

Terra Nova School

Project Manager - Job Description



Overview

Terra Nova is entering a period of development and investment that requires careful management and a greater degree of effort from Governors and the school's Senior Leadership Team. To support this increased activity, the school proposes to appoint a Strategic Project Manager, reporting to the Headmaster, who will work on a part-time basis with the Head, the Bursar and the Chair of Governors to ensure that the school's strategic plan is built, approved and executed smoothly.

This role is largely new, covering areas which have hitherto been covered by ad-hoc activity by the Head, Chair of Governors and the Bursar.

Context

Terra Nova has increased its strength in all respects since the current Headmaster joined the school in September 2017. He has overseen a wide-ranging programme of change, most particularly in its core educational offering. Boarding has also been reinvigorated, and full boarding will return in 2019. A programme has begun to attract and accommodate students from overseas. Their arrival will both increase the cultural and racial diversity in the school, and will help to increase its revenues to a point where the school can contemplate serious investment in its fabric and facilities. Improved marketing, a new range of activities and an emphasis on science technology and mathematics will further increase the school's appeal, and secure a larger roll throughout the school, generating additional surpluses also.

Meanwhile the environment for junior independent schools in particular is becoming more challenging. Additional costs for teachers' pensions, and the likelihood of school fees attracting VAT will drive significant fee increases in the future. This will create a series of challenges and opportunities as other schools in the area struggle or are required to change their provision. This will create opportunities for Terra Nova to exploit its relative strength, either by expanding its own provision and roll, or by acquiring less successful schools in their entirety or through partnership with existing trustees and governing bodies.

Role Description - Overview

The Project Manager will have a twofold role, in generating and then carrying out strategic plans to exploit the opportunities that are likely to arise. A wide appreciation of the tasks involved in devising strategic plans is required, as well as the financial and technical skills to oversee the review, selection, approval and execution of the strategic plan once determined.

The role is likely to include liaison with external agencies, service providers and stakeholders in the wider Terra Nova community. This part of the role is crucial, but is likely to develop over time and is not defined closely here.

Specific Roles and Responsibilities

Strategic Planning:

The building blocks of a successful strategic plan for Terra Nova will entail the creation of:

- A clear understanding of the independent educational marketplace within a 50 mile radius
- A clear understanding of the Prep School market place outside of London
- A clear understanding of the UK boarding school market place (Prep School) outside of London
- A clear understanding of the Terra Nova offer and USPs vs the USPs of others within a 50 mile radius - this should also include information on rolls, educational offer and facilities available
- A Terra Nova master plan showing our current facilities and their % use (time)
- A range of options for the school to grow its provision and its roll, suitable for debate and decision making by the school leadership team and governing body, including for example:
 - A 2-5 year plan showing facility, staff and resource requirements should we go to 3 form entry or indeed to 16+
 - A finance strategy in order to execute the various plans proposed
- A capital finance plan, including options for borrowing, encouraging appeals and exploring other, more entrepreneurial routes to amassing sufficient capital
- A capital plan for the current site and facilities, along with a feasibility study and consideration of planning requirements and outcomes

A range of tasks are likely to be required to achieve this, including:

- Interviews and meetings with school leaders and governors
- Surveys, in collaboration with the Admissions, Marketing and Communications team, to assess market opinion among existing and prospective parents
- Research into other independent school/prep school USP's and associated statistics

- Research into current building applications in the area in relation to facility builds such as swimming pools, additional classrooms etc
- Meetings with likely stakeholders affected by changes to the school - Jodrell Bank, local authorities, Parents, staff, Governors, Sport England
- Research into possible ways to fund the projects and the range of plans proposed
- Masterplans for creation of a range of new facilities
- The creation of a range of short, medium and longer term plans, developed in consultation with the School's leaders and governors
- Commissioning and/or production of necessary plans, drawings and technical requirements for potential construction projects and initiatives
- Meetings and presentations to Governing Body, the school's bankers and other stakeholders, including parents when required.

Time Requirements, Training, Attendance and Terms of Employment

The role is likely to vary in its time requirements, but it is seen as a full-time roll for an experienced project manager. The role will be offered, therefore, on the following basis:

- Five days per week
- Normal or school holidays (with a preference for the former)
- A salary between £30 and £45k per annum pro rata for the eventual hours agreed
- A range of benefits including possible school fee discounts where applicable

In addition the Project Manager may work from any convenient location, or in the school if this is practical. In addition:

- Full access to school systems and information will be provided
- Some limited evening work may be required to allow attendance at Governors' committees and meetings. This will be scheduled in advance and time off in lieu will be granted where applicable.
- Applicants will be required to undergo appropriate DBS checks, and required to abide by school policies in all matters, including non-disclosure requirements.

More generally, work should be planned around the school's management and governance programme and other relevant commitments, and agreed in advance with the Head and Bursar.