



Group Director of Marketing and Communications

Candidate Information

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the role of Group Director of Marketing and Communications. I am delighted that you are considering joining St Dunstan's Education Group at such an exciting moment in our development.

From its earliest days, St Dunstan's has been shaped by a spirit of progressive thinking and a willingness to challenge convention. Our founders believed the first school should be "ahead of its time", and that mindset continues to guide us today. It informs how we think about education, how we lead our schools, and how we shape the culture of our organisation. It is the foundation of our commitment to *Excellence Differently*. - a philosophy that is far more than a brand statement. It is a way of seeing the world, a lens through which we make decisions, and a promise to our pupils and communities.

Across our community of schools, we are united by a belief that education must prepare young people not only for academic success, but for the world they will inherit and shape. That means placing character, curiosity, wellbeing, and social impact at the heart of our work. It means listening to pupil voice, embracing innovation, and ensuring that our schools remain vibrant, inclusive communities where young people feel known, valued, and inspired.

We are fortunate to be rooted in south London, a setting that brings extraordinary diversity of background, thought and experience. This richness fuels creativity and informs our approach to curriculum, pastoral care, and community engagement. It is also reflected in the significant investment we have made in recent years into our estate.

Against this backdrop of growth and momentum, the role of Director of Marketing and Communications is pivotal. This is a rare opportunity to help shape the narrative of a Group that is redefining what independent education can and should be. I am looking for someone who can bring clarity, creativity, and strategic insight; someone who can tell our story with authenticity and conviction; someone who understands the power of relationships and the importance of aligning message with mission.

If you are energised by innovation, motivated by purpose, and excited by the prospect of contributing to a Group that is both ambitious and deeply human in its values, then I warmly encourage you to apply. I hope you will find in SDEG a community that is forwardthinking, collaborative, and genuinely committed to making a meaningful difference.

I look forward to the possibility of welcoming you to St Dunstan's.

Nicholas Hewlett
Chief Executive Officer





St Dunstan's Education Group

Excellence. Differently.

St Dunstan's Education Group (SDEG) 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. Across its four schools and six sites, SDEG educates approximately 1,800 pupils from the earliest years through to Sixth Form.

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 has invested significantly in its estate to ensure that its physical environment reflects its educational ambitions. Recent developments include 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. The transformation of the Jubilee Grounds has created a hub for sport and community engagement, supporting the Group's gender-neutral sports programme and its partnership with Chelsea FC. Looking ahead, the redevelopment of the Plaza and plans for a new Sport and Leisure Centre will further enhance opportunities for pupils, staff, and the wider community.

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.

Excellence. Differently. means redefining independent education. Excellence. Differently. is the future.

Our Schools and Activities

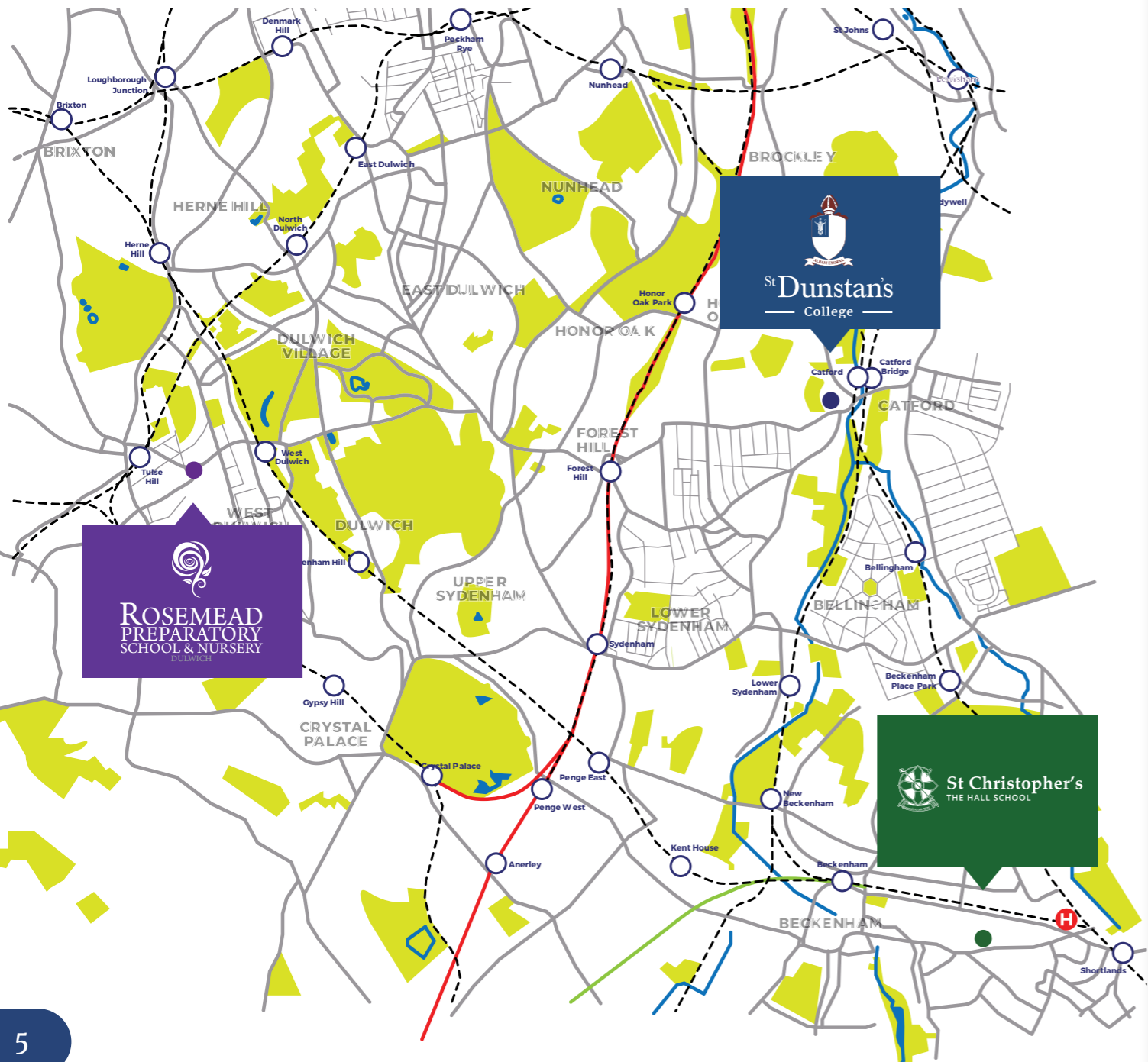
St Dunstan's Education Group is a dynamic and growing community of schools in south-east London, united by a bold vision for modern independent education. The Group currently operates across four schools and six sites and, from September 2026, will be adding a fifth school to the group, bringing the total number of children educated close to 2000.

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. In March of this year, we take ownership of the Dunstonian sports Ground at Park Langley, Beckenham, giving a further opportunity for both educational and commercial enrichment.





Our schools are located across diverse communities in south-east London, giving the Group a rich cultural footprint and a deep understanding of the varied contexts in which children grow and thrive. This diversity is a source of strength - informing our practice, enriching our perspectives, and shaping an educational experience that is both distinctive and deeply human.

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.





The Opportunity

The Role

Reporting to the St Dunstan's Education Group (SDEG) CEO, this is an exciting opportunity for an exceptional individual to lead the marketing and communications activities for this dynamic and forward-thinking Group. This is a pivotal leadership role which will be key to the continued success of SDEG. Working closely with the St Dunstan's Executive Team (DET), the Director of Marketing and Communications will support the CEO in the implementation of the Group's ambitious vision and strategy.

As a key member of the Professional Services Leadership Team (PSLT), this strategic role will be responsible for shaping and delivering a coherent, values-driven strategy that strengthens reputation, deepens engagement, and supports sustainable enrolment and income growth Group-wide and across all schools.

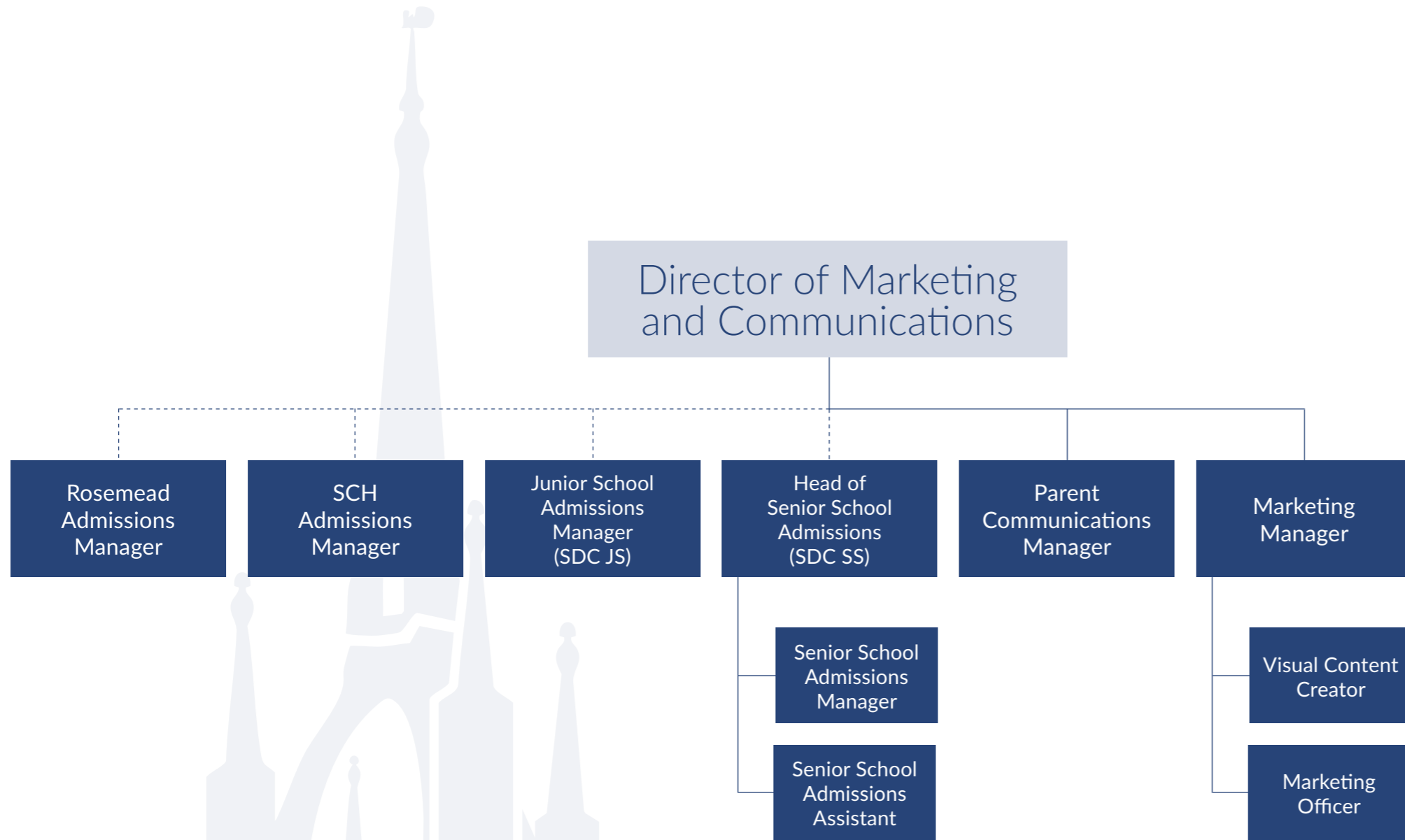
The role carries full **strategic and operational accountability** for all marketing and communications activity. The Director of Marketing and Communications (DMC) will lead these functions across the Group, ensuring high quality delivery, consistent standards, and a unified brand presence, while also providing expert counsel to the CEO, DET and PSLT.

Strategic accountability for admissions – its direction, performance, and alignment with Group priorities— sits with this role, with the role-holder working closely with the individual Heads in their combined understanding of the market and associated opportunities. Operational line management of the admissions teams, however, remains with the respective Heads of School, who oversee day-to-day activity. The DMC will work closely with the Heads to ensure admissions practice is cohesive, data informed, and reflective of the Group's ethos, while supporting each school to meet its enrolment ambitions.

This is a wide-ranging and hands-on role requiring an innovative and dynamic individual who combines highly effective people skills and the ability to create compelling narratives, with strong business and market insight. It requires a leader who can combine strategic vision with operational grip – someone who can think boldly, act collaboratively, and deliver with precision across a diverse and growing family of schools. Through strategic oversight and effective relationship management, the postholder will enhance the Group's reputation, build brand narrative, support sustainable pupil recruitment, and foster enduring partnerships with key stakeholders and communities.

The post will most likely attract either an experienced education professional or an outstanding individual from a commercial or third-sector background who combines instinctive understanding of the independent school sector with the strategic flair, relational strength, commercial acumen and creative vision to thrive in this complex and exciting role.





The Team

The Director of Marketing and Communications (DMC) will line manage an established and centralised team of Marketing and Communications staff, which includes the line management of the Marketing Manager and Parent Communications Manager. This team sits within the centralised Professional Services function and, at present, is a team of four.

Admissions staff are located within each of the schools; Admissions comprises six staff overall and is managed via a matrix organisational approach. Operationally they are managed by the respective school Heads, who have the autonomy to make day-to-day decisions. Strategic accountability for admissions is vested with the DMC, who will work closely with the Heads to drive enrolment and to develop best practice in admissions from initial enquiry through to application.

Job Description

Strategic Leadership and Management

- Develop and implement a clear, Group-wide marketing strategy based on robust data analysis and taking account of the market context, that spans initial interest and admissions, retention initiatives, and engagement, together with the promotion of other activities, including Development, International, Nurseries and St Dunstan's Enterprise activities.
- Lead, inspire, and develop the Marketing, Communications and Admissions teams, ensuring clear direction, professional growth, a sense of shared purpose and a culture of collaboration and excellence.
- Work closely with respective school Heads and Heads of Nurseries to ensure admissions practice is cohesive, data informed, and reflective of the Group's ethos, while supporting each school to meet its enrolment ambitions.
- Support professional development across marketing, communications and admissions disciplines, ensuring the adoption of best practices, technologies and emerging trends.
- Embed external relations Group-wide, fostering strong partnerships with academic, pastoral, operational, and professional services teams.
- Provide strategic insight to DET on market trends, brand positioning, and external opportunities, risks or challenges affecting the independent sector.
- Establish, monitor, and report on measurable KPIs for admissions, marketing and communications activity.

- Oversee the Marketing and Communications budget, ensuring value for money, effective resource allocation and the tracking or ROI on all activities and expenditure.
- Ensure exposure for SDEG at external events and conferences, including representing SDEG or presenting on relevant topics as appropriate.
- Have oversight of compliance with all relevant regulations, policies, systems and procedures.
- Provide guidance and support on all external relations related matters to all schools within the SDEG, ensuring that opportunities for shared learning and efficiencies are maximised across Group.
- Promote a culture of high performance with a focus on successful outcomes.

Marketing, Brand & Communications

- Oversee all aspects of SDEG's marketing and communications activity to drive continuous improvement and to deliver Excellence. Differently.
- Shape and maintain a strong, consistent brand message that reflects the unique character and strengths of each school and the wider Group, helping to enhance its profile and competitive position in the market.
- Develop a cohesive brand framework and asset toolkit for use across all marketing activity, ensuring alignment, authenticity, and compelling positioning to underpin Excellence, delivered Differently.
- Lead the development and execution of a proactive, coherent external communications strategy that enhances the SDEG (and the schools within it) reputation, visibility, and influence across all audiences, whether internal or external.

- Ensure all communications, internal and external, including those with current or prospective parents, are consistent, timely, and aligned with organisational goals, fostering transparency, trust and engagement, providing support and guidance at a school or departmental level, as appropriate.
- Lead the alignment of marketing plans with pupil enrolment targets, broader commercial objectives, and the core brand values of SDEG and, where appropriate, each school, ensuring all activity supports long-term enrolment and income growth.
- Use data and performance metrics to generate insights that inform marketing decisions across advertising, digital platforms, social media, and brand engagement, driving continuous improvement and impact.
- Lead the creation of dynamic, integrated content across digital, social, and traditional channels — including website, newsletters, prospectus, video, photography, and print materials in support of all SDEG externally facing activities whether recruitment, current parent, philanthropic, commercial or community focused.
- Manage media relations and proactive press engagement, safeguarding SDEG group and its respective schools' reputation and promoting thought leadership.
- Work closely with the Director of Development, SDEG Enterprises and the International projects to provide MarComms support and to ensure consistent messaging across all externally facing aspects of SDEG's activity.
- Work closely with the Heads of the respective SDEG schools and nurseries to strengthen retention strategies, ensuring that current families feel valued and engaged, driving loyalty, continuity and word of mouth advocacy.





- Lead the development and delivery of a clear, consistent, and engaging internal communications strategy that strengthens organisational culture and ensures staff across SDEG are informed, aligned, and inspired.
- Oversee and support a high-quality programme of events that strengthen engagement and promote SDEG and the respective schools' reputation – including planning, promotion and running of open mornings, support of school events, conferences and outreach opportunities etc.
- Commission and interpret market research and competitor analysis to inform positioning, strategy, and messaging.
- Lead and advise the CEO and DET on crisis communications planning and management, areas of reputational risk, change management and associated internal and external communications.
- Promote SDEG's role within the local and regional community, fostering partnerships that enhance outreach and reputation.
- Lead and support targeted marketing campaigns that drive pupil recruitment across all SDEG schools and nurseries, ensuring strong reach and engagement with key audiences.
- Work closely with admissions teams to align marketing initiatives with the admissions journey, creating a seamless and consistent experience for prospective families.
- Track market trends, parent expectations, and competitor activity to maintain a distinctive and compelling market presence that supports enrolment growth.
- Work closely with the Head of each school (or nursery) to refine and improve admissions operations and administration, ensuring continuous improvement and excellent efficient customer service throughout.
- Monitor admissions data to track conversion rates and inform future strategy and, in collaboration with the respective school and nursery Heads, recommend interventions or operational change, as appropriate.

Admissions and Recruitment-led Marketing

- Provide strategic oversight of admissions activities across and within the SDEG schools and nurseries, ensuring the sharing of best practice aimed at ensuring a professional, warm, and personalised journey from initial enquiry to enrolment.
- In collaboration with the respective school Heads and Head of Nurseries, develop admissions strategy that sets out annual and long-term pupil recruitment objectives, identifies target markets, and ensures that admissions activity is aligned with the SDEG's marketing strategy and overall growth ambitions.
- Support the effective and aligned use of CRM and admissions data systems across the schools and nurseries to deliver efficient, GDPR compliant and insight-driven processes.
- Plan and deliver targeted campaigns to support and drive enquiry generation, pupil recruitment, open days, scholarships, bursaries and transition from SDEG prep schools to St Dunstan's College, and from nurseries into the respective prep or junior schools.
- Planning and delivery of open events, support advice on the running of nursery and school-based admissions events.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

St Dunstan's Education Group are 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 St Dunstan's Education Group 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 St Dunstan's Education Group 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 be a key player in the life and future of one of the UK's leading independent schools' groups. Plans for the future of SDEG are ambitious, distinctive and exciting. The Director of Marketing and Communications will have a high profile across the Group and will carry significant responsibilities. They will thrive on the opportunity to define clear strategy and implement and monitor its effectiveness skillfully. They will have confidence and presence but also demonstrate flexibility and subtlety in order to successfully engage staff and others in the delivery of the strategic aims and will have many of the following key skills, experience and attributes:

Skills and Experience

- Demonstrable success in and substantial experience of working at a strategic level in a marketing, communications or business development related leadership role with wide ranging responsibilities.
- Proven ability to build, inspire and lead high performance teams.
- Demonstrable success in developing and delivering integrated strategies that achieve measurable impact in reputation, recruitment, or communications.
- Commercial acumen, combined with strong analytical and strategic planning skills with the ability to translate vision into practical action.
- Exceptional interpersonal, communication, and presentation skills, with the ability to influence and inspire confidence at all levels.

- Experience managing teams and budgets in a complex, multi-stakeholder environment.
- Demonstrated success of engaging, building and managing stakeholder relationships, with warmth, emotional intelligence, and diplomacy.
- A creative, proactive, and results-driven approach, with the ability to manage multiple priorities effectively.
- Prior professional experience in an educational environment, whilst helpful, is not essential.

Personal Attributes

- Committed team player who is comfortable working at pace, confident in leading change and who embodies a collegiate and collaborative approach.
- Ability to translate an ambitious vision into meaningful plans and objectives and gain commitment from the staff community.
- The critical intelligence capable of systematically analysing performance, the market and competitors.
- Proactive approach, confident to challenge the status quo where needed and who constantly strives for excellence.
- High professional and personal standards, combined with motivation, initiative and drive.
- A genuine empathy for, and commitment to, the values and ethos of SDEG.
- Willingness to work flexibly, including some evenings and occasional weekends.
- A clear commitment to delivering best practice in safeguarding.
- 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 role, 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 Scheme





Application Process

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

- Cat Sutherland-Hawes, Senior Consultant:
catrionasutherland-hawes@rsacademics.com

Closing date: 10.00am on Monday 2nd March 2026.

Applications should be made electronically to RSAcademics. To submit your application, please go to the RSAcademics **website** and follow the instructions provided.

As part of your online application, you will be asked to upload a covering letter (in PDF format please). This should be addressed to the CEO, Mr Nicholas 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 w/c 2nd and 9th March 2026.
- Longlist interviews will take place at St Dunstan's on Wednesday 18th March 2026.
- Shortlist interviews will be held at St Dunstan's on Thursday 26th March 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



Because the world needs schools to **thrive**



St **Dunstan's**
EDUCATION
GROUP



Excellence. Differently.

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