

Recruitment of Director of Finance and Operations

At Ackworth School from Summer 2024



Ackworth School
NON SIBI SED OMNIBUS
1779



Welcome

I am looking forward to welcoming you to Ackworth School, a wonderfully historic and rural location for the next stage of your career, in education. The setting of the Grade 1 listed campus, combined with the positive impact of the Quaker ethos and beliefs that underpin the life of the school, provide a stimulating and caring atmosphere for our pupils to establish their character as they prepare to face the challenges of the adult world.

Susan Allan has announced her retirement as our Bursar, a post she has fulfilled faithfully and passionately for the past 7 years. Her decision has created the opportunity for a new Director of Finance and Operations to lead Ackworth School to its 250th anniversary in 2029 and beyond, in partnership with our new Head, Martyn Beer. Susan has left a strong legacy for the right candidate to build on, to further develop the school as a centre of excellence, with a reputation for pastoral care as well as academic rigour, providing the opportunity for everyone to shine.

Like most schools in the independent sector Ackworth faces challenges, both internal and external, but the crises around the pandemic and the current economic pressures require a high level of resilience. This provides a platform for a new Director of Finance and Operations to support and influence how the school can confidently approach the future. It is remarkable how the school community demonstrates how it is attentive to the needs of others and demonstrates how Quaker values permeate everyday lives. This is not just an internal act but is equally applied to those in need in the local and wider communities.

At Ackworth we are realistic enough to know that increasing revenue from the campus assets and developing collaborative relationships with our wider community and strategic partners are crucial for a sustainable future. We will be interested in hearing how you would develop a business approach that underpins our charitable purpose of providing a Quaker education to all, especially to those who are in financial need.

Ackworth is a non-selective school and has always been a fee-paying school and a sustainable future will include broadening the scope of bursaries and scholarships.

In addition to addressing the needs of a Grade 1 listed 18th century campus, there is a substantial holding of farmland, playing facilities and wild areas that have great potential for revenue earning as well as preserving the environment of the school in its village setting.

ISI carried out a full inspection in February 2023 and their view was that Ackworth is an excellent school. There were complimentary words about the impact of the Quaker ethos on the manner and well-being of our students of all ages, and how they show the benefit of reflection on the spiritual life of the school.

If this welcome excites your professional interest and presents a broad intellectual challenge as part of your calling as a leader in education, and the associated business activities then please do apply without delay.

Together with my colleagues I look forward to meeting you and hope that in due course you will become the inspirational leader in a partnership with the Head that can lead this school community for years to come.

David Bunney
Clerk to the School Committee (Chair of Governors)



Our Heritage

For over 240 years we have maintained a passion for exceptional learning and teaching that is non-selective and without judgment of the individual.

Quaker values underpin all that happens on a daily basis in our school community, with an emphasis on acceptance and quiet reflection. 'Non sibi sed omnibus', meaning 'not for oneself but for all', lies at the heart of school life alongside the Quaker testimonies of simplicity, truth, equality, peace and sustainability. An inherent respect for others and honesty at all times creates a calm, friendly school atmosphere which is supportive and reassuring for young people. Students are encouraged to think creatively, act ethically and with responsibility.

Ackworth is one of the seven Quaker schools in England, with three others in Yorkshire. We seek to work collaboratively with them as well as more formally as part of the Friends' Schools' Council which meets termly.

Ackworth School Vision

To give every pupil the education, inspiration and preparation they need to make a positive impact in our world.

Ackworth School Purpose

Embrace Quaker values to educate our pupils; unlocking knowledge, kindness, curiosity, honesty and confidence.



Leadership and Governance

Our new Head, Martyn Beer joins the school in April 2024. Martyn leads the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) that includes the Head of Coram House, the Director of Finance and Operations, Senior Deputy Head, Deputy Head, Head of Sixth Form and the Director of Marketing, Admissions and Communications.

SLT reports to the school's governing body, the School Committee. There are currently 14 members of that committee who meet 6 times per year and are led by the Clerk to the Committee (Chair of Governors).

The School had their last ISI inspection in February 2023 and was awarded Excellent in all areas.



Ackworth School

First-class learning is at the heart of Ackworth School life and pupils benefit from the high quality and experience of our teaching staff.

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, whilst taking advantage of the flexibility we enjoy as an all-through, co-educational independent day and boarding school independent school. We encourage pupils to make curriculum choices which suit them best, with advice and guidance to help them.

Nursery

Ackworth School Nursery is set within our modern, purpose-built Junior School, Coram House. It is a warm, safe, loving and stimulating environment, promoting all areas of child development. The Nursery features large play and learning spaces, both indoors and outside, with access to varied active learning opportunities within the school grounds, including our Forest School.

Junior School

Our Junior School, Coram House, provides a supportive, gradual introduction to school life and structured learning. Teaching is according to each child's needs and supported by outstanding levels of care and

regular communication with parents. Our experienced teaching team foster enthusiasm and initiative, nurturing children's emerging personalities and talents, building self-esteem, resilience and confidence along the way.

Senior School

Ackworth provides a broad Senior School curriculum, designed to give young people solid academic foundations to discover and develop their interests and talents. Our expert teachers introduce new ideas with infectious enthusiasm that inspire a genuine interest in subjects and provide the best footing for learning with understanding.

Sixth Form

In the Sixth Form, our exceptional teaching team believes in inspiring our young people to develop their own views, opinions and aspirations. Students are well prepared for life beyond school and given the skills to become resilient, confident, respectful individuals, ready to make a positive contribution to society.

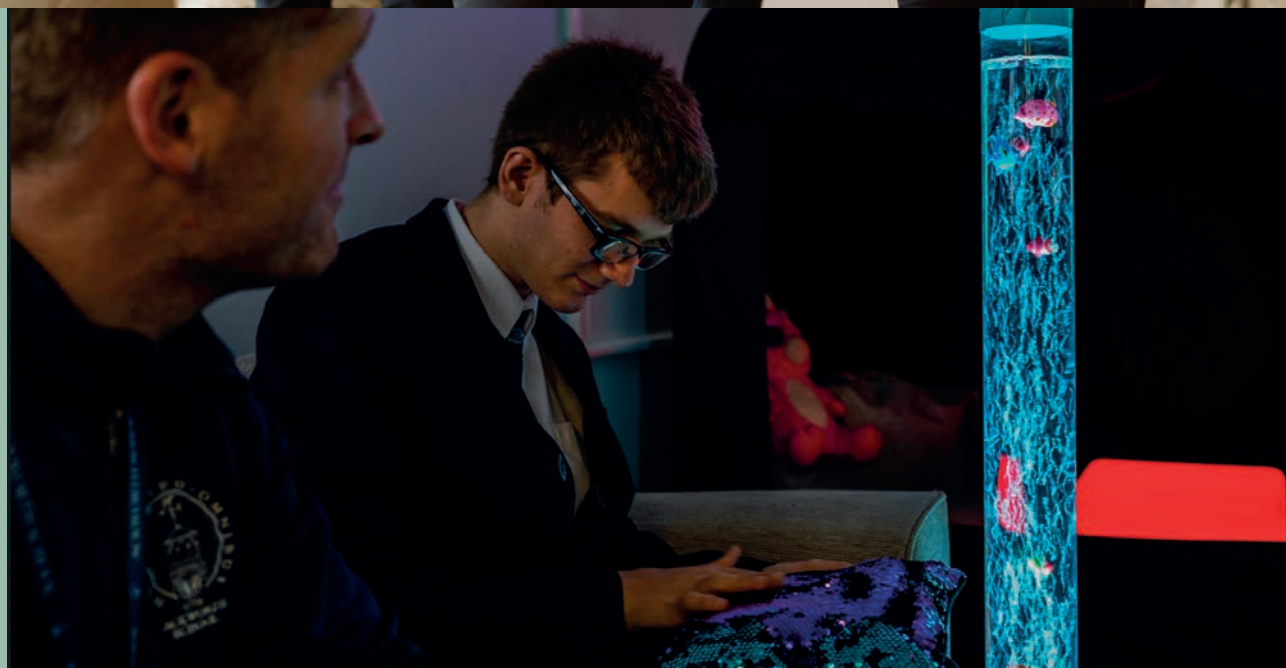


Boarding

Ackworth School was designed from the outset to be a mixed boarding school. This is reflected in the fact that around one third of the Senior School are boarders, of whom 80% are from overseas. Our flexible approach means that some students choose to board full time throughout their school career, while others board for a year or two. Boarding helps students to focus on study, with access to the school's excellent facilities late into the evening and at weekends.

Autism Resource

At Ackworth, we consider ourselves fortunate to have a group of young people with autism in both the junior and senior age ranges. They bring huge insights and skills into our learning and social community.



The Opportunity

Ackworth is a very different school and a number of aspects set us apart. We are a Quaker school and the ethos that emanates from this provides the firm basis from which we develop our distinct identity.

Visitors to the school never fail to comment on this “feel”. It’s not always something you can put your finger on, but we always seem to exude an air of calm. Everyone is encouraged to be an individual and whilst we all play our part we are not expected to “fit in” but instead be a distinct, individual part of something that fits together to make a whole.

- You appreciate why parents choose an independent education at Ackworth and can understand why we must deliver first class facilities and resources supported by valued and engaged employees.
- You value and understand the contribution that everyone brings to the school and the part they play, in keeping with the Schools’ ethos.
- You set the standard and direction, taking others with you on a clear journey.
- You make courageous, financially based decisions but realise your responsibilities to sustain and maintain Ackworth School as a place for education.
- You manage commercially to broaden the financial resources the school can exploit to deliver an ambitious strategy.
- You have an open mind and an appreciation as to how the Quaker values and practices can create a secure foundation for educating children in the 21st century.



Job Description and Person Specification

The Role

The Director of Finance & Operations will work closely with the Head on all strategic and operational matters and will also have a close working relationship with the School Committee, particularly the Chair of the Finance Committee who acts as the Treasurer.

Candidates will demonstrate a proven successful track record of leadership and financial control within multi-disciplinary. As a qualified accountant, you will need to demonstrate energy and agility, with the ability to build highly effective, collaborative working relationships at all levels. This role requires a strong “hands-on” skill set.

Previous experience in the education sector is not a prerequisite, and applications are welcomed from a broad range of sectors.

This is a significant leadership position within a team of broad experience in a vibrant, warm, inclusive, and diverse School. The successful candidate will possess the ability to offer insight and challenge on the key priorities for the School's development. The responsibilities outlined below are not exhaustive but are indicative of the requirements of this significant and wide-ranging role.

Core Purpose

The DFO is the key business partner to the Head, leading on all financial matters and responsible for the efficient and effective leadership and management of the School's resources. The aim is to ensure the smooth running of the School to support the Head and School Committee in delivering the best possible outcomes for pupils.

Key Responsibilities

Strategy

- In conjunction with the Head and School Committee, help shape the School's long-term development plan, including the financial strategy, to support the delivery of the School's aims.
- Lead the business and commercial planning and management, ensuring that the School seizes commercial opportunities.
- Provide to the Head and School Committee, as required, information to enable them to analyse plans and proposals and monitor performance against agreed financial plans and strategic targets.



Leadership & Management

- Lead by example and be an inspiring leader of staff across the whole school.
- Ensure that the support operations are effectively staffed and resourced and that the appropriate scrutiny and development of staff skills are in place.
- Develop and motivate the support staff and ensure clear expectations of their roles.
- Ensure that support staff are appropriately trained and their performance appraised.
- Provide leadership to a diverse team of some 40 professional services staff, assisted by a group of highly capable line managers. The DRO has direct line responsibilities for the Finance Manager, Head of HR, Facilities Manager, Clerk of Works and PA & Office Coordinator. The DFO is line managed by the Head.

Finance

- Provide financial oversight of and direction on all financial matters.
- Provide the Head and School Committee with appropriate, regular, accurate and timely information about the School's finances, including management accounts and cash flow forecasts, budget, and variance reports.
- Ensure the statutory accounts, returns and audit are completed in an effective, efficient, and timely manner.

- Ensure that a robust system of internal controls is in place, including fraud prevention and internal auditing.
- Ensure the invoicing and collection of all income, including fees is carried out appropriately.
- Ensure fair and robust debtor management, including meeting with parents when necessary.
- Ensure robust processes are in place for the assessment of means-tested bursaries and make recommendations for awards.
- Analyse School fees and costs, including benchmarking, and work with the School Committee to set fee levels and provide insight into the School's pricing strategies, including advice regarding scholarships and bursary awards.
- Oversee the administration of the payroll and pension schemes for all staff.
- Oversee the maintenance of the Asset Register.
- Manage relationships with key external services, including the bank, auditors, lawyers and insurers.
- Manage effective procurement arrangements and review and negotiate tenders and contracts to ensure best value.

Buildings, Facilities & Domestic Services

- Oversee the effective management, maintenance, cleaning and security of the School's buildings and grounds.
- Create an attractive environment for teaching and learning by ensuring that buildings, grounds, facilities, furniture, and equipment are always well-presented, serviceable, safe, and compliant with regulations, including health and safety, fire and the Independent Schools Standards.
- Plan, direct and manage the procurement of capital projects, ensuring their delivery on time, specification, and budget.
- Negotiate and manage energy and utility contracts taking into account initiatives to reduce environmental impact and energy consumption in longer term plans.
- Oversee effective management of School transport and arrangements for vehicular traffic to, from and within the site.
- Negotiate and manage the catering provision to ensure the high-quality provision of catering services and value for money.

Health & Safety

- Promote a positive and proactive health and safety culture throughout the School, ensuring compliance with Health and Safety regulations and maintaining risk assessments and necessary insurance.
- Oversee the School's risk management processes, including the preparation of risk assessments and monitoring to ensure compliance with policy.

HR

- Work with the Head and Head of HR to create and deliver the HR strategy.
- Build capacity in the workforce through the development of leadership at all levels by championing an open and collegial culture where staff feel empowered to make decisions and take ownership.
- Be part of wider school recruitment processes and lead on the appointment of own staff.
- Ensure compliance with all current employment legislation and the requirements of key safeguarding and statutory requirements such as Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), the Independent Schools Standards Regulations (ISSR) and the Independent School Inspectorate (ISI).
- Promote a safe, secure and engaging work environment that encourages equality, diversity and inclusion through its policies, good leadership and positive culture.

IT

- Oversee the development, procurement, delivery and management of the IT infrastructure, data and services to support high-quality teaching and learning and administration.
- Ensure the safety, security and integrity of the School's IT network with particular reference to ensuring that it remains secure from cyber attacks and viruses.

Governance, Compliance & Risk Management

- Ensure the School complies with all company and charity law and adheres to the Governing Instruments and that they remain fit for purpose.
- Ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, ensuring policies and procedures are in place and championing their application throughout the School.
- Lead on critical incident planning and lead on business continuity and financial planning to ensure that the School is well-prepared for any crisis.
- The DFO will be appointed as an Executive Director of Ackworth School.

Safeguarding & Welfare of Children

Ackworth School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. You will undertake your role and responsibilities in accordance with the Ackworth School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Guidelines. The successful applicant will be required to have an enhanced DBS disclosure. The School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy can be found on the School's website.

Person Specification

The successful candidate will bring the following:

Qualifications & Experience

- Educated to degree level or equivalent experience.
- Recognised Accounting qualification (ACA, ACCA, CIMA) (desirable).
- A proven track record of successful senior leadership experience of multi-disciplinary teams.
- Direct experience of financial management and operational delivery.
- Experience in project management and contract negotiations and the ability to manage multiple projects organisation-wide.
- Demonstrable financial and business acumen, with the ability to produce long-term financial and business plans working within a regulatory framework.
- Experience of diversification and income generation (desirable).

Skills & Knowledge

- Strong strategic abilities and organisational skills with the capacity to guide whole-organisational development whilst maintaining direct operational responsibilities.
- Financial literacy, strong analytical skills and the ability to present financial information clearly and concisely.
- First-class communication skills – able to balance robustness with constructive, positive discussion and diplomacy with the confidence and personal authority to represent the School to a broad range of stakeholders.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and high levels of emotional intelligence, with a proven ability to operate effectively and efficiently in a diverse environment while maintaining a sense of humour.
- An in-depth understanding of the economic, financial and commercial challenges facing the leadership and management of charitable organisations.
- An understanding of the School's responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection issues and a clear commitment to delivering best practice in safeguarding.

Leadership Style & Personal Attributes

- A highly visible and agile leader who is able to work both independently and as a key team member, with the ability to delegate and build rapport, empower colleagues and gain the confidence of wider stakeholders.
- Strong personal drive with the ability to lead others by example.
- High personal and professional standards; honest and with discretion and integrity.
- High levels of self-awareness, personal warmth, humility and flexibility, as well as a transparent and collaborative leadership style.
- Calm, consistent, diplomatic and empathetic with a sense of humour.
- A commitment to the School's vision and values and an appreciation of the Quaker ethos and how the role can help to deliver and sustain that.

Location

Yorkshire

Central UK location in the county of Yorkshire, the largest region in England, with an international reputation for business, manufacturing, major sporting events and sites of historic and natural beauty.

Leeds

The largest legal and financial city in England (outside London), just 25km, or 25 minutes, by car from Ackworth School.

York

A historically important city just 45 minutes from Ackworth School.

Excellent transport links and airport transfers from Manchester Airport and Leeds/Bradford Airport.



Newcastle upon Tyne

To Edinburgh

Yorkshire

Leeds Bradford Airport (LBA)
45 minutes to LBA

York

25 minutes to York or Leeds

Hull

Ackworth School

1 hour to MAN

Manchester

Sheffield

Lincoln

Nottingham

Birmingham

1 hour 40 minutes to London by train

Terms and Conditions

The School Committee seeks to appoint a Director of Finance and Operations who meets the current and future needs of Ackworth School. A suitable package will be offered that reflects the experience that an individual brings to the post.

Accommodation is available on site if required. We offer a discount of 50% on school fees from our Reception class through to the sixth form.

Our pension schemes, APTIS and AEGON allow greater flexibility through salary sacrifice.

We also offer salary sacrifice electric cars via The Electric Car Scheme.



Application Process

Interested candidates are welcome to contact the school to arrange a confidential discussion. The application process is being managed in-house by the Head of HR, Joanne Colley and she can be contacted as follows:

Joanne.Colley@ackworthschool.com
01977 233600

Closing date: Monday 15th April 2024 at 10.00am UK time

Candidates are required to submit the following in pdf format.

- A completed Ackworth School application form that can be downloaded from the school's website.
- A covering letter, preferably of no more than two pages, addressed to Carol Rayner, Treasurer to the School Committee. The letter should set out your reasons for applying for the role and what attracts you to being part of the Ackworth School community. In the letter you should address

the requirements of the role and draw on the relevance of your experience and skills to illustrate your suitability, paying particular attention to the person specification and overall job description.

Applications should be submitted electronically to the school to **jobs@ackworthschool.com**. If you have any questions about submitting your application, you can contact Joanne Colley whose details are above.

Our process is as follows:

- All applications will be acknowledged, on receipt, by email. If you have not received this within two working days of submission, please email Joanne Colley.
- The panel will meet to shortlist after the closing date. First round interviews will take place **w/c 29th April 2024**.
- Second round interviews will take place **w/c 13th May 2024**.

Applicants should read carefully the Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy. Our recruitment privacy notice is also available on our website within "Working For Us".

Ackworth School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and all applicants will undergo child protection screening, including checks with past employers and an enhanced DBS and Barred list check with Disclosure and Barring Service. Applicants should also be in sympathy with the School's Quaker ethos.





Ackworth School

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