

**WE ARE  
HIRING**



## Join Our Team

If you're passionate about making a difference in the lives of children with ASD then join us at Forest Bridge School and be part of a community that values understanding, respect, and genuine growth.

**Together we can make a difference!**



Elizabeth Farnden  
Headteacher



**Position available: Head of Operations (Member of Senior Leadership Team)**

Please contact Nicky McGarry (Head of HR and Finance) to arrange a visit to the school.

Email: [Nicky.McGarry@forestbridgeschool.org.uk](mailto:Nicky.McGarry@forestbridgeschool.org.uk)

## Why work at Forest Bridge School

Working at Forest Bridge School offers a unique and rewarding opportunity for professionals in the field of special education. Located in the charming town of Maidenhead, just 20 miles outside of London, We are dedicated to providing a nurturing and supportive environment for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Since opening in 2015, the school has prided itself on its multi-disciplinary approach to learning, incorporating a carefully designed in house curriculum.

At Forest Bridge School, we embrace each child's unique journey through Applied Behaviour Analysis, guided by a profound respect for their individuality, strengths, and the distinct stages of their development. We believe in nurturing a child's core self, allowing them to express who they are without the need to mask. Our approach is family centred and community oriented, creating a supportive environment that extends beyond our school walls. We delve deeply into understanding each child's medical, mental health needs, and neurodiverse needs, ensuring our strategies are tailored specifically to them.

We operate on a foundation of transparency and mutual respect, valuing the dignity of every child. Our team works collaboratively, rejecting traditional hierarchies to foster personal connections and equal partnership. Our professionals embody empathy and adaptability, committed to learning from each child's progress to continually refine our practice.

Forest Bridge School is committed to professional development, collaborative work, and the well-being of both its staff and students. We provide dynamic, high quality specialist training and professional development pathways for all staff, ensuring a listening, responsive, and supportive culture.

Our vision is to be a leading provider of education for children and young adults with autism, combining ABA, evidence-based therapy, and effective personalised curriculums to enable pupils to fulfil their potential, prepare for adulthood, and lead happy lives.

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# JOB DESCRIPTION

## Job Description: Head of Operations

**Role Title:** Head of Operations

**Leadership Level:** Senior Leadership Team

**Line Management Responsibility:** Operations Lead (MLT)

**Reporting to:** Headteacher

**Direct Reports:** Operations Lead (with delegated oversight of administration, finance support, HR admin, Site, ICT and catering contracts)

**Contract:** Permanent

**Hours:** Term time plus agreed inset days and additional weeks, with flexibility to meet leadership and governance requirements

## Purpose of the Role

The Head of Operations provides senior operational leadership, oversight and assurance across the school's support services, ensuring that operational HR, finance processes, Site, ICT, Health & Safety, data protection, and compliance arrangements function effectively and lawfully.

The role is focused on implementation, oversight, consistency, quality assurance and risk management, with responsibility for day-to-day operational activity delegated to the Operations Lead.

## Senior Leadership & Governance

- Participate fully as a member of the Senior Leadership Team, contributing to the effective leadership and management of the school.
- Provide professional operational advice and assurance to the Headteacher and SLT.
- Contribute to the School Development Plan in line with job description.
- Forest Bridge School is committed to an inclusive, dignified, and child-centred approach, grounded in deep respect for neurodiversity, individuality, and personal development. The Head of Cohort is expected to uphold and actively model the schools values in all aspects of their leadership and practice.
- Lead with integrity, empathy, and curiosity, fostering psychologically safe environments for pupils, families, and staff.
- Ensure that high expectations are balanced with compassion, reasoned adjustment, and a deep understanding of each pupil's lived experience.
- Support a cohesive, multidisciplinary approach that places the pupil's wellbeing, communication, and long-term outcomes at the centre of decision-making.
- Prepare reports, briefings and compliance updates for the SLT and ET as required.
- Report to the Head of People Strategy and Finance on operational risks, service performance and compliance matters.
- Ensure risks, concerns and incidents are escalated appropriately.

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- Support school improvement and change initiatives by ensuring operational readiness.
- Promote a culture of collaboration, professionalism, accountability and consistency across all support services.

### **Operational Leadership & Line Management**

- Provide **senior leadership, line management and performance oversight** of the Operations Lead.
- Set priorities and expectations for operational delivery through the Operations Lead.
- Ensure effective coordination across administration, finance support, operational HR, site and ICT services.
- Monitor quality, compliance and consistency across all operational functions.
- Act as the escalation point for complex, sensitive or high-risk operational matters.
- Ensure appropriate internal controls, monitoring, and review processes are in place.

### **Finance (Operational Oversight & Assurance)**

The Head of Operations does not hold CFO responsibility and reports to the Head of People Strategy and Finance (who is the CFO). The role focuses on oversight, monitoring and assurance of operational financial processes.

- Work with the CEO, Headteacher, and Head of People Strategy and Finance to support budget monitoring and financial planning.
- Provide oversight of day-to-day financial processes, ensuring compliance with financial policies and procedures.
- Monitor operational budgets and expenditure, escalating concerns or variances appropriately.
- Oversee payroll processes to ensure accuracy and timely administration.
- Ensure financial controls and separation of duties are followed within operational teams.
- Support internal and external audits as required.
- Maintain awareness of financial risks and escalate issues to the CEO, CFO and Headteacher.
- Provide financial and operational information to support governance reporting.

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## **Health & Safety, Estates & Site Development**

- Lead on Health & Safety alongside the Headteacher and Site Manager.
- Ensure statutory compliance, risk assessments and safe systems of work are in place and monitored.
- Provide oversight of the site and premises management through delegated leadership.
- Ensure contractor compliance with health & safety requirements.
- Liaise with project managers and design teams on capital projects on the current school site.
- Provide leadership oversight of construction and development activity on the current school site.

## **ICT & Digital Oversight**

- Provide oversight of ICT infrastructure and support services.
- Ensure ICT provision supports teaching, learning and operational efficiency.
- Oversee cyber-security and business continuity arrangements.
- Ensure ICT policies, contracts and procurement are compliant and deliver value for money.
- Monitor ICT contract performance and service levels.

## **Data Protection Officer (DPO)**

- Act as the school's Data Protection Officer.
- Advise the school on compliance with UK GDPR and data protection legislation.
- Provide advice on data protection impact assessments.
- Act as a point of contact with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).
- Oversee FOI and SAR requests.
- Apply a risk-based approach to data protection compliance and assurance.
- Act as a point of contact for staff, pupils and parents on data protection matters.

## **Human Resources (Operational HR )**

The Head of Operations is responsible for operational HR leadership. People, Workforce and organisational strategy remains the responsibility of the Head of People Strategy and Finance.

Key responsibilities include:

- Work closely with the Headteacher and Head of People Strategy and Finance to ensure operational HR practices reflect the school's ethos, policies and workforce requirements.
- Oversee recruitment, induction, retention and safer recruitment processes, ensuring compliance with statutory requirements.
- Ensure HR administration processes are effective, timely and compliant.
- Manage and oversee operational employee relations cases, including Investigations, grievances, absence and capability processes.
- Liaise with trade unions, occupational health providers, and the LADO as appropriate.
- Implement pay and performance management processes as defined by policy, ensuring consistency and fairness.
- Ensure HR policies and procedures are implemented consistently across the school.
- Monitor changes in employment law and advise the Head of People on operational implications.
- Oversee statutory HR returns, including the School Workforce Census.

## **Professional Expectations**

- Uphold the highest standards of integrity, discretion and confidentiality.
- Engage in reflective practice and professional development.
- Model behaviour aligned with the school's values.
- Contribute to a positive, inclusive and safe working environment.
- Undertake other duties commensurate with the seniority of the role.

## Person Specification Head of Operations

	Essential	Desirable
<b>Qualifications</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degree-level qualification or equivalent professional experience</li> <li>• Relevant professional qualification or demonstrable expertise in one or more areas: HR, Finance, Business Management, Operations, or Public Sector Management</li> </ul> <p><b>Strong working knowledge of:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial procedures, controls and budget monitoring</li> <li>• Health &amp; Safety legislation and compliance</li> <li>• Operational HR practices</li> <li>• Data protection (UK GDPR) and information governance</li> <li>• Understanding of safeguarding responsibilities within a school setting</li> <li>• School Business Management or equivalent (e.g. SBM, MBA, NPQEL/NPQSL)</li> <li>• Formal Health &amp; Safety qualification (e.g. IOSH/NEBOSH)</li> <li>• CIPD level 3</li> <li>• Data Protection Officer training/qualification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="text-align: center;">v</li> <li style="text-align: center;">v</li> <li style="text-align: center;">v</li> <li style="text-align: center;">v</li> <li style="text-align: center;">v</li> <li style="text-align: center;">v</li> <li style="text-align: center;">v</li> <li style="text-align: center;">v</li> <li style="text-align: center;">v</li> <li style="text-align: center;">v</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> <li></li> <li></li> <li></li> <li></li> <li style="text-align: center;">v</li> <li style="text-align: center;">v</li> <li style="text-align: center;">v</li> <li style="text-align: center;">v</li> <li style="text-align: center;">v</li> </ul>

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Experience	Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant senior operational leadership experience, ideally within education or a similarly complex organisation</li> </ul>	√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of leading and managing multi-disciplinary support services (e.g. finance, Site management, HR, ICT, administration)</li> </ul>	√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of line management and developing others</li> </ul>	√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proven experience of managing operational risk, compliance and quality assurance processes</li> </ul>	√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of overseeing HR processes such as recruitment, employee relations, absence management and performance management</li> </ul>	√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of financial oversight, including monitoring budgets and ensuring adherence to financial controls</li> </ul>	√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of working at a strategic or senior leadership level, contributing to organisational planning and improvement</li> </ul>	√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of handling complex, sensitive or high-risk issues</li> </ul>	√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience working within a school, academy trust or public sector organisation</li> </ul>	√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience supporting financial audits (internal or external)</li> </ul>		√
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of Site projects</li> </ul>		√
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience acting as (or supporting) a Data Protection Officer</li> </ul>		√
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Skills and competencies		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong leadership and people management skills, with the ability to set direction and hold others to account</li> </ul>	√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent organisational and project management skills</li> </ul>	√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to analyse complex information, identify risks and implement solutions</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong communication skills, both written and verbal, including report writing for senior leaders and governors</li> </ul>	√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to influence, challenge and provide professional advice at senior level</li> </ul>	√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High level of attention to detail with a focus on compliance and accuracy</li> </ul>	√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong problem-solving and decision-making skills</li> </ul>	√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to manage competing priorities and respond effectively to changing demands</li> </ul>	√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to maintain confidentiality and exercise professional judgement</li> </ul>	√	√
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data analysis skills to support operational reporting</li> </ul>		√
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience using school MIS, HR or finance systems</li> </ul>		

<p><b>Professional qualities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates integrity, discretion and professionalism at all times</li> <li>• Ability to lead with empathy, emotional intelligence and a people-centred approach</li> <li>• Commitment to inclusive practice, equality and respect for diversity, including neurodiversity</li> <li>• Resilient, adaptable and calm under pressure</li> <li>• Collaborative and able to build strong relationships across teams and disciplines</li> <li>• Committed to continuous improvement and high standards</li> <li>• Ability to foster a culture of accountability, consistency and professionalism across teams</li> <li>• Reflective practitioner with a commitment to ongoing professional development</li> <li>• Experience of working in or contributing to a values-driven or specialist education setting</li> </ul>	<p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p>	<p>√</p>
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<p><b>Strategic &amp; Operational Capability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to translate strategy into effective operational delivery</li> <li>• Strong understanding of governance, risk management and internal control frameworks</li> <li>• Ability to ensure operational readiness for change initiatives and school improvement priorities</li> <li>• Experience of embedding systems, policies and procedures</li> <li>• Ability to monitor performance and drive continuous operational improvement</li> </ul>	<p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p>	
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<p><b>Other requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people</li> <li>• Willingness to work flexibly to meet the demands of a senior leadership role</li> <li>• Ability to uphold and model the school's values and ethos in all aspects of work</li> </ul>	<p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p>	
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## Benefits

- Competitive salary
- Socialable working hours (no weekends or evenings after 6.30pm)
- A friendly and supportive team
- Staff pensions schemes—LGPS or Teachers pension scheme dependant to role
- Free parking
- Staff wellbeing and support services
- Supervision ( dependant on role)
- Staff voice— who organise social events for staff
- Tastecard employee discount scheme
- Sick pay
- Comprehensive induction
- Training for professional development such as CEU's, participation in research.
- Opportunities for career progression. Including Masters, NPQ's , UKsBA & QTS.
- Work From Home opportunities for some roles such as Class Teachers, Supervisors, and Senior Leaders.