

	Job Description	
	Role: Director of Finance	
	Salary: £65,000 FTE per annum	Reports to: Chief Operating Officer (COO)
	Role specifics: Part time 30 hours per week, 52 weeks per year, annualised hours arrangement available	

Overall Purpose of the Role

To provide operational leadership and delivery across the school on all financial matters.

To partner with the Chief Operating Officer and members of the Operations Leadership Team to develop financial strategy, budgets and plans to ensure the school's continued financial health and sustainability.

To ensure financial management information is produced in a timely manner that provides insightful analysis to aid decision-making.

To champion a transformational programme to review, simplify and enhance the school's financial policies, systems, processes, cost control and ways of working across teams.

As the school's chief financial officer, to ensure robust systems and processes are in place to ensure good financial management and control, in accordance with the operational requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook and all other statutory requirements.

To lead, oversee, manage, develop and support the finance team to ensure high standards are met and objectives achieved.

Focus Areas

We currently anticipate the following areas as the most important near-term priorities for the new Director of Finance in their transformation and modernisation of the school's finance function.

Strategic financial management and insight

- Embed robust management accounting and reporting that delivers insightful commentary, analysis and accurate forecasting to aid decision making
- Design and implement a core suite of financial KPI measures to actively monitor the school's financial health and support its long-term sustainability
- Drive cost optimisation efforts to ensure spending aligns with available income

Technology, systems and processes

- Lead the selection and implementation of a new finance system to support current and future needs, increasing wider use of technology across financial operations
- Conduct a thorough review and redesign of finance processes, targeting current workflows, inefficiency and duplication

- Simplify financial flows, account coding and budget processes, to close the gap between budget, actuals and forecast data

Team leadership, culture and structure

- Undertake a review and optimisation of the finance team's structure, roles and responsibilities
- Cultivate and evolve ways of working to foster improved collaboration and partnership with other teams in the co-delivery of the school's strategy
- Develop and coach each member of the finance team to help them achieve their best and reach their full potential

The above priorities centre this role as an agent of change that cannot be content with the status quo, to work with and through others to deliver a more efficient, insight-focused, joined up and impactful function.

Main Areas of Responsibility

Strategic financial leadership

- Lead the finance team to deliver an effective, efficient and reliable finance function.
- Serve as a key member of the Operations Leadership Team; collaborating, influencing, listening, motivating and working effectively with other members of this team.
- Maintain an ongoing and up to date understanding of the school's financial position, supporting the Chief Operating Officer, SLT and Academy Trust Governing Board to make informed decisions based on sound financial information.
- Establish and embed robust processes to provide high-quality financial analysis and management reporting to support decision-making, strategic planning and resource allocation.
- Work with other staff to support the generation of new commercial income and external funding streams, alongside the delivery of targeted and considered cost base optimisation.
- Communicate effectively across diverse stakeholders, including staff, students, governors and parents.
- Keep up to date on current developments in school and academy financing to ensure the school optimises all available funding streams.

Operational financial management and control

- Lead the preparation of an accurate annual operating budget and three-year forecast.
- Monitor and report on in-year financial performance through the provision of accurate and insightful monthly management accounts.
- Oversee the development of effective and collaborative partnering with other teams to empower budget holders to manage and optimise resources.
- Maintain financial oversight of major capital works and manage the school's funds and reserves in line with agreed policy.
- Oversee the establishment of cashflow reporting to optimise cash positions and investments.
- Embed good procurement practice in line with the school's procurement procedures and conduct annual financial cost benchmarking against comparator schools.

Financial reporting and compliance

- Ensure a robust system of financial control and accounting, underpinned by clear policies and procedures, including reconciliation and control account processes.
- Oversee all statutory financial reporting and required returns, including to the Department of Education, Charity Commission, Companies House, Pension Schemes etc.
- Manage key external relationships, including auditors, banks and other specialist advisers.

- Work with the external auditor to ensure the accurate production of the Academy Trust and Foundation Company annual report and financial statements.
- Support the work of the Academy Trust Governing Board's Finance, Audit & Facilities Committee and the Foundation Company's Board, preparing papers and attending meetings.
- Ensure accurate, complete and timely month-end and year-end close processes, including payroll and boarding fee management.
- Ensure adherence to all finance-related legislative and regulatory requirements, including VAT & HMRC, and manage the school's insurance arrangements and contracts register.
- Carry out company secretarial tasks relating to the Academy Trust and Foundation Company finances.

Team leadership and management

- Line manage the finance team, currently comprising a Finance Manager role and three Finance Assistants.
- Create and cultivate an inspiring and positive team environment that keeps team members engaged, motivated and focused on achieving goals.
- Organise and manage the effective and efficient deployment of team members to ensure efficient delivery of all finance activities.
- Establish and maintain a culture of open communication and integrated working across all team tasks.
- Carry out team appraisals and performance reviews, ensuring team members receive appropriate and effective feedback, training and coaching.
- Coach and mentor staff to build capability and expand the team's skills base.
- Recruit and induct new team members.
- Encourage innovation and creative thinking, seeking best practice from inside and outside the sector.
- Lead by example, modelling the school's ethos, values, integrity and accountability.

Equalities

Be aware of and support difference and ensure that the school's equalities and diversity policies are followed.

Health & Safety

Be aware of and comply with policies and procedures relating to child protection, health and safety, food safety, confidentiality and data protection, and report all concerns to an appropriate person.

There will be times when the postholder works alone and they must be prepared to take all appropriate health and safety precautions, taking responsibility for themselves and the site whilst on duty.

Disclosure and Barring Service

This post is classed as having a high degree of contact with children or vulnerable adults and is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. An enhanced disclosure will be sought through the Disclosure & Barring Service as part of the school's pre-employment checks.

All those required to have a DBS check are required to inform the school at the earliest opportunity of any conviction, caution or bind-over that they have received or any police investigation which may lead to one of these. Failure to do so, without legitimate cause, would be a serious breach of school discipline.

Additional Information

The postholder is required to contribute to, and support the overall aims and ethos of the school, maintaining its high standards and expectations. All staff are required to participate in training and other learning activities, and in performance management and development as required by the school's policies and practices.

All new recruits to the school within this Grade are subject to a six-month probationary period, which should provide you with the opportunity to discuss your progress within the role, identify any training needs and address any concerns.

The duties and responsibilities listed above may be subject to ongoing change/adjustment in line with business needs. The post holder is expected to accept any reasonable alterations that may from time to time be necessary.

Knowledge, Experience and Personal Attributes

Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified accountant (ACA, CPFA, ACCA, CIMA or equivalent) • Strong financial acumen and senior financial management experience. • Understanding and confidence of relevant statutory and compliance frameworks (Charities SORP, Companies Act, Charities Act etc) • Experience of managing, leading, motivating, developing and directing teams. • Excellent inter-personal skills, with an ability to confidently liaise with a broad group of stakeholders at all levels within an organisation. • Ability to articulate financial information and insights to non-financial colleagues. • Proven and effective written and verbal communication skills. • Experience of working effectively with external auditors. • Ability and desire to be flexible in dividing time between strategic and operational priorities, working with and through others to deliver tasks to deadlines. • Ability to work independently, and take end-to-end ownership and accountability over both individual and the team's work and projects. • Proactive, can-do attitude, innovative, solution-focused, flexible. • High levels of resilience and determination. • Ability to work calmly and effectively under pressure within a complex and busy environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of leading a finance function. • Experience of working in a school environment. • Experience of implementing a new finance system and improving finance processes. • Experience of working in a boarding school setting. • Knowledge of school finance systems. • Understanding of the state school funding structure. • Desire to become involved in the wider school community. • Experience of supporting and working with boards/trustees at governance level. • Delivery of cost saving initiatives.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attention to detail and organised, with developed abilities in multi-tasking against tight deadlines and competing needs. ● Commercially minded, discreet and confidential. ● Willingness to adjust working patterns to meet job requirements, including for evening meetings and other school events. ● Self-awareness and willingness to seek support when required. ● A connection to the school's values and ethos. 	
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Postholder name:	
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Line manager name:	
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Postholder signature:	
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Line manager signature:	
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Date:	
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