



Director of Commercial Enterprise

Candidate Information



Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the role of Director of Commercial Enterprise at St Dunstan's Education Group (SDEG). This is an exceptional moment to join a modern, values-driven educational charity that is redefining what a high-performing, not-for-profit schools group can be.

SDEG has undergone a remarkable transformation in recent years. We have moved from being a single-school foundation to a confident Group of high-performing independent schools with a clear identity and a strategic ambition to be recognised nationally as a modern, socially purposeful and commercially sustainable model for independent education. The Group is enriched through the diversity of a south-east London heritage and setting. Today, we educate more than 2,000 children from early years through to sixth form. Each school has its own character, but we are all united by a commitment to delivering *Excellence. Differently.*

Our performance reflects this ambition. St Dunstan's Senior School is now firmly established as one of the top-50-performing independent schools in the UK, with a clear trajectory towards the top 25. Recent inspections identified four Significant Strengths in our schools, a rare achievement that speaks to the strength of our educational culture, pastoral care and curriculum ambition. We have also received multiple national awards for innovation, including sport,

fundraising and community impact, reinforcing our position as a sector-leading organisation.

At a time when the independent sector is shifting rapidly, SDEG has strong demand for places; staff turnover is low, and major estate, digital and organisational projects are progressing at pace. Commercial diversification will play an essential role in our next phase of development, and the new Director of Commercial Enterprise will lead on this. We are seeking an ambitious commercial leader to drive commercial growth, income diversification and enterprise across the Group.

The purpose of this new role is clear and unambiguous: to generate as much additional income as possible to support the work of the schools and the long-term sustainability of the Group. Reporting to the CFO, with a dotted line to both me as CEO and the COO, the Director of Commercial Enterprise will be a key member of the Professional Services Leadership Team (PSLT).

If you are energised by ambition and sustainable growth and motivated by purpose and challenge, then I warmly encourage you to apply. I hope you will find in SDEG a community that is forward thinking, collaborative, and genuinely committed to making a meaningful difference.

Nick Hewlett

Chief Executive Officer
St Dunstan's Education Group





St Dunstan's Education Group

Excellence. Differently

St Dunstan's Education Group is one of the fastest-growing not-for-profit independent school groups in the UK. It comprises a dynamic family of schools in south London, united by a shared ethos of integrity, curiosity, and community and by a bold vision for modern, future-focused education. At the heart of the Group is St Dunstan's College, a thriving co educational day school for pupils aged 3–18, encompassing both the Junior and Senior Schools. The Group also includes three highly regarded prep schools whose distinct identities enrich the collective offer:

- **West Lodge School, Sidcup** – will be joining the Group in September 2026
- **Rosemead Preparatory School, Dulwich** – joined the Group in 2024
- **St Christopher's The Hall, Beckenham** – joined the Group in 2025

Each school retains its own character and traditions, yet all are bound by a common purpose: to nurture confident, compassionate young people who think boldly and contribute meaningfully to the world.

SDEG's defining philosophy – *Excellence. Differently* – is a commitment to reimagining what excellence in education looks like. It encompasses sector-leading pupil progress, outstanding public examination results, national recognition in sport, music and drama, and award-winning approaches to wellbeing, inclusion, and curriculum reform. It also reflects the Group's belief that excellence must extend beyond the classroom to the way it supports families, serves communities, and invests in its staff.

The Group's south London footprint provides a rich cultural context that informs its practice and strengthens its identity. Diversity of background and perspective fuels creativity and innovation across the schools, shaping an educational experience that is distinctive, inclusive, and deeply human.

SDEG is a Group with momentum – expanding thoughtfully, investing strategically, and shaping a future-facing education that reflects the world its pupils will lead. *Excellence. Differently* is both its guiding philosophy and its promise for the future.

Our Schools and Activities

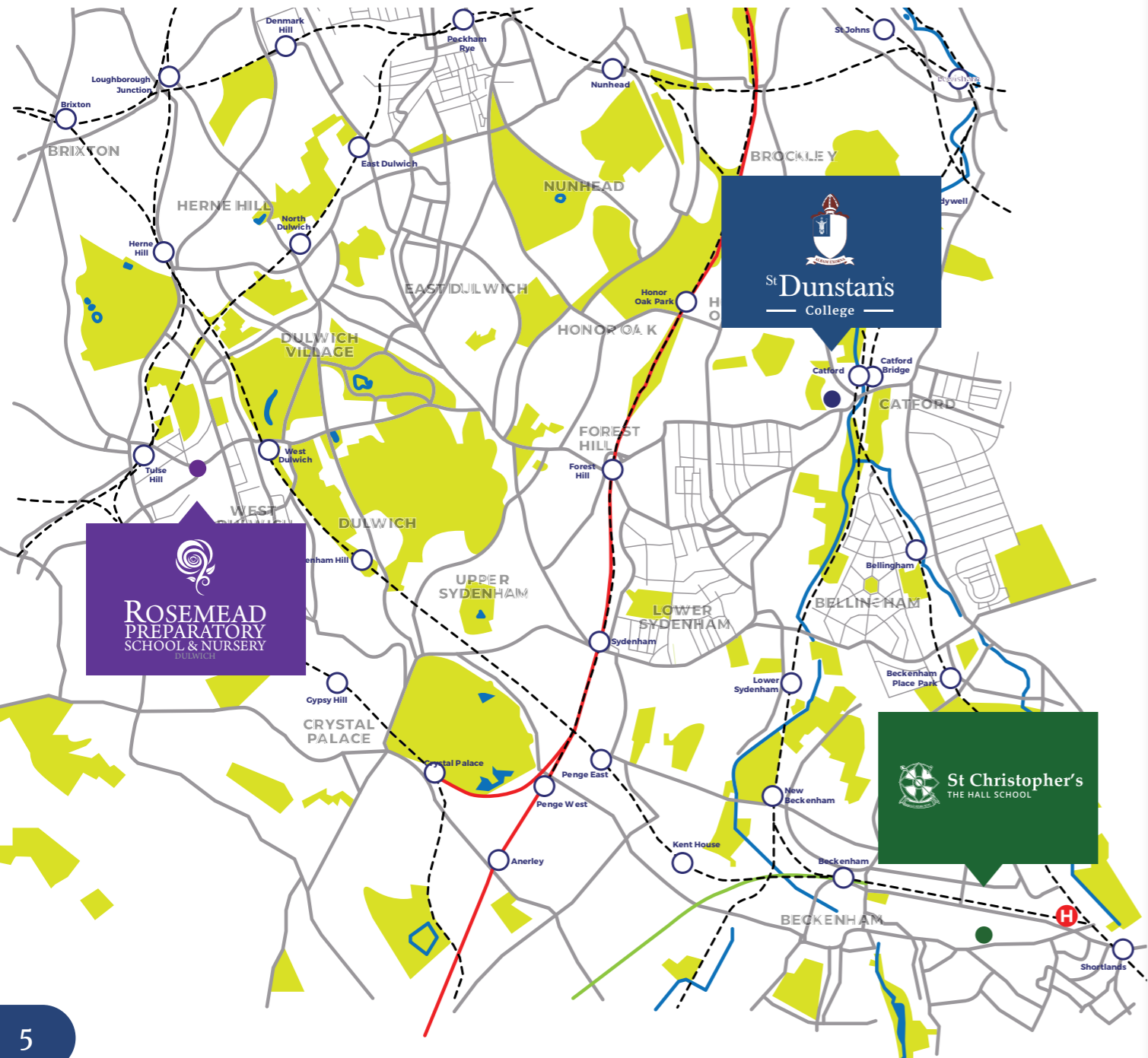
St Dunstan's Education Group is a dynamic and growing community of schools in south-east London, united by a bold vision for modern independent education. The Group currently operates across four schools and six sites and, from September 2026, will be adding a fifth school to the Group, bringing the total number of children educated close to 2,000.

Together, our schools form a collaborative, mission-driven Group that celebrates individuality, champions educational innovation, and places wellbeing at the heart of educational excellence. Each retains its own character and traditions, yet all are bound by a common purpose: to nurture confident, compassionate young people who think boldly and contribute meaningfully to the world.

In recent years, we have invested heavily in an estate that matches our approach to education and our ambitions for the future – at St Dunstan's College, a new Junior School, a STEM Centre for Excellence and Innovation, a dedicated Sixth Form Centre, and a state-of-the-art Performing Arts Theatre have all been built in recent times, with a new recreational hub ('The Plaza') currently under construction and plans to begin the build of a new Sport and Leisure Centre in the very near future. Alongside this, our 21-acre Jubilee Grounds have been transformed into a hub for sport and community engagement, underpinning our groundbreaking gender-neutral sports programme, our unique partnership with Chelsea FC, and our extensive outreach across Lewisham.

At Rosemead, we are in the process of rolling out a site consolidation and improvement process, as well as working with architects to design an incredibly exciting future for that school. St Christopher's The Hall underwent a complete renewal of its outdoor education spaces last summer and, this summer, begins a significant project to reimagine the link between its heritage and modern spaces.





Underpinning and working alongside the work of our schools are other income streams. St Dunstan's Education Group Enterprises works across all our sites to ensure that we maximise revenue in times when they are not in use for school activity. We are in the process of beginning St Dunstan's International to support future international franchising projects and St Dunstan's Nurseries, a 52-week nursery offer for parents at the beginning of their journey with us. St Dunstan's Education Group has one of the fastest-growing development offices in the country. Begun only 5 years ago, it has since raised over £2m, established an endowment fund, and now generates £800k a year, with ambitions to raise £10m by 2035.





Governance

Strong governance is one of the key strands to any successful organisation, and as part of our focus on growth and development, we recently commissioned an independent review of our governance structures. We wanted to ensure that our governance framework reflected our growth plans and philosophy of *Excellence. Differently*.

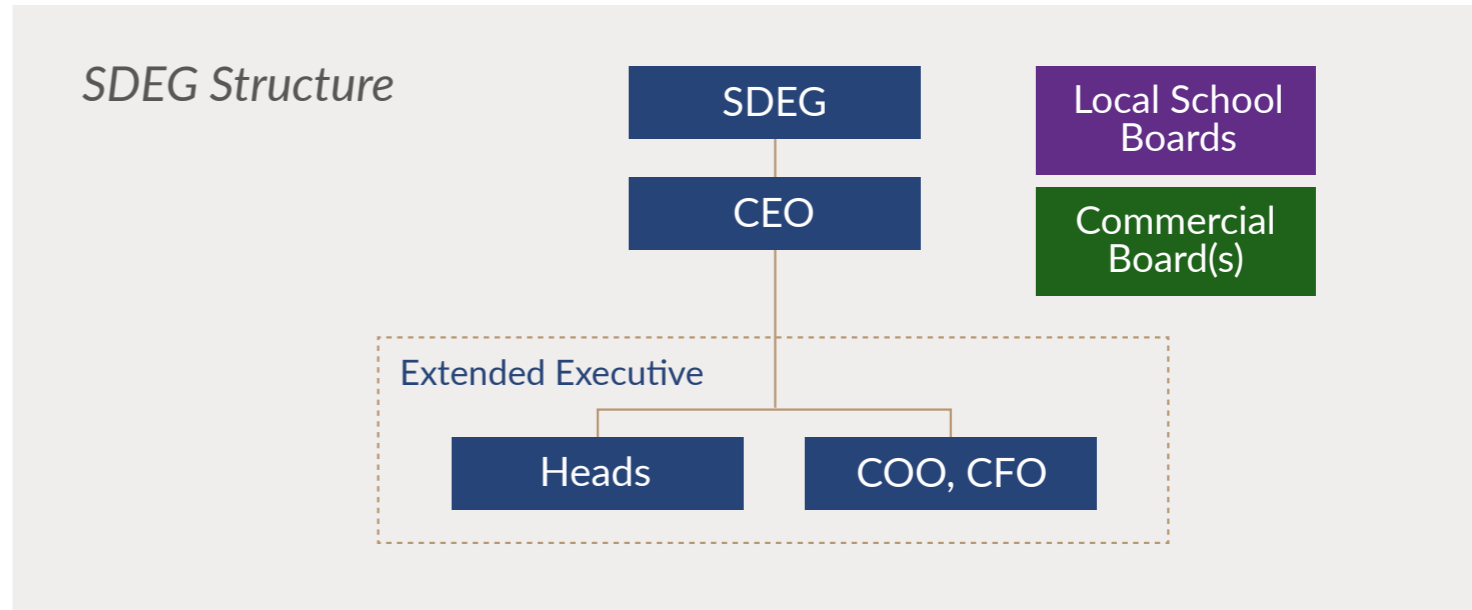
Following the review of governance, we have moved from a traditional Board of Governors with committees and termly meetings to a smaller, more agile Board, which will meet more frequently and be strategically focused. Agendas are derived from

an annual agenda plan with key documents driving deliberations. The Director of Commercial Enterprise will attend meetings as relevant and will attend and contribute to the annual strategy day.

The Nurseries and Enterprise Boards will meet quarterly; the International Board will meet annually. The Director of Commercial Enterprise is likely to attend these meetings.

Each school will have its own Local School Board, which will meet termly.

The governance structure is set out below.





SDEG Enterprises

SDEG Enterprises is a wholly owned trading subsidiary of SDEG, company no. 04396837. The company has a licence agreement with SDEG to promote and manage the use of the charity's assets and facilities when they are not required by the schools. Currently, the operation of the Sports Centre, the swimming pool and the nursery (which is run by a third-party provider) is managed by SDEG Enterprises, together with other lettings. The company's turnover is circa £1m with profits of circa £300k, which is gift-aided to the charity.

The plan is to create a new, separate trading subsidiary through which the nursery business will operate by 2027. Opportunities for nurseries within the schools' estate or elsewhere will be actively pursued.





The Opportunity

This is a newly created and exciting opportunity for an ambitious commercial leader to drive commercial growth, income diversification and enterprise across the Group. The Director of Commercial Enterprise will lead, develop and deliver a Group-wide commercial strategy that maximises income generation, leverages the SDEG brand, develops estate and community partnerships, supports the work of the schools and strengthens the Group's financial resilience. They will identify, evaluate and deliver commercial opportunities across international, domestic, estate-based and education-adjacent markets, ensuring that commercial initiatives are operationally viable and financially robust and that projects are implemented smoothly.

Reporting to the CFO, with a dotted line to both the CEO and the COO, the Director of Commercial Enterprise will be a key member of the Professional Services Leadership Team (PSLT) and will work as an extension of the C-suite, collectively owning the Strategic Operating Plan (SOP) – the suite of enabling strategies that support Heads in delivering their School Development Plans (SDPs). The Director of

Commercial Enterprise will also work closely with the Heads of Operations, Director of Estate Projects, Director of Marketing & Communication and Group Head of Nurseries.

The Director of Commercial Enterprise will be supported in the delivery of commercial activities by the Sports Centre Manager and the Jubilee Ground General Operations Manager. Resourcing of and any initial investment required for new initiatives will be an important element of the commercial strategy and business cases for the post-holder to consider.

This is a strategic, entrepreneurial and delivery-focused role requiring commercial acumen, creativity, strong financial modelling skills and the ability to work across multiple sites, stakeholders and business domains. Candidates will have a proven track record of commercial success in complex organisations, thinking strategically and delivering results. Experience working in education, charity, leisure, hospitality, or community enterprise sectors, including involvement with commercial estate projects and/or community partnerships, would be an advantage.



Job Description

Strategic Commercial Leadership

- Develop and deliver a Commercial Strategy aligned to the SOP and Group financial priorities which enhances the educational mission.
- Provide strategic advice to the CFO, CEO and COO on commercial growth, investment, risk and commercial terms.
- Lead commercial planning across the Group's trading subsidiaries, particularly SDEG Enterprises.

International Income Generation

- Work with the CEO to leverage international branding opportunities and partnerships.
- Develop commercial models for selling the St Dunstan's brand and intellectual property.
- Explore international school partnerships, licensing, consultancy and global programmes.

SDEG Enterprises Strategy and Performance

- Deliver rapid, profitable growth for SDEG Enterprises, utilising the schools' assets and infrastructure and expanding into new markets to develop revenue-earning opportunities.

- Lead on wrap-around care across the Group.
- Assess the opportunity to monetise Music and LAMDA provision into the broader market.

Estates Projects

- Work with the Director of Estate Projects to optimise the commercial income of the schools' facilities, including Park Langley, the proposed new sport and leisure complex.
- Seek, develop and deliver commercial opportunities which support the Group and/or the regeneration of Catford.

Enhancing Core Business

- Work with the Director of Marketing and Communications to extend market reach and strengthen the Group's commercial footprint.
- Develop strategies to enhance pupil recruitment pipelines through commercial activity.
- Work with Heads on transport, bus networks and other revenue-linked operational models.

Nurseries Commercial Development

- Work with the Group Head of Nurseries to model the commercial viability of new nursery projects.
- Support business case development for nursery expansion or new nursery sites.

New Educational Ventures

- Work with the CEO and CFO to explore new educational projects with associated brand leverage.
- Work with the CEO and CFO to evaluate the commercial viability of future expansion projects, including new schools, new sites and acquisitions.
- Produce business cases and financial models for all new ventures.

Governance, Compliance & Risk

- Ensure all commercial activity complies with charity law, safeguarding, health and safety and regulatory requirements.
- Maintain commercial risk registers and ensure mitigation strategies are in place.
- Provide high-quality reporting to the CFO, CEO, COO, Directors of SDEGE and the Trustees of SDEG.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Work closely with Heads and Heads of Operations to ensure commercial activity integrates smoothly with school operations.
- Engage with local authorities, community groups, businesses and partners.
- Lead communications and engagement strategies for commercial initiatives.





Safeguarding and Child Protection

St Dunstan's Education Group is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Applicants will be required to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post. As this role involves regulated activity with children, the successful applicant will be required to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosure application. Employment will be conditional upon SDEG being satisfied with the result of the enhanced DBS check and the outcome of all other checks.

St Dunstan's Education Group will also carry out a check of the Children's Barred List on the successful applicant. Applicants should be aware that it is unlawful for St Dunstan's Education Group to employ anyone to work with children if they are barred from doing so, and it is a criminal offence for a person to apply to work with children if they are barred from doing so.

This role is also exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, and SDEG is therefore permitted to ask shortlisted applicants to declare all convictions and cautions (including those which are 'spent' unless they are 'protected' under the DBS filtering rules) in order to assess their suitability to work with children.

The safeguarding children and child protection policy can be found **here**.

No job description can fully cover all aspects of such an appointment, and therefore, the successful person must be flexible and willing to take on other reasonable responsibilities and tasks in order to fulfil the role.



The Person

The successful candidate will bring the following qualifications, skills and knowledge, and personal attributes.

Qualifications and Experience

- Educated to degree level or equivalent.
- A strong track record of commercial leadership, business development or enterprise management.
- Experience developing business cases, financial models and commercial strategies.
- Experience of negotiating commercial agreements.
- Experience of property development and collaborating with local authorities and/or other community partners will be beneficial.
- Experience of working with multi-disciplinary teams and line managing staff.

Skills and Knowledge

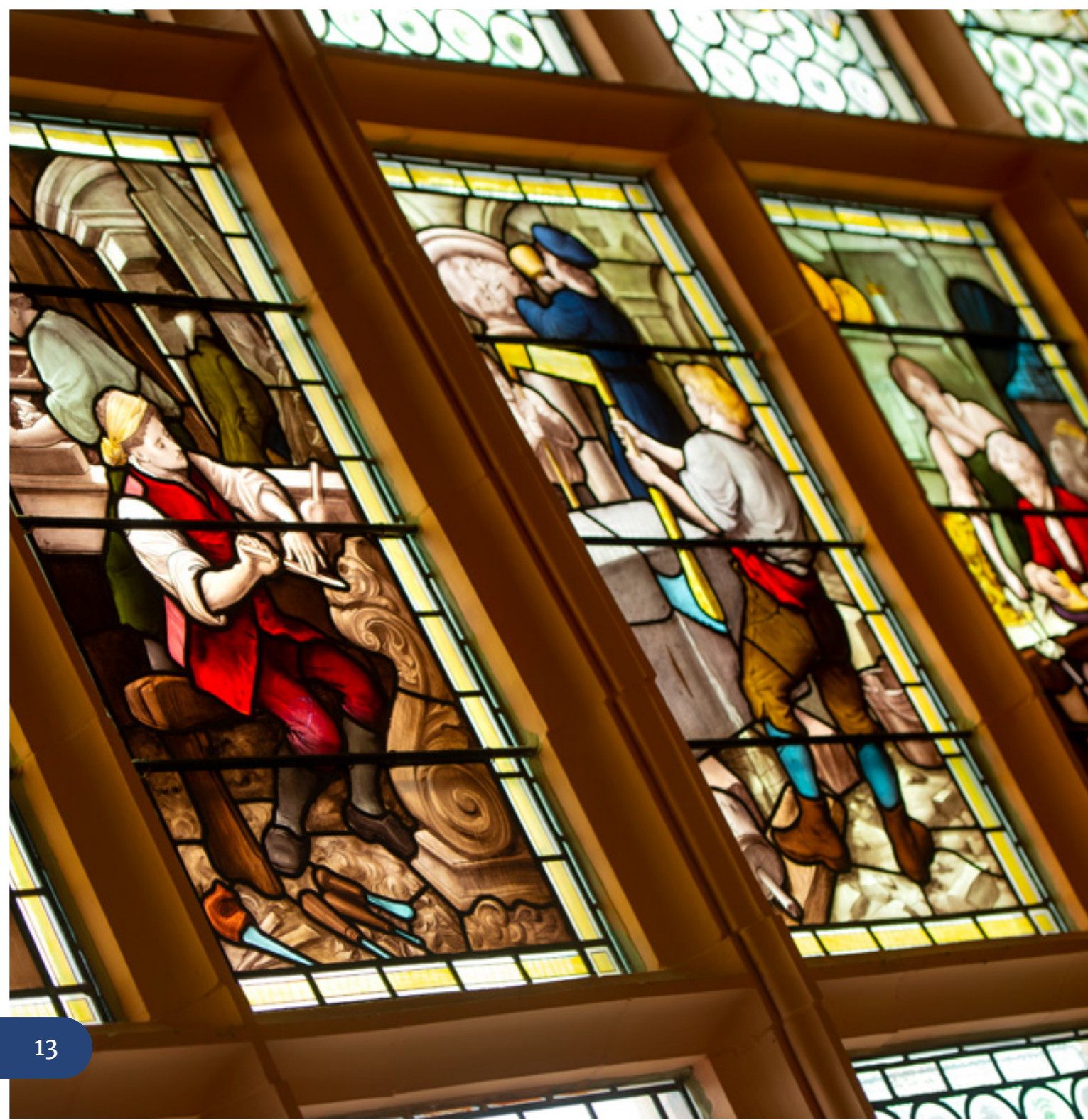
- Strong track record of delivering commercial ventures with measurable financial impact.
- Strong financial and commercial acumen.
- Ability to work across complex, multi-site organisations.

- Excellent stakeholder management and communication skills with the ability to motivate staff.
- Strong negotiation and influencing skills with the ability to balance robustness with constructive and diplomatic challenge.
- Ability to apply commercial practice within an educational context.
- An understanding of risk, compliance and governance in a charity or regulated environment would be helpful.
- An understanding of the Group's responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection issues and a clear commitment to best practice.

Personal Attributes

- An entrepreneurial mindset, creative but with the ability to bring structure and rigour to new ventures.
- Ability to manage multiple priorities effectively and to work at pace.
- Demonstrable energy and drive.
- Proactive, self-motivated and resilient with good humour.
- A commitment to partnerships and social responsibility.
- Values and promotes diversity, equality and inclusion.





Appointment Terms

A highly attractive remuneration package is offered, reflecting the significance and seniority of the position. This is a full-time, 52-week post, and some flexibility in working hours will be required in light of the role and responsibilities it entails.

The Group also offers a very generous benefits package, including membership of a defined contribution pension scheme and fee remission.

Other benefits include:

- Private health care insurance (50% paid by employer) with reduced health club membership.
- Health care cash plan.
- Free lunch and beverages during term time.
- Free off-road parking.
- Salary sacrifice schemes.
- Season ticket loan.
- Use of College leisure facilities, including gym, tennis courts and pool.
- Workplace Nursery School.





Application Process

Interested candidates are invited to contact RSAcademics in the first instance to arrange a confidential discussion with:

- Hannah Freestone-Smith, Search Consultant: hannahfreestone-smith@rsacademics.com
- Nina Lambert, Head of Professional Services Appointments: ninalambert@rsacademics.com

Closing date: 10.00am UK time on Monday 8th June 2026.

Applications should be made electronically to RSAcademics. To submit your application, please upload your documents according to the instructions provided on the RSAcademics **website**.

You should submit the following (both in PDF format):

- A completed application form (available alongside this candidate information on the RSAcademics **website**).
- A covering letter addressed to the CEO, Mr Nick Hewlett. Your letter should be a maximum of two pages and should explain your reasons for applying and outline your suitability for the role.

If you have any questions about uploading your application documents, please contact:

- Jonathan Barnes, Head of Operations (Leadership Appointments): applications@rsacademics.com / +44 (0) 204 6269 791

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 our Head Office by telephone.
- Preliminary interviews will take place with RSAcademics via Teams in the week commencing 15th June 2026.
- Longlist interviews will take place at St Dunstan's on Tuesday 23rd June 2026.
- Shortlist interviews will be held at St Dunstan's on Monday 29th June 2026.

St Dunstan's Education Group is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in all areas of our community and encourages applications from all suitably qualified candidates.

The appointment is subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks in accordance with the relevant statutory guidance, including an enhanced DBS check, satisfactory references, proof of identity and qualifications, and a satisfactory medical report.

RS Academics is a global executive search and consultancy firm working exclusively with schools. For more than 20 years, we've supported governors and leaders at pivotal moments – whether they are appointing senior staff or making complex strategic decisions.

What makes us distinctive is the depth of first-hand experience in schools across our team – as heads, governors, bursars and senior professionals – combined with specialist expertise in areas such as strategy, research, marketing and finance. This blend is continually enriched by our ongoing consultancy and appointments work with schools worldwide, so our advice is always current, practical and evidence led. Please visit www.rsacademics.com for more information.



Because the world needs schools to **thrive**



St **Dunstan's**
EDUCATION
GROUP



Excellence. Differently.

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