



Appointment of  
**Head of Food Experience and Operations**  
Full time, Year Round

Information for Applicants

# Letter from the Head

## Dear Applicant

Thank you very much for your interest in becoming Head of Food Experience and Operations here at Alleyn's. I am delighted that you are considering it and I hope to give you a sense of our school and why it is such a wonderful place to work! Our ROCCK values (Respect, Opportunity, Curiosity, Courage, Kindness) will also tell you what we are seeking to achieve here.

So, why Alleyn's? I started as Head here in January 2021, so I feel in a good position to help you answer that question, having asked it myself a few short years ago! You'll know, from our website, most of the key facts. We are an academic, co-educational through-school; our Junior School is also on our site and we love the fact that many of our pupils learn here from 4–18. We are situated in an inspiringly leafy part of SE London, on a beautiful and well-resourced site with the City of London twinkling enticingly on the horizon, just about four miles away.

As one of the three Dulwich Foundation Schools, Alleyn's is part of a historic foundation which has been educating young people for 400 years. Our namesake and founder, Edward Alleyn, was one of the great Elizabethan players, and playful academic exploration and discovery is something we very much welcome here. I won't go into the less reputable activities he was famous for, but as well as acting, Edward Alleyn was also a philanthropist and a philosopher. His "College of God's gift" was established to change the lives of children – initially "12 poor scholars". It is rather wonderful that the original 12 has grown into our large, thriving community of more than a thousand children. Alleyn's has been honouring the founder's legacy, as one of this country's leading co-educational schools, for generations.

We are very over-subscribed and entrance to the school is intensely competitive. Our pupils are gifted and ambitious and, unsurprisingly, they do extremely well in exams. I can't pretend that we are not proud of our pupils' results; we are, of course, but they are a by-product of an Alleyn's education, not the reason for it. The 'outcomes' we most care about are the incredible young men and young women who leave us. They are engaging, grounded, passionate and interesting individuals, who cross the stage at graduation, aware of who they are and what they care about and very ready to go out into the world and make it better. We're not the only people who think this; we loved Tatler's take on it in their Schools Guide this September: "If you're looking for the epicentre of forward-thinking education, here it is" they said, quoting a recent visitor to the school, 'the school is "dynamic, diverse and thinking in the future tense."'

The really lovely staff/pupil relationships here are critical and they underpin all we do. The strength of the relationships was one of the things people told me about before I started at the school and the other thing was how delightful Alleyn's pupils are. And they were right on both counts! Our students are grounded, engaged and enormous fun; they wear their talents lightly, they support each other, they are often impassioned and keen to fight for important causes and they are (mostly!) very engaged by the adventure of learning. They also make us laugh a great deal (you can see lots of evidence of all of this in our latest ISI report - do have a look at the highlights online).

Pretty much all of our pupils are involved in the co-curricular life of the school and in our partnership

and outreach programmes. This matters to us and we do ask all our teaching staff to play an active part in the co-curricular and enrichment programmes partly because so much of the fun and friendship here stems from this. Equally, of course, most staff will play a role in the pastoral care and education which is delivered through Year Groups, School Sections and Houses. The Outreach programmes at Alleyn's are a big part of who we are and a critical part of an education here.

I hope this summary has been helpful and that you feel excited by this opportunity and keen to apply. If perhaps you are thinking that a historic, academically selective independent school might be a bit daunting or might not be the right place for you, can I urge you to reconsider this? We are emphatically not a 'one-size-fits-all' community and we take great pride and delight in individual differences and the successes these bring. And of course, our pupils benefit from seeing a varied team of adults working together successfully and happily as part of a diverse and inspiring team. If you join us, we hope that you will quickly feel part of the school community and we will warmly encourage you to make the most of the many opportunities for personal and professional development on offer.

I also very much hope that you will be able to get a sense of the energy and fun at the heart of our school during this recruitment process. The informality, the warmth and the unpretentious approach at Alleyn's really is infectious and I hope you will feel it, as I did, the moment you walk through the doors. There is nothing entitled, stuffy or pompous about this school. And we really hope that you will enjoy getting to know us a little bit.

May I wish you the very best of luck.

Yours faithfully,



**Mrs Jane Lunnon**  
The Head



# About The Role

Reporting to the Director of Site Operations, the Head of Food Experience and Operations will oversee the food experience and delivery for the whole school. The primary focus is a lunch offer for nearly 1,500 pupils, from the age of four to eighteen. In addition, the Head of Food Experience and Operations will provide a lunch offer to staff, a pre-school and post-school offer to pupils, and extensive catering support for internal school functions, ranging from food platters, large events, VIP dining, to many more events.

We are not your typical school, we are Co-Educational Independent School of the Year, we care about gut health, we care about eating habits, we care about sustainability, we care about food trends, we care about technology and we have unlimited ambition. We feel more like a university operation than a school.

But it's far more than that.....

The school is undertaking a once in a generation building project, Project Crucible. The school is demolishing the existing dining hall and creating a sector-leading, reimagining of a school catering to mirror a food court offer for many pupils, in a technology led environment. This role will be heavily involved in menu planning, kitchen operation delivery and developing staffing models and processes required to meet the school's aspirations.

The current dining hall will likely cease operation in late October to early November 2026. The expectation is the new dining hall will feed many pupils and staff in September of 2028. Plans are being finalised to ensure a pupil, staff and events catering offer can be provided during the construction phase. This will involve relocation of pupil and staff dining and provision of NED's Kitchen dining, location of the school's 'grab and go' offer and creation of a temporary, and then a final kitchen.

This is a truly unique opportunity to shape the catering offer of a leading co-educational day school in a brand new, premier dining hall and events space and overcoming the challenges of a dispersed catering offer during the construction phase.

Highlights of the role include:

- Manage the food delivery and feeding of approximately 2,000 people a day across multiple temporary outlets during Project Crucible construction.
- Input into kitchen and dining hall finishes, train staff in a state-of-the-art kitchen and shape the roles and responsibilities of the team.
- Support and guide the chef team on menu design and creation that supports all school ages and staff across different locations.
- Playing a key role in pupil wellbeing through gut-health, allergen management, and ensuring nutritious meals to sustain pupil activity throughout the school day.

## Responsibilities of the Role

### Strategic Leadership & Service Development

- Provide strong leadership and direction to the school's in-house catering team.
- Develop and define a catering structure, roles and responsibilities that reflect the current requirements and that of a new dining experience.
- Develop and implement a catering strategy aligned with the school's vision and values with agreed targeted action plans for the department and individual staff members.
- Lead menu development that is nutritious, balanced, inclusive, and compliant with the school's ethos and current school dining legislation.
- In addition to the above, lead a reimagined dining experience during the construction of the new dining hall which will require an innovative approach to the food offer and will not align to traditional school catering.
- Promote healthy eating initiatives and positively influence pupil engagement and uptake.



### Operational management

- Ensure the smooth day-to-day running of catering operations.
- Maintain high standards of food quality, presentation, and customer service.
- Oversee production schedules, staffing rotas, and service delivery to meet operational needs.
- Manage stock control, order, and waste reduction effectively.

### Financial & Commercial Management

- Prepare, manage, and monitor catering budgets to ensure financial sustainability and value for money.
- Analyse performance data (meal uptake, costs, wastage, income) and implement improvements.
- Lead procurement activities, manage supplier contracts, and ensure ethical and cost-effective sourcing.

### Compliance, Health & Safety

- Ensure full compliance with food hygiene, health & safety, allergen, and nutritional regulations.
- Maintain up-to-date risk assessments, HACCP documentation, and audit readiness.
- Lead and promote a strong food safety and safeguarding culture within catering teams.
- Ensure waste streams are compliant and all waste is recorded accurately for analysis.

### Designated Allergen Lead

- Serve as the school's named Designated Allergen Lead, with strategic and operational responsibility for allergen management across the site.
- Maintain accurate and an up-to-date allergen matrix, product specifications, and supplier information for all menu items.
- Develop, implement, and maintain accurate and up-to-date allergen management procedures, product specifications, and supplier information for all menu items, including ingredient control, labelling, storage, preparation, and service.
- Ensure full compliance with food allergen legislation, guidance, and best practice across all school catering operations and events.
- Ensure clear, consistent communication of allergen information to pupils, parents and or carers, staff, and visitors.
- Ensure all school staff receive appropriate allergen awareness training and understand escalation procedures.
- Lead on the management of special dietary requirements, including medically prescribed diets and individual care plans.

### Stakeholder Engagement

- Work collaboratively with school department heads to meet their specific catering requirements.
- Respond effectively to feedback, complaints, and special dietary requirements.
- Represent catering services at meetings and school events as required, in particular the pupil catering committee.
- Liaison and support for the school's internal Events Department, who run a very broad programme of events with many requiring catering support from platters for lunch meetings to VIP diners. Collaboration on menu planning is a key element in this partnership.



### People Management & Development

- Recruit, train, and develop catering staff.
- Set clear expectations, conduct performance reviews, and manage absence and conduct matters.
- Foster a positive, inclusive, and professional team culture.

### Other

- Be aware of the school's Health & Safety Policy.
- In conjunction with all staff of the school, support, promote, and act within the school's Safeguarding Policy.
- In conjunction with all staff of the school, support, promote, and act within the school's data protection policies and practices.
- Promote the school's eco-agenda and ensure all work is carried out with a view to reducing waste and protecting the environment.
- Undertake any additional duties, as directed by the Director of Site Operations which are within reasonable capability and responsibility of the Head of Food Experience and Operations.

### Line Management

The Head of Food Experience and Operations is managed on a day-to-day basis by the Director of Site Operations. The role holder will also have free access to the Chief Operating Officer, who holds ultimate responsibility for operational staff.

Our Values (the Alleyn's ROCCK!)

Respect  
Opportunity  
Curiosity  
Courage  
Kindness

## Person Specification

### Education and Professional Development:

- Degree or equivalent professional qualification in one of the following:
  - Catering or Hospitality Management
  - Business Management
  - Food and Nutrition or a related discipline
- Up-to-date Level 4 Food Safety qualification (or equivalent).
- Demonstrable commitment to continuous professional development (CPD).
- Membership of a relevant professional catering or hospitality body.

### Experience:

- Significant senior management experience in high-volume catering operations.
- Proven track record of:
  - Managing multi-site or large-scale catering services
  - Leading and developing large, diverse teams
  - Budget management and financial control
- Experience of implementing and maintaining:
  - Food safety systems (HACCP)
  - Health & safety compliance
  - Quality assurance standards
- Experience working with stakeholders at senior or executive level.
- Experience of kitchen decants, large scale mobilisation and launch of new kitchen/dining environments.

### Leadership & Management Competencies:

- Strategic thinker with the ability to translate vision into operational delivery.
- Strong people leader with the ability to:
  - Build high-performing teams
  - Manage performance, conduct and capability issues effectively
- Excellent communication and influencing skills.
- Ability to lead change and improve services within complex environments.
- Resilient, decisive and able to perform effectively under pressure.
- Experience of leading cultural change or major transformation programmes.



#### Knowledge & Technical Skills:

- Expert knowledge of:
  - Food safety legislation and best practice
  - Allergen management and nutritional compliance
  - Employment law as it relates to catering staff is desirable
- Strong commercial understanding, including:
  - Cost control, budgeting and financial forecasting
  - Supply chain and contract management
  - Commercial target setting
- Operational knowledge of:
  - Catering systems and procedures
  - Procurement frameworks and supplier negotiation
- Computer literacy across Microsoft 365 suite of programmes.
- Knowledge and understanding of EPOS, pre-ordering systems, allergen recording software and waste tracking tools would be advantageous.

#### Personal Attributes:

- Passionate about delivering a positive, efficient and tailored experience.
- Calm and resilient when working under pressure or managing busy periods.
- Customer-focused with a strong commitment to service excellence.
- Highly organised with strong attention to detail.
- Professional, credible and confident when operating at a senior level.
- Values-driven with a strong commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Flexible approach to work and willingness to travel between sites.
- Passion for food innovation and continuous improvement.
- Committed to pupil wellbeing through food e.g. nutrition and gut health.



# Working at Alleyn's

## Terms and Conditions

This position is based on-site at Alleyn's School in Dulwich, South London, and is a full time, year round role working five days a week. Due to the nature and seniority of the post, whilst working days are often Monday to Friday, a flexible approach to working hours is essential, including late evenings and weekends when events require, including working a full day on Founder's Day, which takes place on one Saturday each year in late June or early July.

The role includes five weeks of annual leave plus public holidays, along with a discretionary closure period over Christmas.

The salary will be in the range of £58,000 to £65,000 per annum based on experience and qualifications, and will be paid over twelve-monthly instalments. The appointment will be subject to a six-month probationary period.

The school provides additional benefits to its staff, including income protection insurance, an employee assistance programme, enhanced family leave pay, lunches and other refreshments, the use of school facilities including the swimming pool and gym, a cycle-to-work scheme, a tech scheme, and holiday purchase scheme, access to the library, free tickets to school performances, and the opportunity to join one of two private healthcare plans. Staff also enjoy discounts with local businesses and may use holiday sports camps for the children of staff at a preferential rate.

Members of staff who have children attending Alleyn's Junior and Senior Schools will benefit from 25% fee remission, which, subject to means testing, may increase to a maximum of 85%. This is a non-taxable benefit, and any means-tested element is reviewed annually. Staff children must meet the same admissions criteria as all pupils at Alleyn's. There is also some fee remission available in respect of staff children attending Dulwich College and James Allen's Girls' School, though the terms and conditions are different, and it is a taxable benefit.

The role holder will have access to, and may be automatically enrolled into, the school's Group Personal Pension Plan, currently provided by Legal & General. This plan may involve contributions being made via salary sacrifice based on 8% employer contributions

On completion of the required recruitment checks, the post would be available to the successful candidate immediate effect or at the completion of their due term of notice.

## Commitment to Safeguarding

Alleyn's are fully committed to providing a safe environment for children, staff and visitors. We promote a climate where anyone in the community can freely share their concerns about themselves, or others, in terms of individual safety and well-being. We protect the interests of the children at Alleyn's through awareness among all members of staff of the kinds of issues of abuse, maltreatment and neglect that would impair a pupil's health or development. In this way, Alleyn's supports its pupils' development by fostering security, confidence and independence.

We provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and know how to approach adults if they or those whom they know are in difficulties, with the assurance that they will be listened to. Everyone in the staff community at Alleyn's takes responsibility for safeguarding, and we always aim to act in the best interests of the child.



# Arrangements for the Appointment

## Applications

Further information about how to apply can be found on our website, [www.alleyns.org.uk/jobs](http://www.alleyns.org.uk/jobs).

**The deadline for applications is at midnight on Thursday 16 July 2026.**

If you have any questions, you are very welcome to contact the HR Department, by email at [Jobs@alleyns.org.uk](mailto:Jobs@alleyns.org.uk) or by phone on 020 8613 5016.

## Interviews and Appointment

**Interviews will be conducted online on Monday 20 July 2026 and in-person at Alleyn's School on Thursday 23 July 2026.** This will consist of interviews with relevant colleagues including the Chief Operating Officer, the Director of Site Operations, the Co-Commercial Director and the Head of Events. There will also be an opportunity to meet with other relevant staff.

## Safeguarding Checks

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and an enhanced DBS check.

## Equal Opportunities

As an Equal Opportunities employer we welcome applications from all applicants who meet the requirements for the position. However we are especially keen to receive applications from those in minority groups for which the school is currently underrepresented. We celebrate diversity and thrive on the benefits it brings.

