



LEWESTON
SHERBORNE



Head of Finance

Candidate Information

Overview

Founded in 1891 Leweston School is a co-educational Catholic independent day and boarding school in Dorset for pupils aged 0 to 18.

Situated just outside Sherborne in 46 acres of beautiful parkland, the school offers holistic education in an inclusive community where first-class pastoral care and wide-ranging co-curricular opportunities underpin a supportive and rigorous academic offer. The school seeks to produce well-rounded pupils with a genuine interest in education in the broadest sense of the word, with interests that stretch beyond the confines of the academic curriculum. The school has strong traditions in music, drama, art, debating, community activities and sport. There are many co-curricular activities, all of which are important in developing a well-balanced, confident individuals.

The school was originally founded as St Antony's and located in Sherborne. In 1948 the demands of the Education Act saw the move of the senior pupils to Leweston Manor with the Prep School continuing in Sherborne until 1993 when the whole school was reunited once again on the Leweston campus. The younger pupils took up residence in the redesigned Coach House. The school amended its name in 2007 to Leweston School.

Today the school educates just over 600 pupils with 90 in the Nursery, 170 in the Prep and 340 in the Senior School. There are approximately 100 boarders, the majority being in the Senior School.

Leweston is a thriving, busy community which has high expectations of its pupils. Whilst the assessment process is not based entirely on academic performance Leweston is increasingly over-subscribed. Pupils are offered places on the basis of school assessments, positive references and their generally suitability for the values and ethos of the school.

Our Values

Leweston School's three core values are **community**, **opportunity** and **expertise**. They are underpinned by our Catholic foundation, which welcomes all faiths and none, building a strong sense of unity, courtesy, respect and affection. Everything we do comes from a place of self-worth and dignity.

- **Community** means being part of a collective. It's essential for every student to feel that they are an important part of the Leweston family and contribute to the life of the school. This same sense is extended to their parents and guardians.
- **Opportunity** is in abundance. We are proud of our zest for life and instil a willingness to try everything and to learn from our failures. This discovery of strength and weaknesses, and the support we provide to students in exploring it, enables them to develop the determination to persevere – a real lesson in preparation for life beyond the school.
- **Expertise** means having an expert skill or knowledge in a particular field. We have an exceptionally talented staff team, who have outstanding expertise and enthusiasm to inspire in others a love of learning and to share their passion for areas of specialism.

Our Campus

With extensive grounds surrounding a beautiful Georgian Manor House, Leweston provides a location which whilst being safe, is close to a town with good transport links to London and South West airports. Within the 46 acre estate sits our swimming pool, a full-sized all weather pitch, a walled garden play area, Enchanted Wood Forest School, tennis courts as well as a wealth of historical features including work by Thomas Mawson and George Sherringham.

The range of buildings on site spans several architectural epochs. The historically important Trinity Chapel is one of the first post-Reformation churches in the country. The Palladian manor house, was built in the late 18th century with Art Deco interior refurbishments and later additions including dining, boarding and teaching wings.

The Prep School is housed in the former Coach House with its own Pre-Prep Garden, tennis courts and play area.



The Prep School

Leweston Prep consists of the Nursery, Pre-Prep and Prep divisions. The school shares a single 46-acre campus with the Senior School and has pupils aged 3 months to 11 years old. It is co-educational all-through school.

Nursery is divided into four age-defined units: Babies, Toddlers, Transition One and Transition Two. Each unit has a specific Room Leader.

The Prep School's staff is comprised of 21 teachers and 5 teaching assistants alongside visiting music teachers, coaches and volunteers. Each Pre-Prep class is led by a Form Tutor supported by a teaching assistant. From Prep 4 when the year group grows to two classes, each has its own a Form Tutor supported by additional part-time staff. The normal maximum class size in the Prep School is 20 with one class in Reception to Prep 3. If numbers allow, Prep 4 splits into two classes, a model which continues for the remainder of the school. Classes are not set.

Leweston School as a whole has 170 employees including academic and support staff.

Staff foster excellent relationships with the students and are committed to supporting the provision of extra-curricular clubs, House activities, school trips and other events.

The majority of Prep School pupils move on to the Senior School, many winning scholarships. A small number leave at this point typically to transition into the state system.



The Senior School

Leweston Senior School educates pupils aged 11 to 18. The school shares a single 46-acre campus with the Prep School and Nursery. It is co-educational all- through school.

The Senior School's staff comprises of 170 teachers and support staff visiting music teachers, coaches and volunteers. Years 7 and 8 are typically three classes of 54 pupils with an additional class at Year 9 and above to take the year groups to 72. The Sixth Form is approximately 80 students. The normal maximum class size in the Senior School is between 18 and 20.

Flexible boarding is offered throughout the Senior School. Boarders belong to one of four houses: Martha, Cecilia, Eleanor and Antony. These are divided according to age and gender.

Staff foster excellent relationships with the students and are committed to supporting the provision of extra-curricular clubs, House activities, school trips and other events.



Work with us

A fantastic working environment

Leweston is set on a beautiful campus a few miles outside the picturesque town of Sherborne. The grounds offer both pupils and staff the opportunity to enjoy space and fresh air and provide an inspiring location to teach and learn. The school's value and ethos creates a culture of courtesy, mutual respect and affection that has at its heart the importance of service to others. High standards are set both inside and outside of the classroom.

Flexible and family friendly

We are a relatively small school that regards itself as one big family. The majority of our staff have children, many of whom are Leweston, and there is the possibility of a staff remission.

Health and Wellbeing

Leweston hosts a range of exercise classes run by local provider Communitfit who offer a discount to Leweston staff. There are also free swimming sessions available during the week in the school pool as well as employee assistance and wellbeing support programmes.

Free meals and parking

Staff are entitled to free lunch and refreshments during term time. This is extended to include supper if on duty. There is also an on-site café where a staff discount is offered. There is free on-site parking.

Pensions

Leweston offers a pension scheme with Royal London and employer contributions of up to 12%. Membership of the Royal London Scheme includes Death in Service benefit and income protection.

Discount for Teachers

Discounts for Teachers has been introduced following the success of Health Service Discounts and Discounts for Carers. As Leweston staff (not just teachers), you can access a vast range of discounts and deals when you register online.



The Opportunity

Leweston School is seeking an experienced, and highly motivated **Head of Finance** to join our senior leadership team. This is a pivotal role, reporting directly to the Headmaster, responsible for leading all financial operations, ensuring the school's financial health, sustainability, and compliance, and providing strategic financial insight to support our continued growth and development. You will be instrumental in safeguarding the school's financial future, managing its resources effectively, and contributing to the strategic decision-making process that shapes the educational experience at Leweston.

Key Duties and Responsibilities

The Head of Finance will oversee and lead all financial aspects of the school, including:

Financial Reporting & Compliance:

- Oversee preparation of the company's annual accounts in accordance with company law
- Make appropriate arrangements for an annual external audit and liaising with the auditors during their audit work
- Ensuring all tax returns are filed on time and taxes due are paid on time.
- Ensure reporting meets compliant standards with statutory law and financial regulations.

Budgeting & Strategic Planning:

- Prepare the annual budget, including cashflow projections, in accordance with the requirements of the Board and the DfE, and maintain a rolling 3–5-year financial plan/forecast
- Coordinating the preparation of budget and financial forecasting, including scenario planning and sensitivity analysis.
- Support the business with all financial aspects of the strategic plan and decision-making processes.
- Prepare business cases and financial appraisals for new projects, taking lead responsibility for their oversight and implementation.

Operational Finance:

- Manage all day-to-day accounting operations, including Billing, Accounts Receivable, Accounts Payable, General Ledger, and Revenue Recognition.
- Ensure the accurate preparation of monthly management accounts and other reports, including re-forecasting each term, with appropriate management commentary, analysis of variances, advice, and benchmarking data on the financial state of the school for the use of the Governors and budget holders, ensuring all transactions are recorded, filed and reported properly.
- Oversee regular bank and other reconciliations.
- Coordinate the management of cash flow, debt, and debt collection.
- Manage the payroll and approval of any monthly payroll adjustments for staff including pension contributions



Key Duties and Responsibilities cont.

Internal Controls & Process Improvement:

- Ensure appropriate internal control processes are in place to mitigate financial risks, maximise economy and efficiency, and enable accountability at appropriate levels
- Document business processes and accounting policies to maintain strong internal controls. Lead initiatives to streamline and improve all operations and accounting systems. Review and propose updates to the school's financial policies as required.
- Streamlining and improving all operations and accounting systems.

Leadership & Collaboration:

- Manage, mentor, and motivate the finance department staff.
- Help the Director of Business Strategy and Operations in presenting reports to senior executives, Governors, and Board members, including attendance at the Executive Committee and relevant Governor meetings.

Full Time role, salary in the region of £50,000

This job description is not exhaustive and gives a good indication of the activities involved in the role within Leweston School. No job description can cover all aspects of a role and consequently responsibilities are likely to evolve and change overtime.



Person Specification

Experience:

- Proven work experience as a Head of Finance, Financial Controller, or similar role.
- In-depth understanding of cash flow management, bank reconciliation, and bookkeeping.
- Hands-on experience with budgeting and risk management.
- Excellent knowledge of data analysis and forecasting models.
- Advanced computer software skills, including Microsoft Excel and financial reporting software.
- Experience working in an educational environment is desirable but not essential.

Qualifications:

- Professional accounting qualification (ACA/ACCA/CIMA) is highly advantageous.

Skills:

- Solid analytical and decision-making skills.
- Strong business acumen and integrity. Results-oriented and metrics-driven.
- Exceptional time management and problem-solving abilities.
- Exceptional interpersonal communication and leadership skills, with the ability to communicate and manage staff at all levels.
- Ability to lead by example and demonstrate a strong sense of integrity, ethics, and dependability.
- Professional written and oral communication skills.
- Confidence in presenting complex financial information to both specialist and non-specialist audiences (including Governors and the Board).
- Ability to assimilate knowledge and understanding of areas relevant to the role such as strategic finance, law, tax matters, school maintenance, and project management.

Personal Qualities:

- Ability to work effectively under pressure.
- Collaborative mindset with the ability to work closely with upper management to organise, plan, and achieve company financial goals.



Application Process

Interested candidates are invited to apply on the school job [portal](#). If you have any questions about applying, please contact 01963 211031.

The process is as follows:

- All applications will be acknowledged by email. If you have not received acknowledgement that your application has been received within two working days of sending it, please contact Nicola Harrison by telephone.
- Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interviews at the School.

Leweston is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from all sections of the community. Candidates will be assessed against relevant criteria only (i.e. skills, qualifications, abilities and experience). All applicants should read the schools' safeguarding policy and are required to declare any criminal convictions or cautions or disciplinary proceedings related to young people. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service. N.B. Safer recruitment checks will be made at all stages of the recruitment process.





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