

*Commercial Director*  
**CANDIDATE PACK**  
HOLMEWOOD  HOUSE



Welcome



HOLMEWOOD  HOUSE

# Headteacher Welcome Letter

Dear Candidate,

The first time I visited Holmewood House, I was rigorously grilled by the children as part of the interview process. They had energy, curiosity and no fear of asking a tricky question. That was the moment I knew this was a school I wanted to work in.

We are ambitious for our pupils and our staff, reflective, forward-thinking and genuinely enthusiastic about research-led innovation. Everything sits under our philosophy, My Heart, My Mind, My World: preparing children emotionally, helping them understand how their own brain learns best, and equipping them to be citizens of the world. Our values of kindness, aspiration and self-belief run through all of it. We value creativity as highly as academia, and pastoral care as highly as teaching.

We have around 400 pupils aged 3-13 and a highly skilled staff team. Our boarding house, relaunched in September 2025, has 45 beds and sits at the heart of the school; more than 60% of pupils aged eight and above have now boarded, whether full or flexi. It has become a hub for the children and valuable wraparound care for busy families. The 32-acre campus includes a theatre, swimming pool and sports courts: assets with real income potential we have barely begun to exploit.

The sector faces significant challenges, and prep schools feel them acutely. We are in a strong financial position and have already laid foundations for generating commercial income. What we lack is not ideas or appetite, but the capacity and specialist skill to drive them at the pace we want, and this is why the Commercial Director role is being created.

It is a new post on the senior leadership team, reflecting the responsibility it carries. This is a chance to lead genuine commercial development rather than financial stewardship alone. You will need: strong people skills, as we have many stakeholders; considerable energy; and ideas of your own. We are looking for a playmaker, not someone who waits for direction. If you value autonomy, this role will suit you.

I would expect you to bring me ideas and challenges, and to handle robust professional debate. In return, I will listen, stay open-minded, and back you.

Our governing body is highly skilled and fully behind this appointment. They agree it is pivotal to the school's future.

If you like a challenge, enjoy working at pace, and want to lead on something still relatively new to this sector, please do apply. We would very much like to meet you.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Ruth O'Sullivan  
**Headteacher**

For a confidential initial discussion, please share an up-to-date CV and book an introductory call with Alpha Parish at Academicis, our retained search consultants: [aparish@academicis.co.uk](mailto:aparish@academicis.co.uk) | 07436 971517 or 01223 907979



# About Holmewood House School

Holmewood House is a prestigious independent Prep School of 400+ pupils aged 3–13 years, set amidst 32-acres of the most beautiful Kent countryside, just outside Tunbridge Wells. The School is a happy and supportive working environment, where we pride ourselves on the exceptional provision for our pupils and staff in all areas.



The school is home to some of the area's most impressive educational and community facilities, including:

- Indoor and outdoor sports facilities
- Its own indoor swimming pool (home to its successful Swim School operation)
- 300-seat theatre with professional capabilities
- Dedicated Medical Centre and Therapy Suite
- Residential accommodation
- Plenty of purpose-built learning spaces
- Two professional kitchens
- Car parking facilities
- 32-acres of beautiful, well-maintained outdoor grounds and scenery

The school has a Strategic Development Plan in place to ensure its facilities receive the investment and care required to ensure that Holmewood House School retains its impressive period character and its ongoing potential as a beacon of community and commercial activity for years to come.

Throughout the year, the school is home to pupils who attend its Nursery, Pre-Prep and Prep Schools, including Boarders. Holmewood House also welcomes local children to its holiday courses, its Forest School provision and is home to several hiring organisations.

# Commercial Director Job Description

|                  |                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Location:        | Langton Green, Tunbridge Wells, Kent (TN3 0EB)                                                                                                      |
| Contract:        | Full-Time, Permanent                                                                                                                                |
| Salary:          | £55,000 – £65,000 (DOE) + Performance-Related Bonus                                                                                                 |
| Reporting to:    | Head and Bursar                                                                                                                                     |
| Responsible for: | Lettings & Courses Manager, Swim School Manager, Theatre Staff (as required)                                                                        |
| Liasing with     | Operations Manager, Finance Manager, Head of Marketing and External Relations, Head of Boarding, Head of Co-Curricular and Sport and Academic Staff |

## Role Summary:

Holmewood House School is seeking an experienced and entrepreneurial leader to drive its commercial and fund-raising activities, developing a host of meaningful business and community partnerships. As part of the school's ambitious Bursary Team, the Commercial Director will play a defining role in diversifying the school's commercial presence, its fund-raising capabilities and its potential to become a vibrant home for a range of engaging and exciting commercial and community activities. This role is seen as strategic and therefore the successful person will have a place on the Senior Leadership Team.

The successful candidate will have a proven track record in fund-raising, business and partnership development, alongside the strong strategic skills needed to shape and develop this programme into a long-lasting legacy for the school and for our local community.



# Commercial Director Job Description

## *continued*

### **Core Purpose:**

The Commercial Director is a new leadership role responsible for the strategic transformation of Holmewood House School's commercial and fundraising function. The twin missions are:

- To form and execute a strategic commercial plan which maximises annual commercial revenue and establishes Holmewood House School as a vibrant hub of commercial and community activity, targeting non-fee income of a minimum of 20% of revenues within the next five years (currently at 6%)
- To create and lead a fundraising function focused on securing capital investment for the new pre-prep building.
- Expand its provision for children from Nursery through to Year 2

### **Key Responsibilities:**

#### **1. Strategic Leadership & Business Development**

- Create and implement a fundraising strategy focused on the development of the new pre-prep and innovation centre, including a compelling case for support that articulates the school's vision for early years education
- Design and execute a commercial roadmap focusing on high-value, multi-year partnerships that make the most of school facilities and generate non-fee income in excess of 20% of revenues within 5 years
- Advise and contribute to the school's overall Strategic Development Plan, including future capital investment proposals and facilities maintenance and development
- Ensure that all commercial aims are always aligned with the school's vision, values and strategic objectives





# Commercial Director Job Description

## *continued*

### 2. Commercial Income & Partnerships

- Proactively identify and secure new B2B partnerships with organisations including, but not limited to, international summer schools, sports, theatre and performing arts companies, corporate event planners and healthcare providers
- Promote the school's facilities as a premier regional venue for conferences, festivals, retreats and residential camps
- Identify, negotiate and manage partnerships with external organisations including sports clubs, community groups, corporate clients and educational providers
- Establish robust booking, pricing and contract frameworks that protect the school's interests and reputation
- Work with Finance to understand the incremental cost of commercial activities and review and overhaul current pricing structures to ensure strong and sustainable commercial viability
- Prepare and present compelling business cases for new investment, identifying and delivering agreed ROI within the school's investment criteria
- Build relationships with local businesses to develop sponsorship, naming rights and corporate partnership opportunities

### 3. Fundraising & Development

- Lead the school's first structured in-house development programme, anchored by the campaign to fund the new pre-prep building
- Develop and manage relationships with major donors, alumni families, foundations and grant-making bodies
- Work with the Marketing Manager to develop and grow the school's alumni engagement programme
- Research and apply for relevant charitable trusts, foundations and statutory grants
- Plan and deliver fundraising events and a robust programme of donor stewardship
- Build a culture of philanthropy within the school community – among current and former parents, staff and supporters

# Commercial Director Job Description

## *continued*

### 4. Operational Excellence & Team Management

- Manage and mentor the Courses & Lettings Manager, Swim School Manager, Theatre Staff and a team of commercial operatives to ensure seamless delivery of all hires with the aim of making them all financially viable
- Act as the bridge between commercial clients and the Estates, Catering and Housekeeping teams; overseeing site staff during major commercial operations to ensure a gold-standard service
- Collaborating with the Compliance Officer, HR Manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead, serve as the commercial lead for safeguarding, ensuring all external partners adhere to school safeguarding standards and procedures

### 5. Financial Management & Reporting

- Full accountability for managing and reporting on the commercial and fundraising budgets, including forecasting, cost control and hitting revenue KPIs
- Liaise and collaborate with the Finance Manager to ensure budgets are up-to-date and aligned with the school's wider financial agenda
- Prepare and present detailed ROI and progress reports to the Board of Governors and Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
- Manage the legal and contractual lifecycle of all commercial agreements, ensuring the school is well protected against risk

### 6. Key Performance Indicators

- Deliver revenue growth in line with targets agreed within the Bursary
- Increase occupancy of the school's facilities, especially during school holiday periods and weekends
- Secure high-value commercial partnerships in line with agreed targets
- Deliver high rates of partner satisfaction and foster long-term relationships
- Launch the pre-prep building fundraising campaign with a compelling case for support and a clear pipeline of major donor prospects
- Secure early leadership gifts and establish a fundraising pipeline within the first 12 months





# Person Specification

We recognise that talent and potential come in many forms, so please do not be deterred if you do not meet every criterion. If you have the strategic drive to transform our 32-acres estate into a thriving hub of commercial and community activity, we want to hear from you.

## Essential Requirements

- At least 5 years' experience in business development, partnership development, or fundraising in a similar role
- Proven track record of securing high-value commercial partnerships with a range of organisations
- Strong understanding of commercial partnerships based on the utilisation of physical assets and spaces
- Demonstrated ability to manage and close significant partnerships or major gifts
- Strong commercial acumen with the ability to identify and convert income opportunities
- Can demonstrate strong strategic awareness and strategic management skills
- Experience of successfully leading and managing a team
- Self-starter with the entrepreneurial drive to build a function from scratch
- High degree of integrity and alignment with the values of an independent school community

## Desirable Requirements

- Previous experience within theatre, arts or sports environments and an understanding of these communities
- Previous experience of working within or representing educational environments
- Experience of capital campaign or building campaign fundraising
- Familiarity with independent school or charity governance structures in the UK
- Knowledge of the grant landscape for educational charities in the UK
- Experience with CRM or donor management systems
- Understanding and awareness of local communities and a community-driven mindset



### Commitment to Safeguarding:

Holmewood House is committed to promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and all staff, volunteers and other third parties are expected to share this commitment. The school adopts a rigorous safer recruitment process which is adhered to in the appointment of all new members of staff. As part of the safer recruitment process, all applicants must be willing to undergo vetting checks appropriate to the post including, but not limited to, checks with past employers and an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

### Pension & School Benefits:

The school offers a range of benefits including:

- Pension with Employer Contributions of 10% for managerial roles
- Private Medical Insurance
- The potential for school fee-concession (subject to availability and assessment criteria)
- Free on-site parking
- Free lunch and refreshments.

### Hours of work:

This is a full-time, permanent role, based on 40 hours per week, Monday to Friday. We anticipate there may be occasional need for evening/weekend working, and some occasional travel, to accommodate the needs of the role. The school is open to flexible working options although this role will be based in school. If this is likely to be of interest to you, we recommend including details within your application.





## **How To Apply**

If you would like to discover more about this exciting opportunity, need any further information or you wish to have an informal discussion, please contact our retained consultant at Academicis, Alpha Parish: [aparish@academicis.co.uk](mailto:aparish@academicis.co.uk) or 01223 907979 / 07436 971517

Closing date: 25th September 2026

Interviews will be arranged ad-hoc on receipt of a credible application



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Holmewood House School, Barrow Lane, Langton Green, Kent TN3 0EB