

St Helen's School

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Director of Operations – Job Description



The Purpose

The Director of Operations is a senior non-academic leader (SLT) within St Helen's School, responsible for the commercial and operational leadership of support functions such as Estates, Risk & Compliance, Health & Safety, and Catering.

As a key member of the Senior Team, the post holder works closely with the Head, Senior Deputy Heads, other Business Support Directors, and the Governors to ensure the School's, regulatory compliance, operational excellence and strategic development.

The Director of Operations reports to the Head on all operational and governance matters and works with the Business Support Directors to report on all business-related matters.

The role also carries responsibility for the School's wholly owned subsidiary, St Helen's Enterprises Ltd, ensuring commercial performance and contribution to the School.

This role will directly line manage:

- Head of Enterprises
- Head of Estates
- Catering General Manager
- Health & Safety staff
- Team responsible for purchase ledgers, debt collection, fees and billing

The Post

SALARY: Competitive

HOURS: 37.5 hour per week Monday to Friday, 52 weeks per year

Main Responsibilities

Commercial Operations

- Oversee commercial strategy for lettings, sports complex revenue streams and wider enterprise activity.
- Ensure St Helen's Enterprises Ltd operates effectively, compliantly and profitably. In conjunction with the Head of Enterprises, identify and develop new commercial opportunities aligned with the School's strategic priorities.
- Ensure all commercial activities are appropriately risk-assessed, compliant and aligned with the School's charitable objectives and reputation.

Operational Leadership & Service Delivery

- Ensure operational teams deliver high quality, efficient and responsive services that support the smooth running of the school.
- Support the Senior Leadership Team to ensure alignment between operational delivery and the school's strategic objectives.
- Act as a senior point of contact for parents regarding commercial finance matters, including payment plans, arrears discussions, trip information and sensitive hardship conversations.
- Coordinate the administration and operational processes for scholarships, bursaries and hardship applications, ensuring fairness, confidentiality and compliance.



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- Work closely with members of the Finance team to ensure accurate and timely application of awards and adjustments.
- Deliver high-quality financial analysis to support strategic decision-making around School Trips, Co-curricular, wraparound care and Home to School Coach Travel
- Manage the outsourced catering contract, ensuring quality, value and service excellence.
- Manage the outsourced home-to-school coach service and ad hoc travel arrangements, ensuring effective utilisation, efficiency and value for money.
- Oversee the Sports Complex operations, ensuring high-quality provision for pupils and strong commercial performance outside School hours.
- Ensure operational teams deliver efficient, high-quality services that support the School's educational mission.
- Ensure all operational functions actively support the School's safeguarding culture and statutory responsibilities.

Finance

- Lead strategic negotiations for major contracts, ensuring value for money and supporting the Finance Business Partner with key operational assumptions to underpin the annual budgeting and long-term financial planning process.
- Alongside the Finance Business Partner, with support from the wider SLT, provide analytical interpretation and recommendations to the Governing Board and Committees on financial performance
- Oversee financial governance of St Helens Enterprises Ltd, ensuring commercial viability
- Oversee accounts payable function
- Oversee termly billing activity & credit control team with responsibility for the review and timely collection of debts, always ensuring clear and open communication with parents.
- Manage and report on the school's bursary and scholarship process to ensure appropriate reporting and approval by the Bursary Committee, ensuring appropriate communication with parents.
- Shared responsibility on budget management, forecasting and financial sustainability with the SLT.
- Shared responsibility to ensure the finance@ mailbox is reviewed and cleared daily.

Estates & Capital Development

- Lead the strategic management of the School's 21-acre estate, ensuring a safe, well maintained and future-focused environment.
- Oversee major capital projects, working closely with the Head of Estates on planning, procurement, contractor management and project delivery.
- Maintain and evolve the School's 10-year maintenance plan.
- Ensure compliance with planning authorities, statutory bodies and external consultants. Lead the development and implementation of the School's sustainability strategy, embedding environmental considerations within estate management, procurement and capital projects.
- Ensure operational resilience across the estate through effective business continuity and disaster recovery planning.

Risk & Compliance

- Lead the development, implementation and monitoring of the School's Risk & Compliance Framework, ensuring robust systems are in place across all support functions.
- Maintain the Strategic and Operational Risk Register, working with direct reports and Senior Leaders on risk identification, assessment and mitigation.
- Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and regulatory requirements, including charity law, employment law, pension obligations, health and safety legislation, data protection requirements



and Independent School Inspectorate standards. Oversee compliance with UK GDPR, Data Protection legislation and information governance requirements, working closely with the School's Data Protection Officer. Ensure robust systems are in place for records management, information security and data protection across all operational functions.

- Manage internal audit processes and ensure timely completion of agreed actions. Provide senior leadership for Health & Safety across the School, ensuring a proactive and compliant safety culture.
- Chair the termly Health & Safety Committee, ensuring robust risk management, emergency planning and statutory compliance.
- Oversee regular external Health & Safety audits and ensure recommendations are implemented.
- Ensure all contractors on site meet Health & Safety, safeguarding and safer recruitment requirements.
- Maintain oversight of accident reporting, investigations and trend analysis.
- Maintain and regularly review the School's Business Continuity and Critical Incident Management Plans, ensuring preparedness for major operational disruptions. Lead operational responses to significant incidents, emergencies and critical risks affecting the School.
- Ensure School policies remain current, are reviewed within agreed timescales and meet the requirements of the Governing Body.

Governance

- Support the Governing Board and its Committees through the provision of high-quality reports, analysis and professional advice.
- Ensure governance reporting is accurate, timely and supports effective strategic decision-making.
- Oversee governance administration and company secretariat responsibilities where applicable.
- Support regulatory engagement and reporting with statutory authorities, professional bodies and external agencies.

Other Duties

- Responsible for insurance strategy, raising and handling claims where necessary and maintain relationships with brokers.
- Leads, in collaboration with other Business Support Directors or solely on contract negotiations related to, but not limited to, catering, cleaning, home to school coaches, and adhoc private travel.
- Supports the delivery and implementation of operational projects.

Safeguarding

- Ensure all operational functions support the School's safeguarding responsibilities and statutory requirements.
- Ensure all contractors, suppliers, transport providers, lettings users and commercial partners operate in accordance with the School's safeguarding expectations.
- Undertake safeguarding training appropriate to the role and maintain up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding requirements and best practice.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Closing date: 9.00am Thursday 17 September 2026

Please apply as soon as possible as shortlisting/interviews will progress up until the closing date. Should a suitable candidate be appointed, we reserve the right to close the advert early.

Due to the volume of applicants, we receive, if you do not hear from us within 4 weeks of the closing date, please assume we will not be progressing your application further on this occasion.

