

The Blue School

Facilities and Operations Manager

Information for Candidates



Details about the school

The Blue School caters for approximately 1360 students aged 11 to 18 drawn from the City of Wells and its surrounding communities. The Blue is a state maintained, non-fee paying, co-educational, fully inclusive Church of England school. The successful postholder will be employed by The Blue School, an independent charitable trust under the Academies Act 2010.

The school's staff

There are over 200 people employed at The Blue School, within a range of full-time or part-time, permanent, fixed term or casual contracts. Teaching or support, all roles are deemed equally vital for the smooth and effective running of the school.

The school operates two conditions of service, teaching and support. This vacancy is a support post. Although an independent employer, the school continues to closely follow the terms and conditions of Somerset Council and other national agreements, including pay scales. On appointment, all support staff are automatically enrolled into the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) administered by Peninsula Pensions, with an opt-out option. The employee's contribution to the LGPS is enhanced by an additional contribution from The Blue as employer. Many of our staff are parents/carers of children attending The Blue or at other local schools and we endeavour to follow family friendly policies for our staff whilst balancing the need to fulfil the role in school. Staff can access the facilities provided at our Wells Blue Sports Centre, including fitness classes.

Many of our staff enjoy the associated benefit of working with and supporting our teenage students. Staff are encouraged and welcome to participate in the full life of the school, whether helping individual or small groups of students and staff colleagues. Staff volunteer to participate in our enrichment programmes including sports fixtures, a thriving Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, Ten Tors, Year 7 Camp, Art exhibitions and annual music and drama productions. Working in a school such as The Blue can bring employees a sense of a positive purpose that is not always present in other work environments.

The school's facilities

The Blue School's campus is a most pleasant one, situated to the north of the City at the foot of the Mendip Hills. Many visitors comment on the south facing aspect, with views to the Cathedral south-west, St Cuthbert's Parish Church directly south and Glastonbury Tor in the distant south-east. With two playing fields, over 70 trees plus an orchard, gardens and wildlife areas, we work to maintain our grounds in accord with the local environment of this beautiful part of Somerset. The spread of our seven main buildings helps to provide a relaxed feel even at the busiest times when all 1500 plus students and staff are on-site.

The Blue School, being the school for the parish, had been located in various buildings around Wells for over 300 years. But in 1950 the first school building, a standalone Science

block, was erected on the current campus with the rest of 'The Blue School that was dotted around the City' following in 1956 comprising teaching block, gymnasium and school hall. In the early 1960s, a new school for Wells was built adjacent to the existing school, but in 1973 (when the Government raised the school leaving age to 16) it was decided to merge both schools into one secondary, comprehensive provision for Wells, whilst retaining the name 'The Blue School'. The campus today of 35 acres reflects the original 1950's Kennion buildings (west) and the 1960's Milton buildings (east). Middle blocks were erected as part of this 'bringing together' of the two school campuses into one. The arrival of Wells Road Bypass, slicing off the southern part of the school's playing field, enabled the 1999 build of Wells Blue Sports Centre. As of today, the sports hall (called Holland Hall), artificial playing pitch and fitness suite are used extensively by both students and the wider community for physical education and enrichment. In 2007, a new Science extension was erected to the Kennion building, expanding much needed specialist laboratory classroom facilities. 2013 saw the last major permanent build on-site with the completion of a general teaching block named after the Barkhams, the mid-17th Century founders of the first school for the parish children of Wells.

By the nature of the different designs and construction methods used over the decades since the 1950s, the buildings that make up the current campus have unique characteristics which bring their challenges in terms of general maintenance and upkeep in line with current building and safety regulations. But The Blue School has a track record of investment in the maintenance of its buildings and infrastructure. After successful bids for additional government funding, in the last 10 years nearly all the school's heating and hot water boiler plant and significant areas of our flat roofing have been replaced. There have been ongoing upgrades to our electrical and plumbing systems, including a recent LED lighting replacement programme to help reduce energy costs throughout the school. The school continues to remove asbestos containing material as refurbishment opportunities allow, with continuous monitoring in line with regulation of the less accessible material that remains. In 2025 safety work to the main Kennion teaching block was undertaken to be able to reopen the building following the discovery of cracks to the concrete floor panels contained therein. This work included extensive and overdue fire prevention works.

As a fully inclusive school and as to be expected of any public building, there are several physical facilities in place to ensure all students can access the full curriculum. Because the school is built into a slope at the foothills of the Mendips there is an extensive network of ramped walkways that need to be kept clear at all times. This in addition to the numerous automatic doors, lifts, hoists and specialist toilets on-site – all bringing their required regulatory maintenance programme.

The school's operations

The Blue is a large secondary school with a full student curriculum and enrichment programme running 190 days of the year, including specialist facilities for Art, Science, Design and Technology, PE and ICT. Wells Blue Sports Centre aside, activities continue out of school hours in weekday evenings and at weekends and throughout school holidays.

The Estates team play a key part in the smooth running of the school's day to day operations, working with staff colleagues to facilitate events throughout the year. These include daily assemblies, parent/carer evenings, careers fairs, students' celebration events, musical concerts, art shows, the annual production, enrichment week alternative learning activities and Sports day. The team also manages the school's vehicle fleet preparing

minibuses and providing logistical support for our extensive Duke of Edinburgh and Ten Tors programmes on the Quantocks, Exmoor and Dartmoor.

The Estates (Facilities and Operations) team

The postholder will oversee our in-house Estates team, currently comprising a Deputy, (one of) two maintenance technicians, two caretaker keyholders and one grounds person. Subject to successful recruitment, the school will consider future recruitment of an estates maintenance operative (possible apprentice) to enhance the team. The team are experienced and knowledgeable of the school's site and the specific challenges it brings. They have a well-founded reputation as a pro-active, friendly and co-operative support service.

In addition to the the in-house Estates team, at times the postholder will oversee other school staff involved in the facilities and operations of the school, plus the work of external contractors and their personnel while working on campus. This includes the Cleaning Manager, who oversees the 30 strong 'adult' and sixth form students' cleaning team. There is also close liaison with the Manager of Wells Blue Sports Centre (WBSC) regarding out of school day use of the school's facilities and the ICT Manager regarding the school's ICT infrastructure.

JOB DETAILS – FACILITIES and OPERATIONS MANAGER

This role is being offered on a full-time basis **37 hours per week**. The pattern of working to be agreed with the successful candidate, falling between 7.30am to 6.00pm and excluding 30-minute unpaid lunch break taken during the middle of the day. By the nature of the post, remote home working is not considered suitable with weekday attendance on-site required during school term-time (with some flexibility when working during school holidays).

All-year round, 52.143 working weeks per year. **33 days annual leave per year** (1st Sep to 31st Aug) plus 8 paid bank holidays. The postholder will be expected to attend on the first In-service day of the year in September to undertake statutory training. The postholder is expected to allocate 3 days of annual leave to the closure period between the Boxing Day and New Year's Day bank holidays.

Part-time option. For the right, qualified, candidate the school will consider a request for a part-time contract. However, this is unlikely to be less than a 4 weekday 0.8fte option due to the duties of the post. Term-time options will be considered, but again the postholder will be expected to work during some of the school holiday closure periods when the majority of facilities maintenance and estates project work and external statutory checks are undertaken.

Annual salary – minimum grade 7 point 39 £50,388* rising by annual increment to maximum point 44 £56,442* per annum. *Apr25 prices, with Apr26 pay inflation award pending. Starting point negotiable at point of offer depending on the experience and qualifications of the successful candidate, enabling greater responsibility.

This post is not eligible for additional hours overtime payments. However, time off in lieu is possible with prior agreement. An additional allowance is paid to acknowledge weekend keyholder cover on a duty rota basis. In this circumstance only, actual callouts are paid as additional hours worked attending site or time off in lieu.

Membership of pension scheme 6.8% employee deduction (from above gross pay with tax relief), 19.2% employer contribution (of gross pay and in addition). Optional opt-out within 3 months of start date. Further 50/50 option available, 50% employee contribution, 50% final pension benefit.

Sick, maternity, paternity and shared parental leave in accordance with The Blue School's policies.

Job Purpose

With the aim of ensuring a safe, clean and pleasant environment for all students, staff and visitors to The Blue School, provided in an efficient manner that remains effective and fit for purpose.

- To contribute to the strategic leadership of the school, responsible for overseeing the day-to-day running of the school's facilities and operations management.
- To work with the Business Manager and other members of the Leadership Team to 1) determine, maintain and review a strategic estate and facilities plan and 2) develop and implement project systems and procedures which ensure operational excellence across the school.

Major Tasks

Leadership and Project Management

- To work with the Business Manager and other members of the Leadership team to determine The Blue School's Estates Strategic Plan and be responsible for its ongoing maintenance and review. [With reference to the expectations of the Department for Education's Good Estate Management for Schools guidance].
- To support the management and promotion of good health and safety practices in relation to facilities and operations and as outlined in the school's Health and Safety Policy.
- To implement, lead and manage estates projects successfully, within budget and with the strategic aim of enhancing provision for students at the school.
- To undertake Team Leader responsibilities for members of the in-house Estates team, the Cleaning Manager and other school staff involved as such and oversight of external contractors and their personnel while working on campus.

Estate and Facilities Management

- To ensure the efficient operation of all facilities on site in accordance with the operational needs of the school while meeting all statutory and regulatory requirements.
- To regularly inspect the campus and advise the Business Manager with regard to any significant defects to the school's facilities discovered during such, to include managing the emergency response and/or proposing remedial actions.
- To manage estates, plant and facilities related maintenance, developing an inspection, service and repair programme and (when beyond the scope of the in-house school team)

ensuring that external service level agreements exist so that all statutory and regulatory duties are comprehensively covered.

- To have oversight of estate development and facilities maintenance projects and liaise with school staff, external estates professionals, consultants and external contractors to ensure health and safety and other regulations are in place, and projects represent best value and that contracts are secured in accordance with the school's financial regulations. To include building construction, plant and services, equipment, furniture and grounds. This will include awareness of skills in plumbing, electrical, carpentry and/or other building and handyman tasks (within qualification limits).
- Together with the Headteacher and other members of the Leadership Team, to share responsibility for the safety and security of the campus and all those who use it. This includes the maintenance of fire and security alarms, liaison with the security guard agency, maintenance of boundary fences, barriers and entrances, keyholding and the issuing of keys to staff; traffic and pedestrian safety and the adherence to lockdown procedures.
- To ensure arrangements are in place to deal with emergency repairs and call outs, so that the school is always operational (beyond all but very rare, exceptional circumstances such as severe weather incidents).
- To be responsible for ensuring all facilities emergency, security and safety equipment is properly maintained and tested, and all statutory notices are correctly displayed.
- To manage and oversee all external contractors working on site, ensuring that all appropriate checks and safeguarding processes have been followed, including that appropriate insurances and qualifications are in place for individual personnel working on site.
- To oversee the Groundperson with management of the playing fields, gardens and other external areas, including
 - liaison with the Head of PE and WBSC Manager regarding pitch markings and use.
 - liaison with external drainage and other groundworks contractors as the campus adapts to increased rainfall.
 - Responsibility for the maintenance of grounds equipment and plant and ensuring the safe and proper use thereof in line with the manufacturer's instructions.
 - Management of the day to day tidiness and safety of the grounds, such as litter picks, leaf clearance, entrance and pathway debris clearance, salting of iced over walkways and snow removal.
- To support the management of the school's sustainability agenda.
 - management of the school's energy and utilities consumption, including heating operation, lighting (internal and external) and water consumption.
 - support initiatives aimed at protecting and nurturing the school's environment, working to protect biodiversity on campus around the school's operations and in response to the challenges of climate change.
 - in liaison with the ICT, Cleaning and Catering Managers, to support the management of the school's disposal of waste, including recycling of obsolete kit, in line with regulations.

- to ensure the safe and legal disposal of unwanted chemicals and substances in line with environmental regulations
- To manage the maintenance of the school's motor fleet (including minibuses and grounds vehicles), ensuring they are
 - maintained to the safe and legal levels, with regular safety inspections in line with manufacturer expectations and statutory requirement,
 - regularly cleaned as undertaken by the team.

Operations

- To manage the daily, weekly and other periodic routines required to facilitate the smooth operation of the school. These may be adhoc as much as calendared, and include such as daily assemblies, learning and enrichment activities, examinations events, parents/carers' evenings, careers fairs, concerts, productions and staff and students' meetings.
- To support the logistical management undertaken by the the Outdoor Education staff teams with the delivery the school's Duke of Edinburgh, Ten Tors, Year 7 Camp and other outdoor enrichment programmes. The departure/arrival of school trips out of hours, including PE fixtures. This particularly in relation to the preparation of vehicles and delivery of equipment.
- To manage the facilitation of those external lettings and 'out of school day/term' events that are not overseen by WBSC as part of its activities.
- To coordinate portering: the delivery of parcels, chemicals and equipment for distribution around the site by the team

Health and Safety

- To support the Headteacher and Business Manager in maintaining effective facilities and operations risk management – identifying hazards and devising, maintaining and communicating relevant risk assessments and undertaking regular review and reporting thereof.
- With the support of the Headteacher and Business Manager, to share responsibility for the implementation of and adherence to facilities related health and safety procedures and practices including as examples: fire systems, firefighting equipment, fire prevention and safety; project CDM Regulations; water hygiene including legionella prevention; regulations relating to COSHH, PUWER, LOLER, LEV, RADON gas, lightning conduction, electrical safety including EET and asbestos containing materials (ACM).
- Specifically, in relation to the above, to act as the school's designated lead on the required programme of regulatory and 'good practice' health and safety compliance checks, including adherence to, review and reporting of findings with recommendation of solutions or mitigations.
- To lead on aspects of the control of emergency events such as evacuation alarms, lock downs and invacuations, intruder management, building or equipment failure.

- To work with responsible staff colleagues to ensure that the school's equipment, store cupboards and chemical storage areas are maintained safely and securely.
- To support the Business Manager with accident and near miss investigations.

Human Resources

- To lead, motivate and support the Estates Team. To include the allocation and direction of work activities, agreeing leave absence and cover management whilst maintaining service delivery, performance appraisal, acting as the first point of contact before reference to the Business Manager (HR) where necessary.
- Specifically, ensuring the school's employer duty of care to the Estates team, by maintaining a training matrix for everyone in the team that ensures all have received the legal, necessary and/or 'reasonably anticipated' level of training for the tasks they are being asked to undertake. Subsequently, to supervise such that everyone adheres to the principles of that training for the task they are undertaking with immediate intervention when evidenced as not.
- To conduct regular briefing 'toolbox' talks with the team.
- To support, potentially lead, on HR processes, including recruitment events and disciplinary and grievance investigations.
- To ensure a full induction programme is devised, delivered and followed for any new members of staff joining the team, including temporary casual workers. To provide an enhanced programme of training and support for apprentice and/or other inexperienced (to the workplace) new members of staff.
- To ensure that visiting contractors' personnel are aware of the school's safeguarding requirements and procedures while on site and address non-compliance with the individual and/or their supervisors. Further, in relation to training above, to be satisfied within reason that external contractor's personnel have been trained to a suitable level to undertake their designated task for the school, including health and safety compliance.
- To manage the out-of-hours, all year, all day emergency keyholding cover rota.

Other

- On a voluntary basis, to be prepared to drive the school's minibuses and estates vehicles, including adhoc transportation of students with accompanying staff and for maintenance visits.
- To act as Budget Holder for expenditure from the school's day-to-day maintenance budgets (within limits set), purchasing adequate and safe levels of stock and materials.
- On a voluntary basis, to undertake first aid training, focussed on support for the team and/or contractors' personnel.

Safeguarding - general

- As with any member of staff, the postholder is expected to always adhere to the school's safeguarding policies. As with all staff at The Blue, the postholder will conduct themselves and undertake their day-to-day activities in line with the school's child safeguarding policy, ensuring that any concerns are reported promptly following the specified communication route.
- As a strategic Team Leader, the postholder is expected to ensure that all members of the Estates Team are aware of the school's safeguarding and child protection expectations of their employment at The Blue. Further, that visiting contractor's personnel are similarly fully aware. Further, that the postholder will intervene directly and promptly in the event of any witnessed contravention of these policies however minor.

Health and Safety - general

- In addition to the specific responsibilities of this post, as with all staff at The Blue, the postholder will conduct themselves and undertake their day-to-day activities in line with the school's health and safety policy and procedures, ensuring due care for themselves and those around them.

Supervision received

- The post holder is line managed by the Business Manager. However, the postholder is expected to meet the objectives of their employment through their own initiative, working for long periods unsupervised, under their own initiative.

Supervision given

- The postholder supervises the members of the Estates Team, the structure and make-up of which may vary over time. The postholder will also oversee the Cleaning Manager and the cleaning team in conjunction with the Business Manager. On occasion the postholder may supervise individual or groups of students on work experience or other learning projects relating to estates maintenance.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

<p><i>E = Essential (we think you will need this qualification, skill or personal quality to be able to do this job)</i></p> <p><i>D = Desirable (we think this will help you to do this job)</i></p> <p><i>U = Useful (of benefit, but not part of the selection criteria as training will be provided)</i></p>	
Education	
5 GCSEs / O levels minimum grade 4/C including English and mathematics OR other externally assessed verified evidence of minimum level 2 literacy and numeracy skills.	E
3 A Levels / BTEC equivalent	D
UK based University First degree or Overseas verified equivalent qualification – preferably in relevant subject specialism	D
Minimum level 3 facilities and operations related training/qualification such as estates management, facilities management, project management, building surveying and/or estates related health and safety compliance.	E
Minimum level 4 estates related training/qualification such as estates management, facilities management, project management, building surveying and/or estates related health and safety compliance.	D
Evidence of an up-to-date training portfolio in facilities and operations management and general health and safety compliance	E
Minimum level 3 relevant qualifications in construction, grounds, electrical, plumbing or other engineering skillset.	D
A first aid at work qualification (or willingness to achieve such training)	U
Full UK Driving licence	D
Right to work in the UK	E
Experience	
Verified work experience in a facilities and operations environment preferably at or leading to management level	E
Work experience (beyond personal DIY) of an estates related skillset in construction, grounds, electrical, plumbing or other engineering skillset. This role is not expected to be 'hands-on' but a technical understanding of how to undertake tasks through personal experience is useful.	U
Evidence of (or leading up to) team leadership – leading by example, challenging performance when required, supporting, developing and motivating.	E
We expect the Postholder to have Personal Qualities that reflect	
Understanding and adherence to good health and safety practice, providing a safe estates environment for our students, staff and visitors	E
A desire to work with staff colleagues to ensure the smooth operations of the school, with a friendly, flexible and fair approach to all	E
A desire to fully contribute to all students' engagement in and enjoyment of school	E

Respect for the equality and diversity of all in our school community	E
Diligence to the task in hand and need for completeness, accuracy and honesty	E
Respect for confidentiality	E
Professional standards in line with the school's ethos of respect, empathy and politeness to and for all.	E

A planned programme of induction and on-the-job training will take place in order to prepare the successful candidate for the role. Candidates are not expected to be fully aware of all the needs of this varied role from the start.

Applicants - Safeguarding

The Blue School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. **The offer of this post to the successful applicant will be subject to a satisfactory Enhanced DBS Check and two satisfactory references**, one of whom must be the applicant's current or most recent employer, trainer or education establishment as appropriate.

A criminal record as disclosed does not automatically exclude potential applicants. In such circumstances, any potential offer of employment at The Blue School will follow a risk assessment that will reflect on the nature and timing of the circumstances. The safeguarding of our students is the primary concern and the Headteacher's decision is final.

The application process

If you are interested in applying for this post, our preference is that you complete the school's support staff application form fully and accurately. (We will review CV's at application but any subsequent offer of employment will be subject to a completed school support staff application form). Please ensure that there are no unexplained gaps in your training and/or employment history. In addition to your application form (or CV) please provide a brief statement as to why you are applying for this post and how you believe your skills and experience makes you suitable for this position.

Please return the completed application form to Mrs Jo Stitch at the school:

The Blue School

Kennion Road

Wells

Somerset BA5 2NR

Telephone: 01749 836251. Email: jobs@theblueschool.somerset.sch.uk

With no expectation to do so, with no impact on the selection process, individuals are welcome to book a tour of the school site before the closing deadline to help with their decision to apply or not. If you wish to book a tour please contact Jo as above. The school will endeavour to accommodate all requests for tours, but this may not be possible if school operations restrict access.

Closing date: Wednesday 13th May 2026 at Noon.

Version

14th April 2026