



**ILKLEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL**  
A MOORLANDS LEARNING TRUST ACADEMY



**THE SKIPTON ACADEMY**  
A MOORLANDS LEARNING TRUST ACADEMY



**Moorlands**  
Learning Trust

**FURTHER  
PARTICULARS FOR  
THE POST OF:**

**TRUST DIRECTOR  
OF FINANCE &  
OPERATIONS**

**SALARY SCALE  
POINT:**

**L9  
(RANGE L9-L13)**

**MARCH 2026**



# Moorlands Learning Trust

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the position of Director of Finance & Operations at Moorlands Learning Trust (MLT). We are delighted that you are considering joining us and hope the information enclosed inspires you to apply.

This is a pivotal new executive role, created in response to the significant growth and development of MLT over recent years. Working with the CFO, the Director of Finance & Operations will provide strategic leadership of high quality financial and operations management across our large and complex public-sector organisation as a key member of the Executive Team.

MLT is now a large and complex multi-academy trust, a public-sector organisation employing almost 1,000 colleagues and educating more than 6,000 pupils across nine schools in North and West Yorkshire. Our growth has been purposeful and values-led, and we are proud of the strong professional culture we have built together.

At the heart of MLT is a deep commitment to:

- enabling every child and young person to succeed and excel
- fostering a culture where staff feel valued, trusted and empowered
- acting with integrity, collaboration and moral purpose in all that we do

The Director of Finance & Operations will play a crucial role in ensuring robust financial stewardship, operational excellence, and supporting the delivery of the Trust's strategic priorities as the Trust continues to evolve. This is therefore an exciting opportunity for an experienced and ambitious leader to make a lasting, strategic impact on finance and operations systems and structures across our Trust and its schools.

- Ilkley Grammar School was MLT's founding school in 2017
- The Skipton Academy joined in 2019
- Ashlands Primary School, Burley Oaks Primary School, Eastburn Primary School, Menston Primary School, and Nidderdale High School joined during 2023/2024
- Benton Park School joined in August 2025
- Talbot Primary School joined in November 2025

We are seeking an executive leader who:

- brings vision, energy and strategic insight to the leadership of finance and operations
- is passionate about making a demonstrable, positive difference to our organisation, our staff and, in turn, for our children and young people
- has a strong track record of leading high-performing finance teams within complex organisations
- is an exceptional leader and collaborator, able to support, challenge and influence at all levels
- models high standards of integrity, transparency, emotional intelligence and professional presence

In return, MLT offers a vibrant, supportive and aspirational working environment. Our standards are high and we invest heavily in our people, value professional learning and wellbeing, recognising that our colleagues are our greatest strength.

This is a rare opportunity to help shape the future of a growing Trust at an exciting point in its journey. If you are inspired by this opportunity and believe you have the qualities to make a transformational contribution to our Trust, we would be delighted to hear from you.

**Application process** As part of your online application, please include a personal statement (no more than two sides of A4) outlining:

- your motivation for applying for this role
- the impact of a significant finance strategy which you have led
- the experience, skills and leadership qualities you would bring to the position

Closing date: **8am Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2026**

Provisional interview date: **Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

If you do not receive an invite to interview by Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April, we regret your application will have been unsuccessful on this occasion.

Thank you again for your interest in Moorlands Learning Trust.

Yours sincerely,



**Helen Williams**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

## **Job Title: Director of Finance & Operations**

**Reports to: CFO**

**Salary Range:** MLT Scale L9–L13

**Location:** Hybrid – The Skipton Academy, MAT central offices and across schools within the Trust. While this is a visible onsite position, there will be flexibility to work from home during school holidays and, occasionally, during term time.

**Contract Type:** Full-time, Permanent (part-time or flexibility around the school holidays considered for an exceptional candidate).

### **Job Purpose**

Reporting to the CFO, and working within the Trust Executive Team, the Director of Finance & Operations is responsible for leading the finance team which includes fully centralised finance and in-house payroll, and the operations team including catering, procurement and contract management.

The role combines strategic leadership with hands-on delivery and responsibility for the development and management of the business function across our schools, working with Headteachers and Operations Leads to ensure financial sustainability and operational efficiency that enables outstanding education delivery.

As a member of the Trust's Executive Team, the post-holder will contribute to MLT's strategic priorities and will help build a positive culture where staff feel valued and empowered and where every child and young person can thrive and succeed.

### **Summary of Key Responsibilities:**

1. Take responsibility for high quality financial operations and reporting
2. Co-lead the development and maintenance of the Trust's financial strategy
3. Support the CFO in ensuring the financial sustainability of the Trust
4. Ensure robust financial governance and statutory compliance across the Trust
5. Develop strong partnerships with internal and external stakeholders
6. Model ethical leadership, Trust values and professional excellence

### **Strategic Leadership and Culture**

- Co-lead on long-term financial planning, including scenario modelling, investment planning, capital strategy and financial due diligence for potential new schools
- Support schools joining the Trust, inducting them in Trust policies, procedures and systems and supporting with system and contract changes
- Drive a culture of financial stewardship, efficiency and continuous improvement to ensure that public money is used appropriately at all times and resources are maximised in order to fulfil the Trust's charitable objectives
- Work with the Executive Team and Trust Leaders to effectively manage change
- Participate in Trust Strategy meetings
- Build financial management capacity within the Trust, helping Trust and school leaders to develop their knowledge and skills
- Drive organisational change initiatives

- Lead the development of innovative systems and processes to streamline operations across the Trust
- Provide strategic financial insight through robust analysis of data, KPIs and trends to inform strategic decision making at Trust and school level
- Represent the Trust externally, building effective regional and national partnerships and professional networks.

## **Strategic Leadership and Compliance**

- Ensure the Trust meets all statutory and regulatory requirements, including the Academy Trust Handbook, DfE reporting and charity/company law obligations
- Ensure compliance with the MLT Regulatory Controls Manual and support the CFO to update this as and when required
- Lead and develop a high-quality, centralised and effective finance and operations service, delivering consistent, responsive and legally and statutory compliant support across the Trust
- Lead the Trust's central finance, payroll, operations and catering teams, ensuring clear lines of accountability, effective line management and appraisal
- Support the work undertaken by the finance team, ensuring all deadlines are met for the submission of the annual accounts, budget forecasts, financial returns, internal/external audit processes and reporting to Governors, Trustees and Members
- Maintain high standards of financial control, risk management and internal assurance across the Trust
- Oversee and manage finance systems, processes and data management, including financial management, budgeting and payroll systems, ensuring data accuracy, and continuous improvement
- Develop, implement and review finance policies and procedures in line with the Academy Trust Handbook, sector regulation, best practice and Trust priorities. These include but are not limited to those on charging and remissions, expenses, investment, procurement and contract management, reserves, as well as establishing new, relevant policies where required
- Manage the Trust's use of external providers e.g. catering, cleaning and procurement companies to ensure value for money and high standards of service
- Develop and maintain effective professional working relationships with stakeholders at all levels, including colleagues, internal and external auditors, legal teams, local governing bodies, Trustees, and external agencies
- Contribute to Trust risk management and assurance processes
- Review and update allocated finance and operations sections of the Trust strategic risk register and Trust KPI tracker
- Provide timely and accurate Finance information to the CFO, CEO, Trust leaders and Trustees, as appropriate, to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities

## **Operational Leadership and Management**

### **Finance**

- Lead and oversee the Trust's statutory year-end process, ensuring timely preparation of the annual report and financial statements in accordance with the Academies Accounts Direction, Charities SORP, and relevant statutory and regulatory requirements
- Hold oversight of the Trust's VAT position, ensuring compliance with HMRC requirements and the correct application of VAT legislation across all Trust activities
- Oversee the Trust's cash management framework (including cash flow forecasting), ensuring the Trust maintains adequate liquidity at all times to meet operational, capital and statutory commitments
- Lead the strategic management of the Trust's investment and reserves, ensuring surplus funds are invested in accordance with the Trust's Investment Policy

- Lead and develop the central finance and payroll teams, ensuring the provision of accurate, timely and insightful financial information
- Oversee financial operations including accounts payable/receivable, payroll and procurement, ensuring all month end reviews are completed in a timely manner
- Ensure that each school within the Trust has high quality financial support, with consistent systems and processes across the Trust
- Oversee finance systems currently in use (IRIS financials, IMP and Sage Payroll), supporting the CFO with the evaluation of new systems and technology to meet the Trust's requirements

### **Operations**

- Lead and develop the central Operations Team and work closely with school Operations Leads to ensure compliance, efficiency and to build and deliver a Trust wide operations strategy
- Work with the Executive Team to develop systems of reporting by the schools to the Trust, ensuring that relevant information is collected in an accurate and timely manner without undue workload for schools to enable effectively KPI reporting
- Lead the Trust Catering in-house provision and external contract to ensure that these are run efficiently, effectively and in line with financial budgets
- Negotiate, manage and monitor contracts, tenders and agreements ensuring best value at all times

### **Budgeting and Financial Performance**

- Lead the annual budget setting process, ensuring realistic and sustainable budgets for each school and the central team
- Provide financial monitoring reports and analysis for internal and external stakeholders, including benchmarking
- Develop and lead a Trust wide income generation strategy, identifying and securing external funding, corporate sponsorship and philanthropic partnerships to enhance educational resources and capital projects
- Support the Director of Estates with financial tracking of capital approved projects
- Support Headteachers and Trust Executive in financial performance management, providing training where appropriate

### **Governance, Risk and Assurance**

- Work with the Director of Risk & Compliance to provide commentary on financial and operational compliance and risk management
- Take a lead on the annual statutory audit and on finance internal audits and ensure that audit recommendations are implemented
- Manage the financial aspects of the Trust risk register and contribute to the Trust-wide risk assurance framework

### **Procurement and Value for Money**

- Uphold the Trust procurement strategy and procedures to maximise value for money
- Ensure compliant procurement processes (working with the Trust's procurement partner) including tendering, contract management, and supplier performance management
- Review procurement systems and processes and supplier spend, ensuring the Trust achieves best value through its external contracts
- Drive collaborative procurement opportunities across the Trust and sector

## **Professional Expectations**

- Model and promote the Trust values, ethical leadership and adherence to the Nolan principles
- Contribute to broader Trust initiatives and projects as required
- Maintain up-to-date professional knowledge and lead the continuous development of the Finance and Operations teams
- Respond appropriately to urgent and complex situations, including outside of normal working hours where required
- Attend and participate in meetings outside of normal working hours where required
- Have regard to the rules and regulations that govern the financial and corporate compliance requirements of a public sector organisation.

Please note that, whilst the successful candidate will be based at The Skipton Academy, the nature of the role will require travel to the Trust's central offices and academies, which could involve being situated at any of the Trust academies for a period of time, if the situation arises.

Whilst every effort has been made to explain the main duties and responsibilities of the post, each individual task undertaken may not be identified. Staff will be expected to comply with any reasonable request from a manager to undertake work of a similar level that is not specified in this job description. This job description will be reviewed annually, and the Executive Team reserves the right to alter the content of this job description, after consultation with the post-holder, to reflect changes to the job or services provided, without altering the general character or level of responsibility.

## **Probationary Period**

The successful candidate will undertake a six-month probationary programme on commencement of the role.

## **Recruitment and Selection Policy Statement**

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

Moorlands Learning Trust is committed to the protection and safeguarding of children and young people in our recruitment procedures and in all our work across and beyond school. The school adheres to statutory guidelines in respect to safe recruitment. All persons employed by the Trust, in any capacity, will undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, and confirmation of employment is subject to a successful outcome. All teaching staff members recruited by the school have their eligibility to teach checked with the DfE.

## PERSONNEL SPECIFICATION – DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & OPERATIONS

Category / Criteria	E/D	How Identified
<b>Qualifications &amp; Professional Status</b>		
Recognised accountancy qualification (e.g. ACCA, ACA, CIMA, CIPFA)	E	Application form and selection process
Evidence of sustained professional development at senior leadership level	E	Application form and selection process
Minimum of 5 strong GCSEs (A*-C) including English and maths	E	Application form
<b>Experience</b>		
Minimum 5 years' experience working at a senior Finance level	E	Application form and selection process
Proven experience of statutory accounts preparation and establishing financial systems – preferably in a geographically distributed organisation	E	Selection process
Experience of using accounts, payroll and budgetary software	E	Selection process
Strategic Finance and Operational leadership in complex, multi-site organisation	E	Selection process
Experience advising CEOs, Executives, Boards/Trustees	E	Selection process
Experience in Finance and Operations policy development and implementation	E	Selection process
Experience developing/implementing finance systems	E	Selection process
Experience leading and managing finance teams	E	Selection process
<b>Knowledge and Expertise</b>		
Solid understanding of the Academy Trust Handbook	D	Selection process
Knowledge of payroll and pension schemes	E	Selection process
Expert knowledge of finance policies and procedures	E	Selection process
Strong understanding of public accountability	E	Selection process
Understanding of the Charity SORP	D	Selection process
Experience in the education sector, public sector, or regulated charity environment	D	Selection process
Experience of Trust risk management and assurance	D	Selection process
<b>Leadership, Management &amp; Administrative Skills</b>		
Strong strategic thinking and ability to translate vision into delivery	E	Selection process
Ability to influence/challenge at senior level	E	Selection process
Excellent negotiation skills	E	Selection process
Ability to lead cultural change and promote high performance	E	Selection process
Strong decision-making with balanced judgement	E	Selection process
Strong analytical skills	E	Selection process

Ability to lead and develop high-performing teams	E	Selection process
Ability to work positively within a team	E	Selection process
Excellent communication and interpersonal skills	E	Selection process
Ability to interpret information and devise policy	E	Selection process
Ability to prioritise/manage workload	E	Selection process
Excellent presentation and report writing skills	E	Selection process
Ability to plan, review and improve systems	E	Selection process
Excellent administrative and IT skills	E	Application/selection
High attention to detail and accuracy	E	Selection process
<b>Leadership Behaviours</b>		
Credible, authoritative, values-driven leader	E	Selection process
Leads by example	E	Selection process
Ethical leadership and commitment to Nolan principles	E	Selection process
Resilient and decisive	E	Selection process
Commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing	E	Selection process
Models professionalism, integrity and accountability	E	Selection process
High emotional intelligence	E	Selection process
<b>Personal Qualities</b>		
Motivation to support staff in achieving the best outcomes for children and young people by advising on appropriate allocation of financial resources	E	Selection process
Works with discretion, sensitivity and confidentiality	E	Selection process
Calm and resilient under pressure	E	Selection process
Shows pride in work	E	Selection process
Appropriate relationships/boundaries with young people	E	DBS/selection process
Excellent attendance and punctuality	E	References
Honest, reliable and trustworthy	E	References
Able to take constructive criticism	E	Selection process
Excellent organisation, commitment and self-motivation	E	Selection process
Proactive and uses initiative	E	Selection process
Flexible and willing to work additional hours	E	Selection process
Warm sense of humour	E	Selection process
<b>Personal Circumstances</b>		
Flexible to meet Trust requirements	E	Selection process
Willingness to travel between sites	E	Selection process
Full driving licence, access to vehicle and be appropriately insured	E	Selection process
<b>General</b>		
Commitment to child protection and safeguarding	E	DBS/selection process
Understanding of UK GDPR obligations	E	Selection process