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Director of Finance

Candidate Recruitment Pack

Director of Finance

School/Location: Rise Multi Academy Trust

Responsible To: Chief Executive Officer

Grade: Grade 15

Salary: £63,027 - £69,342

The post holder will also be expected to network and liaise across the multi academy trust group of schools and wider, to ensure a consistent approach pertinent to the post.

Contact us via: 0116 4783770 eskinner@risemat.co.uk rise-mat.com

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Shape the Future. Lead with Purpose. Inspire Change.

Welcome to Rise MAT: Where Your Impact Matters

Thank you for your interest in joining Rise Multi-Academy Trust as our new Director of Finance.

At Rise, we believe in more than just education; we believe in transformation. Every day is an opportunity to inspire, to innovate, and to make a tangible difference in the lives of pupils, staff, and communities. If you are a passionate, resilient school leader with a proven record of improvement and transformation, you will find your professional home here.

We are a trust defined by ambition, equity, and an unwavering commitment to excellence. We believe in a foundation of shared purpose and collaboration where each member of our team is given the tools to enable all to flourish and succeed. Alignment matters, and for those who thrive on challenge, innovation, and high expectations, this role offers a unique opportunity to grow and lead in a supportive environment.

This is your invitation to join a team not afraid to be bold, not afraid to pursue what they think is right, and that always strives for the best for our pupils and our people. Together, we work to shape a future where every child succeeds—and your leadership will be at the heart of that journey.

Are you ready for your next great challenge?

The Director of Finance is a key member of the Trust Leadership Team, responsible for leading the strategic and operational management of financial resources across the Trust. The postholder will ensure the Trust remains financially resilient, compliant and sustainable, enabling the delivery of exceptional educational outcomes through effective stewardship of public funds.

Reporting directly to the Co-CEO (Finance & Operations), the Director of Finance will provide trusted strategic advice to Trustees, the Co-CEOs and senior leaders, driving informed decision-making, organisational performance and long-term value for money across the Trust.

The role is responsible for ensuring accurate statutory and management reporting, strong internal controls, effective financial management and continuous improvement across the Trust.

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Welcome from the Chair of Directors

Stephen Adshead, Chair

Thank you for your interest in the Director of Finance role at Rise Multi Academy Trust.

As a key member of our Trust Leadership Team, the Director of Finance plays a vital role in shaping our strategic direction, ensuring financial sustainability and enabling our schools to deliver the very best outcomes for every child. This is an exciting opportunity to make a lasting impact across a growing family of schools through exceptional financial leadership and collaboration.

Thank you for taking the time to explore this opportunity. We hope this pack gives you a real insight into our vision, values and ambitions, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Welcome from the Co-CEO's

Thank you for your interest in the Director of Finance role at Rise Multi Academy Trust.

This is a unique opportunity to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of our Trust, ensuring that every financial decision supports the very best outcomes for our children, staff and communities. As part of our Trust Leadership Team, you'll work collaboratively to deliver our vision and help drive sustainable success across our family of schools.

Within this recruitment pack, you'll find everything you need to learn more about the role, our Trust and what makes Rise such a rewarding place to work. We hope it gives you a real sense of who we are and inspires you to become part of our journey.

Keri Harvey, Co-CEO (Finance & Operations)

Jo Westaby, Co-CEO (Education)

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Your Dual Impact

Shape the Trust's Financial Future:
Lead the financial strategy of a growing Multi Academy Trust, ensuring long-term sustainability and enabling every school to thrive.

Influence Strategic Decisions:
Provide trusted financial advice to the Co-CEOs, Trustees and senior leaders, helping shape the Trust's future through informed decision-making.

Maximise Impact for Children:
Ensure every penny invested delivers the greatest possible value, supporting exceptional educational outcomes across all our schools.

Drive Innovation & Growth:
Lead financial transformation, support Trust expansion and champion continuous improvement through modern systems and strategic thinking.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Financial Leadership:
Lead budgeting, forecasting and long-term financial planning to secure the Trust's future.

Lead the Finance Team:
Inspire, develop and empower a high-performing finance function that supports every school.

Governance & Compliance:
Ensure the highest standards of financial control, statutory compliance and risk management.

Support Trust Growth:
Lead the financial aspects of school growth, due diligence and successful integration of new schools.

Financial Insight & Reporting:
Provide clear financial reporting, benchmarking and analysis to support confident decision-making.

Build Strong Partnerships:
Work collaboratively with school leaders, Trustees , central teams and external organisations to achieve the Trust's strategic priorities.

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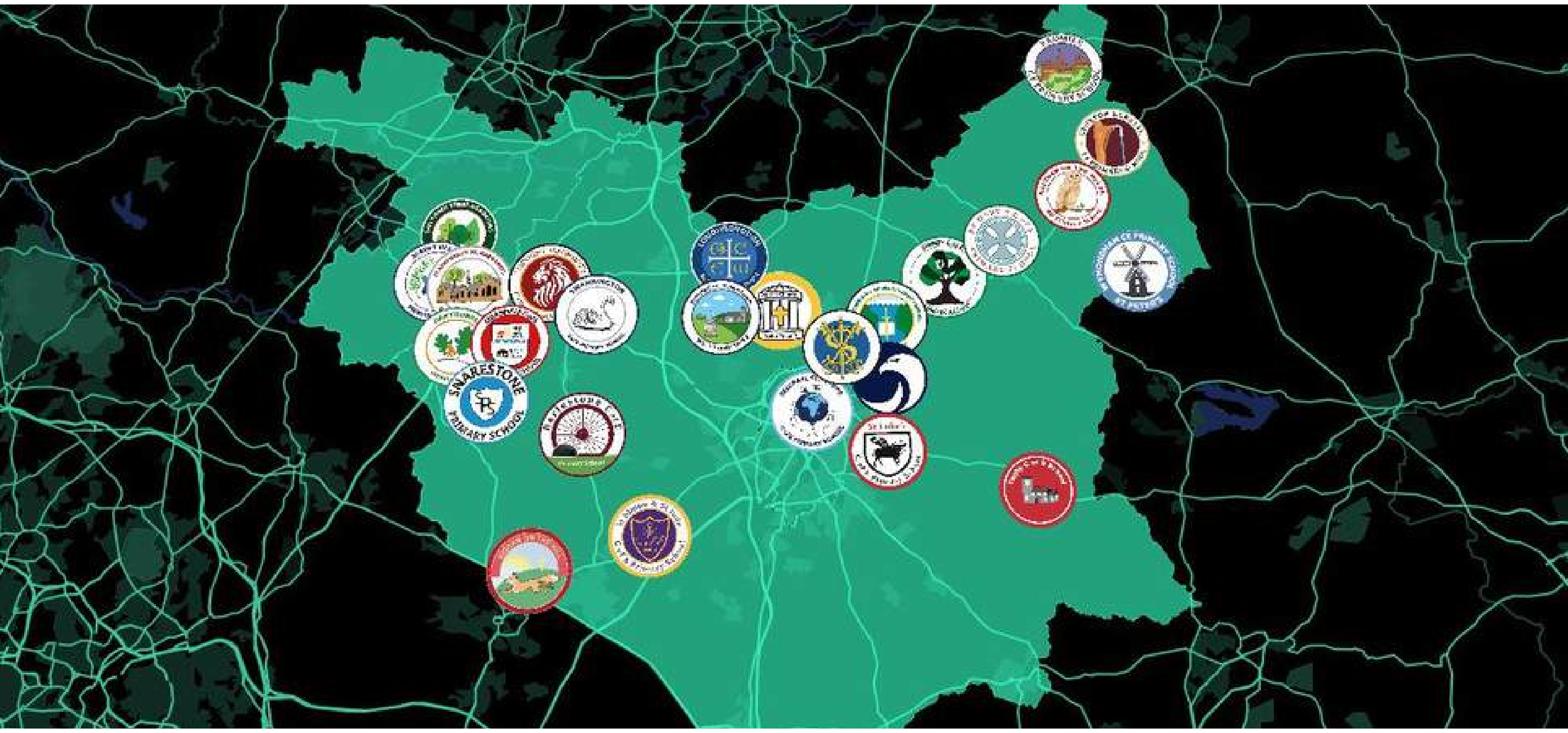
Ambition, Success, Equity

About Us: Rise Multi-Academy Trust

At Rise, we have a simple yet powerful vision: to enable all pupils, staff, and communities to flourish and succeed. We are a diverse trust with both Church of England and community schools, united in our belief in the power of education for the common good. Our work is driven by the CofE's vision for education and by an unwavering commitment to equity and inclusion.



Rise is a community of 26 schools across the East Midlands, working together within three geographic cluster groups. Our trust brings together a rich mix of Church of England and community primary schools, creating strong partnerships that celebrate both individuality and shared values. With schools located across Leicestershire, Leicester City, and South Derbyshire, we are committed to enabling every child to flourish and succeed within their local community.

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What We Offer

The best of both worlds

- An influential trust leadership role, with the flexibility of hybrid working.

A passionate, collaborative team

- Become part of our Central Team who are committed to making a difference—personally and professionally.

High-quality CPD

- Access to high-quality CPD, mentoring, networks, and the opportunity to lead system-wide initiatives.

Our Beliefs and Approach

Unapologetically ambitious

- We are unapologetically ambitious for every child, every family, and every member of staff.

We believe in success

- Not just academic, but personal, social, and emotional growth for all.

Equity is at our core

- We work tirelessly to remove barriers and ensure every pupil is ready for the world they step into each day.

Alignment matters

- We believe in strategic, values-driven financial leadership. Through robust planning and informed decision-making, you'll ensure every resource delivers the greatest impact for our children, staff and communities.

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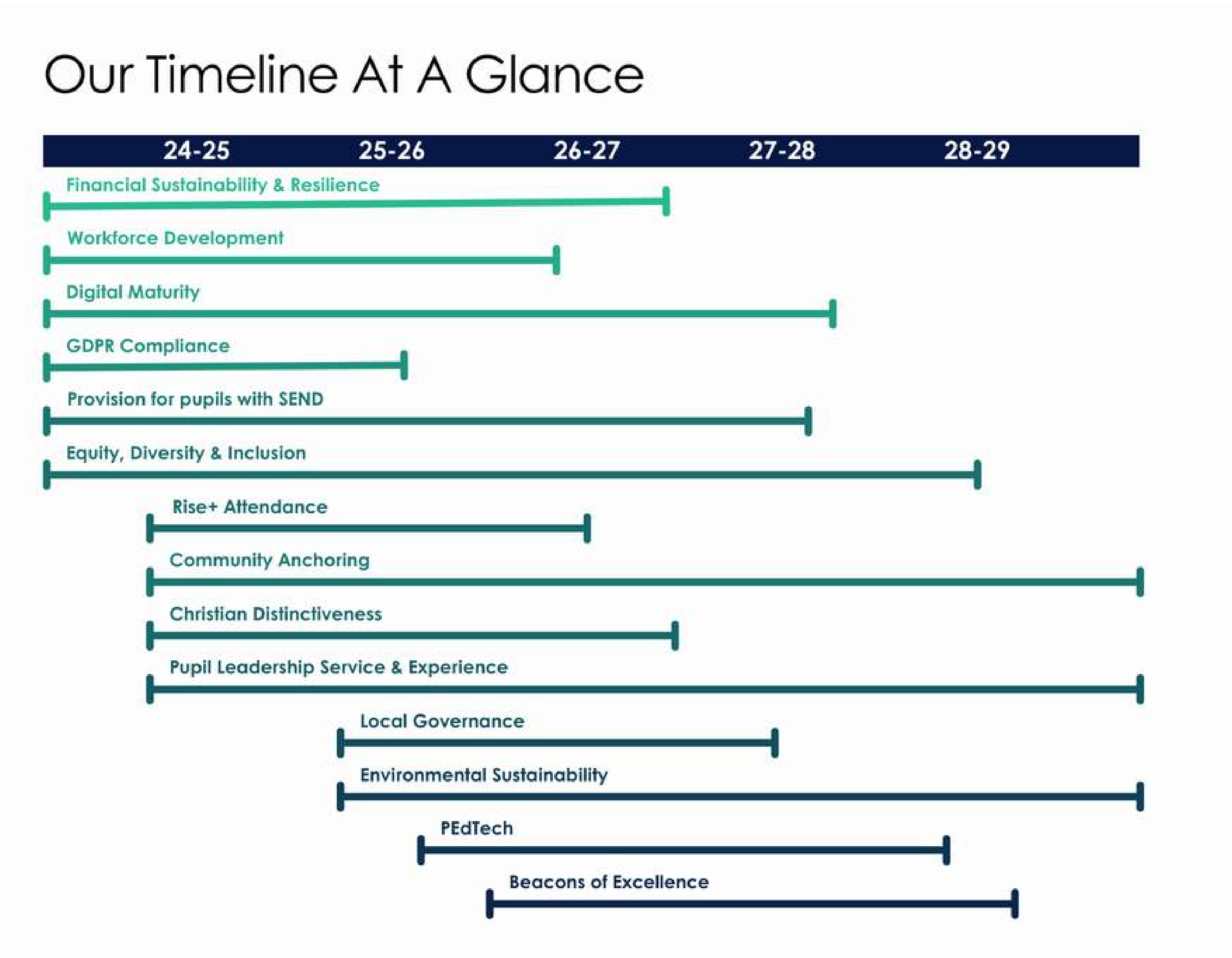
About Us: Trust Strategy

The Rise Trust Strategy (2024–2029) sets out a five-year vision to ensure excellence, resilience, and inclusivity across its schools, grounded in the belief that all should flourish and succeed. Building on strong foundations, the strategy focuses on four key themes: Resilience (financial stability, workforce development, and digital maturity), Community (anchoring schools in their localities, strengthening Christian distinctiveness, and promoting environmental sustainability), Advocacy (championing equity, diversity, inclusion, and provision for SEND and vulnerable pupils), and Opportunity (enhancing teaching through technology, fostering pupil leadership and service, and developing beacons of excellence).



Director of Finance

Job Description

This job description outlines the key responsibilities of the Director of Finance. As a key member of the Trust Leadership Team, the role provides strategic and operational financial leadership across the Trust, ensuring financial sustainability, strong governance and effective stewardship of public funds to support outstanding educational outcomes.

Key Duties & Responsibilities

Strategic Financial Leadership:

- Serve as the Trust's lead strategic financial adviser, providing robust financial insight, challenge and assurance to the Co-CEOs, Senior Leadership Team, Trustees, Headteachers and senior leaders to support informed decision-making and long-term organisational sustainability.

- Shape and influence Trust-wide strategy by ensuring financial planning, educational improvement priorities, workforce planning, estates strategy and operational delivery are fully integrated and financially sustainable.

- Lead the development of the Trust's annual budget, medium-term financial plan and longer-term financial modelling to support sustainable, evidence-informed decision making.

- Champion a culture of financial stewardship, accountability, probity and value for money, ensuring resources are deployed to maximise educational outcomes and organisational impact.

- Support the development, implementation and review of Trust strategies, policies and plans through insightful financial analysis, options appraisal and clear recommendations.

- Act as a visible senior leader, building effective relationships across the Trust and contributing to wider organisational leadership beyond the finance function.

- Model financial stewardship, collaboration and accountability as a visible senior leader across the Trust.

Key General Responsibilities

Financial Planning, Budgeting and Forecasting:

- Lead the Trust's annual budget-setting process from planning through to approval, ensuring assumptions are evidence-based, prudent and clearly linked to strategic priorities.
- Prepare and maintain rolling forecasts and medium-term financial plans, including scenario modelling, sensitivity analysis and options appraisal to inform strategic decisions.
- Lead the development of integrated financial planning approaches that connect curriculum delivery, workforce strategy, estates investment, SEND and inclusion priorities, and pupil outcomes to medium and long-term financial sustainability.
- Work closely with schools and central leaders to support robust school-level budgeting, constructively challenge assumptions where required, and ensure plans are financially viable.
- Monitor in-year financial performance against budget, investigate variances and recommend corrective action where necessary.
- Develop and use benchmarking, KPI reporting and financial analysis to assess performance, identify trends, drive efficiency and support resource allocation decisions.
- Support the Trust's approach to pooled funding and strategic resource allocation, ensuring financial leadership reflects the principles of equity, need, transparency and value for money.

Financial Control, Governance and Compliance:

- Ensure the Trust complies with all relevant financial, statutory and regulatory requirements, including the Academy Trust Handbook, funding agreement, charity and company requirements, and internal financial regulations.
- Maintain and continuously improve the Trust's financial procedures, systems and controls to safeguard assets, ensure propriety and support effective financial management.
- Oversee the integrity of the accounting system, chart of accounts, reconciliations, and month-end and year-end processes, ensuring timely and accurate reporting.
- Present clear, insightful and accessible financial information to Trustees, Board Committees and the Executive Team, translating complex data into strategic recommendations and actionable decisions.
- Ensure records are maintained to the required standard and that key financial decisions are supported by an appropriate audit trail, documentation and evidence.
- Horizon-scan emerging regulatory, funding and policy developments, assess organisational implications and ensure policies, systems and working practices are updated accordingly.

Key General Responsibilities

Statutory Reporting and External Returns:

- Lead the preparation and submission of all financial returns to the Department for Education, and other bodies within required timescales and to the required standard.
- Take responsibility for the preparation and delivery of the Trust's statutory annual accounts and supporting working papers, ensuring compliance with applicable accounting standards and reporting requirements.
- Oversee the production of monthly management accounts and performance reports that provide meaningful financial insight to leaders and Trustees.
- Act as a principal point of contact for external agencies in relation to financial returns, funding matters and reporting requirements.
- Ensure all reporting deadlines are planned, monitored and achieved, with robust quality assurance arrangements in place.

Audit, Risk and Assurance:

- Lead an integrated financial assurance framework that provides Trustees with confidence regarding compliance, internal control effectiveness and risk management.
- Manage relationships with internal scrutiny providers, external auditors and other assurance partners, planning work effectively and coordinating responses across the Trust.
- Oversee preparation for internal and external audit, ensure timely completion of audit recommendations and monitor progress on actions arising.
- Support the development and maintenance of the Trust's risk management arrangements, including the financial elements of the Trust risk register.
- Ensure financial risks, control issues and irregularities are identified promptly, investigated appropriately and reported through the correct governance channels.
- Promote strong governance, transparency and compliance through a disciplined and proportionate approach to assurance and risk management.

Cashflow, Treasury, Tax and Financial Sustainability:

- Actively manage the Trust's cashflow position, ensuring liquidity is maintained and cash resources are deployed effectively.
- Oversee banking arrangements, cash management processes and treasury activities, ensuring appropriate controls and efficient use of resources.
- Support the Co-CEOs and Trustees with investments, reserves and treasury matters, including analysis of options, risk and compliance with Trust policy and delegated authority.

Key General Responsibilities

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Cashflow, Treasury, Tax and Financial Sustainability:

- Plan and coordinate the Trust's tax arrangements, including VAT, business rates and other claims, ensuring entitlements are maximised and returns are submitted accurately and on time.
- Monitor financial risks affecting sustainability, including cost pressures, funding changes, staffing affordability and demand-led pressures, and develop mitigation strategies.
- Drive financial sustainability through strategic resource planning, efficiency transformation, income optimisation, investment analysis and data-informed decision making.

Payroll, Pensions and Employee Financial Systems:

- Provide strategic oversight of payroll services across the Trust, ensuring that employees are paid accurately and on time and that appropriate controls, reconciliations and checks are in place.
- Manage relationships with payroll providers and ensure that service standards, reporting arrangements and process improvements are maintained.
- Oversee pension administration processes for TPS and LGPS, ensuring accurate data, timely submissions and compliance with statutory and scheme requirements.
- Ensure that payroll and pension processes reflect current legislation and sector guidance, with changes implemented promptly and effectively.
- Work collaboratively with HR and other services on matters relating to pay, pensions, employee benefits, establishment control and employment cost reporting.
- Oversee associated compliance requirements, including P11D and other related returns where applicable.

Capital Planning, Fixed Assets and Estates Finance:

- Support the financial planning and oversight of capital investment across the Trust, ensuring alignment with strategic priorities, estate need and available funding.
- Contribute to the development of rolling capital plans and support the financial aspects of major capital projects, bids and grant applications.
- Ensure that the capital funding is appropriately monitored, accounted for and reported.
- Oversee the Trust's fixed asset accounting arrangements and ensure that assets records are accurate, complete and regularly reviewed.
- Work effectively with estates and operations colleagues to ensure that capital decisions are informed by affordability, value for money and long-term sustainability.

Key General Responsibilities

Data, Business Intelligence and Value for Money:

- Lead the development of financial dashboards, benchmarking and business intelligence tools that support evidence-based decision making at Trust, school and committee level.
- Develop and oversee the Trust's value for money approach, identifying opportunities to improve educational impact, efficiency and resource utilisation.
- Provide strategic leadership on workforce affordability, establishment control and long-term staffing sustainability, working closely with HR and school leaders.
- Use data intelligently to identify patterns, risks and opportunities, ensuring financial insight supports timely intervention and improved organisational performance.

Leadership of the Finance Function:

- Provide inspirational leadership to the finance function, creating a culture of excellence, innovation, accountability and continuous professional development.
- Lead, develop and manage a high-performing finance function that delivers responsive, accurate and customer-focused support to schools and central teams.
- Provide clear line management, coaching and professional development for direct reports and contribute to succession planning within the finance team.
- Ensure the team structure, roles, systems and ways of working remain fit for purpose as the Trust grows and evolves.
- Drive continuous improvement, standardisation, automation and effective use of financial systems to improve efficiency, stakeholder experience and reporting quality.
- Develop strong collaborative working relationships with Headteachers, school admin teams, HR, estates and other central functions.

Trust Growth, Due Diligence and Organisational Development:

- Lead all financial aspects of Trust growth activity, including due diligence, financial risk assessment, integration planning and post-conversion financial consolidation.
- Support the Co-CEOs and wider Senior Leadership Team in relation to Trust growth, including review of joining school information and transition planning.
- Oversee the integration of new schools into the Trust's financial systems, controls, policies and reporting frameworks.
- Provide strategic financial evaluation of new opportunities, partnerships, capital investments and organisational development initiatives to support sustainable growth.

Key General Responsibilities

Trust Growth, Due Diligence and Organisational Development:

- Review financial structures and service models periodically to ensure they remain appropriate for the Trust's scale, complexity and ambitions.
- Identify opportunities for collaborative working, shared services and improved operating models across the Trust and with external partners.

General Responsibilities:

- Uphold and actively promote the vision, values and ethos of the Trust.
- Maintain the highest standards of integrity, confidentiality and professional conduct.
- Work at all times in accordance with Trust policies, procedures and applicable legislation.
- Participate in performance management, professional development and relevant professional networks to maintain current knowledge and best practice.
- Undertake such other duties as may reasonably be required, commensurate with the seniority and broad remit of the post.

Special Factors:

- The nature of the work may involve the postholder carrying out duties outside normal working hours.
- The postholder may be required to attend training courses, conferences, seminars or other meetings in line with their own development needs and the needs of the Trust.
- Expenses will be paid in accordance with local conditions of service.
- The post is eligible for an enhanced DBS check under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 and is defined as regulated activity under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. An enhanced DBS check is therefore an essential requirement.

This job description is indicative of some of the main responsibilities of the post and is not exhaustive. It is expected that anything reasonably requested by your line manager would be included in your responsibilities, in keeping with the seniority of the post within the organisation.

Person Specification

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Education, Qualifications and Training	Essential	Desirable
Fully qualified accountant (ACCA, CIPFA, CIMA, ICAEW or equivalent recognised professional qualification).	✓	
Relevant education, public sector, governance or leadership qualification, with evidence of continuing professional development.		✓
Experience, Skills and Knowledge		
Significant senior finance leadership experience in a complex multi-site organisation, with responsibility for strategic financial planning, financial control and reporting.	✓	
Experience of systems implementation, process automation or service redesign.		✓
Experience of leading finance teams through organisational growth and/or change.		✓
Experience of advising Boards, Trustees or equivalent governance bodies and influencing strategic decision making.		✓
Strong experience of benchmarking, KPI development and wider business intelligence.		✓
Proven ability to lead, motivate and develop teams, set high standards and build positive relationships across a complex organisation.	✓	
Proven ability to translate complex financial information into clear strategic recommendations for non-financial audiences.		✓
Proven track record of leading budget setting, forecasting, scenario modelling and financial analysis.	✓	
Experience of working effectively with external auditors, internal scrutiny providers and assurance partners, with a strong understanding of financial governance and risk management.	✓	
Strong technical accounting knowledge, including statutory accounts, audit processes, management accounting, internal control and regulatory compliance.	✓	
Understanding of payroll controls, pension administration and key tax/VAT principles relevant to organisational finances.	✓	

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Person Specification

Personal Attributes		
Commitment to the Trust's vision, values and ethos.		
Ability to establish professional, supportive and appropriate relationships with colleagues, school leaders, Trustees, parents, carers and external partners.		
Willingness to contribute to the wider life and strategic development of the Trust.		
Commitment to promoting a distinctively Christian ethos, British Values, respect and inclusion across the Trust.		
Safeguarding & Equal Opportunity		
Commitment to the highest standards of safeguarding, equality and celebration of diversity.		
Ability to recognise discrimination in its many forms and willingness to put the Trust's Equality Policies into practice.		
Ability to perform all duties and tasks with reasonable adjustments, where appropriate, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.		
Commitment to safeguarding pupils and promoting the wellbeing of children and young people.		
Knowledge and understanding of the principles and values underpinning safeguarding and safer working practice.		



Ready to Apply?

If you are an ambitious financial leader ready to shape the future of our organisation as our Director of Finance, we want to hear from you.

To speak directly to our Co-CEO (Finance & Operations) for more information, email eskinner@risemat.co.uk

Together, let's pursue excellence — for every pupil, every school, every day.

Thank you