

The Skinners' School

Appointment of Director of Finance



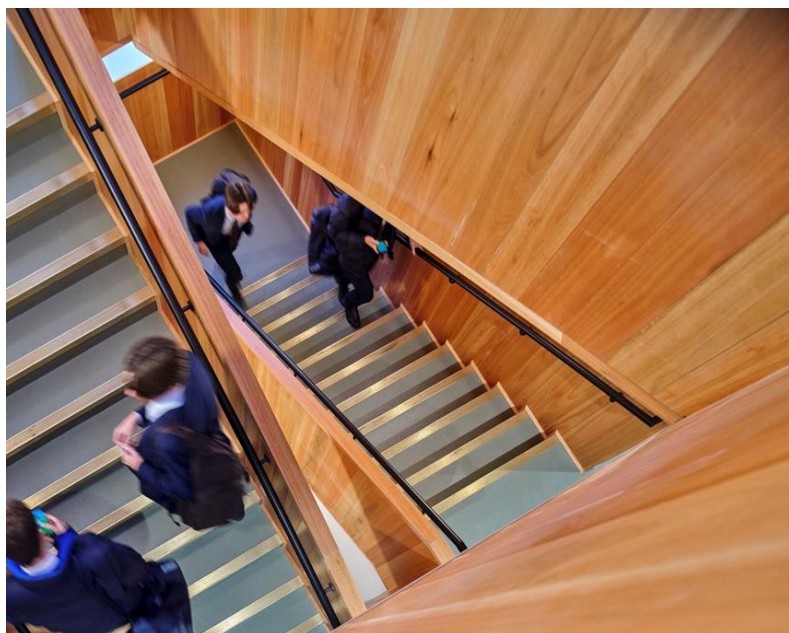
ABOUT SKINNERS'

Skidders' School was founded in 1887 and is a thriving boys' grammar school. There are currently 1119 pupils, 325 of whom are in the Sixth Form. A friendly and hard-working community, the school is amongst the highest achieving in the country, both academically and in terms of extra-curricular provision. Pastoral care is also a real strength.

ADMISSIONS

The School is significantly over-subscribed and has an excellent reputation in both Kent and Sussex. It admits 160 boys (five forms) at age 11. Entry is achieved via the Kent 11+ examination, with an entry qualification that is higher than the Kent County Council 11+ pass. Once they reach our qualifying score, pupils are given places based on distance lived from the school (although we also offer a sibling preference). The current 'catchment' of the school is approximately 11 miles.

Nearly all Skidders' students stay after Year 11 to enter the Sixth Form and are joined by a small number of students from other schools. Pupils are required to achieve a total of 50 points over their best 8 GCSE grades in order to enter the Sixth Form.



HISTORY

Skidders' is one of the Skidders' Company's family of schools – the others being Tonbridge School, Judd School, Skidders' Kent Academy, Skidders' Academy, Skidders' Kent Primary School and the Marsh Academy. The Skidders' Company, one of the original twelve London livery companies, provides a rich seam of support, governance and tradition.

Since the construction of the original school buildings in 1887, considerable development has taken place in recent years in order to accommodate an increasing school roll. The Leopard building (1994) houses Mathematics, Design Technology and ICT. The Beeby building (2002) created specialist accommodation for Modern Languages, and the Byng Hall renovation of 2008 provided a wonderful theatre for Music and Drama. A £2.5 million Sports Hall complex was opened in September 2012, dramatically increasing the range of sports available. In November 2020 we opened the £4.5 million Mitchell Building: a Sixth Form Centre, School Library and new premises for the English department.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Examination results at Skidders' are excellent. At A Level, 80% of grades are at A*-B. Students thus access the top universities in the country: last year over 95% went to the top 30 universities or top 10 courses rated nationally; typically, a dozen go to Oxford or Cambridge. At GCSE, typically around 70% of grades are 9-7, with 95%+ progressing to our Sixth Form.

Our goal is to help each pupil develop his talents and interests to the full. The curriculum is thus aimed at giving a broad education, leaving specialisation as late as possible. At Key Stage 3 this includes an integrated STEM curriculum. At GCSE and A Level there is a wide range of options, with students typically taking 11 GCSEs (including three separate sciences and a modern language) and either 3, 4 or occasionally 5 A levels. A growing number of students also undertake the Extended Project Qualification in the Sixth Form.

In February 2014, Skidders' converted to academy status, but remains closely tied to the ideal of being a leading Kent grammar school.



PASTORAL SYSTEM

Skidders' has a reputation as a friendly and supportive community. The responsibility for general welfare and progress lies with teams of Form Tutors. Heads of Year work closely with Form Tutors to ensure every pupil is known and supported. Good relationships between students, staff and parents are at the heart of all we do and are a key element in our success.

THE SCHOOL DAY

School begins at 8.45am. Each day has five periods, which last for one hour. School ends at 3.35pm but many activities take place at lunchtimes and after school. In addition, many sporting fixtures are played on Saturday mornings. Pupils enthusiastically take part in the extra-curricular life of the school and value it as highly as they do their academic studies.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY

We place great emphasis upon the development of character and potential through extra-curricular activities. A wide range of clubs and societies supports both the learning of pupils and their interests. These operate during and after the school day, with pupils immersing themselves in Chess, Eco Council, Politics, STEM and Model United Nations, to name just a few. Drama, Music and Art play a significant role in the life of the school, with concerts and a wide range of productions a regular part of the school's life.

We welcome job applicants supporting the extra-curricular life of the school.



CCF AND DUKE OF EDINBURGH

Skidders' School has one of the largest CCF contingent of any state school in the country, including Army and Air Force sections. The attractions of Adventurous Training, Easter and Summer camps, along with rifle practice in the School's range, draw significant numbers to join. Alongside, the Duke of Edinburgh award is also very popular: pupils can graduate through Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards.



SPORTS AT SKINNERS'

We consider involvement in team sports to be a valuable part of the pupils' education. There is a very strong fixture list every Saturday and we also achieve success in national competitions. We place an emphasis upon excellence, but also upon mass participation and team work. We often, for example, field six rugby teams for Year 7 alone. We think it is important that every pupil can say that they have represented the School competitively.

The main sports are rugby, hockey and football during the winter months and cricket, tennis and athletics during the Summer Term. However other sports include basketball, table tennis, badminton, cross-country and shooting. The Sports Hall is also equipped with a state of the art fitness suite, which is also freely available to staff at the school.



STATEMENT OF VALUES

The Skinners' School is place of learning. Students acquire not only qualifications, but a respect for scholarship and learning, as things worthwhile in themselves. We intend that they will also develop an appreciation of human achievement in the arts, humanities, languages, science and literature. Students must be diligent and open-minded, and they must develop the ability to think critically, to respect evidence, to distinguish between opinions and prejudices and to make balanced judgments of their own. Through involvement in our varied extra-curricular programme every boy should develop and grow intellectually, culturally, physically and spiritually and emerge as well-rounded, flexible, articulate and collaborative individuals.

Skinners' is a caring school. No young person will learn effectively unless he feels happy, safe and secure. At Skinners' we try to address the particular needs of every pupil through a comprehensive pastoral system. We value everyone as unique and we work together to develop self-respect, self-discipline and self-understanding. We aim to make responsible use of our talents and opportunities, strive for wisdom and knowledge and take responsibility for our lives.

Skinners' is a community. We respect others for themselves, not for what they have or what they can do for us. We believe that the capacity to form strong relationships is the foundation of a happy and fulfilled life. As such we strive to show others they are valued, to earn the trust and loyalty of others and to work together cooperatively. We do not tolerate bullying, violence, theft or abuse.

Skinners' is at the heart of a wider community. We learn to take on our responsibilities as citizens. We respect and celebrate diversity. We promote opportunities for all. We place truth, integrity, honesty, loyalty and goodwill at the heart of what we do. The ethic of service is more highly valued by us than that of self-interest. We believe that from those to whom much is given, much is expected.

These values will underpin our work and relationships at Skinners' School; they are at the foundation of all that we do.



GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Body

The Governing Body is made up of members of the Skinners' Company and members of the local community. There are currently 15 governors in total, including staff and parent governors.

Leadership and management

The day to day running of the School is delegated to the Headmaster, the Second Master and the Bursar. They are supported by a Leadership Group, which meets weekly.

The Director of Finance will report to the Bursar, who is the Company Secretary, and will work closely with the Headmaster, who is the Accounting Officer. He/she will be responsible for the overall management of the school finances and on appointment will be asked to undertake a review of the school's financial systems.

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

This role is advertised at 4 days per week, working 42 weeks per year. However, it is hoped that the Director of Finance will also be interested, when the current Bursar, Paul Johnston, retires, in moving to a broader role at the school that would involve line management of HR, facilities and capital projects. This could involve moving to a full-time role within a year, though that is a matter for discussion at interview. There would be ample opportunity for significant handover with Paul Johnston.

Initially, the role would attract a salary set at Band 13-14 on the school's Support Staff Salary Scale (£53,662-£67,735 FTE).

The starting date is 1st September 2021.



JOB DESCRIPTION

- To ensure strong accounting and financial reporting, including compliance with statutory requirements and upholding the highest standards of financial probity.
- To oversee and monitor effective financial controls and processes.
- To support the Headmaster and Bursar in ensuring the financial sustainability of the school.

Key duties: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- Maintain an overview of the short-term and long-term financial position and any financial issues within the school.
- Manage and prepare monthly management accounts and reports including income & expenditure account, variance analysis and commentaries, cash flows and balance sheet.
- Prepare the annual budget and 3 Year Financial Plan and present for approval.
- Ensure balance sheet items are managed and monitored, including reviewing and checking monthly reconciliations for all key balances and control accounts.
- Monitor the school's income streams, including additional grants or funding, and prepare reports and monitoring returns as necessary.
- Prepare and submit accurate and timely information for the annual statutory accounts and financial returns.
- Ensure financial regulatory and compliance, as specified in school policies, and the annual Academies Financial Handbook and Academies Accounts Direction.
- Manage the annual internal scrutiny programme and year-end external audit.
- Attend the Finance and Risk Committees and present financial information as required.
- Develop and implement best accounting practices and processes, and train and guide new and existing finance colleagues accordingly.
- Liaise closely with other support services functions (eg. HR) to manage financial issues and foster a culture of continual improvement to the systems, processes and procedures to ensure timeliness, accuracy and relevance of financial management information provided.
- Manage the schools financial reporting systems (eg. management accounts/forecasts) and review/develop the school's financial systems and software

Key duties: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

- Good understanding of relevant financial systems; previous experience of SIMS Financial Management System (FMS) an advantage.
- Maintenance of a wide range of documents on Word and Excel.
- Occasional use of the school's management information system (SIMS); maintenance of accurate pupil records.
- Occasional distribution of information to parents via Edulink.
- Responsibility for updating financial information on the school website.

Key duties: STAFF RELATIONSHIPS

- Liaison with the Bursar and Headmaster, working on other ad hoc projects as directed.
- Attendance at Governors' Finance meetings as and when requested.
- Attendance at Leadership Group meetings as and when requested.
- Regular liaison with other members of the school's finance team.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

- Accountancy qualification from recognised professional body or equivalent.
- Considerable financial work experience, ideally, but not necessarily, in a school/academy or Trust or the education or voluntary sectors.
- Expertise of MS Office packages (especially Excel) and appropriate financial and budgeting systems.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Ability to communicate and explain financial matters to other professionals.
- Analytical skills; attention to detail whilst focusing on the wider picture; a practical approach to problem solving.
- Ability to plan, prioritise and manage a workload in an environment of regular and critical deadlines; able to work independently and supportively as part of a team.
- Ability to identify areas of underperformance and lead improvement.
- Ability to lead and task a virtual and matrix team to deliver essential outputs.
- Skilled in maintaining personal and professional confidentiality and understanding of basic principles of data protection.
- Team player; flexible.
- Willingness to take on new opportunities in unknown territory.
- Willingness to engage with the wider life of the school.

APPOINTMENT PROCESS AND HOW TO APPLY

Candidates should submit a completed application form, including details of key achievements and responsibilities, along with a covering letter which fully addresses the competencies outlined in the job description and person specification.

Completed applications should be emailed to the Headmaster's Secretary, Mrs Wendy Dray at wendy.dray@skidders-school.org.uk

The closing date for applications is **12pm on Friday 12th March 2021.**

Candidates will be invited for interview during the week beginning 22nd March.

