



Candidate brief for St George's School for Girls For the position of Business Director

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Message from the Head, Mrs Chandler-Thompson

Dear applicant,

Thank you for considering joining our welcoming school community at St George's in the beautiful city of Edinburgh. I have the great privilege of leading a dedicated and loyal team of staff who are committed to providing an inspiring environment for our sparky, confident and kind girls to grow up, learn and develop in. We teach and learn within a beautiful campus which inspires us every day.

Whether it is the panoramic views of Edinburgh from our Upper School library windows, the secret leafy hideaway of our Fantastical Forest or the creative corners of the dedicated Arts buildings, the school is buzzing with the hum of activity and debate. St George's has been dedicated to educating girls since 1888, and the same guiding principles of boldness and vision sit at the heart of the school, albeit in an entirely different and modern context.

We welcome applications from potential staff who genuinely enjoy working with young people and who are committed to providing a warm and inspiring environment designed especially with girls in mind.

Our school community is one where every individual is valued and we welcome a range of perspectives and insights. We always seek to ensure the education that we provide sets our students up well for their futures and is sector-leading. If this sounds like the kind of school environment you would like to work in, please do apply and I hope to meet you in person soon.

Yours faithfully



About St George's School for Girls

WHAT MAKES ST GEORGE'S SPECIAL?

Our warmth, expertise and personalised approach builds ambitious, fearless young women with personality. We amplify the voice of every girl and equip them to be robust, empathetic change-makers. Over 95% of girls achieve their first-choice destination after leaving school.

WHY WORK FOR ST GEORGE'S SCHOOL, EDINBURGH?

- St George's is Edinburgh's only all-through independent school to offer an empowering all-girls education. We nurture independently minded, fearless young women, ready to step boldly into their future. This is where girls are fearless and free.
- With over 130 years of experience in educating girls, we understand how single-sex education empowers girls to choose freely, lead with confidence and succeed without limits
- Our parkland environment, intimate class sizes, full and flexible curriculum and commitment to a 360 student experience designed specifically for girls, makes us more than a school. This is a place of possibilities, where ambition is unfettered. It is a place to become.

WE FOCUS ON THE INDIVIDUAL

St George's focus on the individual is paramount: each girl is encouraged in her distinctive talents and interests to achieve her true potential. Our emphasis is upon supporting each individual chosen pathway. Whatever a girl's ambitions and passions are, we help them get there. We are equally skilled at supporting applications to Oxbridge, to apprenticeships and highly competitive Art Foundation courses.

OPPORTUNITY AND EMPOWERMENT

St George's genuinely offers an all-round education. The breadth of choice in our academic curriculum, range of clubs and activities on offer, and the emphasis on giving a voice to the students helps to encourage an atmosphere of open dialogue. This means that every girl grows in knowledge of herself, has confidence in her own abilities and is comfortable in her own skin.

AN ALL-THROUGH SCHOOL

St George's is one of Scotland's largest girls' schools and the only all-through girls' school in Edinburgh for girls from 3 to 18 years. Boys are welcome in the co-educational nursery: Little Dragons.

500 girls from ages 3 through to 18 flourish in their own sections of the school. Nursery currently accommodates children from the term of their 3rd birthday through to age 5, with plans to extend to welcome all two year-olds later this year; Junior School takes pupils from age 5 to 10 through P1 to P5. In our unique structure, Middle School follows for girls from ages 10 to 13 (P6, P7, S1); Upper School is the final phase from age 13 to 18.

Houldsworth House, the onsite boarding house, offers up to 50 girls from the UK and abroad, from the age of 10, which adds an international dimension to our outward-looking community.

Houses: Pupils are attached to a particular house throughout their time at St George's and family members all belong to the same house.



EXCELLENT LEVELS OF ACADEMIC ATTAINMENT

St George's figure consistently highly in the independent schools' league tables for Scottish Advanced Higher results. This success is a product of the all-girls' learning environment, inspiring and dedicated teachers and the personal support that the school can offer to the girls.

The curriculum is coherent across the whole school and GCSE, as a two-year programme, provides an excellent foundation for moving on to Scottish Higher and Advanced Higher. We offer exceptional qualification pathways.

Students are highly motivated to achieve the best of their abilities. Most achieve their first choice of post- school destination. The Heads of Sixth Form and Careers are instrumental in ensuring the high quality of student welfare, the Sixth Form enrichment programme, careers guidance, work experience and UCAS applications which lead to meaningful destinations.

To offer further academic support to students, the extensive Support for Learning Department provides additional support and some teachers take on the role of academic mentors.

CO-CURRICULUM

We run a co-curriculum that is character building – it fosters risk taking and thus develops courage and spirit. Our emphasis on learning outside the classroom, to support learning inside the classroom, is very important to us. We genuinely believe in a creative and balanced education hence the value we place upon a rich and diverse co-curricular and enrichment programme which broadens horizons and encourages ambition.



INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

We facilitate international education through global partnerships and exchanges. With overseas boarders and ESOL support, we prepare students to thrive in global opportunities.

CAMPUS AND FACILITIES

St George's is situated on a spacious parkland campus with plenty of lawned landscaped school grounds and green playing fields in the popular, leafy residential area of Murrayfield.

LOCATION

Located in the heart of Edinburgh, we have excellent transport links and access to a cosmopolitan, cultural hub.

PASTORAL AND COMMUNITY

The welfare, well-being and personal and social education of each student are of central importance. This is a central tenet of the girls' educational experience and is founded on excellent relationships throughout the school.

Our community is one where we want every individual to feel they belong and are celebrated. Open-mindedness and sense of shared aims within the community is reflected in a mutually supportive and welcoming staffroom.

We are a school where students from a rich variety of backgrounds (ethnic, national, geographical, linguistic and socio-economic) mix readily and easily. We consider ourselves to have broad horizons and value internationalism, in light of the global opportunities that we are preparing girls for.



Opportunity

The Business Director is a member of the School's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and is responsible for strategic oversight of the finance/commercial activity, facilities, IT and support services (including catering and cleaning) of the School, ensuring that they support the organisation's aims and objectives. The Business Director works closely with the Head, the Governors and members of the SLT to promote a strong performance culture and ensure that the School is at the leading edge of best professional support practice.

The Business Director will be a financially astute individual, who is attuned to commercial opportunity and the values and ethos of the school as the beacon of girls-only education in Scotland. This person will advise on all matters relating to financial performance, growth strategies and plans, including evaluation of business development opportunities, financial modelling, scenario planning and investment analysis.

They will be used to working at pace and responding to organisational and market change as well as capable of managing people managing people across professional support functions within complex organisations.



ROLE PURPOSE

The Business Director, supported by the Head of Finance, the Head of Facilities, Head of IT and their respective teams, is responsible for ensuring that the School has the finance, facilities, IT systems and people in place to deliver an excellent education to its pupils. This role involves close support of the Head on a day-to-day basis; providing timely and comprehensive financial and commercial support to aid strategic and operational decision-making. It also involves working closely with the governors, particularly to provide them with financial forecasts to aid strategic decision-making and to report on the financial performance of the School.

The post holder also works closely with the Lead HR Advisor and Deputy Head (Staff) to promote a high performing support function with a strong customer focus, ensuring that the School is meeting all statutory obligations and relevant best practice.

St. George's is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

USEFUL WEBSITE LINKS:

- Ethos/Strategy and an introduction to the Governing Board: 'The Council': [Vision and Strategy](#)
- Head's welcome video: [St George's Private School Edinburgh | Girls Day & Boarding](#)
- Campus: [School structure and campus tour](#)
- Campus plans for capital investment: [St George's Confirms Chosen Buyer of Lansdowne House Site](#)



RESPONSIBILITIES

STRATEGIC

- Drive the growth and development of the school through astute financial and commercial planning and modelling, allowing the School's Governing Body and Leadership team to take well-informed, forward-thinking decisions to consolidate the school's pre-eminent position as the first choice for girls' education in Scotland.
- Contribute to, and deliver, the Whole School Development Plan as a member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Oversee and monitor sustainable Finance/Commercial, Facilities and IT strategies and their supporting operational plans, ensuring delivery of key objectives and targets over time, as set out in the School's Strategic and Development Plans.
- Through personal engagement, develop and maintain high quality relationships and partnerships that support the School's strategic priorities and goals.
- Ensure that robust policies, procedures and systems are in place in Finance, Facilities and IT, and that they are effectively implemented.
- Liaise with external providers of Catering and Transport to ensure and document the same.
- Benchmark against comparator organisations, in both the public and private sectors, on a range of effective performance metrics to enable best practice and continuous improvement in the School.
- Oversee the School's procurement function including a robust system for contract management.
- Oversee the School's Risk Management framework, ensuring that the School is alert to its key risk areas and has the capability to manage them effectively.
- Identify and lead appropriate organisational change programmes across the School.
- Support the Senior Leadership Team as individuals and as a team to operate effectively in the leadership of the School.



LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

- Lead, manage and develop the Finance, Facilities and IT teams effectively, ensuring staff develop and maintain their specialist skills and knowledge and that the teams collectively have the capacity and capability to succeed.
- Directly line-manage the Head of Finance, Head of IT and Head Facilities, as well as other senior members of the Support Team as agreed with the Head.
- Oversee all School procurement activities ensuring that they meet statutory and legislative requirements and accord with best practice.
- Lead and manage key contract negotiations and oversight of performance, as delegated by the Head (i.e. School Catering)
- Act as Company Secretary ensuring all filing dates and requirements are met with OSCR and Companies House.
- Report to the Governing Board meetings and attend relevant sub-committees.
- Consolidate understanding and acceptance of Finance, IT and Facilities policy and practice at all levels of management and leadership and across staff groups as appropriate.
- Work with SLT to maximise the School's capacity to achieve its goals through its people.
- Be the SLT member with responsibility for GDPR compliance (with support of external retained advice)



COMPLIANCE/REGULATORY

- Oversight of compliance across the school (with support from independent retained advisors for GDPR and Health and Safety)
- Oversight of contract /salary detail (with support from retained Employment Lawyers)
- Oversight of the Health and Safety Audit and policy
- Keep up-to-date on legal and regulatory changes, with support from ISBA (Independent Schools' Business Directors' Association)
- With appropriate professional input, ensure compliance with all relevant legal, financial, insurance, data protection, health and safety, independent Schools' standards and property regulations.
- Ensure that the School retains its charitable status, by meeting its obligations to charitable principles and the requirements of the Scottish Charity regulator (OSCR) through the development and execution of appropriate policies. The Business Director will be the prime contact with OSCR and will be expected to keep fully abreast of all matters relating to Charitable Status in Scotland.
- Drafting and reviewing policies as required.

WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE LEAD HR ADVISOR/ DEPUTY HEAD (STAFF) IN RELATION TO THE SUPPORT SERVICES TEAM:

- Ensure that the support services team is appropriately resourced, in terms of finance and people.
- Promote and inspire high standards and continuous improvement in the development of professional support across the School.
- Develop and embed performance management systems and processes to support a quality performance driven culture.
- Develop and lead a talented and enabling professional support function and service.
- Ensure full compliance with UK/Scottish Government legislation, Care Inspectorate, HMIE and all other regulations, as appropriate.
- Ensure support services resources reflect organisational requirements over time.



IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE HEAD OF FINANCE:

- Maintain a comprehensive and responsive financial model to inform strategic decisions, including a five-year forecasting model for profit and cashflow.
- Mechanisms for conducting sensitivity analysis on proposed capital expenditure /commercial projects.
- Core monthly financial information for SLT and budget holders to track performance.
- A relevant, up-to-date and accessible financial dashboard for SLT and governor use.
- The fee strategy for the school, based upon input from Finance Committee and based upon the modelling above
- Advise on general financial policy within the School
- Regular review of Finance Office performance and structure
- Oversight of debt management and liaison with families once escalated.
- Compliance in all aspects of the Finance function, including OSCR and Companies House legislation.
- Maintain relationships with investment and bank managers
- Review and Procurement of key contracts e.g. energy and insurances
- Oversight and responsibility for the annual audit.
- Contribute to and provide oversight of the resourcing of the school's commercial functions (eg lettings).
- Ensure cost efficient and effective use of School resources, in particular, leading core external contract negotiations and subsequent supervision of such contracts, including energy supplies, professional services and insurance.
- Oversee the Finance Manager's preparation of the annual budget and departmental budgets in consultations with department heads and SLT
- Ensure the School has adequate insurance cover at all times to include employer's liability, buildings and equipment cover, personal accident, travel insurance and other relevant cover. Professional advice should invariably be sought.



IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE HEAD OF FACILITIES:

- Effective management and oversight of the planned preventative and regular reactive work and routines of the Facilities, Grounds and Cleaning teams
- Project contracting and tendering for all significant projects, to ensure robust processes and partnering with credible, reliable partners
- Compliance with all Health and Safety legislation (with the support of an independent retained advisor) and Care Inspectorate and HMIE requirements in relation to campus
- Production of costings and annual update of the long-term Facilities plan for replacement of plant, machinery, vehicles, catering, grounds and sports facilities, together with Capital Investment Projects, for the Council Property Committee
- Communication with key stakeholders around major projects or developments on site (eg neighbour/local Councillor liaison, development project presentations etc)
- Drafting, presentation and implementation of the long-term Estates Strategy, based upon the Whole School Strategy as agreed with Governors and upon regularly updated condition surveys

AS A MEMBER OF THE SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM:

- Be a visible, reassuring and positive presence around school, in touch with the wider school community
- Support the Head in communication with families and stakeholders on matters relevant to role
- Deliver presentations and training to staff as required
- Be available to make decisions, or attend important events, be part of the emergency back-up rota outside of regular working hours
- Lead HR processes within teams under your leadership, as directed by the Head
- Undertake Continuing Professional Development as appropriate to continually maintain professional capability and effectiveness and to ensure compliance and legislative awareness and competency.
- To undertake additional reasonable duties as requested by the Head or Chair of Governors.

This is not an exhaustive list and will vary as the School's requirements change. Flexibility regarding working hours will be expected from time to time, in consultation with the member of staff.



The Individual

We are looking for someone with proven experience as Head of Finance, or equivalent, who demonstrates outstanding organisational and leadership abilities to be successful. An ability to understand all of the nuances of the school is key to this role.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Educated to degree level or, exceptionally, have substantial relevant professional experience.
- Recognised professional accountancy qualification and current membership of a relevant professional organisation.

BACKGROUND & EXPERIENCE

- Extensive experience of leading and delivering successful finance, commercial and operational strategies to meet business needs.
- Extensive experience of developing and delivering sound financial/commercial strategies and plans that align with corporate aims and objectives.
- Track record of developing high quality financial and performance management information.
- Proven ability to think strategically and apply this at institutional level in a people intensive organisation like a school.
- Expertise in building effective partnerships and/or relationships with key stakeholders.
- Proven experience of successfully leading and managing teams and operations in complex organisations.
- An understanding of complex business models and organisational performance metrics.
- Extensive experience of working at board level in a people intensive organisation.



PERSONAL QUALITIES

- Positive, solution focussed mindset, capable of thinking outside the box
- Flexible and able to deal with conflicting and changing demands and priorities.
- Strongly self-motivated and personally resilient
- The capacity for personal reflection upon own performance and contribution.
- Cultural and emotional intelligence to deal with organisations and individuals nationally and internationally.
- Demonstrable openness, integrity and honesty.
- Willingness to take a hands-on approach where necessary.
- Ability to question and challenge and deliver tough messages.



SKILLS & COMPETENCIES

- Proactive and innovative strategic thinking and problem-solving skills, with the ability to be decisive and command support.
- Proven ability to horizon scan, identifying opportunities/challenges and inform key decision making.
- Excellent negotiation, influencing, persuasion and networking skills to work effectively at the most senior levels within and outside of the School.
- Demonstrably commercially driven, with the ability to assess and manage risk.
- High-level communication skills
- The ability to synthesise large amounts of management information, analysing and identifying salient issues to enable informed decision-making.
- Effective project management.
- Creativity, and experience of and aptitude for change management.
- Proven track record in excellent customer service and commitment to continuous improvement
- Proven ability to work successfully with a multidisciplinary team of staff.
- Ability to build credibility, trust and respect with academic and professional colleagues, internally and externally.
- An authentic belief and commitment to the values and ethos of the School.



Search Process

APPROACH CANDIDATES

We will have an initial discussion with you over the phone to determine your interest and suitability for this role, and discuss a little about your background and aspirations.

INTERVIEW CANDIDATES

Once your interest and suitability has been determined we will arrange for you to meet with the partner leading this search.

SHORT LISTING

Having met with candidates who will differ on experience, ambition and background, we will put forward a number of candidates whom we feel most meet the criteria.

MEETING OUR CLIENTS

St George's will meet the candidates on the shortlist. This will give you the opportunity to really understand the role,

the company culture and their expectations of you. You will more than likely have multiple meetings with key stakeholders to get a feel for the business.

DUE DILIGENCE

As you will appreciate, you will have conducted due diligence on St George's and they will expect us to do the same for the candidates who they anticipate would really bring that 'something special' to the business.

OFFER AND ACCEPTANCE

St George's School for Girls puts together the offer which we convey to you. We will fully support you through your resignation period and beyond.

ONGOING COMMUNICATIONS

We like to maintain contact with all candidates from a search. If you have been

successful in this activity we will meet with you after your first month to ensure that your expectations have been met. If you have not, we will ensure that you gain full feedback and we will maintain a relationship with you for the future.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

We aim to ensure that each and every stage of the search process is as inclusive as possible and we work to support St George's School for Girls in their own commitment to inclusivity.

CONFIDENTIALITY

We guarantee that any approach we make to you and any discussions we have will be in the strictest confidence. Any discussions will be conducted under the terms of a formal nondisclosure agreement.



About Odgers

Odgers was founded in 1965. We offer integrated executive search and leadership advisory services through our 59 offices in 33 countries. During our 60-year history we have developed functional and sector expertise and built a global network of relationships. We are deeply rooted in our local markets, which we combine with global perspective and reach, enabling us to serve clients across six continents.

What we do matters; our work impacts peoples' lives and drives our clients' success. It is a privilege to help build the world's best leadership teams, a trusted role we never take for granted.

This ethos underpins our commitment to our clients and candidates and motivates our colleagues to strive for excellence in all we do.



Candidate Charter

TALENTED PEOPLE ARE OUR LIFE BLOOD

Whether we approach you about a specific opportunity, or you contact us to share your biography and career ambitions, we want you to have a constructive experience of engaging with Odgers.

We recognise that we have a commitment to you as well as to our client, and we undertake that our dealings with you will be professional, courteous, rigorous and honest. We will:

- Approach you after considered analysis and in relation to roles where we think there is a strong match. Your time is valuable; we don't want to waste it.
- Work to make your candidacy as strong as it can be.
- Represent you effectively and discreetly to our client, based on accurate information that you give us in confidence.
- Be inclusive, open and fair-minded.
- Keep you informed, communicating outcomes promptly, and giving fair and honest feedback where we can.
- Celebrate your success in the event of a successful outcome, and share any lessons in the event of disappointment.
- Take a long-term view, recognising that you have a multi-year view of your own career. Where possible, we will help you fulfil your ambitions.
- Embrace continuous improvement, for example by carrying out regular independent audits of those we shortlist for roles.

If ever you feel we have not lived up to the letter or spirit of this charter, please tell us. We want to know. Email our Global Chief Executive Officer KScrope.CEO@odgers.com.



How to Apply

KEY DATES

Following a long list meeting of the Selection Panel, successful candidates will be invited to attend preliminary interviews with Odgers in February. The interview process with St George's will take place in March.

HOW TO APPLY

In order to apply, please submit a comprehensive CV along with a covering letter which sets out your interest in the role and encapsulates the aspects of your experience relevant to the required criteria. Please include current salary details and the names and addresses of three referees. Referees will not be approached until the final stages and not without prior permission from candidates.

The preferred method of application is online at: www.odgers.com/95389

If you are unable to apply online please email: karen.younie@odgers.com
All applications will receive an automated response.

All candidates are also requested to complete an online Diversity Monitoring Form which will be found at the end of the application process. This will assist St George's School for Girls in monitoring selection decisions to assess whether equality of opportunity is being achieved. Any information collated from the Diversity Monitoring Forms will not be used as part of the selection process and will be treated as strictly confidential.

PERSONAL DATA

In line with GDPR, we ask that you do NOT send us any information that can identify children or any of your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, data concerning health or sex life and sexual orientation,

genetic and / or biometric data) in your CV and application documentation. Following this notice, any inclusion of your Sensitive Personal Data in your CV/application documentation will be understood by us as your express consent to process this information going forward. Please also remember to not mention anyone's information or details (e.g. referees) who have not previously agreed to their inclusion.

CONTACT DETAILS

For a conversation in confidence, please contact:

Peter Henry: peter.henry@odgers.com

We are committed to ensuring everyone can access our website and application processes. This includes people with sight loss, hearing, mobility and cognitive impairments. Should you require access to these documents in alternative formats, please contact emma.burnett@odgers.com.



Where Leadership Matters.

