



**UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

School Business Leader

Candidate Information Pack

University of Cambridge Primary School

Permanent · Senior Leadership Team · January 2027 start

Welcome from the Headteacher

Thank you for your interest in becoming our School Business Leader.

I loved school as a child, and I still love learning now. That's what we want for every child here — and none of it works without the strong foundations that a great business leader provides. As a member of our Senior Leadership Team and the trust's appointed Chief Financial Officer, you will lead the finance and people functions that make everything else possible, and support effective governance of the trust.

We ask one question before any decision: what is best for this child? That question shapes our curriculum and our teaching, but it shapes how we run the school too — with honesty, with rigour, and in genuine partnership between our leaders and our team. I am looking for a business leader who shares that seriousness of purpose: someone who will hold us to the highest standards of financial integrity and compliance, and who understands that sound stewardship is not separate from our work with children but the very thing that protects and enables it.

You would join a small, capable business team at a settled and ambitious school, with strong support around the role. I hope you'll come and see us. I'd be glad to show you around.

Rob Drane
Headteacher

About our school

University of Cambridge Primary School is a large, three-form entry Free School in the Eddington development in the north-west of Cambridge — the first primary school of its kind in the country. We opened in 2015, growing from the recommendations of the Cambridge Primary Review (2010), with a founding commitment to reach high standards within the school and to build networks of educational possibility locally, nationally and internationally.

Our school is founded on three principles: inclusion, ambition and innovation. We believe in the power of collaboration, through strong relationships and clear communication, and in every child's capacity to learn. We believe that children are powerful and need a kind, caring approach within clear boundaries and high expectations, and we challenge and support them in equal measure to become independent, confident learners. Alongside knowledge and skills, we develop in children the values of empathy, respect, trust, courage and gratitude.

We work in close research partnership with the University of Cambridge's Faculty of Education — training new teachers, hosting researchers, and contributing to national conversations about what excellent education looks like. In all we do, we are guided by Professor Maxine Greene's idea of 'social imagination': to release the imagination and celebrate the art of the possible.

About the role

The School Business Leader leads all of the school's non-educational functions and is the trust's appointed Chief Financial Officer. Working closely with the Headteacher as Accounting Officer, you will lead finance and financial compliance, people and HR, procurement, and governance and risk, and line-manage our business team — including the Operations Manager, who leads estates, IT and data protection.

The full job description and person specification are set out on the following pages. In summary, we are looking for an experienced school business professional — or someone ready to step up into the role — with the financial judgement, integrity and leadership to hold this post with confidence.

Key terms

Salary	NJC SCP 34–38 (£45,091–£49,282 full-time equivalent), term-time (pro rata)
Hours	Full-time, term-time (40 weeks)
Contract	Permanent
Start date	January 2027
Reporting to	Headteacher (Accounting Officer); member of the Senior Leadership Team

Benefits

Wellbeing

- University Visit Card: free entry to Cambridge colleges, access to Eddington accommodation and the U bus service
- Discounted membership at the University Sports Centre
- A dedicated well-being day each year, plus 1:1 and group well-being sessions, a workload strategy and a calendar of team-building events
- Cycle to Work scheme
- A free, confidential Employee Assistance Programme covering legal, financial and mental health support

Professional development

- A trained Coaching and Mentoring Programme
 - Access to the Faculty of Education Library, University of Cambridge
 - Involvement in the school's wider research culture, including our Lesson Study Programme
-

Job description

1. Strategic leadership and contribution

- Serve as a key member of the Senior Leadership Team, shaping strategy, policy and operational direction.
- Work with the Headteacher to set short-, medium- and long-term priorities and deliver them through robust operational planning.
- Lead the school's annual operational and financial planning cycle, and embed continuous improvement and accountability across business services.
- Ensure business continuity and organisational resilience are established, tested and reviewed, working with the Operations Manager.
- Represent business and support services at Board and Committee level and with external bodies.
- Lead on marketing and communications, including branding and the school's digital presence, with website and IT delivery supported by the Operations Manager.

2. Financial leadership and statutory compliance (as appointed CFO)

- Ensure the financial sustainability and integrity of the trust, and advise and support the Headteacher in their responsibilities as Accounting Officer.
- Ensure full compliance with the Academy Trust Handbook, Companies Act, charity law, HMRC requirements and relevant frameworks.
- Oversee the preparation and submission of statutory accounts and regulatory returns to deadline.
- Direct management accounts, forecasts and performance reports for Trustees, Committees and regulators.
- Own budget-setting, monitoring and forecasting, including integrated curriculum and financial planning (ICFP).
- Maintain robust financial controls, the scheme of delegation and governance arrangements, and the authorisation framework within which the Operations Manager processes purchases and invoices.
- Oversee audit and maintain relationships with auditors, the Department for Education, HMRC, banks, pension providers and legal advisers, and oversee payroll and its statutory compliance.

3. People and HR

- Contribute to the school's people strategy and support workforce planning aligned to its needs.
- Ensure HR policies and procedures comply with employment law and reflect best practice.
- Lead on salary forecasting and the affordability of staffing structures, and ensure rigorous appraisal and performance management for support staff.

4. Procurement and value for money

- Lead procurement strategy and ensure arrangements deliver value for money, with effective tendering and contract-award processes.

5. Governance, risk and compliance

- Lead governance reporting to the Board of Trustees and Committees, and ensure accurate, timely and transparent reporting of performance.
- Maintain and develop the trust's risk management framework.
- Ensure overall compliance with data protection legislation and effective oversight of the Data Protection Officer function (held by the Operations Manager).
- Hold senior responsibility for health & safety compliance, with operational delivery led by the Operations Manager, and report on health & safety to the Board.
- Support Company Secretary duties and compliance with Companies House and governance requirements.

6. Leadership of the business team

- Line manage the Operations Manager and the wider business team, developing them to high standards of performance, and model the school's inclusive ethos.
-

Person specification

The selection panel will use the criteria below to shortlist; please demonstrate how you meet them. Key: A = Application, I = Interview, R = References.

Criteria	E	D	Assessed
A. Education, qualifications & professional development			
Degree or equivalent level professional qualification	✓		A
ISBL Level 4 Diploma for School Business Managers (or equivalent), held or willingness to work towards		✓	A
Qualified accountant (CCAB, CIMA, CIPFA, ACCA or ACA), or qualified by experience		✓	A
Evidence of continuing professional development	✓		A
B. Professional qualities, knowledge and experience			
Experience of financial planning and budget management, ideally in a school or academy	✓		A, I, R
Knowledge of the Academy Trust Handbook, DfE funding and assurance requirements, Companies House and charity requirements	✓		A, I, R
Strong financial knowledge including budget management, risk assessment and forward planning	✓		A, I, R
Experience of procurement and management of contracts and contractors	✓		A, I
Experience of people management, leading teams to strong outcomes	✓		A, I, R
Sound understanding of data protection and governance in an educational setting		✓	A, I
Results-focused, with strong organisation and decision-making	✓		A, I
Strong influencing and interpersonal skills; communicates clearly at all levels	✓		I, R
Commitment to safeguarding and to the school's inclusive ethos	✓		A, I

How to apply

To apply, please complete our application form and a supporting statement (no more than two sides of A4) setting out how you meet the person specification via **MyNewTerm**, our recruitment portal, by **12 noon on Monday 2 November 2026**.

Shortlisting will take place on **Tuesday 3 November 2026**, with interviews in the week commencing **Monday 9 November 2026**. We warmly welcome informal conversations and visits to the school before you apply; to arrange one, please contact James Tweddle via enquiries@universityprimaryschool.org.uk

University of Cambridge Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all colleagues to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check, online searches and satisfactory pre-employment checks. We are an equal opportunities employer and welcome applications from all sections of the community.