



WELLINGTON
COLLEGE

Chief Operating Officer

**Pioneering education
to serve and help shape
a better world.**



Candidate Pack



Introduction to Wellington College

Wellington College is one of the UK’s – and indeed the world’s – great coeducational boarding and day schools. Set within 400 acres of stunning parkland in leafy Berkshire and less than an hour’s drive from London and Heathrow, the College is a remarkable place to learn, work and live. Wellington College also licences to brand eight premium schools across China, Thailand, India, and Indonesia, serving over 5000 pupils globally.

Founded in 1853 as the living memorial to the Duke of Wellington, described by Queen Victoria as “the greatest man this country has ever produced”, today Wellington College represents a community of approximately 600 staff and 1100 pupils. Wellington College Prep is similarly one of the country’s oldest preparatory schools, today with around 100 staff and 360 pupils within the group.

A wonderful fusion of heritage and modernity characterises our educational philosophy. Our curriculum, facilities and teaching methods are constantly adapting to the challenges of preparing young people for the ever-changing world of the 21st century. Wellington College is a school which is dynamic in every sense of the word, and yet all that we do is rooted firmly in our five College values – Kindness, Courage, Respect, Integrity and Responsibility – values which underpin every aspect of life here at Wellington.

The achievements of our pupils and staff, both inside and outside of the classroom, are remarkable; consistently stellar examination results at GCSE, A Level and the IB Diploma; an Arts programme, the breadth and quality of which would rival the West End or Broadway; an enviable reputation as one of the strongest schools for sport in the UK; a n d

groundbreaking and sector-leading pastoral care, wellbeing and mental health provision.

Wellingtonians study GCSEs, followed by the IB Diploma or A Levels and, whichever route they take, results are superb; in 2026, the College achieved its strongest results in two key metrics: percentage of top grade 9s and proportion of 9s and 8s. Grade 9 was the most common grade awarded, with an average grade of 8 per pupil, and 70% of all grades attaining a 9 or 8. Nearly a third of grades reached the top A*/7 level, with 72 students securing straight A grades or better, and 125 students earning a clean sweep of top grades.

Over 100 Wellingtonians have been offered Oxbridge places over the past five years, while 20-25 move on each year to American universities, including several to Ivy League universities.

Wellington is as much a thriving community as it is a school. Its boarding houses, classrooms, homes, theatres, playing fields, woodland and shared spaces sit within the same estate, creating a distinctive rhythm of life and a strong sense of belonging.

These are just some of the things that make a Wellington education not only outstanding, but also a way of life.



Wellington just seemed to be more colourful - more music, sport and societies.
- The Good Schools Guide

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Our Vision

Wellington College is a pioneering coeducational institution, driven by a clear purpose: to prepare young people not simply to succeed in the world they inherit, but to play an active part in shaping what comes next. We live in a time of seismic global change at an unprecedented rate. To successfully navigate the challenges of the 21st century the world will need thoughtful, engaged, conscientious, courageous change-makers in every sector of society. That ambition is particularly visible today in Wellington's work on Human Flourishing and artificial intelligence: exploring both what education should equip young people for in an AI-enabled world and how new technologies can transform teaching, learning and the operation of the College itself. Alongside its growing international family of schools, this reflects Wellington's determination not simply to respond to change, but to help shape it.

- We have a vision of how we, as an institution, can work towards our stated purpose. We will serve and help shape a better world by doing all we can to:
- Prepare our pupils to become the leaders, scientists, entrepreneurs, creatives and global citizens that the world needs to overcome the challenges of the 21st century.
 - Stand in the vanguard of pedagogical debate and play an active role in the future development of the educational landscape, not just in the UK but also around the world.
 - Improve universal educational outcomes through partnership, cooperation and an open sharing of what we have learnt.
 - Ensure we reflect what the world needs to become: diverse, tolerant, kind, sustainable and supportive.



Chief Operating Officer

Governance, Leadership & Management

William Jackson
Outgoing Chair Of Governors

Sarah Bentley
Chair Of Governors Designate

Executive Leadership Team

James Dahl
Master

Cressida Henderson
Second Master

Stephen Crouch
Chief Operating Officer

Delyth Lynch
Director of Safeguarding

Naima Charlier
Director of Edi & Social Responsibility

Phil Mann
Director of Admissions

Ed Venables
Head of Wellington College Prep

Huw Jones
Deputy Head (Academic)

Nick Creed
Deputy Head (Co-curricular)

Tom Wayman
Deputy Head (Pastoral & Wellbeing)

Iain Henderson
Director of the Bridge

Murray Lindo
Head of the Wellington Community & Director of Strategic Advancement

88 The atmosphere and ethos inspire you to push beyond your comfort zone.
- Current 6th Former



The Role

Purpose of the Position

Reporting to the Master of Wellington College, the Chief Operating Officer and Group Bursar is the second most senior role within the organisation. The role has at its core responsibility for the strategic financial management of the Wellington College Charity, but its remit extends considerably beyond finance. The COO has oversight of the College’s professional functions and the infrastructure required to support a large and complex residential community, including Finance, HR, IT, Legal, Estates, Grounds, Security, Transport, Catering and commercial activities. This encompasses the management and development of Wellington’s 400-acre estate, alongside a significant programme of ongoing capital investment and major projects The scale is significant and this individual is charged with managing the infrastructure required to support a large and complex residential community of nearly 1500 pupils and over 600 teaching and professional staff across Wellington College and Wellington College Prep.

The COO will be a strategic partner to the Master and Governors and a member of the Executive Leadership Team, with a significant role in the leadership of Wellington as a whole and in defining and shaping Wellington’s future direction. This will include supporting the continued development of the College’s international portfolio, identifying further opportunities for strategic growth and partnership, and considering how Wellington can make more of its assets, capabilities and reputation in ways that are both commercially attractive and consistent with the purpose and values of the Group. The Master is ultimately accountable to the Governors of the College for the overall financial well-being of the College, and the COO is therefore accountable for the timely flow of accurate and relevant financial information to support that process. The COO will therefore have a dual reporting line to both the Master and the Vice-President and lead Business and Finance Governor for all matters relating to financial and legal activities. S/he will also maintain regular contact with the Vice-President and Chairmen of all Governors’ Committees in order to support them in the proper discharge of their specific roles and responsibilities.

The successful candidate will inherit a strong financial and operational platform, while having the opportunity to bring greater strategic and commercial focus to the role. They will be expected not simply to safeguard Wellington’s financial position and operational effectiveness, but to help enable its ambitions: bringing rigour and realism to decision-making while retaining the curiosity, judgement and confidence to find ways of making good ideas work. It provides a unique platform to generate significant value for a thriving school and community.

Key Responsibilities

The COO’s performance will be measured particularly by the extent to which s/he is successful, within the bounds of their authority, in the following key areas:

Financial stewardship and investment

- For financial management of a charity with an annual turnover in excess of £65m. (The Wellington College accounts for £57m and Wellington College Prep for £8m).
- To ensure that the business activities of the College and its residential community are developed and managed as economically and effectively as possible in accordance with its aims and objectives.
- Financial planning, management and control of the College estate, including financial modelling, sensitivity analysis and benchmarking performance, alongside long-term financial planning and investment.
- Financial reporting and accounting in accordance with Governors’ and regulatory requirements.
- Efficient collection of fees and other sources of revenue.
- Oversight and reporting of the investment portfolio (which has a valuation, as of July 2026, of £55.5m), including provision of oversight and financial accountability for the international partner portfolio and associated spending.
- Ensure correct and compliant payment of salaries and wages, including tax, National Insurance and pension deductions.

Strategy, growth and commercial development

- Fully costing strategic proposals in line with the Master’s Development Plan, providing appropriate data upon which informed decision-making can be based.
- Revenue-raising responsibility to ensure all opportunities are fully explored and exploited.
- Identifying and developing opportunities to grow and diversify Wellington’s revenues, including existing commercial activities, new external partnerships and other initiatives consistent with the College’s purpose, reputation and values.

Operational excellence, estate and services

- Ensuring the effective maintenance and security of the estate and all College assets, including buildings, plant and equipment.
- Responsibility for the delivery of the capital development programme.
- Oversight of the provision of major services and suppliers, including periodic retendering and reappointment in line with Service Level Agreements.
- Provision of catering, domestic services, medical and estates management.
- Provision of effective legal and IT services.

People and organisational leadership

- Recruitment, compliance, management and development of both teaching and non-teaching staff.

Governance, risk and compliance

- To ensure that all regulatory and Charity Commission requirements in respect of the Wellington College Charity are complied with in a timely manner.
- Ensuring that the Master and Governors, as appropriate, are fully informed of all financial, statutory and administrative opportunities and threats facing the College, and that decisions at all levels are taken with a full understanding of their financial implications.
- Oversight of the duties carried out by the Clerk/Secretary to the Governing Body to ensure constitutional compliance.

Management and transitional arrangements

The COO will be supported by the following senior management and support staff:

- **Finance Director**, responsible for all financial activities
- **Estates Bursar**, responsible for the Estates Departments including grounds, maintenance and capital building projects and Health and Safety activity.
- **Operations Bursar**, responsible for security, domestic activities, catering, college and commercial events and day to day site operations.
- **General Manager, Wellington College Services**, responsible for the Health and Fitness Centre and associated commercial activities.
- **HR Director**, responsible for recruitment, payroll, training and development of all staff and compliance with Single Central Register.
- **Legal and Compliance Director**, with overall responsibility for managing risk
- **IT Director**, responsibility for all IT activities including cyber security.
- **Clerk to the Governors** (dotted line report only).
- **School Business Manager**, WC Prep school (dotted line report only)



Person Specification

Essential Knowledge & Experience

Candidates will bring a combination of financial sophistication, commercial judgement and broad leadership experience. They are likely to have operated at senior level within a sizeable and complex organisation, and will be comfortable moving between strategic questions, operational detail and the demands of a diverse stakeholder environment.

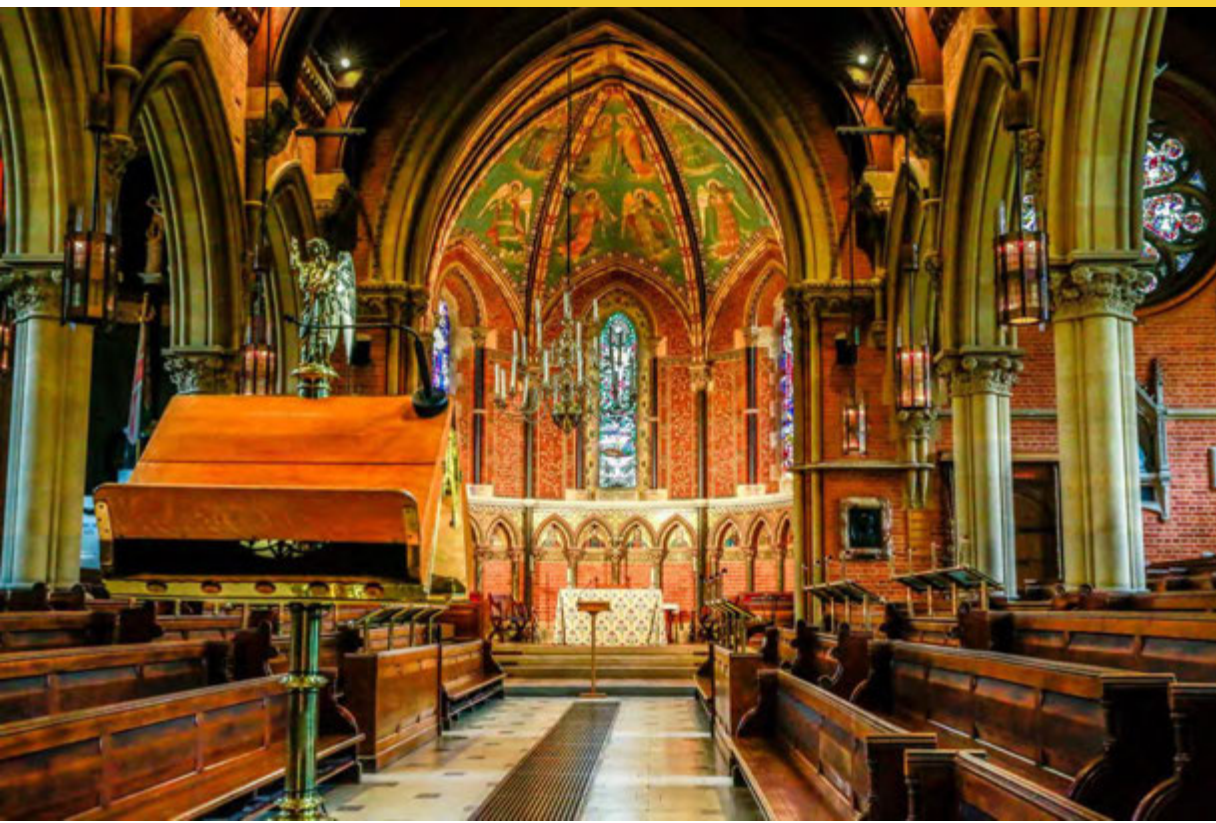
In particular, candidates will demonstrate:

- Significant senior leadership experience gained in a commercially minded, financially complex or operationally demanding organisation. Experience may have been gained in education, but equally could come from sectors such as hospitality, heritage, major estates, visitor attractions, sport or other complex service environments.
- Strong financial credentials/understanding, with a track record of leading financial planning, investment, capital allocation and performance management.
- Experience of operating across a broad organisational remit, ideally encompassing a number of areas beyond finance such as estates, operations, people, technology, legal, commercial activities or major projects.
- The ability to understand and provide leadership within a complex, asset-rich environment, balancing long-term stewardship with the effective delivery of day-to-day operations and significant capital investment.
- A strategic and commercially minded approach, with the ability to identify opportunities for growth, partnership and new sources of value while remaining sensitive to Wellington's purpose, culture and reputation.
- Experience of contributing to organisational strategy and translating ambitious ideas into deliverable plans, combining appropriate challenge with a strong instinct to find ways of making good ideas work.
- A proven ability to lead through others, building strong, capable teams and creating clear accountability while avoiding unnecessary involvement in operational detail.
- Strong relationship-building skills and the ability to establish trust across different professional communities. The successful candidate will need to act as a genuine partner to the Master and Governors, and operate comfortably with Governors, academic leaders, professional staff, external partners and the wider Wellington community.
- Strong commercial instincts and an appetite to explore new opportunities, including the continued development of Wellington's international activities and wider strategic and external partnerships.
- Experience of international activity would be advantageous, although not essential.
- An understanding of the governance, regulatory and risk responsibilities associated with a complex organisation. Direct experience of the charity or education sectors is not essential, provided candidates have the curiosity and ability to understand quickly the particular context in which Wellington operates.
- A genuine interest in education and in the wider purpose of Wellington College, together with an appreciation of what it means to contribute to the life of a residential, collegiate community with a thriving intellectual, cultural and sporting tradition.
- Demonstrable drive, tenacity, energy and with an appetite for hard work

Skills and Personal Qualities

The successful candidate will be a confident and credible leader, but one who combines authority with curiosity, judgement and humility

- Strong strategic judgement, coupled with sufficient intellectual and operational curiosity to understand a broad and complex organisation.
- Financial and commercial rigour; able to challenge constructively while maintaining an enabling, solutions-oriented approach.
- The confidence and presence to command the respect of the Master, Governors and senior colleagues, while remaining approachable and visible across the wider College.
- Excellent communication and influencing skills, with the ability to explain complex issues clearly and adapt their style to very different audiences.
- A collegiate leadership style and the ability to build bridges between the academic and professional communities, contributing to the leadership of Wellington as a whole rather than viewing the role solely through the lens of the professional functions.
- Strong instincts for people, with the ability to attract, develop, motivate and empower high-quality individuals and teams.
- Commercial curiosity and a willingness to consider new ideas, partnerships and ways of working while exercising sound judgement about what is right for Wellington.
- Pragmatism and sound judgement, including the ability to distinguish between issues requiring close personal attention and those best delegated to others.
- Resilience, energy and the ability to remain measured and effective when dealing with competing priorities or difficult decisions.
- High standards of integrity, discretion and professionalism, with a clear understanding of the responsibilities associated with working in a school and safeguarding environment.
- Adaptability and openness to entering a distinctive institutional culture; able to listen and learn before seeking to change it.
- A genuine enthusiasm for becoming part of the Wellington community and contributing to its intellectual, cultural, sporting and wider life.



Our Benefits



On-site Accommodation

Beautiful on-site accommodation within a 5 bedroom house within the College estate



Significant Reduction in School Fees



Competitive Remuneration



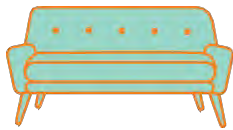
Health Scheme

PMI and Annual Health Check



Free Lunch

We provide all staff with a generous on-site lunch and beverage provision free of charge when working



Social Club



Pension

Generous GPP Scheme



Cycle to Work Scheme



Train Station

Crowthorne Station 5 minute walk from the College



Free Parking



Health

On-site subsidized Health and Fitness Centre



Chief Operating Officer

Terms of Appointment

A competitive salary commensurate with the seniority of this post and the experience of the successful candidate will be offered.

How to Apply

Russell Reynolds Associates is acting as an employment agency advisor to Wellington College on this appointment.

For a confidential discussion about the role, prospective candidates are invited to contact responses@russellreynolds.com. When submitting an application, please also write to this email quoting reference number 2608-010L in the subject heading of the email.

All applications will be acknowledged.

Your submission should include:

- Your CV setting out your career history, with key responsibilities and achievements. Please ensure you have provided reasons for any gaps within at least the last five years.
- A Statement of Suitability (no longer than two pages) explaining how you consider your personal skills, qualities and experience provide evidence of your suitability for the role.



The College is committed to equality and diversity, safeguarding, promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Applicants for any of the positions available at the College must be willing to undergo a number of safeguarding checks including an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check, reference checks with previous employers and where applicable, a Barred List, Prohibition and EEA check. In addition to all relevant checks candidates will be required to complete an application form in order to comply with our safer recruitment process.



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