from Central London in the cathedral city of St Albans in Hertfordshire. SCC is a thriving 4-18 independent co-educational day school, comprising a Prep of approximately 200 pupils and a Senior School of 600 students, of whom 160 are in the Sixth Form. Columba's is an academic and aspirational school devoted to scholarship and the holistic development of each individual child in its mixed-ability intake. It was established in 1955 by the Brothers of the Sacred Heart and is a Roman Catholic foundation based on the educational philosophy developed by its founder Father André Coindre: to ensure a provision of education rooted in religious values, structured through friendly discipline, nurtured by personal attention, and committed to academic excellence. We are part of a vital and dynamic group of 12 schools located primarily across the United States and United Kingdom.

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Exemplary pastoral care + great teaching +
emphasis on extracurricular = happy children
reaching their potential.

The Good Schools Guide

Overview

St Columba's College is delighted to introduce a new and forward-thinking position: Head of Vocational Education and Futures+ Programme.

This role has been created in response to the rapidly evolving landscape of qualifications and training pathways available to young people. As university and vocational routes continue to diversify and expand, there is a clear need for strategic leadership to develop and manage partnerships, oversee and increase vocational provision, and ensure coherent, high-quality pathways are embedded within the school's curriculum offer to meet the needs of our students and families.

Rooted in the charism of André Coindre, St Columba's College is committed to providing an education that is not only academically rigorous but deeply holistic. We seek to form young people of character, compassion and purpose, equipped to discern their vocation and to contribute meaningfully to the world. The Head of Vocational Education and Futures+ Programme will be central to this mission: helping each student to understand their strengths, explore their aspirations and access high-quality pathways that align with their talents and values.

This new post is also a direct response to the thoughtful feedback we have received from parents and students. Our community has told us clearly that they value greater breadth of choice, clearer guidance on non-traditional routes, and more personalised support in navigating life after school. In establishing the Head of Vocational Education and Futures+ Programme, we are affirming our commitment to listen, to innovate, and to ensure that every Columban is exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their journey.

We are seeking an inspiring, visionary leader who is passionate about vocational education, who understands the changing world of work and qualifications, and who will work collaboratively across the College to embed vocational awareness and opportunity into every student's experience. This is an exciting opportunity to shape a flagship area of our provision and to make a transformative impact on the futures of our young people. The role is offered initially on a fixed term contract for three academic years.



Job Description

Job Title: Head of Vocational Education and Futures+ Programme

The Post Holder Reports to:

Headmaster through a member of the College Leadership Team and/or the Head of Sixth Form

Responsible for:

Vocational staff, delivery partners and employer engagement functions

Frequent contact with:

Assistant Head of Teaching and Learning; Director of Studies; Head of Sixth Form; Head of Careers and Higher Education; Head of Commercial; Headmaster (for the initial set up of the Department); Marketing Manager

Overall purpose:

This role exists to future-proof the College's post-16 offer, diversify income streams, and position the College as a recognised national leader in values-led vocational education. The Head of Vocational Education and Futures+ Programme will provide strategic leadership and operational oversight of the College's vocational, technical and adult education provision.

The postholder will:

- Lead the development and embedding of the College's Futures+ strategy
- Oversee AAQs, V-Levels, T-Levels and Skills School (Adult Education) provision
- Act as the single accountable lead for employer partnerships and technical pathways
- Ensure safeguarding, compliance, and inspection readiness across all vocational activity
- Teach Vocational Course based on areas of expertise

Key Responsibilities

A. Strategic Leadership

- Develop and implement the College's vocational and technical education strategy
- Embed Futures+ as a coherent progression pathway from Form 3 (Options Stage) through to Sixth Form
- Lead the expansion and delivery of AAQs, V-Levels and T-Levels
- Establish and grow the College Skills School model and build a sustainable adult and workforce education framework aligned to local demand and dual school values
- Present strategic updates and performance data to SLT and Governors
- Protect and enhance the College's reputation in all vocational activity

B. Partnership & Employer Engagement

- Act as the primary liaison with the appointed delivery partners
- Ensure clarity of accountability between college and partner responsibilities
- Oversee employer engagement strategy, including industry placements
- Develop partnerships with local authorities, employers, and community organisations
- Position the College as a hub for lifelong learning and workforce development alongside any existing or future co-commercial enterprises

C. Quality Assurance, Compliance & Safeguarding

- Ensure all vocational provision meets inspection and awarding-body standards
- Oversee safeguarding arrangements for under-18 learners within technical pathways
- Monitor IQA, EQA and inspection readiness processes (if required)
- Track learner progress, retention, achievement and destinations
- Ensure data reporting is accurate and robust

D. Operational Delivery

- Coordinate curriculum planning, timetabling and staffing in line with responsibilities of other Heads of Department
- Support and upskill College teaching staff involved in vocational pathway teaching
- Develop a strategy for potential adult learners (evenings, weekends, holiday periods) in conjunction with any future co-commercial enterprise
- Ensure financial viability through demand-led growth

E. Financial & Commercial Accountability

- Contribute to business planning and revenue forecasting
- Monitor cost efficiency of delivery models
- Ensure variable-cost model is maintained and risk exposure minimised
- In conjunction with any future co-commercial enterprise, support the development of new income streams through workforce education

F. Key Performance Indicators (Year 1–3)

The success of this role will be dependent on achievement of KPIs:

- Successful launch and embedding of Futures+ framework
- Growth in AAQ / V-Level / T-Level enrolment and delivery
- Established employer placement infrastructure
- Adult provision launched and commercially sustainable
- Positive inspection and compliance outcomes
- Clear progression routes into apprenticeships, higher education, or employment

Leadership & Behavioural Expectations

The postholder will:

- Operate with strategic clarity and commercial awareness
- Balance innovation with safeguarding and compliance rigour
- Demonstrate calm leadership in a developing area of provision
- Maintain high standards of professionalism and accountability
- Work collaboratively across academic and operational teams
- Be available as required during college holiday periods to ensure that the needs of the role and students are met
- Play a full part in the life of the College community to support its distinctive mission and ethos and to encourage staff and students to follow this example
- Contribute to co-curricular activities
- Pastoral responsibility for a tutor group
- Undertake other key tasks that may be reasonably asked by the headmaster

Person Specification

Essential

- Degree or equivalent professional qualification
- Qualified Teacher Status (desirable)
- Significant experience in vocational / technical / FE education
- Experience of curriculum leadership and staff management
- Knowledge of awarding-body compliance, IQA and inspection frameworks
- Proven employer engagement experience
- Strong safeguarding understanding
- Financial and commercial awareness
- Experience within an independent school context
- Experience establishing new provision or growth models
- Understanding of adult education funding and workforce commissioning

Safeguarding Children

The appointee's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons for whom s/he comes into contact will be to adhere to and ensure compliance with the College's Safeguarding Policy at all times. If in the course of carrying out the duties of the post the appointee becomes aware of any actual or potential risk to the safety or welfare of children in the College s/he must report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and record on CPOMS.

It should be noted that a job description is not an exhaustive list of activities, and employees may be asked to carry out other duties in consultation with the Head, that are deemed necessary for the smooth running of the school and which are commensurate with the responsibility and seniority of the post. The job description may also be amended to take account of changed circumstances, and employees will be consulted if this is necessary.

Remuneration and Benefits

- The role is offered initially on a fixed term contract of employment for three academic years, commencing September 2026.
- St Columba's College operates its own salary scales.
- The College offers a fee remission for children of permanent members of staff educated at SCC.
- Membership of APTIS, a Defined Contribution Pension Scheme.
- 17 weeks of annual leave to include an October two week break.
- Complimentary lunch / tea / coffee / fruit / biscuits.
- Eye care vouchers.
- Free annual flu vaccination.
- Cycle to Work and Tech Schemes.
- Access to use of a confidential 24-hour counselling help line
- Use of the College Fitness Suite.
- Free car parking on site.
- Support with Continuing Professional Development.
- All staff have use of a Microsoft Surface Pro for school use.

Work With Us

St Columba's is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Applicants will be required to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including reference checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

If you wish to discuss the vacancy further, please contact Jackie Metcalfe, Head of HR at metcalfe.j@stcolumbascollege.org or on 01727 892095. To apply for this position, visit the Work with Us page of our website.

Application Process

Closing date: 10.00am on Wednesday, 13th May 2026. Interviews will be conducted during week commencing 18th May 2026. Early applications are encouraged as we reserve the right to call suitable candidates to interview and to appoint prior to the closing date.



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St Columba's College is a Catholic Foundation of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart (US Province)