

Job Description

School Finance Business Partner

Reporting to:	Finance Director
Responsible for:	Assistant Schools Finance Business Partner
Liaising with:	Trust Executive Management Team, Head Teachers, School administrative staff, other Central team staff.
Grade/Salary:	SI
Hours of work:	37 hours per week
Location:	Office based at Cossington, with travel to Schools

Core Purpose:

To provide high quality financial support and information to Headteachers throughout the annual financial cycle including:

- preparing annual budgets
- preparing, reviewing and interpreting monthly School management accounts
- re-forecasting budgets
- understanding, explaining and reporting budget variances
- financial modelling and advice to support decision making
- making effective use of benchmarking and integrated curriculum Financial Planning

Duties, responsibility and key tasks:

Budget Management

- Work alongside the Finance Director to develop a budget setting strategy for the Trust that will ensure the long-term financial sustainability of all Schools in the Trust.
- Lead annual budget planning meetings with Headteachers, ensuring School priorities are factored into short- and medium-term financial plans.
- Undertake integrated curriculum and financial planning (ICFP) reviews at Schools, identifying efficiency savings and supporting the school's senior leadership team to develop an affordable curriculum that meets the needs of the school.

- Prepare budgets, forecasts and short- and medium-term financial plans for Schools.
- Actively monitor performance against the agreed budgets and budget headings, meeting with Headteachers and budget holders and taking prompt appropriate action where necessary to ensure each School and cost centre operates within its allocated budget.
- Working with the Assistant Finance Business Partner, prepare and regularly update the staffing budget for Schools, reconciling the information to the staffing establishment held within the HR system and ensure that any agreed changes were captured and updated promptly.
- Propose revisions to the budget in response to significant or unforeseen developments.
- Produce monthly Management Accounts for Schools, interpreting the results and helping Headteachers to know what their budget is and how they are financially performing.
- Approve recruitment requests after considering affordability and views from others on the Executive Team (when Finance Director not available).

Payroll and Pensions

- Assist with reviewing the monthly payroll, ensuring it is accurate and complete.
- Ensure that payroll data is reconciled to budgets on a monthly basis and investigating any anomalies.
- Approve monthly payroll (when Finance Director is unavailable).
- Consider and agree repayment plans where current or ex-employees have been overpaid, ensuring that the payroll and accounting treatment is correct.

Cash Management - Oversight

- Assist with managing the Trust's bank accounts and cash levels, ensuring funds are available to meet the day-to-day operational needs of the Trust.
- To act as a signatory on the Trust's bank account, checking, reviewing and approving payment runs and faster payments.
- To assist with chasing hard to reach bad debts, those older than 90 days, following the Trust's recovery process to minimise losses.
- To administer the recovery of bad debts through the courts.

Financial Efficiency and Value for Money – core responsibility

- Undertake benchmarking analysis to provide evidence of value for money and to highlight potential opportunities to save money at individual Schools and across the Trust.
- Lead and co-ordinate any projects as may be required by the Finance Director e.g. preparing financial projections for projects under consideration, e.g. staffing alternatives, etc.

Audit and Compliance

- Assist with the internal and external audit process.
- To understand and be able to explain to colleagues the financial rules in place to help protect Trust staff and resources including:
 - The Trust's financial procedures
 - Academy Trust Handbook
 - Accounts Direction and Charities SORP

Financial Efficiency and Value for Money

- Act as a senior member of the finance team, producing financial reports as requested for the Finance Director.
- Assist Schools with submitting grant claims and associated monitoring.

Financial Management

- Monitor the accuracy of the finance and accounting system, ensuring the completeness of postings and correcting errors in a timely manner.
- To support the Finance Team with the processing of complex transactions on the finance and accounting system, providing advice, guidance and training to upskill every member of the team.
- To act as an approver for payment/BACS runs and to authorise the addition of new suppliers to the purchase ledger.

Advice and Support

- Have a leading role in the finance team in delivering a finance helpdesk service to all Schools within the trust, ensuring help and procedure manuals are available and regularly updated.

Additional Duties

- To attend meetings as required
- To take action to improve outcomes for young people and to support all Schools in the Trust to be outstanding
- To perform any task or duty under the reasonable direction of the Finance Director or another member of the Executive team.

The St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to satisfactory references, which will be requested, prior to interview, an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, medical check, evidence of qualifications plus verification of the right to work in the UK.

The Trust will endeavour to make any necessary reasonable adjustments to the job and the working environment to enable access to employment opportunities for disabled job applicants or continued employment for any employee who develops a disabling condition.

Whilst every effort has been made to outline the key duties and responsibilities of the role, it is not an exhaustive list. The duties and responsibilities of the role may vary from time to time, commensurate with and without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility entailed and would not in itself justify a reconsideration of the grading of the post.



St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi Academy Trust
 Person Specification
 School Finance Business
 Partner

A Training and Qualifications	Essential	Desirable
Part or fully qualified CCAB or AAT Professional Diploma in Accounting, or able to demonstrate equivalent experience, or willingness to work towards the CCAB or AAT Professional Diploma in Accounting	Y	
A minimum of 5 GCSEs (or equivalent) including a grade C in math and English	Y	
Commitment to ongoing professional development	Y	

B Experience	Essential	Desirable
Experience working within a finance function	Y	
Experience of working in a school/educational setting in a financial management role or equivalent		Y
Experience of working in a Multi Academy Trust financial role		Y
Experience of managing complex budgets	Y	
Solid understanding of regulatory frameworks		Y
Experience of producing and interpreting management accounts	Y	
Experience of developing and operating financial systems and procedures, including audit compliance controls	Y	
Experience of managing a finance team		Y

