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THE GRANGE SCHOOL

Recruitment Pack
Head of Finance

Welcome

The Grange School is one of the great success stories of independent education, shaped by over forty years of sustained growth, ambition and achievement. Founded in 1933 as a Kindergarten and Preparatory School, the School took a bold and transformative step in 1977 with the introduction of secondary education. Since then, The Grange has grown steadily, developing an outstanding academic reputation alongside a strong and supportive school community.

Today, The Grange educates 1,180 students aged 3–18, with approximately 400 students in the Junior School and 780 in the Senior School, including a vibrant Sixth Form. The School is consistently amongst the highest-performing independent schools in the North West and is widely regarded as one of the leading co-educational day schools in the country.

Academic standards are high, and outcomes place The Grange towards the top of national independent school league tables, with strong GCSE and A-level results and the majority of students progressing to their first-choice universities.

Just as importantly, The Grange is a very happy place to work and learn. Relationships between staff and students are warm, respectful and purposeful. Expectations are high, and the School is busy and dynamic, but it is also collegiate, supportive and professionally rewarding. Staff are encouraged to be ambitious, reflective and creative, within a culture that values collaboration and mutual respect.

Above all, our purpose is to help young people truly flourish. We believe in educating the whole person, supporting each student to discover and develop their individual strengths, talents and passions. Through challenge, encouragement and opportunity, we prepare our students not only for academic success, but for fulfilled and purposeful lives beyond school.

If you would like to discuss this vacancy please contact Mrs Lynn Geary, HR and Governance Officer by email to: recruitment@grange.org.uk, or call 01606 539039.

Dr Lorraine Earps
Head

Hartford, Cheshire

The Grange School is situated in Hartford, a thriving village that combines a strong sense of community with excellent regional connectivity. Closely linked to the nearby market town of Northwich, Hartford sits within the historic Vale Royal of Cheshire and is ideally positioned between Manchester and Liverpool, with Chester just 15 miles away.

The area offers an outstanding quality of life. Beautiful countryside is always close at hand, while hills, coastline and mountain landscapes are all easily accessible. At the same time, nearby cities provide rich cultural, sporting and commercial opportunities, complementing the more peaceful pace of village and rural life.

A wide range of housing is available locally, catering for different lifestyles, stages of life and budgets. Both staff and students travel to The Grange from a broad geographical area, drawn from a mix of urban, suburban and rural communities.

Overall, the location combines accessibility, natural beauty and a high standard of living, making Hartford and the surrounding area an excellent place to work, live and belong.

Head of Finance
The Opportunity

Salary: £68,952 per annum, dependent on skills and experience
Reports to: Chief Operating Officer
Contract: Full-time, permanent, whole-school role

The Opportunity
The Head of Finance is the School's senior finance professional, responsible for leading a high-quality, responsive and forward-looking finance service across The Grange School. The postholder will provide clear financial leadership, robust stewardship and insightful analysis to support the Chief Operating Officer, the Head of The Grange, the Executive Leadership Team and Governors in making well-informed decisions.

The role combines strategic financial planning with strong operational control. It has oversight of all School income, whether fee-related or non-fee-related, and will ensure that income, expenditure, cash, assets, liabilities, payroll and pensions are accurately controlled, recorded, forecast and reported. The postholder will lead the Finance/Bursary team and will be a visible partner to budget holders and service leads across both the Junior and Senior Schools.

Key current priority: to lead the further development, optimisation and embedding of iFinance so that it becomes the School's authoritative, well-controlled source of financial information, workflow and reporting.

Purpose of the Role
- Provide professional leadership of the School's finance function and ensure that financial services are efficient, accurate, customer-focused and appropriately controlled.
- Safeguard the School's financial sustainability through strong budgeting, forecasting, cash-flow management, scenario planning and risk management.
- Ensure Governors and senior leaders receive timely, accurate and accessible financial information, advice and challenge.
- Maintain a robust control environment that protects the School's income, assets and reputation and supports compliance with charity, company, tax and accounting requirements.
- Lead and develop the Finance/Bursary team, promoting accountability, continuous improvement, service standards and effective succession planning.

Head of Finance
Responsibilities

1. Strategic financial leadership and governance

- Advise the Chief Operating Officer and senior leaders on the financial implications of strategic and operational decisions.
- Lead the annual budget-setting process and maintain an integrated multi-year financial plan, including income, staffing, operating expenditure, capital expenditure, cash flow, reserves, borrowing and covenant considerations.
- Prepare scenario and sensitivity analysis to support decisions on fees, pupil numbers, remuneration, pensions, capital investment, commercial activity and other material financial risks.
- Produce clear, concise and decision-focused reports for the Executive Leadership Team, Finance & Resources Committee and Governing Board, including management accounts, forecasts, key performance indicators, variance analysis and recommended actions.
- Support the development, review and consistent application of the School's financial policies, scheme of delegation, procurement controls and delegated authority framework.
- Provide constructive financial challenge while working collaboratively with budget holders and senior colleagues.

2. Oversight of all income

- Hold end-to-end oversight of all School income, ensuring complete, accurate and timely billing, collection, allocation, reconciliation and reporting.
- Oversee fee-related income, including tuition fees, deposits, fees in advance, bursaries, scholarships, discounts, sibling and loyalty arrangements, supplemental charges, examination fees, trips, transport, catering and other pupil-related charges.
- Oversee non-fee income, including commercial and trading activity, facility hire, catering sales, transport income, clubs, events, donations, grants, investment income, insurance recoveries and other ancillary income streams.
- Ensure appropriate cut-off, deferred income, restricted fund and intercompany accounting, with a clear audit trail between underlying records, iSAMS/iFinance and the general ledger.
- Monitor aged debt and collection performance, ensure early and proportionate intervention, maintain appropriate payment arrangements, provisions and write-off controls, and report material risks promptly.
- Work with commercial and operational leads to improve income forecasting, pricing, margins, cost recovery and the financial evaluation of new initiatives.

Head of Finance
Responsibilities

3. iFinance and financial systems development

- Own the continuing development and effective operation of iFinance as the School's core finance platform.
- Develop the system roadmap in partnership with the Chief Operating Officer, Finance/Bursary team, IT provider and software supplier, prioritising control, automation, data quality, usability and management insight.
- Complete and optimise relevant modules and workflows, including billing, purchase-to-pay, approvals, budget-holder access, fixed assets, reporting, integrations and interfaces with iSAMS and third-party systems.
- Ensure system roles, permissions, approval routes and segregation of duties reflect the School's delegated authority framework and are reviewed regularly.
- Establish and monitor data-quality controls, reconciliations, exception reports and month-end disciplines so that iFinance is relied upon as the authoritative financial record.
- Develop accessible dashboards and reports for budget holders, senior leaders and Governors, reducing avoidable spreadsheet dependency and manual processing.
- Ensure users receive effective training, guidance and support, and that system changes are documented, tested and implemented through sound change-control arrangements.
- Maintain appropriate business continuity, record-retention and finance-system access controls in collaboration with the School's outsourced IT provider.

4. Financial control, accounting and reporting

- Lead accurate and timely monthly, termly and year-end close processes, including journals, accruals, prepayments, depreciation, provisions, control-account reconciliations and balance-sheet substantiation.
- Prepare high-quality management accounts and forecasts, providing clear commentary on performance, emerging trends, risks and corrective actions.
- Maintain oversight of bank accounts, cash management, investments, financing arrangements, bank reconciliations and payment controls.
- Ensure purchasing, accounts payable, expenses, income processing and payment runs are completed accurately and within approved procedures and authority levels.
- Maintain the fixed asset register and ensure appropriate capitalisation, depreciation, verification and disposal controls.
- Ensure appropriate accounting for restricted, designated and unrestricted funds and for the School's trading subsidiary and associated intercompany transactions.
- Maintain orderly, complete and secure financial records capable of supporting management scrutiny, statutory reporting, internal review and external audit.

Head of Finance
Responsibilities

5. Payroll, pensions and third-party provider oversight

- Provide senior financial oversight of payroll delivered through the School's appointed third-party payroll provider, while recognising that accountability for accurate pay and statutory compliance remains with the School.
- Maintain a clear payroll governance timetable, defined responsibilities, service standards and escalation routes with external providers and internal HR colleagues.
- Ensure all starters, leavers, contractual changes, variable payments, deductions, benefits, salary-sacrifice arrangements and pension instructions are properly authorised and submitted accurately and on time.
- Review and approve payroll control totals, variance reports and exception reports before payment, ensuring payroll is reconciled each month to HR records, cash payments, pension submissions and the nominal ledger.
- Oversee PAYE, National Insurance, statutory payments, benefits reporting, year-end returns and other payroll obligations, obtaining appropriate evidence that submissions and payments have been completed.
- Oversee pension administration and reporting across the Teachers' Pension Scheme and the School's defined contribution arrangements, including contribution reconciliations, annual certificates and liaison with scheme administrators, auditors and advisers.
- Monitor provider performance, data security, business continuity, accuracy and value for money, promptly addressing errors, control weaknesses or service failures.

6. Tax, statutory accounts, audit and compliance

- Ensure accurate VAT accounting, partial exemption and recoverability treatment, preparation and submission of VAT returns, and maintenance of supporting records.
- Coordinate preparation of the annual statutory accounts for the School and its subsidiary in accordance with applicable law, UK accounting standards and the Charities SORP.
- Lead the external audit process, ensuring agreed timetables, high-quality working papers, prompt responses and completion of agreed management actions.
- Coordinate other finance-related assurance work, including Teachers' Pension Scheme certification and any internal audit or targeted reviews.
- Ensure accurate and timely finance-related returns and filings to HMRC, Companies House, the Charity Commission, pension bodies, lenders and relevant sector or membership organisations.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of financial, tax and regulatory developments relevant to independent schools and advise on their implications. External support will be made available.

Head of Finance
Responsibilities

7. Team leadership and service delivery

- Lead, manage and develop the Finance/Bursary team through clear objectives, regular supervision, performance management, coaching and professional development.
- Ensure resilient team structures, documented procedures, cross-training and appropriate separation of duties.
- Establish and monitor proportionate service standards for internal colleagues, parents, suppliers and other stakeholders.
- Promote a culture of accuracy, professional curiosity, constructive challenge, confidentiality and continuous improvement.
- Build effective working relationships with budget holders and provide training and guidance that improves financial ownership across the School.

8. Risk, fraud prevention and safeguarding assets

- Maintain effective financial controls designed to prevent and detect fraud, error, income leakage, cyber-enabled payment fraud and inappropriate override of controls.
- Ensure supplier bank-detail changes, payment instructions, refunds and other higher-risk transactions are subject to robust independent verification and approval.
- Contribute to the School's risk-management framework, identifying and reporting material financial, liquidity, income, payroll, tax, systems and provider risks.
- Support regular review of insurance, banking, investments, procurement and key finance contracts to demonstrate value for money and appropriate protection of School assets.
- Report suspected irregularity, control failure or financial misconduct promptly in accordance with School policies.
- Develop the School's internal Financial Handbook.

Head of Finance
The Person

Essential qualifications and experience

- Qualified accountant (ACA, ACCA, CIMA or CIPFA) or exceptionally, AAT Level 4 with substantial senior leadership experience in an independent school or charity environment.
- Substantial post-qualification experience in a senior finance role with responsibility for management accounting, statutory reporting, budgeting, forecasting, cash flow, audit and financial controls.
- Demonstrable experience of leading and developing a finance team and delivering high-quality services to varied stakeholders.
- Experience of financial systems development or implementation, including process redesign, controls, reporting and user adoption.
- Strong working knowledge of payroll controls and effective oversight of outsourced or third-party service providers.
- Experience of preparing and presenting complex financial information clearly to senior leaders, committees or boards.
- Understanding of charity accounting and the Charities SORP, or the ability to demonstrate directly transferable expertise.

Desirable experience

- Experience in an independent school, multi academy Trust, charity or similarly complex multi-income organisation.
- Knowledge of independent-school fee billing, bursaries and scholarships, fees in advance, trading subsidiaries and ancillary income.
- Experience of iFinance, iSAMS and EveryHR or a comparable integrated finance and management-information environment.
- Experience of VAT in the independent-school or charity sector, pension scheme reporting and payroll-provider management.
- Experience of long-term financial planning, capital projects, borrowing arrangements and covenant reporting.

Employee Benefits

Here at The Grange School we offer a competitive package of employee benefits, including:

Employee Assistance Programme: with Health Assured

Healthcare: We have partnered with Benenden Health to look after your health and wellbeing. Healthcare membership gives employees access to healthcare services such as Medical Diagnostics, Medical Treatment and Surgery, Physiotherapy, 24/7 GP and Mental Health helplines. You can also take advantage of exclusive offers on other products including discounted health assessments, health, cash plans, travel and home insurance and discounts on self-funded treatments.

Pension: Aviva Pension Scheme

Fee discount: Up to 50% discount on Student Fees

Use of on-site facilities: Staff have free membership to the school's onsite gym, outside of school hours and use of the sports hall. All staff can also take advantage of discounted ticket prices to shows at The Grange Theatre.

Social events: All new staff are invited to join us for a welcome meal and we also host an annual summer BBQ and Christmas party. A variety of wellbeing activities are also planned around school INSET days.

Staff discounts: The Grange has partnered with 'Benefit Hub' who offer discounts and money- saving deals on shopping, holidays, insurance etc. We have also partnered with local businesses who offer discounts on car maintenance and local gym memberships.

Subsidised lunch: in dining hall

Electric vehicle salary sacrifice scheme: with Octopus (following a successful probation period)

Cycle to work scheme: Cycle scheme is an employee benefit that saves you 26-40% on a bike and accessories. You pay nothing upfront and the payments are taken tax efficiently from your salary.

How to apply

To apply for this position please complete and return an application form and write a covering letter for the attention of the Head, Dr Lorraine Earps and send to: recruitment@grange.org.uk.

Applications can also be returned to us by post, to: The Grange School, Bradburns Lane, Hartford, Cheshire CW8 1LU.

The closing date for applications is Monday 14th September 2026 at 9am.

The Grange School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful candidate will be subject to a DBS check.

This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

The Grange School

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