

St Helen's School

Business Director - Applicant Pack





WELCOME TO ST HELEN'S

St Helen's School is a large, thriving all-through school and many of the girls who leave us at the end of Year 13 have been with us since Nursery or Reception. We are ambitious for every single girl: that she achieves her potential; that she leaves us to embark upon an exciting and fulfilling future, able to deal with whatever life throws at her with resilience and courage; that she possesses inner confidence, strong personal integrity, and a sense of fun; that she is ready to go out into the world and make a difference.

St Helen's has a long tradition of academic excellence which encourages girls to pursue intellectual curiosity beyond the curriculum. We are exceptionally proud of our 2025 results where 85% of A Level students obtained A*-B grades and 80% of GCSE awards were graded 9-7. Sixth Formers go on to established, high-ranking universities including Oxford and Cambridge, with more than a third studying STEM subjects. However, we give our girls much more than just academic success; our Co-curricular programme is rich and varied, and our pastoral care ensures that every girl is known, valued, and cared for.

Within easy reach of central London, our school is set in 21 acres of grounds and, just as we are proud of our students' academic achievements and their personal development, we are also proud of our facilities and buildings. We have invested significantly in developing our facilities over the last ten years.

St Helen's has a warm and lively atmosphere that makes it a rewarding and exciting place to work. Our staff and our pupils look out for each other and encourage each other to be the best possible version of themselves. As such, you will play a vital role in supporting the school in the next stage of its journey. We look forward to receiving your application.

Bridget Ward
Head



A photograph of four young girls in school uniforms walking outdoors. They are wearing dark green jackets over light blue and white striped shirts and skirts. The girl on the far right is wearing glasses and has a ponytail. They are standing in front of a large window that looks out onto green foliage. The image has a green tint.

Thank you for showing an interest in this post.
We hope that the following information about St Helen's
school and this job description will help you to decide that
this is an application which you wish to pursue.

THE SCHOOL

St Helen's is an academically selective independent girls' day school for over 1100 students aged 3-18, set in beautiful green space in Northwood, London.

It draws pupils from a wide area of north-west London, Buckinghamshire, and Hertfordshire with easy access by Underground from central London.

We want our students to be ever intellectually curious. They will believe they can do anything. They will want to explore how they can best interact with the world around them and make a difference for the better in their own way. They will be ready for whatever the future brings.

Our aims are:

- To provide each and every girl with the opportunity and means to achieve academic excellence.
- To provide our students with the personal skills, emotional resilience, and the confidence to achieve their full potential through a varied, rich and challenging Co-Curricular programme.
- To know, value and respect all girls as individuals so as to best support them on their journey through the school.
- To ensure that the girls are ready to play a full and active part in their communities and in an interconnected digital world.

Our students achieve high academic standards, and we encourage them to develop lifelong skills in a diverse range of areas, both within and outside the curriculum, and to pursue their individual ambitions. The school is proud of its tradition of providing a balanced and forward-looking education through which its pupils can become confident, independent learners and leaders in their fields, their professions, and their communities. Attention to the individual child is at the heart of everything we do and shapes the pastoral care, teaching and learning and the co-curricular opportunities on offer at St Helen's.



THE POST

The Business Director

The Business Director is the most senior non-academic leader within St Helen's School, responsible for the strategic, commercial and operational leadership of all support functions.

As a key member of the Senior Team, the post holder works closely with the Head, Senior Deputy Heads and the Governors to ensure the School's long-term financial sustainability, regulatory compliance, operational excellence and strategic development.

The Business Director reports to the Head on all operational and governance 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.

Directly line manage:

- Accountant(s)
 - Billing and Credit Team
 - Head of Estates
 - Head of Enterprises
 - Director of IT
 - Catering General Manager
 - Personal Assistant
 - Front Office Administrators
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- Provide outstanding leadership to non-teaching staff across finance, estates, facilities, grounds, IT, sports complex, commercial and enterprise operations.
 - Foster a high-performance culture focused on service excellence, accountability, professional development and continuous improvement.
 - Lead organisational change, transformation and continuous improvement initiatives across operational functions.

Core working hours are either 08.00am – 4.30pm or 08.30am – 5.00pm,
Monday – Friday throughout the whole year (52 weeks)







Leadership Responsibilities

Finance and Accounts

The finance team are responsible for the production of management accounts, cash flow forecasts and statutory accounts for both the School and St Helen's Enterprises Ltd. The Business Director is required to prepare statutory returns for the Charity as well as providing information and analytical interpretation for the Governing Board on the School's budgetary performance and projections as well as presenting the implications of potential developments.

Estates

The School's impressive 21-acre site is looked after by the Head of Estates and the grounds and maintenance teams. A detailed 10-year maintenance plan is in place and the Head of Estates supports the Business Director in the planning and delivery of major capital projects to further enhance the facilities at the School

IT

The Director of IT leads a team of nine staff consisting of technicians, service, operations and data managers and performing arts technicians to provide the IT resources and facilities needed for teaching, learning and administration. He is responsible for the network infrastructure around the School and all pupil and staff devices, including PCs, SmartScreen's, cyber security, mobile devices and telephones.

Catering

Catering services are outsourced to an external provider who provide pupil, staff and hospitality catering from two separate kitchens. The Business Director is responsible for the management of the catering contract and meets regularly with the on-site Catering General Manager

Sports Centre

St Helen's has an impressive, modern Sports Complex that includes a large sport hall, a 25m swimming pool, gym and, outside, an all-weather pitch, several tennis courts and an air dome. Day to day management of these facilities are managed by the Head of Enterprises, Sports Centre Commercial Manager and the Operations and Events Manager and the wider Estates team for the benefit of the pupils during the day and to provide commercial revenue when not in use by the School.



MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

Key responsibilities:

Strategic Leadership

- Lead, evaluate and advise on long-term strategic planning, ensuring alignment with the School's charitable objectives and future development priorities.
- Provide authoritative guidance on regulatory changes, sector developments and emerging risks.
- Advise the Governors in their stewardship of the School, ensuring high-quality governance reporting, analysis and compliance.
- Lead the strategic financial planning for both the School and St Helen's Enterprises Ltd, ensuring robust modelling, forecasting and scenario planning.
- Work with the Head, Governors and Senior Leaders on pupil number planning, fee affordability and the long-term sustainability of pupil recruitment.
- Lead financial modelling and analysis to support annual fee-setting decisions and future affordability planning.
- Act as principal adviser to the Head and Governors on financial, operational, estates, commercial and risk matters.



St. Helen's

↑ Senior School

The Centre

Fitzwalters

Science

Lund

Claremont

MacKenzie

← Rowland Brown Hall

Senior School

Kennedy

EQ



DQ

IQ



Key responsibilities:

Financial Management

- Oversee financial strategy, annual budgeting, long-term financial planning and cashflow management.
- Provide analytical interpretation and recommendations to the Governing Board and Committees on financial performance, risk and investment decisions.
- Ensure statutory returns for the Charity are prepared accurately and on time.
- Financial oversight of the School's pension and fee remission policies, including staff fee remission, bursaries and scholarships.
- Ensure value for money across all utility contracts and major areas of expenditure.
- Lead and oversee the School's procurement strategy, ensuring value for money, appropriate tendering processes, effective contract management and strong supplier relationships.
- Maintain strong relationships with auditors, insurers, banks, solicitors and professional advisers.
- Oversee financial governance of St Helen's Enterprises Ltd, ensuring commercial viability and gift back contributions to the School.

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.



Key responsibilities:

Risk & Compliance

- Oversee the School's HR operational function, including payroll, pensions, recruitment, workforce planning and Support Staff CPD frameworks.
- 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.



Key responsibilities:

Safeguarding

- Actively promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young people.
- 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.

Information Technology

- Oversee the strategic development of IT systems, infrastructure and digital services.
- Ensure the School's network, devices and digital platforms support high-quality teaching, learning and administration.
- Ensure the safety, security and integrity of the School's IT network with particular reference to cyber security, business continuity and protection from malware, ransomware and external threats.
- Ensure appropriate cyber security frameworks, disaster recovery arrangements and business resilience measures are maintained and regularly tested.

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.



Key responsibilities:

Operational Support Functions

- Lead all major non-academic operations including Finance, IT, catering, facilities, estates, grounds, sports centre and outsourced services.
- 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.

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.



The image shows the exterior of St. Helen's School, a modern building with a prominent gabled roof and large glass windows. The upper floor features a balcony with a wooden slat railing. The school's name is displayed in large white letters on a dark horizontal band. The ground floor has a glass entrance and a flower box on the left. The foreground is partially obscured by out-of-focus green foliage.

St Helen's School

THE PERSON

Experience

- Proven senior leadership experience managing multi-disciplinary teams in complex organisations.
- Strong business, financial and administrative expertise.
- Experience in estates management, capital projects and facilities operations.
- Experience working with a Board of Trustees or equivalent governance structure.
- Demonstrable experience in commercial operations and revenue generation.
- Experience of risk management, compliance and governance frameworks.
- Experience of procurement, supplier negotiation and contract management.
- Advanced IT literacy and experience managing digital systems and infrastructure.
- Experience of leading organisational change, transformation and continuous improvement initiatives.
- Experience within the independent education sector is desirable but not essential.

Qualifications

- Degree educated or able to demonstrate equivalent professional experience.
- A professional qualification in business management or a related discipline (is desirable but not essential).

Personal Qualities

- Highly developed interpersonal and communication skills; diplomatic, persuasive and influential.
- Strategic thinker with strong problem-solving capability and a solutions-focused mindset.
- Confident decision maker, able to take difficult decisions when required.
- High personal standards, resilience under pressure and a commitment to leading by example.
- Reflective, self-aware and committed to continuous learning.





APPLICATION PROCESS

Closing date: **9.00am on Thursday 6 August 2026**

Interview date: **Wednesday 12 August 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.

THE SELECTION PROCESS

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to the school where they will be interviewed by the Head and other members of SLT or our Governing Body where appropriate. They may be asked to complete a task and will take a tour of the school .

St Helen's school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, as detailed in Part 3 (Safer Recruitment) of the KCSIE 2025 guidance document. Applicants will be asked for proof of right to work in the UK and undergo child protection screening, including checks with past employers and the disclosure and barring service.

If you have any queries about this position, please contact the school at recruitment@sthelens.london





Where **Girls** Succeed



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