



CRANLEIGH
SCHOOL
EX CULTU ROBUR

Director of Admissions

Candidate Information





Welcome from the Head

Dear candidate,

Thank you for your interest in this important leadership role at Cranleigh School. This is an exciting moment to be joining the School. Set in the beautiful Surrey Hills, Cranleigh is a thriving co-educational boarding and day community with a strong sense of identity and a renewed ambition for the future. Approaching two full years as Head, I can say with confidence that there is real momentum here — a willingness to evolve, to raise our sights, and to ensure Cranleigh takes its place among the leading independent schools in the UK.

Cranleigh has long been something of a hidden gem: a school with a warm, grounded culture, exceptional pastoral care, and a distinctive whole-person ethos. Our motto, Ex Cultu Robur — “From our Culture comes Strength” — is more than a strapline, it reflects who we are, what sets us apart, and the culture that drives everything we do. We are a community that believes deeply in character, contribution, and the power of relationships. As we enter a new phase of strategic growth, we are now ready to share that story more confidently and more widely and we are already seeing a positive response to what we are doing amongst our feeder prep schools and prospective families.

The Director of Admissions will play a pivotal role in this next chapter. You will be one of the most visible ambassadors for the School, shaping the first impressions of families and ensuring that our values are communicated with clarity, warmth, and conviction. You will work closely with me, with Will Newman, the Head of Cranleigh Prep, and with Executive Team colleagues to deliver a bold, insight-driven recruitment strategy across the full 3–18 age range.

This is a role for someone who combines strategic thinking with emotional intelligence; someone who can lead a high-performing team, build strong relationships, and bring both rigour and creativity to our admissions work. You will be based at the heart of the School, working alongside Marketing, Communications and Events colleagues, our newly formed cross-functional strategic team helping to shape Cranleigh’s external voice and future growth.

If you share our ambition, our values, and our belief in the transformative power of a Cranleigh education, I very much hope you will consider applying. This is a critical appointment at a pivotal time, and I look forward to the possibility of welcoming you to our community.

Sam Price

Head, Cranleigh School

Job Title: Director of Admissions

Reports To: Sam Price, Head

Time: Full-time, based in the School

Purpose: A role for a bold, forward-thinking leader who wants to make a lasting impact — driving innovation, growth, and excellence at one of the country’s leading independent schools.



From our culture
comes strength

Our school motto 'Ex Cultu Robur'

A place that feels like home, where
everyone plays their part

The School

Cranleigh School is a wonderful place to live and work, set in 280 acres of beautiful Surrey countryside, within easy reach of London. The School is conveniently located on the edge of the large market village of Cranleigh, eight miles from Guildford, near the Surrey-West Sussex border and within forty-five minutes of London. Heathrow and Gatwick airports are within easy access and there is a fast, regular train service from Guildford to Waterloo.

There are 700 pupils in Cranleigh Senior and 300 in Cranleigh Prep and we accept pupils from 5-18 years – moving to age 3 from September 2026 as we open our new Pre-School. The School was founded in 1865 as a boys' school to educate the sons of farmers and it is fair to say that we have come a long way since then, accepting girls in the 1970s and becoming fully coeducational in 1999. The heart of the school is a red brick quadrangle overlooked by a clock tower. We are blessed with a beautiful site, and there is a campus feel to our community. In terms of our model, we have kept ahead of the times by offering full boarding, day and weekly boarding options; approximately 75% of pupils boarding in the Senior School. There are eight houses, accommodating both day and boarding pupils.

Most of our pupils come from Surrey, Sussex, Berkshire and South West London, although we are expanding to attract pupils from further afield. We are known to be very strong on sport, particularly hockey, cricket, rugby and riding. We are spoilt with vast playing fields and excellent facilities including an equestrian centre and golf course. Meanwhile our performing arts and music are equally strong with an ambition to develop further our growing reputation in these areas. We have recently opened an exciting new Sixth Form Centre, and there is a particular focus on making our children future ready. There are countless events and activities throughout the year making it easy for new staff to get involved. There is always something going on at Cranleigh.

This is a particularly exciting time to be joining Cranleigh as we celebrate our 160th anniversary. In an uncertain sector, the school is energised, buoyant and growing; both in the UK (with the introduction of Pre-Prep and – from September 2026 - Pre-School) and internationally with plans to add to the existing portfolio of four schools.



The Cranleigh Community

Cranleigh's strength has always been its community — local, regional, national, and international. The School's extended family includes:

- The Old Cranleigh Society, offering alumni a vibrant network, events, and a dedicated sports club.
- The Cranleigh Network, providing careers support and professional connections for former pupils and parents.
- Cranleigh Friends, bringing together parents, staff, and pupils through events, volunteering, and shared celebration.
- Cranleigh International, a growing family of schools in China and Abu Dhabi, aligned through shared values and educational philosophy.

This sense of community — warm, inclusive, and outward-looking — is central to Cranleigh's identity.



Admissions at Cranleigh

Admissions is a strong and well-established function at Cranleigh School, playing a central role in shaping the School's community and future direction. The department manages a diverse and dynamic pipeline across multiple entry points - Pre-School, Reception, 11+, 13+ and Sixth Form - and welcomes families from the local area, across the UK, and around the world.

The team is known for its warmth, professionalism and attention to detail. Families consistently comment on the quality of their experience, the authenticity of their interactions, and the sense of welcome they feel from their very first contact with the School.

The Director of Admissions leads an established team of eight across two sites, working closely with academic, pastoral, marketing and operational colleagues to ensure a seamless and distinctive admissions journey for every family.

However, the influence of the role extends far beyond the Admissions Office. As a key member of the Executive Leadership Team - the School's most senior leadership body - the postholder will help shape whole-school strategy, contribute to major decisions, and play an active part in steering Cranleigh's longterm direction.

They will also be a central figure within MACE, Cranleigh's integrated external relations team. Working alongside the Directors of Marketing, Communications, Development and Events, the Director of Admissions will help drive a coordinated external relations strategy, strengthen Cranleigh's profile and reach, and ensure that every touchpoint with prospective families reflects the School's values and ambition.

Together, these three spheres of leadership - Admissions, the Executive, and MACE - make this a genuinely dynamic and influential role at the heart of Cranleigh's future.

“An all-rounder's paradise, yes, but the academic offering can stand up to almost any school in the land.” The Good Schools' Guide

About The Role

Reporting directly to the Head and a member of the Executive Leadership Team, the Director of Admissions is a pivotal senior leadership role with strategic responsibility for pupil recruitment across the full 3–18 age range. The postholder will bring strong commercial acumen, a sales-focused mindset, and the ability to use data and insight to drive strategy, shaping and delivering a forward-looking, evidence-led admissions approach that reflects Cranleigh's values and supports its long-term success.

This is a highly visible, outward-facing role. The Director of Admissions will act as a key public ambassador for the School, building strong relationships with feeder schools, agents, and prospective families, and representing Cranleigh with warmth, confidence, and professionalism.

The postholder will bring insight and foresight to the School's leadership, interpreting market trends, demographic shifts, and competitor behaviour to inform strategic decisions. They will work closely with Marketing and Communications to ensure Cranleigh's brand and narrative translate into meaningful engagement and measurable recruitment outcomes.

Above all, the Director of Admissions will lead and inspire the Admissions team, fostering a culture of excellence where every family receives an exceptional experience and where processes, systems, and touchpoints are continually refined to support the School's ambitions.

This is a role for a bold, forward-thinking leader who wants to make a lasting impact — driving innovation, growth, and excellence at one of the country's leading independent schools.

**A community that
celebrates difference
and supports one
another to excel**



Core Purpose

The primary objectives of this high-profile leadership role:

- Lead Cranleigh's pupil recruitment strategy across all entry points, ensuring the School attracts, engages, and enrolls pupils of the highest calibre throughout the school.
- Deliver a bold, insight-driven admissions strategy that secures sustainable growth, strengthens Cranleigh's competitive position, and reflects the School's values and ambitions.
- Ensure enrolment targets are met so that the School is appropriately balanced, setting and achieving recruitment targets (including for boarding) and maintaining a healthy gender and year-group profile.
- Oversee an exceptional and seamless admissions experience for every family, embedding a culture of warmth, professionalism, and operational excellence.
- Act as a key public ambassador for Cranleigh School, building strong relationships with feeder schools, prospective families, agents, and partners to enhance reach and reputation.
- Provide strategic advice to the Head and Governors, using data, market intelligence, and forecasting to inform decision-making.
- Drive data-led decision-making by overseeing forecasting, conversion optimisation, and CRM excellence, ensuring robust pipeline visibility and evidence-based recruitment strategies across all entry points.
- Lead, inspire, and develop the Admissions team across both schools, fostering a high-performance culture focused on service excellence, collaboration, and continuous improvement.
- Work in close partnership with Marketing and Communications to ensure Cranleigh's brand and narrative translate into meaningful engagement and measurable recruitment outcomes.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership & Planning

- Lead the development and delivery of a bold, insight-driven admissions strategy across the 3–18 age range, aligned with Cranleigh’s vision, values, and growth ambitions.
- Set, monitor, and report on recruitment targets across all entry points, ensuring the School remains full, balanced, and sustainable.
- Provide high-quality forecasting, data analysis, and market intelligence to inform strategic decision-making by the Head and Executive Leadership Team.
- Maintain oversight of the Admissions Policy, ensuring annual review, regulatory compliance, and alignment with best practice.
- Prepare and manage the departmental budget, ensuring effective use of resources and clear evaluation of return on investment.
- Monitor demographic trends, competitor behaviour, and sector developments, adapting strategy to ensure Cranleigh remains a destination of choice.

Admissions Operations & Journey Excellence

- Oversee the full admissions journey from first enquiry to enrolment, ensuring a seamless, warm, and distinctive experience for every family.
- Ensure efficient and compliant administration of registrations, assessments, interviews, offers, acceptances, and deposits.
- Lead the planning and delivery of admissions events, including Open Mornings, Taster Days, Assessment Days, and scholarship assessments, ensuring they showcase the School’s strengths.
- Oversee scholarship and award assessment processes, ensuring they are well-designed, well-run, and aligned with Cranleigh’s ethos and academic standards.
- Work closely with academic and pastoral leaders on admissions assessments, testing processes, scholarship decisions, and entry recommendations.
- Maintain high standards of data integrity, CRM usage, and pipeline management, ensuring accurate reporting and conversion optimisation at every stage.
- Ensure full compliance with ISI regulations, GDPR, and UKVI Child Student visa requirements.
- Gather and analyse feedback from prospective parents, non-joiners, feeder schools and agents to inform continuous improvement and strengthen relationships.

Domestic & International Recruitment

- Lead a structured programme of engagement with UK Prep schools, strengthening Cranleigh’s profile and relationships.
- Work closely with Cranleigh Prep to manage the internal pipeline and ensure a smooth transition into the Senior School.
- Identify and develop key international markets, building and managing a network of trusted agents and partners.
- Represent Cranleigh at recruitment fairs, events, and overseas visits, promoting the School’s ethos and educational offer with confidence and clarity.
- Ensure effective liaison with feeder schools regarding entrance assessments, scholarship outcomes, and candidate progression.

Collaboration & External Relations

- Act as a key public ambassador for Cranleigh, building strong relationships with prospective families, feeder schools, agents, and community partners.
- Work in close partnership with Marketing and Communications to ensure alignment between brand, messaging, and recruitment priorities.
- Collaborate with academic, pastoral, operational, and co-curricular colleagues to ensure admissions processes reflect the School’s ethos and support a smooth transition for new pupils.
- Influence and support colleagues across the School who contribute to the admissions experience, ensuring consistent messaging, high standards of engagement, and a shared sense of responsibility for recruitment.
- Report regularly to the Head and Governors on admissions performance, trends, risks, and opportunities.

Key Responsibilities

Leadership & Team Development

- Lead, inspire, and develop the Admissions team across both sites, fostering a culture of professionalism, accountability, and service excellence.
- Ensure consistent practice, clear communication, and high standards across all admissions activity.
- Provide coaching, training, and performance management to support staff development and ensure the team operates at its best.
- Promote a collaborative, solutions-focused culture that reflects Cranleigh School's values and commitment to exceptional service.

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 Director of Admissions will be a visible, influential ambassador for Cranleigh, combining strategic intelligence with emotional intelligence. The successful candidate will combine strong commercial awareness, strategic thinking, and the confidence to use data and insight to guide decisions and drive performance, with the warmth, credibility and leadership skills to inspire a high-performing team and build trusted relationships across the School.

Skills, Experience & Knowledge

- Proven success operating at a senior level in admissions, sales, marketing, or business development, with responsibility for strategy, performance, and growth.
- Strong commercial awareness with the ability to analyse complex data, forecast trends and drive measurable growth.
- Demonstrable experience of developing and delivering integrated strategies that drive recruitment, sales or growth targets in a competitive market.
- Deep understanding of the principles of pupil recruitment and relationship-based customer service.
- Skilled in CRM systems, pipeline management and conversion optimisation.
- Experienced leader with a track record of building, motivating, and developing high-performing teams and managing change.
- Outstanding communication and relationship-building skills, with the ability to engage confidently with families, agents and partners.
- Excellent organisational skills and the ability to manage multiple priorities in a fast-paced environment.
- Strong IT capability and high levels of numeracy with the ability to track, analyse, and interpret data accurately and insightfully.
- Prior professional experience in education or of boarding, whilst helpful, are not essential.

Terms of Appointment

Personal Attributes

- Warm, approachable, and authentic, with the gravitas and ambassadorial skills to represent Cranleigh and engage and build trust with stakeholders at every level.
- Collegiate, collaborative, and committed to leading change in a positive, solutions-focused and inclusive way.
- Strategic thinker with critical intelligence and the confidence to challenge constructively and to lead change.
- Creative, proactive, adaptable and resilient with a solutions-focused mindset.
- Comfortable working at pace in a dynamic and ambitious environment and with a drive for continuous improvement.
- A genuine empathy for and commitment to the values and ethos of independent boarding and day school education.
- Willing to work flexibly, including evenings, weekends, and travel (UK and overseas) as required.
- A clear commitment to delivering best practice in safeguarding.
- Values and promotes diversity, equality and inclusion.

A highly attractive remuneration package is offered reflecting the seniority and significance of the role. The eventual salary will depend on skills and experience; however, it is anticipated that it will be in the region of £80,000 - £90,000 per annum.

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. Some UK and international travel is also likely to be required.

The postholder will enjoy a wide range of benefits, including:

- Annual Leave entitlement of 30 days per year plus statutory bank holidays and Christmas shutdown (gifted days between Christmas and New Year).
- Aviva Pension with 8% employer and 4% employee contribution.
- Life assurance of 3 times annual base salary.
- Private Medical Insurance (currently with BUPA).
- Fee discount.
- Membership and use of the school's sports facilities including gym, squash, tennis, swimming pool and 9-hole golf course.
- Free lunches during term time.
- Onsite parking.
- Cycle to work scheme.
- Employee assistance 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

The deadline for receipt of applications is 10.00am on Monday 11th May 2026.

Applications should be made electronically to RSAcademics. To submit your application, please upload your documents according to the instructions on the [RSAcademics website](#).

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

- A completed application form (available to download from the RSAcademics website).
- A covering letter addressed to the Head, Sam Price. The letter should explain your reasons for applying and suitability for the role.

If you have any questions about uploading your application documents, please contact Jonathan Barnes, Head of Operations (Leadership Appointments) at: applications@rsacademics.com. Jonathan can also be reached by calling our Head Office on +44 (0) 204 6269 791.

The Process is as Follows:

- All applications will be acknowledged by e-mail. If you have not received an 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 online with RSAcademics via Teams on Monday 18th and Tuesday 19th May 2026.
- Longlist interviews will take place at Cranleigh during week commencing 1st June 2026.
- Shortlist interviews will be held at Cranleigh during week commencing 8th June 2026.



Cranleigh School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all its staff and volunteers to share that commitment. Applicants will be required to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post. The appointment is subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks in accordance with the relevant statutory guidance, including an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check, satisfactory references, proof of identity and eligibility to work in the UK, a satisfactory medical report and proof of qualifications.

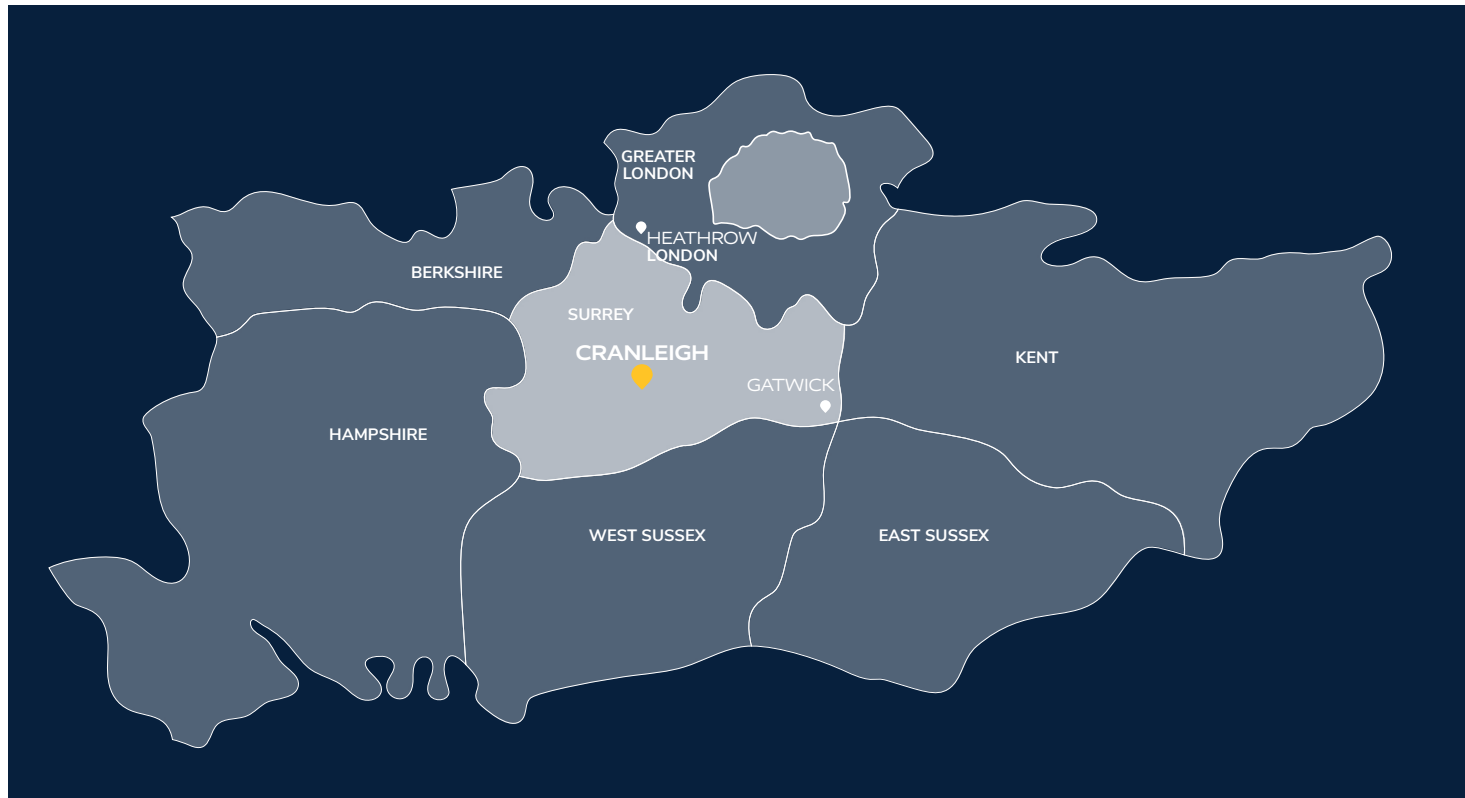
The school recognises the positive value of diversity, promotes equality and challenges discrimination. We welcome and encourage job applications from people of all backgrounds. It is the School's policy to employ the best qualified individuals and to provide equal opportunity for the advancement of our team including promotion and training and not to discriminate against any person because of their race, colour, national or ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, religion or religious belief, disability or age.

RSAcademics 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.

Please visit www.rsacademics.com for more information.

How to Find Cranleigh





CRANLEIGH
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