

Recruitment Information Pack

Director of Finance



'Becoming the Best you can be'



William Henry Smith
School and Sixth Form



William Henry Smith
Specialist College



William Henry Smith
Therapeutic Children's Home



William Henry Smith
Specialist Service

William Henry Smith Foundation

The William Henry Smith Foundation is a not-for-profit registered charity committed to transforming lives and breaking down barriers, empowering every individual to reach their full potential. The Foundation exists to improve outcomes for children and young adults who experience social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) challenges, providing outstanding provision through high-quality working, living and learning environments.

Everything the Foundation does is rooted in strong, trusting relationships and a psychologically and trauma-informed approach. By placing care, compassion and consistency at the centre of its work, the Foundation creates safe and supportive environments where children and young adults feel valued, understood and able to engage, grow and thrive.

At the heart of the Foundation's work is a holistic, personalised approach that recognises each individual's unique strengths, needs and aspirations. Through tailored support and nurturing environments, the Foundation enriches the lives of children and young adults, while also supporting their families, its people and the wider community. This approach ensures that everyone feels safe, valued and a deep sense of belonging.

Working closely with Local Authorities, partners, schools and community organisations, the William Henry Smith Foundation delivers outstanding education, care and therapeutic services that create lasting and meaningful impact. With a strong commitment to excellence, inclusion and wellbeing, the Foundation continues to champion positive change and build stronger, more resilient communities.



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William Henry Smith School & Sixth Form is an outstanding day and residential special school for boys aged 5–19 with SEMH needs. Through a psychologically and trauma-informed, relationship-based approach, the school provides a safe, structured environment where pupils develop a strong sense of belonging and are supported to thrive academically, socially and emotionally. High expectations, personalised support and strong partnerships ensure every young person is empowered to overcome barriers and prepare confidently for the future



William Henry Smith Therapeutic Children's Home provides a safe, nurturing, psychologically and trauma-informed residential environment for children and young adults with complex social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. Grounded in strong, trusting relationships, the home offers personalised therapeutic care that promotes stability, belonging and emotional wellbeing. Through consistency, understanding and high-quality support, children and young people are empowered to develop resilience and build positive futures.



William Henry Smith Specialist College provides a safe, structured and nurturing environment where young people aged 16 – 25 develop a strong sense of belonging and are supported to achieve meaningful academic, vocational and personal outcomes. Through personalised pathways, high expectations and psychologically and trauma-informed, relationship-based approach, the College prepares students for adulthood, further education, employment and independent living.



William Henry Smith Specialist Services works in collaboration with a wide range of organisations to strengthen provision and improve outcomes for children and young adults with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. We provide bespoke training, consultancy and specialist guidance to schools, settings and services, supporting the development of psychologically and trauma-informed practice, inclusive cultures and effective systems of support. Our work is underpinned by strong values, social responsibility and a commitment to sharing effective practice. We actively contribute to research, publications and professional learning and regularly present at national conferences and professional forums. Through national networks such as NASS, NATSPEC and Engage, we extend our reach and impact, offering targeted support that strengthens education and social care provision locally, regionally and nationally



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Mission Statement

To champion a Holistic and tailored approach, enriching the lives of children and young adults, their families, our people, and the wider community



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CEO / Executive Principal Welcome

As CEO and Executive Principal of the William Henry Smith Foundation, encompassing William Henry Smith School & Sixth Form, William Henry Smith Specialist College, and William Henry Smith Therapeutic Children's Home, I am deeply committed to transforming the lives of children and young adults. Our Foundation is a vibrant, multi-site community delivering high-quality education, care, health, and therapeutic support. Everything we do is rooted in strong relationships and a trauma-informed approach. We look beyond presenting behaviours, prioritising safety, trust, compassion, and emotional well-being so that every child and young adult feels understood, valued, and able to flourish.

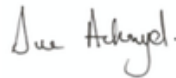


My career began in 1987 in residential care, where I discovered a profound sense of purpose, one that has shaped and sustained my leadership for nearly four decades. Since then, I have progressed through a breadth of senior roles across both care and education, including Deputy Principal, Principal, and now CEO and Executive Principal. Throughout my journey, I have held fast to the belief that education is a transformative force: a pathway to resilience, belonging, and opportunity. This belief continues to guide my commitment to creating environments where children and young adults experience not only learning, but connection, trust, and authentic understanding.

I am a leader who values authenticity, continuous learning, and the courage found in vulnerability. At the William Henry Smith Foundation, we strive for excellence not only for our students, but also for our staff, families, and wider community. We are dedicated to sharing learning, strengthening professional practice, and leading positive change, locally and nationally, so that more children and young adults benefit from environments built on relational safety and neuro-affirming practice.

Beyond my professional life, I am married, a proud mother of two sons, and a devoted grandmother. Fitness and martial arts play an important role in my own well-being: I train regularly in strength and Olympic lifting, speed and agility work, and kickboxing, and I am currently working towards my black belt. This journey strengthens my discipline, resilience, and focus – qualities I bring into my leadership every day.

I believe in what I call work-life brilliance: continually learning, reflecting, and growing while inspiring others to do the same. My leadership is grounded in compassion, resilience, and authenticity, and I hope to encourage others to embrace these values in their own professional and personal journeys.



Sue Ackroyd
CEO/Executive Principal



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Safeguarding

The William Henry Smith Foundation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults and expects all staff to share this commitment. The foundation has effective child and adult protection policies which provide clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with safeguarding issues. Our recruitment process aims to create and maintain a safe workforce and contains robust vetting procedures. The successful applicant will be appointed subject to references and enhanced DBS check (this is a position working in regulated activity). The successful candidate will be subject to a rigorous safer recruitment process and must adhere to a strict code of conduct regarding behaviour at all times. Shortlisted candidates will be subject to online searches in accordance with KCSIE 2025. The Foundation is also committed to promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of both students and staff and reflects life in Modern Britain.



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Our Core Values

Our Vision To transform lives and break down barriers, empowering every individual to reach their fullest potential.

Our Mission To champion a holistic and tailored approach, enriching the lives of children and young adults, their families, our people, and the wider community.

Unwavering integrity

We lead with honesty, purpose, and an unshakeable belief in what we do.

We hold ourselves to the highest standards, always keep our word, and work hard to earn trust from the children, young adults, families, and people we serve, leaving a lasting mark that extends beyond the classroom.

Close collaboration

It takes a village to raise a child, and that village starts with us. We're a team of listeners, collaborators, and supporters who adopt a curious and compassionate approach, building trusting relationships with local authorities, families, children and young adults, and our people.

By understanding backgrounds, behaviours and lifelong ambitions, we strive to build individualised pathways that are guided, encouraged, and nurtured by specialists.

Compassionate curiosity

Every person's story is unique, and we take the time to understand it. We ask why and dig deeper to uncover the bigger picture. With open arms and open minds, we foster safe and nurturing spaces where children, young adults, families, and communities feel fully supported. We listen without prejudice and respond with care, helping people rewrite difficult chapters into stories of growth, resilience, and limitless possibilities.

Empowering community

We are a thriving village where every voice matters, and everyone is valued. By embracing diversity in all its forms, we foster an enriching environment where individuals feel seen, heard, and supported around the clock. This applies to families, communities, and our people as well as children and young adults, with a deep sense of belonging echoing throughout everything we do.

Visionary thinking

We know that to inspire others, we must feel inspired ourselves. That's why we set the highest standards. We lead by example, role modelling behaviours that help shape those around us. With enthusiasm, optimism, and unwavering belief in children, young adults, and our people, we nurture an environment where everyone is empowered to surpass what they thought possible. Our shared purpose, expert knowledge, and passion for progress drive us to build something even bigger than ourselves.



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DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Strategic Leadership Team

At the William Henry Smith Foundation, our Strategic Leadership Team plays a vital role in shaping a culture where children, young adults, families and colleagues can truly thrive. Rooted in our mission to transform lives and break down barriers, the Strategic Leadership Team works collaboratively across education, care, health and therapeutic and operational services to ensure every aspect of the Foundation reflects our values, vision and commitment to excellence

What We Do

The Strategic Leadership Team provides purposeful, values-led leadership across the Foundation's multi-site provision, including our School & Sixth Form, Specialist College, Therapeutic Children's Home and Specialist Services. Working in close partnership with colleagues across all disciplines, the team ensures high-quality education, care, health and therapeutic provision and operational excellence remain at the heart of everything we do.

Our Directors work beyond traditional functional leadership. The Director of Finance will work in close liaison with the wider Strategic Leadership Team to support organisational growth, sustainability, workforce wellbeing and innovation. All strategic leaders, help create psychologically informed, compassionate and high-performing environments where both colleagues and students feel valued, supported and empowered.

The Director of Finance will ensure strong financial stewardship which enables strategic planning and operational sustainability that enables the Foundation to continue delivering transformational outcomes for children and young adults.



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Strategic Leadership Team

Our Approach

Everything we do is rooted in strong relationships, compassionate curiosity and psychologically and trauma-informed practice. We believe leadership should be authentic, collaborative and values-driven. Our approach is underpinned by integrity, empowerment, innovation and a shared belief that every individual can achieve more than they thought possible.

The Strategic Leadership Team works collectively to:

- Champion a holistic and tailored approach across all services
- Foster safe, nurturing and inclusive environments
- Support continuous learning, reflection and professional growth
- Build strong partnerships with families, professionals and external agencies
- Encourage innovation and visionary thinking across the Foundation
- Ensure colleagues feel heard, valued and connected to the Foundation's mission

As a leadership team, we recognise that excellent outcomes for children and young adults are only possible when colleagues themselves are supported to flourish. This commitment is reflected in our culture of “Work-Life Brilliance”, colleague wellbeing initiatives, leadership development opportunities and investment in learning and development.



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Strategic Leadership Team

Why Join the Strategic Leadership Team?

Joining the Strategic Leadership Team at the William Henry Smith Foundation offers the opportunity to be part of a purpose driven organisation making a genuine and lasting difference to lives every day.

You will join a collaborative and ambitious leadership community where:

- Relationships, compassion and integrity are central to leadership
- Innovation and continuous improvement are actively encouraged
- Your voice and expertise will help shape the future direction of the Foundation
- You will work alongside passionate professionals committed to transformational outcomes
- Leadership is grounded in authenticity, courage and emotional intelligence
- Colleague wellbeing and professional growth are genuinely prioritised

This is more than a leadership role, it is an opportunity to contribute to a thriving, values-led community where strategic leadership directly impacts the lives of children, young adults, families and colleagues across the Foundation.

At the William Henry Smith Foundation, we do not simply lead services; we build environments where people belong, grow and become the very best they can be.



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Director of Finance

Purpose of the role

The Director of Finance will provide professional leadership and management of all financial aspects across the organisation. You will ensure strong financial stewardship, effective planning, compliance with statutory requirements, and the delivery of value for money in line with the Foundation's vision, values, and strategic priorities.

This role will act as the Foundation's principal financial advisor, supporting the CEO, Board of Trustees, Governors and senior leaders with clear, evidence-based advice to inform decision-making and ensure resources are directed to achieving the best possible outcomes for children and young people.

To be an active presence, contributing to strategic direction, supporting effective decision-making, and promoting a culture of collaboration and accountability across the organisation.



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Job Description

Post: Director of Finance

Location: To be based at William Henry Smith School but requirement to work across all Foundation Sites

Contract: Full time, Permanent, All year round, 37 hours per week

Salary: NJC Points 51 – 54, (£63,837.00 – £67,435.00 per annum)

Responsible to: Chief Executive Officer / Executive Principals

Responsible for: Finance Team

Key Relationships: Chief Executive Officer; Principals; Registered Manager (Children's Home); Head of Care; Designated Safeguarding Leads; SLT and Operational Managers; Board of Trustees / Governors; External Regulators, and local authorities



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Duties and Responsibilities

Strategic Financial Advice

- Lead the development and delivery of the Foundation's financial strategy, ensuring it aligns with the Foundation's mission, vision and values.
- Act as the principal financial advisor to the CEO, Board of Trustees, Governors, Trustees and senior leaders.
- Provide insight, analysis, and professional advice to inform strategic and operational decision-making.
- Develop robust financial models to support the Foundation's sustainability, growth, and long-term planning.
- Ensure the Foundation is compliant with all statutory and regulatory financial requirements.

Financial Management & Compliance

- Lead and oversee all aspects of financial management across the Foundation, ensuring compliance with Foundation policies, ESFA regulations, Companies House and Charity Commission requirements.
- Lead the annual budgeting process and ensure the timely and accurate production of financial reports, including monthly/termly management accounts and preparation of year-end statutory accounts in compliance with all relevant regulations and accounting standards.
- Lead on internal and external audit processes and VAT compliance, ensuring timely and accurate reporting
- Provide accurate, timely reports to the Foundation Trustees, Governors, CEO, senior leaders and other stakeholders as required.
- Develop, monitor and present annual budgets, ensuring alignment with Foundation strategy and financial sustainability.
- Produce robust financial forecast to support decision-making and long-term planning.
- Ensure all financial reporting meets internal deadlines and external filing requirements.
- Provide strategic financial guidance to trustees and senior leadership management team, highlighting risks and opportunities.
- Act as the key contact for auditors, bankers, funding bodies, and regulatory agencies, ensuring compliance and strong working relationships.
- Maintain strong internal controls, financial policies, and procedures across the Foundation.
- Ensure effective financial risk management, including monitoring reserves and cash flow.



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Duties and Responsibilities

Operational Delivery

- Provide accurate financial reports, forecasts and budget projections for the Foundation including trustees, strategic leadership team, board, Business and partnerships SIG and all services and departments to support effective financial planning and management.
- Monitor financial performance across all services, providing professional challenge and support where required.
- Manage procurement processes, ensuring compliance and securing best value.
- In collaboration with the VP Business, Resources and Operations lead on capital planning, including funding applications and oversight of capital projects.
- Oversee payroll, pensions, and VAT compliance across the Foundation.

Leadership & Team Development

- Lead and manage the finance team, including recruitment, training, and ongoing professional development.
- Develop and maintain professional working relationships across the Foundation, promoting collaboration and supporting colleagues in financial matters.
- Have knowledge of all the Foundation's Ofsted & other regulatory bodies compliance expectations/standards.
- Promote a culture of collaboration, continuous improvement, and professional development.
- Champion and role-model the Foundation's values, embedding them in financial decision-making and everyday practice.

Other Specific Requirements

- To participate in the Foundation's programme of performance management.
- Understand their professional responsibilities in relation to the Foundation's policies and practices.
- To participate in whole Foundation training days.
- To ensure your Essential Training/Reading is kept up to date as well as any CPD relevant to the role.
- To work across all Foundation sites as and when required by line management.
- To undertake such other duties appropriate to the post as may from time to time be required to ensure the smooth and efficient running of the Foundation.



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Person Specification

Director of Finance

William Henry Smith Foundation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment.

A – Application form

I – Interview

R – Reference

E – Essential

D – Desirable

Education/Qualifications/Training	E	D	A/I/R
Qualified accountant (ACA, ACCA, CIMA, CIPFA or equivalent).	/		A/I
Degree level qualification or equivalent professional experience.	/		A/I
Postgraduate qualification in finance, leadership or business management.		/	A/I
Evidence of continuing professional development relevant to the role.		/	A/I



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Experience	E	D	A/I/R
Over five years experience in a progressive finance leadership role	/		A/I
Extensive experience of strategic financial planning, budget management and forecasting.	/		A/I
Experience of preparing statutory accounts and managing year-end audit processes.	/		A/I
Experience of leading and developing finance teams with a proven track record of making and implementing essential change.	/		A/I
Experience of presenting financial information to boards, trustees or senior leadership teams	/		A/I
Experience of financial risk management, internal controls and compliance.	/		A/I
Experience within education, charity, public sector or multi-site organisations.		/	A/I
Experience working within ESFA, charity or academy trust financial frameworks.		/	A/I
Experience overseeing payroll, pensions and VAT in a regulated environment.		/	A/I
Experience supporting capital projects and funding applications.		/	A/I



Knowledge & Understanding	E	D	A/I/R
Strong understanding of financial regulations, accounting standards and governance requirements	/		A/I
Knowledge of budgeting, management accounting and financial modelling.	/		A/I
Understanding of audit requirements and statutory reporting obligations.	/		A/I
Knowledge of procurement and value for money principles.	/		A/I
Understanding of safeguarding responsibilities and professional conduct within an educational or care setting.	/		A/I
Knowledge of Companies House and Charity Commission requirements.		/	A/I
Understanding of Ofsted and regulatory compliance expectations within education and care settings		/	A/I

Personal Qualities	E	D	A/I/R
Values-driven, committed to Safeguarding, student welfare, equality and diversity	/		A/I
Self-motivated and proactive, with a willingness to undertake further training and continuous learning	/		A/I
Commitment to the aims, values and ethos of the Foundation, including Quality of Life and Positive Behaviour Support	/		A/I
Willingness to undertake training as required and commitment to ongoing professional development	/		A/I
Demonstrates integrity, professionalism and resilience	/		A/I
Collaborative and approachable leadership style	/		A/I
Commitment to continuous improvement and high standards	/		A/I
Strong interpersonal and communication skills	/		A/I
Passion for improving outcomes for children and young people		/	A/I
Additional Factors	E	D	A/I/R
Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young adults	/		A/I
Willingness to undertake enhanced DBS clearance	/		A/I
Willingness to work across Foundation sites when required.	/		A/I
Commitment to ongoing professional development and training.	/		A/I



Application Information

Visits to the William Henry Smith Foundation are highly recommended prior to making an application.

For further information on this post or to arrange a visit, please contact the HR Department on
HR@whsfoundation.org.uk or 01484 710 123

All our roles are by application via SAM Recruit – **we do not accept CVs**

When completing your application form, you must refer carefully to the Job Description and Person Specification. Please ensure that you fully complete all sections of the application form including salary and reasons for leaving employment and clearly demonstrate how you meet each of the essential criteria outlined in the Person Specification.

Please apply by visiting our vacancies page: [Our Vacancies](#)

We reserve the right to close this vacancy early if we receive sufficient applications for the role. Therefore, if you are interested, we would encourage you to submit your application as early as possible.

Colleague Benefits & Wellbeing Brochure

At the Foundation, our colleagues are at the heart of everything we do. This brochure brings together the wide range of benefits, wellbeing support, and professional development opportunities available as part of our vision to transform lives and break down barriers, empowering every individual to reach their fullest potential, based upon Our Core Values

Health & Wellbeing Support

Westfield Health

Fully funded core cover (colleagues pay only the taxable benefit). Includes:

- Doctor Line & Best Doctors access
- CBT sessions and counselling
- 24/7 counselling and legal advice
- £150 alternative therapies allowance
- £150 physiotherapy and related therapies allowance
- Routine healthcare cashback (dental, optical, chiropody)
- Easy access via dedicated app

Fitness & Lifestyle Support

- Nutritional and physical training from a specialist personal trainer
- Lifestyle, wellbeing and financial guidance
- Encouragement of peer learning and shared expertise

Headspace

Reduced annual subscription for meditation, mindfulness, sleep tools and stress reduction

Menopause Café

A supportive and inclusive space to learn, share experiences, and access resources

Occupational Health

Onsite Occupational Health Nurse and a team of external consultants supporting physical and emotional wellbeing.

Annual Flu Vaccine

Free flu vaccinations delivered onsite.

Life Assurance Scheme

4x annual salary coverage (or via Teachers' Pension Scheme). Expression-of-wish form completed on joining.



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Work–Life Brilliance

Quality of Life Hour

Weekly dedicated wellbeing hour with activities such as yoga, HIIT gym work, arts & crafts, gardening, bingo, badminton, darts, secret spa sessions, nail delights and more

Free Staff Meals

- Daily hot lunch in The Barn for School-site colleagues
- Delivered meals for College-site colleagues
- Termly refreshed menus and meals provided on L&D days

Wellbeing Gifts & Celebrations

- Wellbeing gifts at Christmas and Easter
- Subsidised staff Christmas party and end-of-summer celebration

Free On-site Parking

Accessible, free parking with encouragement of car sharing.

Life Days

- One paid Life Day each academic year
- An additional Life Day for 100% attendance

Healthy Email Boundaries

Colleagues are encouraged not to check or send emails between 7pm–7am or on weekends (unless required by role).



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Financial & Lifestyle Benefits

Discounts for Teachers

- Free membership for all staff, providing:
- Discounts across retail, travel, utilities, insurance and more
- Cashback opportunities via an ode card

Perks @ Work

Free access to discounts across travel, groceries, electronics, cinema, home & garden and more

Cycle to Work Scheme

Available after 6 months' service via salary sacrifice, repaid over 12 months.

Branded Work Wear

Quality branded work wear, of which some is subsidised

Contributory Pension Scheme

- Competitive employer contributions to the Peoples Pension scheme:
- Standard: 4% employee / 6% Foundation (10% total)
- Higher: 5% employee / 7.5% Foundation (12.5% total)
- Heads of Departments Higher: 5% employee / 10% Foundation (15% total)
- All contributions made by way of salary exchange to provide for additional National Insurance contributions savings
- Teachers have separate pension arrangements through the Teachers Pension Scheme

Long Service Awards

Recognition gifts and certificates; additional week of holiday pay for term-time staff after 5 years' service.



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Leave & Family Support

Maternity, Adoption & Parental Support

Up to 12 months leave for all, with enhanced Foundation pay based on service and role

Additional Paid Leave

- Compassionate Leave
- Bereavement Leave
- Religious Observance
- Time Off for Dependants
- Funeral Attendance

Enhanced Family Leave

- Paternity Leave
- Neonatal Care Leave
- Parental Bereavement Leave



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Learning, Development & Career Growth

Induction & Onboarding

A welcoming, structured start including:

- First-day induction
- 4-week onboarding programme
- Assigned buddy system
- Half-termly SLT "Meet & Greet"

Performance Development Reviews (PDRs)

- Objectives set in September
- Interim review in March
- Full review in July
- Performance-related pay increments considered annually
- Exceptional recognition opportunities

Learning & Development Programme

- Three L&D days annually with keynote speakers
- Access to in-house and external training
- Coaching and mentoring
- Clinical supervision (internal and external)
- Access to extensive online learning via the National College

Employee Voice & Community

Surveys & Feedback Loops

Regular surveys and forums ensure your voice directly contributes to meaningful change

Wellbeing Champions

Each department has a designated champion who works closely with SLT to ensure colleague voice shapes Foundation decisions

Working Together for a Thriving Community

Every benefit in this brochure reflects our commitment to fostering a compassionate, collaborative, empowered and future-focused workplace. Thank you for being a valued part of the William Henry Smith Foundation. If you have any questions, the HR Team is always here to support you.



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