



Job Description & Person Specification Director of Schools Relationships

Reporting to: Chief Executive

Salary Range: c. £60,000-£70,000 (dependent on experience)

Location: We operate hybrid/remote working practices. There is access to a hot-desking space in our offices in London but scope for the role to be predominantly remote working. The role requires flexibility and significant UK travel.

About the Foundation

We believe every child deserves the chance to thrive, regardless of their background. Royal National Children's SpringBoard Foundation ("Royal SpringBoard") is a social mobility charity working with more than 120 of the UK's leading schools to harness the power of fully funded bursaries and widening access to 'outreach' opportunities at boarding and independent day schools. Our vision is to transform the lives of children and young people facing disadvantage or vulnerability through providing them with access to a great education. In doing so we seek to create a sustained 'ripple-effect' - shifting aspirations and achievements and creating a movement of role models for future generations. To date, we have supported over 900 young people to access the life-transforming opportunity of a fully funded boarding school education and have plans to ensure that 2,000 young people are supported by our work by 2025. Read some of our impact stories [here](#)

About the role

This is an exciting opportunity for an outgoing individual with experience of working at a senior level in independent and/or boarding schools who shares a passion for the role that the independent and boarding schools sector can play in lifting the life chances of some of the UK's most disadvantaged and vulnerable children. We are at an important moment in the evolution of the charity: now placing upwards of 110 children and young people in new fully-funded boarding placements each year; expanding our portfolio of partner schools to include day placements from 2022, and extending our remit to including supporting those schools to also target outreach and partnerships activities for the benefit of the most vulnerable in society.

You will lead our work to secure greater investment by schools in bursary and outreach provision: growing the network of partner schools deeply committed to prioritising their bursary schemes for the most marginalised and vulnerable young people, ensuring that all SpringBoard bursary placements provide children and young people with the conditions in which they will thrive, using the insights from our work to unlock more places and build support for the role of boarding and independent schools in social mobility and raising attainment of children facing challenging circumstances, and overseeing the expansion of our remit to include support for independent and boarding schools seeking to better target their 'outreach' and partnerships work for the benefit of the most vulnerable.

Our Strategic Plan

We deliver our mission through four strategic objectives:

- Identifying children and young people for whom a fully funded bursary at an independent day or boarding school offers a life-transforming opportunity
- Working with schools to make available fully funded bursary places; matching those children and young people to the school best suited to their needs and interests; and providing support to ensure they thrive through their placements
- Encouraging those children and young people on leaving school to realise their ambitions, navigate fulfilling careers and make positive contributions in their communities
- Ensuring targeted access to other educational opportunities through independent school outreach programmes, for children and young people who are looked-after, or on the 'edge of' care but for whom bursary placements are not possible.

Our **theory of change**, included at the end of this document, describes the change that we wish to see and how we will make that change happen. It frames how we build our evidence, learn and continuously adapt our work on the basis of our research and impact assessment findings.

Our **evidence** to date shows that we are having a measurable impact as an engine for social mobility: transforming individual life chances, building a movement of inspirational role models and extending the provision of bursary and outreach opportunities to more children and young people facing challenging circumstances. But we know that the independent and boarding sector has the power to transform many more young lives. By continuing to grow good practice, raise standards in bursary and outreach schemes, and campaign for more schools to join our movement, we seek to transform the lives of at least 2,000 young people by 2025.

Our programmes

We have now supported more than 900 children and young people to secure bursary placements across 120 state and independent boarding schools, with 420 of those pupils currently in schools. We have four main programmes:

- 1) Our **Looked After and Vulnerable Children programme**. To date we have placed c.30 children who are looked after by their Local Authority, and c.350 children who have had significant contact with Children's Social Services and face circumstances that can be characterised as being on the "edge of care" in fully-funded boarding school bursary placements. We are commissioned by the Department for Education to grow this programme, and explore the role of day placements for these, often very vulnerable, pupils. This programme attracts significant political interest and, if scaled carefully, could have a profound impact on the landscape for children's social care and the perceived role and relevance of the independent sector in a complex area of social policy.
- 2) Our **Social Mobility programme** works to offer opportunities to secure a bursary place for young people from targeted areas of high socio-economic deprivation. We have formed strong relationships with community partners in [14 social mobility 'cold spot' areas](#) across the UK, and one with a national reach (IntoUniversity). These include state-funded 11-16 years schools seeking good 6th Form opportunities for their most disadvantaged school leavers; and charitable organisations such as Eastside Young Leaders' Academy (East London), Southside Young Leaders' Academy (South London), Hope Opportunity Trust (Liverpool and Cheshire) and others who provide mentoring and other essential services to raise social mobility in deprived communities.
- 3) Our **alumni** programme supports all our bursary holders on leaving school to realise their ambitions, navigate fulfilling careers and make positive contributions in their communities.
- 4) **'SpringForward'** is a pilot programme working with independent schools seeking support to target their outreach activities for the benefit of Looked After and Vulnerable Children. This

programme seeks to ensure that, for vulnerable young people for whom a bursary places is not available or appropriate, they can gain priority access to the support that might help to shift their life chances and that is available within the independent sector. In its' first phase the focus is on accessing independent school expertise in University preparation. In the years to come this might expand to tailor support across other areas such as music, the arts, sports facilities etc.

Our values

We ...

- always start with the child ... in everything we do we ask, "What is in the best interests of the child (or young person)?" . Our 'whole child'-centred approach means constantly asking ourselves if we are doing all we can to ensure children are healthy, safe, supported engaged and thriving academically
- are optimistic ... we believe passionately that a boarding or independent school education offers the opportunity to lift the life chances of all children, regardless of their background
- act with integrity ... our pupils, families, schools, and community partners trust us to make good decisions based on a confidence in our values and how we work
- are focused on impact and learning ... we hold ourselves accountable; we are committed to continuously reflecting on our pupils' experiences and adapting our model to respond to what we learn
- work together in a network ... we believe that it is only by working collaboratively in long-term, committed school and community-partnerships that we will make a lasting difference to social mobility. We are better than the sum of our parts

Our staff

You will join a small, close-knit team of ten staff all passionate about the role that independent and state boarding education can play in lifting the life chances of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable children. You will play a key role as a member of the Senior Management Team, working alongside the Chief Executive Officer, Director of Programmes, Director of Fundraising and Director of Finance & Compliance.

An organisational chart is included at the end of this document

The role

Key Responsibilities:

- **provide vision and leadership for the development of the Royal SpringBoard accredited schools network (the existing boarding network, and a new day school network)**
- **manage the relationships with schools to ensure the success of the pupil placement programmes**
- **identify and engage new schools to secure an increase in the number of "100%+" bursaries available for disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils in both day and boarding schools**
- **have full regard to Royal SpringBoard's policies and procedures and to uphold Royal SpringBoard's reputation, aims and values**

The postholder will:

Leadership

- As a member of the senior management team, play a key role in the development of the charity's medium and long-term vision and strategy.
- You will offer, and continuously develop, expertise and understanding of the issues facing the boarding (both state and independent) and independent day, schools' sector.
- You will actively promote Royal SpringBoard's values and respect diversity and inclusion in all aspects of their duties and working relationships.

Manage and grow the Royal SpringBoard accredited schools' network

- Maintain excellent working relationships with the partner schools within the Royal SpringBoard accredited schools' network to ensure they continue to offer significant numbers of "100%+" bursaries; and engage new (independent and state) boarding schools to expand the number of fully-fund bursaries available for SpringBoarders.
- Manage the ongoing review and expansion of our partner schools' network: overseeing the accreditation process to assure a 'kite-mark' of excellence in the care for full-bursary award holders (e.g. ongoing scrutiny of ISI/OFSTED inspection reports, visits, risk assessments and ensuring schools demonstrate their commitment to training and sharing of best practice)
- Lead expansion of the charity's remit to include identifying and engaging independent day, as well as boarding, schools committed to widening access to their full bursary award schemes for looked-after-children and those on the 'edge of' care (e.g. those with significant social care involvement), to deliver a shift in the targeting of all bursary places for the most vulnerable and marginalised.
- Work closely with the Programmes team to ensure effective matching of pupils to available placements: coordinating and managing all preparation, admissions and ongoing support procedures; selecting candidates on the basis of interviews; liaising with community partners, Local Authority representatives, families and schools as needed; coordinating and managing admissions procedures including taster visits etc.; and transfers of pupils between schools as needed.
- Secure engagement from independent schools in SpringForward – our pilot programme to extend our remit to include support to ensure Looked After and Vulnerable children for whom a bursary place is not available or appropriate can access targeted opportunities offered by independent school outreach and partnership activities that will improve their life chances.

Advocacy and Communications

- Design and deliver appropriate training for schools, including events and other training as required - tailored as necessary to the issues particular to e.g. attachment and trauma-based practices for those schools supporting looked-after and vulnerable children, particular issues affecting day as well as boarding placements etc.
- Actively contribute to the charity's learning and legacy through supporting the Impact Assessment & Evaluation Manager to analyse the evidence of our impact; and ensure this evidence is disseminated in a way that builds good practice and supports the charity's ability to effectively campaign for the positive role that bursary placements can play, in order to unlock more fully-funded bursary places for deserving children at more schools;

- Work with all our schools to understand and adapt the place of bursary giving in building inclusive school communities that promote respect and tolerance of differences and diversity;

Line-Management Responsibilities

- Ensure the Impact Assessment & Evaluation Manager is supported and developed in line with our values and standards of line management and leadership.
- Agree responsibilities, objectives and priorities and carry out regular 1-2-1's and bi-annual appraisals.

What you can expect in return:

- You will be part of a small, friendly and committed team. Although some are based in London, others predominantly work from home. Standard hours are 9am – 5pm with an hour for lunch but the role is open to those seeking other, flexible hours.
- There will be occasional evening/weekend commitments for which appropriate time off in lieu will be given in order to help staff maintain a healthy work-life balance.
- Annual Leave: the full time equivalent annual leave entitlement is 30 days (excluding public holidays). This would be pro-rata'd to reflect the part-time working hours of the successful candidate; with further options to extend the leave entitlement to be taken as unpaid leave.
- Probationary period: 3 months.
- DBS: This post is subject to a satisfactory DBS disclosure.
- Pension: If the post holder is over 21, they will be auto-enrolled into the NEST pension scheme but may request to opt out.

Making an application

- Please apply online via www.charityjob.co.uk (LINK NOT YET PUBLIC) with a CV and covering letter demonstrating how your skills and experience meet the person specification below.
- We regret that we will only be able to contact applicants who are short-listed for interview.
- Royal SpringBoard is an Equal Opportunities Employer and we seek to build a team that reflects the diverse communities that we serve.
- Candidates will be selected on the merits of their application and through competency and values-based interviews.

Person Specification

	(Essential) (Desirable)
<u>Qualities, Attitudes and Values</u>	
Strong and demonstrable commitment to Royal SpringBoard's vision, mission, values and policies	(E)
Enthusiasm and optimism for the role of the independent sector, and boarding schools (state and independent) in providing an excellent educational experience for children and young people from diverse backgrounds and a passion for the widening access and partnerships agenda, in particular in relation to the independent education sector	(E)
A commitment to personal development, reflection and continuously identifying opportunities for improvement.	(E)
A passion for working with children and young people from diverse backgrounds and putting them at the heart of our work.	(E)
Motivation to work within multi-disciplinary environments; and ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children, young people, parents/carers, other disciplines	(E)
<u>Skills</u>	
Ability to form and maintain strong working relationships across the charity's partner network (with schools, Local Authorities and partner organisations)	(E)
Ability to ask searching questions and make sound judgements in the best interest of a child/young person.	(E)
Outstanding verbal and written communication skills.	(E)
Excellent organisational, administrative and IT skills	(E)
Leadership qualities to motivate and inspire others	(E)
Influential and confident in a range of different environments	(E)
Ability to juggle multiple tasks and complete work within fixed deadlines.	(E)
Ability to analyse and synthesise complex information in a logical matter	(E)
<u>Knowledge</u>	
Of issues affecting the boarding (both state and independent) and independent day, schools' sector.	(E)
Of the issues and challenges facing children and young people from areas of high socio-economic deprivation, who are looked after by local authorities or facing vulnerabilities	(E)
Of local authority systems and processes in relation to education and children's services	(D)
Of effective strategies to enhance learning and professional development	(D)
<u>Experience</u>	
Of working at a senior level within the boarding or independent education sector	(E)
Of working with children and young people	(E)
Of working with children and young people from areas of high socio-economic deprivation, who are looked after by local authorities or facing vulnerabilities	(D)
Of selling a vision: influencing others to join a movement through presenting and public speaking.	(E)
Of contributing to strategy development and delivery.	(D)
Of all aspects of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people	(E)

Our theory of change



