



Birchwood High School

your dreams, your future, our challenge

School Finance Director

Recruitment Pack





*At Birchwood, we are part of something special, welcoming all,
supporting all, and encouraging all.*

*Together, we enjoy the exploration of ideas, the excitement of
learning, and the celebration of our achievements in a school
where we feel safe.*

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WELCOME FROM OUR PRINCIPAL, SAM GRIFFIN



Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in joining the team at Birchwood High School. We are a school that is proud to be more than just a place of learning — we are a thriving, inclusive community where every member is valued, supported, and empowered to succeed.

At Birchwood, we believe in unlocking personal potential: nurturing ambition, fostering growth, and ensuring that every student thrives in an environment where they feel safe, inspired, and encouraged. Our commitment to this ethos was reflected in our most recent Ofsted inspection (January 2025), where we were judged to be 'Good' in all areas.

We are incredibly fortunate to have a dedicated and talented team of staff who share our vision. Teaching at Birchwood means working alongside passionate professionals who go above and beyond to create enriching experiences for our students. Whether through academic progress, pastoral support, or curriculum enrichment, we strive to strike the right balance—offering challenge, support, and opportunity in equal measure.

If you share our commitment to inclusive education and want to be part of a school where your contribution is valued and where you can truly make a difference, we would love to hear from you.

We look forward to welcoming you to Birchwood.

your dreams, your future, our challenge.

Sam Griffin,
Principal

ABOUT BIRCHWOOD HIGH SCHOOL & THE LOCAL AREA

Birchwood High School is a thriving, inclusive secondary school that welcomes students of all abilities. With a student body of over 1,450, including a vibrant Sixth Form, we offer a diverse and ambitious curriculum that supports academic success, personal growth, and future aspirations.

Our ethos—**Welcome all, Support all, Encourage all**—is at the heart of everything we do. We are proud of our strong links with the local community and our reputation for exceptional pastoral care, SEND provision, and enrichment opportunities. Students benefit from modern facilities, including specialist teaching spaces, a dedicated Sixth Form centre, a well-equipped library, and extensive sports amenities, ensuring a dynamic and engaging learning environment.

At Birchwood, we believe in preparing our students not only for academic success but also for life beyond school—empowering them to become confident, capable, and happy young adults ready to take on the world.

Nestled in the heart of the Hertfordshire countryside, Bishop's Stortford is a thriving and historic market town that offers the perfect balance of connectivity, charm, and community. Bordering Essex and with direct train links to London Liverpool Street, Cambridge, and Stansted Airport, the town is ideally positioned for commuters and families alike. The M11, M25, A120, A10, and A414 provide excellent road access to key destinations across the South East.

Beyond its exceptional transport links, Bishop's Stortford boasts a rich heritage, vibrant town centre, and a strong sense of community. The area offers a mix of independent shops, cafes, and restaurants alongside well-known high-street brands. Residents enjoy a variety of leisure facilities, green spaces, and cultural attractions, as well as easy access to beautiful countryside and picturesque villages.

Birchwood High School is located in the north-east of Bishop's Stortford, within a welcoming residential area and surrounded by open green spaces, including mature woodland.

KEY FACTS AND STATISTICS



RATED '**GOOD**' IN ALL AREAS
JANUARY 2025



BISHOP'S STORTFORD



SINGLE ACADEMY TRUST
(Est. 2011)



YEAR 7-13



1179 - STUDENTS YR 7-11
227 - SIXTH FORM STUDENTS

21%

SEND

11%

FSM

13.6%

EAL

12.4%

PUPIL PREMIUM

“

The supportive community of teachers and fellow students has
empowered me to reach my full potential academically
and personally.

BIRCHWOOD ALUMNI

”



JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE	School Finance Director
SALARY / GRADE RANGE	Leadership Range 11-15 (Fringe)
RESPONSIBLE TO	The Principal, Chair of Trustees, Resources Committee and Audit Committee

Principal Responsibilities

- To support the Principal in supporting the Academy's strategic direction through the efficient and effective deployment of resources.
- To plan, monitor and review the Academy's annual budget linking to the Academy's five-year financial plan.
- As CFO and a member of the Senior Leadership Team, to assist the Principal with whole school policy making, planning and evaluation, staff appointments and liaison with the Trust Board.
- Act as Company Secretary to the Birchwood High School Academy Trust.
- To serve the Trustee's Resources Committee and Audit Committee. As Birchwood is an Academy, to monitor the assets and resources, advising the Senior Leadership Team and Trustees where necessary.
- To lead on all aspects of the Academy's financial affairs.
- To ensure best practice in accordance with the Academy Financial Handbook is adhered to.
- To support the Academy's Finance Personnel in the day-to-day running of the academy's accounts.

Financial Management

- Prepare the annual budget for approval by the Principal and the Trust Board.
- Develop strategic budget plans over a three to five-year period.
- Monitor the Academy budget and produce monthly reports for the Finance & Estates Committee.
- To carry out an annual financial benchmarking exercise against data from other schools and report to the Principal and the Trust Board.
- To produce, on a monthly basis, monitoring reports, control and payroll account reconciliations, VAT returns and VAT reconciliation reports.
- To check and sign off reports produced by the Finance Manager e.g. bank reconciliations and debtor control accounts.
- Ensure all returns to the Local Government Pension Scheme and Teachers' Pension Scheme are prepared and submitted by due dates.
- Implement the Academy's financial regulations and ensure adherence to them.
- Update financial policies for perusal and ratification by the Trust Board.
- Provide all such information as is reasonably requested by key budget holders.
- Monitor the Academy's cash flow, ensuring that payments are made within agreed time limits.
- Support the Academy's Finance Team in the processing and payment for all goods and services.
- Ensure maintenance of the Fixed Asset Register and monthly depreciation of assets.
- Manage the Academy bank accounts.
- Monitor the Academy's investments and advise the Resources Committee on investment policy.
- Prepare all financial returns for the Education & Skill Funding Agency (ESFA) and other government agencies within statutory deadlines.
- Advise the Principal and Trust Board as to sources of additional income and prepare bids as appropriate.



JOB DESCRIPTION

Financial Management Continued

- Maximise the efficient use of the Academy's resources and apply 'best value methodology'.
- Advise the Directors/Trustees on all relevant aspects of Company and Taxation Law.
- To prepare papers for the Annual General Meeting.
- To update Company Books, ensure directors are appointed and removed at Companies House in a timely manner and that all changes are reported to the ESFA. To ensure that the Academy Annual Return is completed by the due date.
- Produce trial balance and funds analysis at year end and work with the External Auditors to produce the Annual Report and Accounts.
- Ensure that Final Accounts and Academy Accounts Return is completed to the required deadline and ensure it lodged with Companies House by the due date,
- To liaise with the Internal Controls Evaluation Service on a termly basis, act upon recommendations and report findings to the Audit Committee.
- Oversee and contribute to the Academy Risk Register in liaison with Governing Body.
- The oversee maintenance of the Academy Business Continuity Management Plan
- To prepare and maintain the Schools' Financial Procedures Manual.
- Ensure that the Academy's insurance database is maintained via sample testing.
- Tender for and maintain the Academy property, employee, vehicle and travel insurance at suitable levels.
- Liaise with the ICT Network Manager to ensure funds are indicated for a five-year strategic ICT renewal and upgrade process.
- To monitor current utilities costs and charges and seek best value.
- To evaluate current energy consumption and advise the Principal with regards to energy conservation and renewable sources and options.
- Working with other key Finance Personnel within our local network of schools (Bishop's Stortford Education Trust – BSET).

Line management:

- Line managed by the Principal
- Meeting with relevant members of SLT with regards to budgetary and financial matters
- Meeting with the HR Manager regarding staffing, salaries and contracts
- Regular meetings with the Catering Manager and Community Manager with regards to income and expenditure
- Line managing the Finance Manager and Finance Team

To undertake any other responsibilities as negotiated with the Principal



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Qualifications and Experience

Essential

- Educated to degree level or degree equivalent
- Have a track record of financial management skills developed in senior positions and hold a recognised accountancy qualification (e.g. ACA, CIMA , ACCA or CIPFA qualified)
- Experience of year-end procedures and of working with external auditors.
- Experience of managing a range of teams and of performance management
- Experience of planning and managing change
- Considerable experience of all financial processes and operating procedures
- Experience of tendering and contract management
- Experience of budget setting and budgetary control
- Experience of monitoring a range of contracts to ensure value for money and Key Performance Indicator requirements are met.
- Evidence of CPD / on-going professional development

Desirable but not essential

- Experience and/ or understanding of school business management
- Experience of working within a school environment
- Experience of bid writing
- Further award-bearing professional study – e.g. CSBM Certificate of School Business Management

Key Skills

- Excellent finance skills
- Ability to work independently balanced with a collegiate team-based approach
- The ability to stay calm under pressure and meet strict deadlines
- Understanding of the school funding structure and environment
- Ability to pay close attention to detail
- Commercially minded with demonstrable entrepreneurial flair
- Advanced computer skills including use of Excel and preferably school accounting systems
- Experience of working with different financial IT systems
- The ability to lead, support and motivate a team
- Planning and decision-making skills
- The ability to manage large budgets
- Delivery of value for money initiatives
- Ability to solve problems and design innovative solutions
- Good organisation and time-management
- Excellent speaking and writing skills
- An ability to interpret legislation and regulations

Personal Qualities

- Clear values and strong moral leadership
- Confidence to work in an open and transparent manner with all stakeholders
- Able to manage own workload, to work flexibly, to delegate and to motivate others
- The ability to make strategic decisions and demonstrate rationale when challenged
- Self-awareness and the willingness to seek support when required
- Effective inter-personal skills
- Be able to handle sensitive information and issues appropriately
- Commitment to the vision of Birchwood High School
- A willingness to be involved in the school as a community



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

JOB TITLE	School Finance Director
SALARY	Leadership Range 11-15 (Fringe) – FTE £67,796 - £74,532
TERM	Permanent, Full Time
START DATE	January 2026 (Later by negotiation)
CLOSING DATE	Monday 8 th December, 9am
INTERVIEW DATE	W/c 15 th December 2025

If you would like to find out more about the role and/or arrange an informal visit to the school, please contact our HR Manager via admin@birchwoodhigh.org.uk, or phone 01279 655936.

Birchwood High School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and visitors to share this commitment. Appointment to this post is subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS) as well as other pre-appointment checks, including an online check, outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025).

To help us meet our high standards and aspirations of a fully diverse and inclusive workplace, we strongly encourage suitably qualified applicants from all backgrounds to apply and to join us.

HOW TO APPLY

Application Form

Applicants must use the staff application form provided on MyNewTerm (CVs are not accepted). Please complete all aspects of the form fully. Include your full work history with no unexplained gaps since leaving school education

Person Specification and Personal Statement

Please refer to the Person Specification to help guide you in terms of your personal statement. Be sure to evidence additional aspects such as training and qualifications together with your background and experience.

References

Please make sure your referees are aware of your application and that they are able to provide a swift turnaround. Referees should be your last two employers, and you should provide their official organisation email address for us to contact.

Please contact our HR Manager via admin@birchwoodhigh.org.uk if you have any questions.



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www.birchwoodhighschool.co.uk