

Head of Finance

Candidate Information Pack



Introduction

A very warm invitation to join us...

The Royal Grammar School in Newcastle is a remarkable school with a 500-year history of welcoming people from all backgrounds. From history's Vice Admiral Cuthbert Collingwood, to recent Nobel Prize molecular biologist Sir Gregory Winter, RGS has educated thousands of young people who have gone on to make an indelible mark on the world. It is an exciting place to learn, that is forward thinking and inclusive. We aim to create a sense of belonging, to foster a belief in each other, inspire a love for learning and encourage an ambition to succeed.

The RGS has a reputation for excellence across academic and co-curricular activities and our students benefit from the wide range of opportunities they can enjoy. We are equally dedicated to our pastoral care as we believe that happy children learn best. We encourage our students to be intellectually curious, to think creatively and to challenge themselves in everything they undertake. We believe that academic results should be the consequence, not the purpose, of an outstanding and well-rounded education. That said we are immensely proud of the academic achievements of our community and it is testament to our students' commitment and teachers' dedication that we are ranked as one of the highest performing schools in the country. The RGS is the Sunday Times' North East Independent School of the Decade and we were separately awarded overall Independent School of the Year for the whole of the UK for 2023 following winning the category for Outstanding Educational Partnerships. Most recently, RGS was awarded the Sunday Times' North East's Independent Secondary School of the Year for Academic Performance for 2024 as well as overall Independent Secondary of the Year for the North East.

We are seeking a dynamic and experienced individual to join as Head of Finance at RGS Newcastle. This is a role of significant operational importance and presents a fantastic opportunity for a highly motivated and proficient professional to make a lasting impact. The Head of Finance will play a key role in supporting the financial future of the school, working closely with our finance and operations team to deliver results and foster strong relationships across the organisation. If you are passionate about contributing to our continued success and thrive in a collaborative environment, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Geoffrey Stanford- Headmaster





RGS Newcastle

There's more to life at RGS...

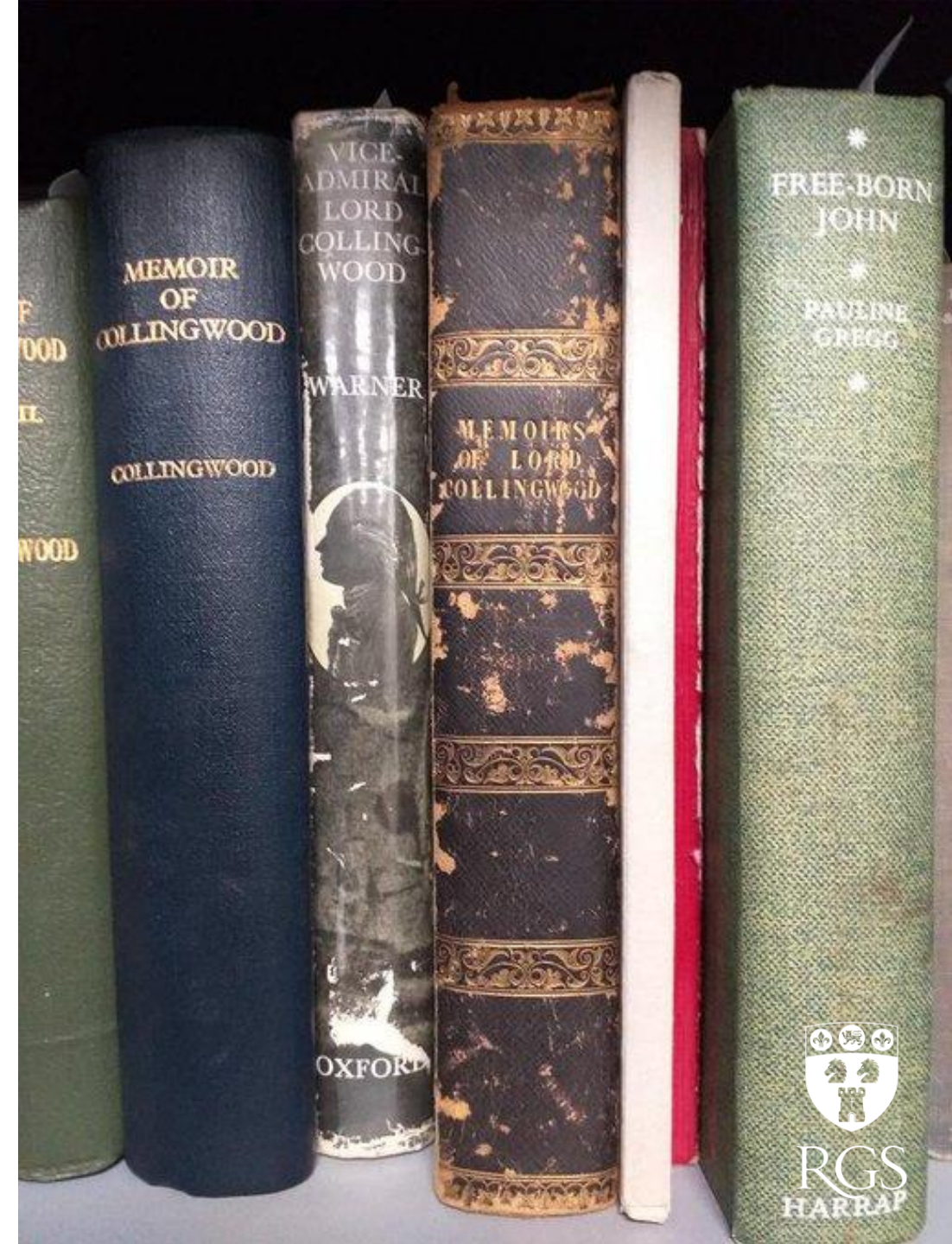
In 1525, the Mayor of Newcastle, Thomas Horsley, wrote his will, in which he generously gifted his estate to fund a grammar school. Five centuries later, Horsley's vision lives on in the Royal Grammar School Newcastle's corridors and classrooms, and his philanthropic spirit drives the RGS's commitment to education.

Few schools can claim a 500-year history. Over the years, the RGS, has continued to flourish as the premier independent school in the North East of England and as one of the country's leading schools - consistently topping the regional table for academic excellence.

Today, RGS is a fully co-educational school with over 1,300 students aged 7-18 (Years 3 to 13). Its academically selective places are highly sought after. The school has more than 250 students in the Junior School, which shares the same outstanding site as the Senior School. Its Sixth Form is one of the largest in the independent sector, with more than 340 students.

While RGS prides itself on academic excellence, the school is also known for its emphasis on a holistic education. The school's 'There's More to Life' approach informs its holistic education, which is central to students' success, health and happiness.

RGS is based in the heart of Newcastle, immediately opposite Jesmond Metro station. The school occupies over 30 acres of land and has state-of-the-art facilities, including five brand new art studios, a new library, a modern Sixth Form Centre, a 25m swimming pool, two Sports Halls, a Performing Arts Centre, outdoor football/rugby pitches at Mooracres, an artificial turf pitch for hockey and the former County Cricket Ground.





Our Vision and Ethos

We believe in inspiring young people and equipping them to make a positive contribution to society.

The RGS aims to promote excellence and is committed to raising aspiration and attainment across the North East.

By inspiring and nurturing hearts and minds, we can give those around us the freedom to create and shape their own future.

A future that is built on our sense of history and belonging in the city but is fueled by an ambition to succeed and evolve.

A place where freedom of expression, ideas and beliefs can be shared, exchanged and grow openly in our happy environment.

An environment where we look out for each other and treat everyone with care and respect, within and beyond our community.

A spirit to challenge, inspire and stretch the minds of everyone here so we feel free to explore, free to think, free to try, free to dream of possibilities and free to be ourselves.

The four pillars of our ethos are embedded in everything that we do:

- Belief in each other
- Ambition to succeed
- Sense of belonging
- Love for learning



Academic Success

RGS is a special place, known and respected throughout the whole country as well as the North East. It's a place where aspirations are high, results are outstanding, and opportunities are endless. Our students go on to study highly selective courses at the most sought-after universities but also leave the school realising that life outside the classroom has been equally beneficial.

In 2023, RGS was named the overall national 'Independent School of the Year' by The Telegraph Group's Independent School Parent Awards. The school was again named North East Independent Secondary School of the Year for Academic Excellence 2025 by The Sunday Times' Parent Power Schools Guide. Most recently, the school was named Independent Senior School of the Year at the TES Awards.

Academically, the school is highly selective. Students are assessed for entry at the key entry points (Y3, Y5, Y7, and a handful at Y9, plus Sixth Form). The biggest entry points are Y3 (60 students), Y7 (c.75 students) and Y12 (c.45 students). Beyond the academics, in Junior School (Y3-6), entry is assessed through activity days, whilst at Y7, students are assessed through online tests and an interaction day. Sixth Form entry is through interview only.

Students sit baseline tests in Y7, Y10, and Y12 – the average GLA CAT score for both the current Y7 and Y12 is 117. We have several students who have the assistance of our dedicated Learning Support Team, which works across Junior and Senior School.

Pastoral Care

We understand that all of our students are unique and different, and we strive to treat them as individuals, aiming to tailor our care to meet their needs.

That is why pastoral care is another critical cornerstone of RGS's holistic approach. Student well-being is embedded throughout school life, from a dedicated Form Teacher and an allocated Tutor to easy access to the school Medical Team and counsellors who work together to help students reach their full potential.





Co-Curricular Activities

At RGS, students can choose from over 170 co-curricular activities, ranging from music, drama, and sports to unique options like e-sports and knitting. All students are encouraged to discover what excites and inspires them.

Sport is also a central part of life at RGS, with students actively participating in a variety of activities including hockey, cricket, and basketball, from early morning until late afternoon. RGS views sport as a fundamental vehicle for students to develop lifelong skills, character, resilience – and, above all, a love for daily movement.

While it may seem tricky to balance schoolwork with so many exciting co-curricular and sporting activities, RGS has found that students actively engaged outside the classroom often perform even better academically. Both programs are designed to help students develop essential life skills, from self-awareness to decision-making and self-organisation.



The Role

The Head of Finance will support the Director of Finance and Operations with the delivery of the school's financial and operational objectives.

They will have day-to-day responsibility for the smooth running of the finance systems and functions, ensuring adequate processes and controls are in place. This will include billing, purchase ledger, trading activities, VAT and compliance with statutory obligations such as tax, Charity Commission and wider legal obligations. They will deputise in the absence of the Director of Finance and Operations on all financial matters.

The Head of Finance will be an active participant and contributor to the Finance and Operations team and work collaboratively across the whole school although key relationships will be with the Head of Facilities and Estates, the Head of HR, as well as the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and School Trustees.





Job Description

(The job description for this role is subject to regular review)

Reporting to the Director of Finance and Operations (DFO), the principal duties of this position are to oversee the efficient operation of our busy Finance Department. Responsibilities include:

- Providing day to day line management and support for the Finance Team.
- Preparing annual Statutory Accounts, Termly Management Accounts, Budgets, Plans and Forecasts for the School, its Trading subsidiary, and The Educational Trust.
- Preparing financial models as required by the DFO and Governors including cashflow forecasts and income scenarios.
- Tracking KPIs and producing reports on trends, comparative analysis, competitor performance and local and wider markets.
- Responsibility for all aspects of payroll and pension– including overseeing the monthly payroll and pension uploads, calculating any required adjustments, and ensuring regulations are met.
- Overseeing business continuity of the Finance Department, including working collaboratively with team members to ensure that guides/manuals for all procedures/processes are prepared and maintained.
- Managing, with the DFO, the School's relationship with the bank, auditors, statutory and regulatory bodies, and providers of financial services (e.g. investment managers, lenders).
- Ensuring compliance with governmental and statutory oversight bodies and regulations on tax, Gift Aid, VAT and other HMRC requirements.
- Alongside the Compliance Officer, ensure all required filings (e.g. Charity Commission, Companies House) and census/benchmarking submissions are accurate and submitted on time.
- Oversee all financial systems (Accounts IQ, Bursary +, Sage Payroll)
- Review and assess bursary awards in conjunction with the Head of Bursary Support.
- Attendance at and presentation to relevant meetings with Governors as required.
- Supporting the DFO and Governors with long-term scenario planning and detailed proposals for the long-term development of the school.
- Overseeing the budget and forecasting processes and ensuring budget holders are aware of relevant procedures.
- Evaluation of investment opportunities and potential returns.
- Undertake any other duties as requested that are commensurate with the responsibilities of the post as may reasonably be requested by the DFO.



Person Specification

Qualifications and Experience

The following are essential:

- Qualified Accountant (ACA/ACCA/CIMA or equivalent) with at least five years' post-qualification experience, including delivery of annual/statutory accounts.
- Extensive experience presenting management accounts and financial analysis to Senior Leaders.
- Experience in developing financial plans and budgets.
- Experience of managing and developing a team and ensuring excellent performance through training, appraisal, and leadership.
- Experienced in working in a fast-paced environment and able to work to tight deadlines.
- Analytical, careful and thorough in preparing figures, reports and business cases.
- Proficient in Microsoft Office packages, including advanced Excel knowledge/skills.

The following are desirable:

- Experience of working in a charity or similar environment.
- Payroll experience

Skills and Personal Qualities

The following are essential:

- Confident communicator, with excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Organised with an ability to self-plan and prioritise workloads, along with planning work schedules for others.
- Able to demonstrate strong attention to detail.
- Must be able to respect utmost confidentiality in respect of all information relating to this post and be seen as a role model for our school values.
- Ability to work as part of a team and establish good working relationships at all levels, including external providers, legal and professional advisors, and internal colleagues/parents.
- Ability to work with senior members of staff and demonstrate tact and diplomacy at all times.

The following are desirable:

- Ability to think 'outside the box'.
- Show initiative to deal proactively with any situation that develops.
- Knowledge of iSAMS, our school management information system.



Living in the North East

Whilst the North East is beloved and popular with so many, we know that not everyone will have had first-hand experience of it, so this is a short introduction to a city and region which we love and believe you will too. Newcastle is a medium-sized city with an historic centre and a vibrant life of its own. There is culture and arts in the form of the award-winning BALTIC Art Gallery and The Glasshouse performance venue, alongside several theatres that attract national touring productions. There is music from classical to club and we are home to the Royal Northern Sinfonia. There's also a growing food culture with some fantastic restaurants.

If you like sport then there is certainly no shortage of top class entertainment: from Premier League football being played at St James' Park and EFL at the Stadium of Light to first class cricket at Durham (a mere half hour away), and great rugby at the Falcons, not to mention basketball and even ice hockey, and then there is the annual Great North Run. The North East has also produced some of the country's finest athletes in track and field and there are clubs aplenty to get involved with, most famously in Gateshead.

The coast and the hills are minutes away from the city centre. By car you can be in the middle of nowhere in 45 minutes, the Scottish Borders is only an hour away and the Lake District an hour and a half. The coast is served by the Metro (our version of the Tube), but some of the country's best beaches are up the road in Northumberland, less than 40 minutes by car. There's mountain biking, road cycling, climbing, and endless hill walks in stunning countryside. There are green spaces all over the city too, with plenty of parks for children and dogs alike to run around.

There are three local teaching hospitals and two universities in the city with another three close by. Some pioneering medical work goes on at the RVI, Great North Children's Hospital and the Freeman Hospital. History abounds with more castles than you could count and sites of interest for almost every period of English (and border) history. Add that to a proud, independently minded and very friendly local population and we have most things you could want.

There are excellent primary schools in the region and city as well as some good secondary schools too, but staff do get a discount at the RGS. There are also a number of good competitor independent schools as well.

The RGS is on the edge of the city centre, a ten-minute walk from the main shopping areas. The leafy, affluent suburbs of Jesmond and Gosforth are close by with housing ranging from purpose-built flats in terraced streets and conversions of bigger houses to terraced houses, post-war semis and large, family-sized detached houses with big gardens. All of this is within walking distance of the school so no commute is needed. Properties are very affordable both within the city and the surrounding area. If you want to travel to work then you could wake up with a sea view, hop on the Metro and be at school just half an hour later. The region wins tourism and lifestyle awards for very good reasons!



Terms and Conditions

- The post holder will report to the Director of Finance and Operations.
- Start Date: As soon as possible pending completion of safer recruitment checks.
- This is a full-time, permanent and on-site role with the school.
- The successful candidate will be required to work all staff training days throughout the academic year.
- The successful candidate will also be expected to work the annual safeguarding training day in September each year, which is compulsory for all staff (date varies each year).
- The successful candidate will also be required to work limited special events e.g. Open Day.
- The normal working hours will be 37.5 hours per week, Monday to Friday, (7.5 hours per day) all year round, with a 30-minute unpaid lunch break. The core hours for this role will normally be 8.30am until 4.30pm, however there will be occasions in which the Head of Finance is required to be flexible regarding start/end times to support key functions of the school i.e. training.
- A competitive salary will be offered for this role and will reflect the experience and skills offered by the successful applicant. Prospective candidates are invited to contact Nikki Miller (DFO) to discuss the salary on offer for this role. Please email dfo@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk to arrange a time to discuss the role further.
- The school offers a generous annual leave entitlement of 31 days plus Bank Holidays for all year-round support staff.
- The employee will be required to comply with a range of RGS policies, in particular, those regarding Data protection, use of ICT facilities, Child Protection, Staff Code and Health and Safety, a copy of which will be made available.



What we offer

- For non-teaching staff we offer a support staff pension scheme, The Aviva Pension Trust for Independent Schools (APTIS). On receipt of a 6% employee contribution the school makes an employer contribution of 10%. There is also the option of a 3% employee and 5% employer contribution if preferred. This scheme is administered via Salary Exchange (also known as Salary Sacrifice) for those who are eligible. You can opt out of the Salary Exchange arrangement whilst remaining in the pension scheme. Further details of the scheme and salary exchange will be provided on appointment.
- Membership to life assurance scheme through Aviva which pays out 5x annual salary in the event of death in service.
- The employee will become eligible for sick pay under the RGS Support Staff Sick Pay Scheme after a qualifying period. Details of the scheme will be provided on appointment.
- During term-time, staff are provided with a free lunch, if on site.
- The school offers an optional healthcare plan for staff which includes optical, dental and physio cover, access to telephone GP consultations and a host of other benefits (terms and conditions apply). Further information will be available to the employee once in post.
- As with all RGS employees, the employee will be encouraged to become involved in the wider life of the RGS community.
- Ongoing educational support and development of all staff with the provision of external and internal training courses, and our middle leaders training programme for existing and aspiring managers.





What we offer

- It is the school's policy to allow all eligible members of staff to educate their children at the school at concessionary rates, subject to their children meeting the academic entry requirements and subject to a place being available.
- Opportunity to see free school productions in the Miller Theatre located in our Performing Arts Centre.
- We offer an interest free travel loan for a corporate Metro travel pass after a qualifying period. Further information will be available upon starting in post.
- We offer a Bike to Work scheme for qualifying members of staff. Terms and conditions apply. Details will be shared upon starting in post.
- Free use of a well-equipped gym, fitness suite and swimming pool at permitted times.
- Access to our onsite confidential counselling service.
- Access to the school's library service and a wide range of reading materials.
- Access to the school medical team (1 doctor and 2 nurses) for triage medical advice and free flu vaccinations.
- Invitation to join staff clubs and wellbeing activities during term-time.
- Staff social events throughout the year.
- Supportive and friendly community.
- Opportunity to join in with RGS tradition and become a member of the Stowell, Collingwood, Horsley or Eldon House.





Equal Opportunities

We are looking to appoint staff from a wide variety of backgrounds. Not just because it is the right thing to do but because at the RGS we recognise that those different experiences provide fresh perspectives, opportunities to challenge existing beliefs and provide opportunities to act as excellent role models for our diverse student body. We are committed to creating an inclusive and diverse school culture and our staff are at the heart of this. We are proud to be an equal opportunities employer, and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment regardless of neurodivergence, age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and marriage and civil partnerships.

Whilst all applications are considered on merit, we would particularly welcome applications from black and minority ethnic candidates who are currently under-represented in our staff community.

We encourage all candidates to complete an 'equal opportunities' form with your application. This will be sent directly to the HR team for monitoring purposes.

Safer Recruitment

RGS is committed to the safeguarding of children and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers and those working in school to share this commitment.

The school applies the Government's Keeping Children Safe in Education Safer Recruitment procedures to all candidates including appropriate pre-interview checks on shortlisted candidates and pre-employment checks pending any offer. More information regarding the checks can be found in our Information for Applicants [here](#), and '[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)' (September 2025)





How to apply

Candidates are advised to read the 'Information for Applicants' before applying.

The closing date for this vacancy is 9.00am on Monday 10th November 2025

1st stage interviews will be held week commencing 17th November 2025.

Please visit www.rgs.newcastle.sch.uk/join-us/work-with-us to access our application form and further information for applicants.

Applications should be sent directly to jobs@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk and include the following:

- A covering letter and,
- A fully completed RGS application form.

You must complete the application form, even if you want to also attach a CV.

Reasonable travel expenses will be considered to attend an interview if candidates live outside the local area. This is normally up to a maximum contribution of £100 on provision of receipts. If your expenses will be significantly higher than £100 and an overnight stay is required, please note all expenses will need to be booked and approved in advance. If you plan to claim expenses, please contact the Head's Secretary, Sandra Ellis S.Ellis@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk in advance of your interview, who will talk you through the policy and advise on eligibility for reimbursement.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to email Nikki Miller (DFO) dfo@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk or call 0191 281 5711 to arrange a chat about the role.





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RGS