



Candidate Brief

Brief for the position of
Senior IT Manager, Thomas's London Day Schools
September 2012

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Letter from the Executive Principals

12th September 2012

Dear Candidate,

Vision, opportunity, tenacity and leadership, as much as good fortune and sheer hard work by a good many people, have built Thomas's London Day Schools from nothing forty years ago into a celebrated presence within independent preparatory education in central London today.

Thomas's core belief is to "Be Kind". We believe that a child who is happy will grow in confidence, learning and understanding. We work in partnership with our parents to share this responsibility throughout their children's preparatory school years.

Through a broad curriculum, we seek to offer children the widest opportunities to "have a go". We recruit and provide for a significant number of specialist staff, because we believe the best teachers are those who have a passion for their subject.

We have invested many millions of pounds to provide the facilities needed to offer our curriculum, as we believe that the curriculum defines the schools' requirements and not the other way around.

Organisationally, we have structured our schools to allow our leaders the ability and autonomy to lead.

We employ open-minded, forward-thinking, child-focussed and parent-orientated professionals, who share our belief that together we can make anything happen.

Expectations of our schools and ourselves are sky high, because expectations of our pupils are too. We do not see a ceiling to our ambitions for Thomas's.

We need help now to continue to deliver on these ambitions for IT. Until now, we have been most fortunate to grow our IT infrastructure with the efforts of a small but dedicated team working under the direction of David Jackman, a Senior IT Consultant who is retiring from London after many years of good service.

David and his team delivered dramatic organic growth and considerable investment to enable IT to grow largely from nowhere to become embedded into every aspect of a Thomas's education. Much to be proud of has been achieved during a rapid period of expansion and a significant infrastructure has been built for the future. Project management for each major installation has been strong but a growing weakness developed unaddressed by not planning strategically for the ongoing support of the ever enlarging IT infrastructure. We continued to concentrate on further installations at the expense of the day to day tasks of keeping the lights on and the system flexible enough to accommodate all future demands of an increasingly highly IT literate school community. We came therefore to deliver a less than satisfactory standard of support to our users in a simply vital area.

To address this we have spent this year restructuring and enlarging our IT Support Team. We have considered how we can best professionalise IT Support Services to make the demands on them sustainable. We have recruited higher calibre support staff and enhanced strategic planning for

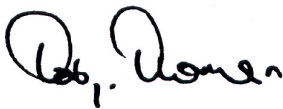
enhanced teaching and learning with the appointment of Taryn Hauritz, Director of Learning Technologies. We have commissioned in house software development for Willow Tree, our own Educational Management Information System on top of further development of the already active bespoke VLE which underpins all functions now.

We now seek to recruit the key post of Senior IT Manager to have real responsibility across Thomas's and to lead, manage, motivate, inspire a team to deliver both support and further continuous enhancements to the high standard of care that we deliver elsewhere.

We offer you a central position within a fast moving environment and a challenge without end, which we are certain, will captivate the right candidate, as it has captivated us.

If this challenge is for you, we look forward to meeting you in due course.

Yours sincerely



Tobyn Thomas
Principal



Ben Thomas
Principal

Background

Thomas's London Day Schools is a group of leading preparatory schools in London. The schools are self-supporting, independent day schools for girls and boys, offering education to 1,950 pupils between the ages of two and a half and thirteen within central London.

Thomas's was founded in 1971 when Joanna Thomas started the Ranelagh Kindergarten in a Pimlico church hall (now Thomas's Kindergarten, Pimlico). Six years later, David Thomas, a former Gurkha Officer, joined his wife in founding a school for older children. The school was to embody the ideals they had developed themselves as parents of children in London day schools. They envisaged a co-educational school, with high academic aims, but also with a wide curriculum taught by energetic members of staff. The first school came into being in 1977 with two teachers and eleven pupils.

Over the course of the school's successful growth and development, freehold buildings in Kensington, Battersea and Clapham and a long lease on a building in Fulham were acquired and a second kindergarten was opened in a church crypt in Battersea. A cycle of ongoing investment in construction, refurbishments and improvements has ensured excellent facilities and accommodation in all the premises.

In 1995, David and Joanna's sons, Tobyn and Ben, were appointed Principals, having worked in the schools for a number of years. In 1999, David and Joanna Thomas retired from active management of the schools, which are now run by Tobyn and Ben. Ben is also Headmaster of Thomas's, Battersea.

Each school has its own Head who has responsibility for academic and administrative management through a common timetable and curriculum. The Heads refer to the Principals on matters of policy, and liaise with the Vice-Principal on curriculum matters. Financially the Heads operate each school within budgets agreed with the Principals, who retain executive authority. Budgets are operated via the Director of Finance who is based in the Accounts Office in Ringwood, Hampshire and who reports direct to the Principals. IT is delivered by a dedicated team under the direction of the Director of Digital Technology working in partnership with the Senior IT Manager and others.

Thomas's has a single school rule, which is to "be kind". Thomas's believe that children learn best when their self esteem is as high as it can be. It is therefore the prime concern that children at Thomas's are happy. They provide for their education by giving each child dignity and self-esteem through a sense of achievement, be it academic, artistic or sporting. They believe that this is best provided for by motivating an energetic staff to teach pupils to the best of their ability within their chosen specialism. In these exploratory years, they offer a broad curriculum covering a wide range of subjects and skills so that by the time they leave the pupils will have begun to identify individual areas of talent. Thus, in a positive and stimulating environment they ensure that each child achieves the best academic results of which he or she is capable through a process of enjoyment, learning and achievement.

Our Values

Kindness – Courtesy – Appearance – Independent learners – Confidence – Humility – Givers, not takers

Kindness

We expect all at Thomas's to be kind; to be good friends to those around them, always on the lookout for those in need of a word of encouragement or a listening ear. We expect our pupils, staff and parents not just to tolerate but to celebrate difference in others.

Courtesy

We expect our pupils to be unfailingly courteous and polite; to stand back, holding the door open, to allow adults through; to be particularly aware of the very young and the very old; not to 'hog the pavement' on school trips; to say "please" and "thank you" without prompting.

Appearance

We believe that we should take pride in our schools and in ourselves and that appearance matters. Boys are expected to tuck in their shirts and girls to tie back long hair.

Independent learners

We would like our pupils to become independent learners; to be organised and to manage their books and belongings effectively; to be conscientious about their homework and to hand it in on time. In the classroom, we would like them to be good listeners, who respect and appreciate the effort made by their teachers, who strive to broaden their knowledge and add to their skills.

More than that, our pupils should begin to undertake their own learning, reading around subjects that interest them, carrying out their own research and making full use of the resources available to them.

As a result, we would like our pupils to gain a growing sense of enquiry and wonder about the world around them; about the vast body of knowledge and skills that has brought mankind to where we are today – and about how much there is still to learn.

Confidence

We expect our pupils to acquire self-knowledge by encountering both success and failure in an environment of support and encouragement, both at school and at home. Consequently, they should feel 'comfortable in their own skin'; full of self-confidence and able to make their own judgements. We believe that these qualities will make them natural leaders.

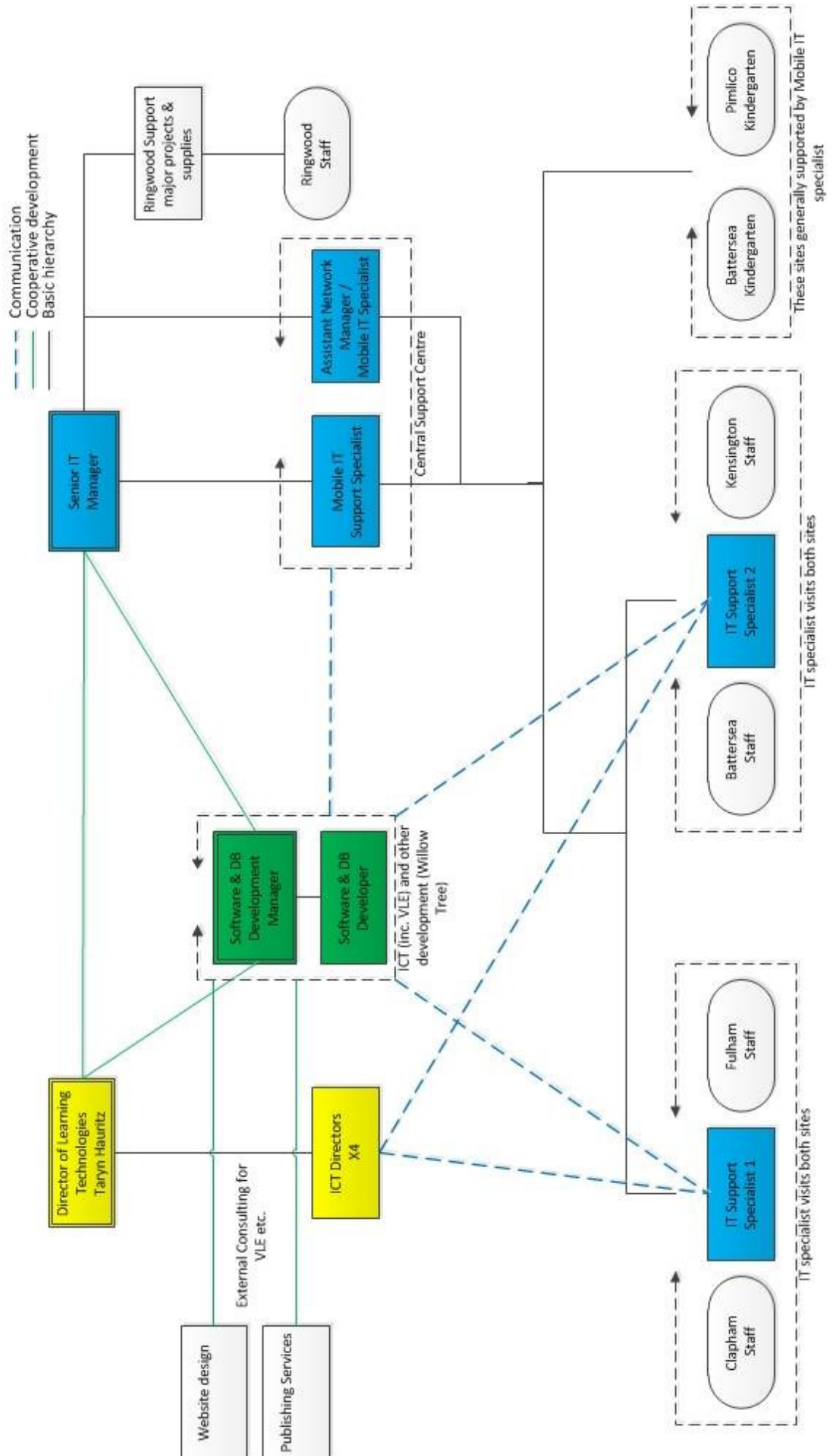
Humility

Notwithstanding such confidence, our pupils are expected to retain a sense of humility; to be conscious of the advantages they enjoy and to be thankful for them. We hope that all pupils will acquire a sense of the eternal and that this will inform their perspective of their place in the world.

Givers, not takers

Above all, we would like all members of the school community to be givers, not takers; to show generosity of spirit; to use our skills and talents first for the benefit of others. We hope that our pupils will leave our schools with a strong sense of social responsibility, set on a path to become net contributors to society.

Thomas London Day Schools IT Services Structure



The Role

Management of the core networks of four Schools and associated IT and ICT technology. Each site has between 130 and 160 workstations and 8 to 15 servers. Generally every classroom also has presentation equipment in the form of; projectors, interactive white boards and other audio visual aids. The four sites have their own private fibre circuit linking them to a network solutions provider. The Senior IT Manager is expected to cater for the technology requirements of both teaching and administrative staff by directing the IT support team and driving the technology forward whilst maintaining stability throughout. Thomas's demand for educational technology is now increasing at a significant rate and the Senior IT Manager is expected to be a key driving force behind future successes.

Key roles and responsibilities

- Reporting to the Director of Learning Technologies (DLT), with a line of communication to the Executive Principals.
- Line Manager to the Assistant Network Manager (ANM), Mobile IT Support Specialist (MITSS) and IT Support Specialists (ITSS).
- Help proactively co-develop the ICT strategy with the DLT and provide the technical knowledge required to deliver on-going and future ICT projects to budget constraints and relevant FITS guidelines and procedures.
- Work with the Software Development Team and provide technical resource to enable them to maintain existing and rollout new systems such as Virtual Learning Environment, Serco Facility and it's replacement Willow Tree.
- Fulfil the IT requirements of the school administration teams and manage their expectation of the onsite support team members.
- Co-develop and manage the core IT network / strategy with the ANM and keep to maintenance and project budgets.
- Be responsible and accountable for changes and upgrades to the core IT systems.
- Manage the support team with input / feedback from the DLT and ANM.
- Give direction and facilitate training both in house and externally for all IT team members, auditing staff skills where appropriate.
- Provide and maintain an agreed service level agreement (SLA) to all areas of the schools.
- Analyse data from the IT management system to identify recurring incidences and provide necessary support to the IT team to eliminate these.
- Manage the relationship with 3rd party suppliers in the IT / ICT environment, including; desktop and server hardware, AV equipment, web design, printing and multifunction device support.
- Co-manage the network wide security and risk strategy with the ANM in line with appropriate FITS guidelines.
- Ensure the configuration management database is maintained in line with appropriate FITS guidelines.
- In the absence of the ANM, deal with all core network emergencies etc.
- In the rare absence of both the ANM and MITSS be able to provide administration of user accounts for each system and provide support to members of staff if necessary.
- During school holiday periods the SNM and ANM will be responsible for providing and managing a schedule of works when required for major system changes and upgrades. Planning these works may involve liaising and coordinating with the Facilities Manager.

Experience / Qualifications

- Educated to degree level or equivalent.
- Management of Technical team and delivery of core infrastructure.
- Managing, motivating and developing IT staff skills.
- Confident in ability to deliver deadlines to relevant audiences.
- Management of a Tech desk environment or IT support team.
- Good interpersonal skills and ability to communicate on all levels with not only IT staff but also senior management and general staff members both verbally and in writing.
- IT Procurement skills.
- FITS Practitioner / Advanced – desirable.
- PRINCE 2 Project management.
- Previous experience providing IT support within an educational setting – highly desirable.

Technical skills required (this list is by no means exhaustive)

Essential

- MS Windows Server 2000 / 2003 / 2008 / 2008 R2 and associated versions including Hyper-V, MS WSUS
- Other virtualisation technologies eg. VMware and Citrix
- Active Directory and Group Policy
- SANs, offsite SAN replication/backup
- SQL Server
- Understanding and basic use of UNIX server webhosting environments in relation to VLE and Willow tree
- MDAEMON Messaging Server
- Google Apps / Docs / Drive
- MS Windows XP and Windows 7
- 3CX VoIP Server / Yealink VOIP phones or equivalent
- LANs, WANs, TCP/IP, Routing, VPNs, Kerio WinRoute Firewall
- Rack mounted servers / switches / routers / NTUs and other associated hardware
- Structured cabling systems including twisted pair and fibre
- Wireless network management and security
- Scripting in various forms in order to automate regular tasks and services

Desirable

- MS SharePoint 2010 / Office 365
- Understanding of AV technology including: Interactive Whiteboards, Visualisers and other presentation related hardware.

The Person

The successful applicant will be willing to support Thomas's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The personal qualities that the applicant requires to perform effectively in the role are as follows:

- A business-like appearance and presence
- A pleasant and friendly approach
- Hard working
- Honest
- Conscientious – goes the extra mile
- Punctual
- Have initiative
- Work well under pressure
- Be discreet
- Be organised and reliable
- Be resourceful
- Work flexibly
- Sense of humour
- Loyal to the school and supportive of its aims and objectives
- Willing to abide by the schools' terms and conditions of employment

Remuneration

Salary: £60,000+ depending on experience and qualifications.

Benefits: BUPA, contributory pension and free lunch.

Hours of work

- As required but normally Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm during term time.
- Some work outside of these hours will be expected.
- During school holiday time when there are major IT projects and system maintenance taking place, hours are likely to be more flexible to suit the workload.

Holidays: Six weeks holiday per year plus public holidays

- Holidays can only be taken by agreement from the DLT and on the clear understanding that the Assistant Network Manager is able to cover any high level incidents and requests.

The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The post holder's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons for whom he/she is responsible, or with whom he/she comes into contact will be to adhere to and ensure compliance with the school's Child Protection Policy Statement at all times.

If in the course of carrying out the duties of the post, the post-holder becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children in the school, he/she must report any concerns to the school's child protection officer or to the Headmaster/Headmistress (if different).