



SIKH ACADEMIES TRUST
Faith Inspired Education



*Challenging the mind.
Nourishing the spirit.*

Chief Finance Officer Information Pack

July 2024



This is a unique opportunity for an exceptional CFO to lead a recently established Sikh Trust into the next stage of its development.

The Trust has 2 schools and is well respected in the local and wider Sikh community. The successful candidate will provide strong system leadership. The Trust was set up to create and sustain a family of academies which provide children an excellent education within a distinctively caring and supportive Sikh ethos. SSST (The Slough Sikh Trust) is the founding body of Khalsa Primary School.

SAT was formed on 30 December 2020. The Trust is comprised of two schools:

1. Khalsa Primary School (original school became a trust school on 1 February 2021)
2. Pioneer Secondary Academy (opened on 1 May 2022)

All of the schools in our Trust are learning communities where academic excellence sits within a Sikh faith inspired education. Our vision is for our pupils to have a coherent learning experience with clear learning pathways to higher education and employment. We aim to create a hub of excellence for students and young adults. Our objective is for all of our schools to be outstanding in all areas. We aspire to develop social responsibility through exemplary programs of outreach and service and to create a community bonded by open-heartedness, hope, compassion and care.

As a Trust, our single biggest and most important commitment is to pupils. We are committed to ensuring that every pupil, regardless of background or personal circumstance will be inspired to achieve their potential. We also know that strong achievement is grounded in the best teaching and learning experience. It is our aim that students secure high levels of attainment, develop into confident citizens and have real choices in their future.

We believe in providing a structured and disciplined working environment in which all pupils can achieve their full potential. There is a high standard of teaching across all schools which, coupled with the strong work ethic, allows our pupils to flourish. Our broad, balanced and innovative curriculum is designed to stretch and challenge pupils to reach their potential, and there is a particular focus on English, maths and the sciences.

Our objectives are to:

- Focus on the importance of outcomes for students.
- Offer a broad and balanced curriculum which is knowledge rich and promotes Sikhism values.
- Provide a curriculum that places depth and mastery at its heart.
- Ensure meaningful curriculum enrichment experiences for all students.
- Deepen students understanding of RSE, Citizenship, British values and SMSC.
- Ensure equality of opportunity so that all students thrive and take up extra-curricular activities.

Khalsa Primary School is an 'Outstanding' School (Ofsted Report - Sept 2023). We are committed to making a difference to the children in our communities and not allow disadvantage to be a barrier to achieving. All schools in the Trust are popular and KPS parental first choice far exceeds the number of places available.

Pioneer Secondary Academy is a new school to join our Trust. It is set in beautiful grounds and is a calm, thriving learning community. As a part of our growth plan, we started our new Sixth Form in September 2023.






Vision and Ethos

SAT VISION: We nurture outstanding individuals to build an enriched society, through faith-inspired education and truthful living.

SAT MISSION: We inspire every child’s sense of curiosity, empowering them to achieve their potential and prosper in a fast-changing world. We do this by:

- Leading by example
- Creating a safe and inclusive environment
- Actively collaborating with each other and the wider community

SAT VALUES:

-  **Integrity** - We do the right things and do things right.
-  **Service** - We speak with respect and act kindly with compassion towards a collective good.
-  **Community** - We foster a diverse, inclusive community through positive collaboration and fun.
-  **Learning** - We are committed to learning through curiosity, wisdom and knowledge.
-  **Innovation** - We stretch towards excellence and challenge ourselves to achieve with determination.

Our vision and values are underpinned by the Sikh ethos that is built upon the three pillars of Sikhism.

<p>BEYOND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT (Kirat Karna)</p> <p>We aim to provide an exceptional education and encourage a passion for life-long learning. Following the Khalsa way means working to the best of your ability with honesty, integrity and self-discipline.</p> <p>This is what we inspire our students to do.</p>	<p>BEYOND SELFLESSNESS (Vand Chakna)</p> <p>We aim to inspire pupils to share future skills, knowledge and income with those in need, with love and charity and without discrimination.</p> <p>At Sikh Academies Trust pupils of all faiths and no faith are respected and supported.</p>	<p>BEYOND THE INDIVIDUAL (Naam Japna)</p> <p>We aim to foster all aspects of personal development and encourage pupils to take a life-long journey of self-discovery.</p> <p>The core principles of Sikhism will support pupils in undertaking this journey towards purity of spirit by self-reflection and meditation.</p>
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Pioneer Secondary Academy

Pioneer Secondary Academy (PSA) is a new Sikh faith school which opened on 1st May 2022 by the Sikh Academies Trust (SAT). We believe that every student no matter their ability or background can achieve and build a bright future.

As a smaller than average secondary school, it is a welcoming community with a family atmosphere that allows students to gain confidence and forge new friendships quickly. With a school of our size, we can make sure all our students are known well, feel valued and fully supported.

A child’s time at school leaves a significant impression on them, shaping the adult that they later become. This is a responsibility that we take seriously at PSA. There is a Gurdwara on site.

Through high expectations, our exam results speak for themselves, but we believe in developing well rounded individuals. PSA is committed to developing

the leaders of tomorrow by creating as many opportunities as possible for students, based on what they’re passionate about. The rigour in our curriculum and the work ethic of our students ensures the high outcomes are students achieve.

We aim to empower our students to navigate their own future through our student leadership programmes. There are a range of opportunities for students to be involved in shaping the direction of our school through whole school projects, leading on school events and within subjects. We firmly believe that the development of the whole person is vital to be successful in a modern and evolving digital world. As a Sikh faith school, we welcome students of all abilities, faiths and backgrounds. With our deeply held core values we will help your child reach their full potential. We nurture students to be compassionate, creative, resilient and to embrace challenges.

Indicator	Pioneer Secondary Academy 2023	National 2023
Progress 8 Score (National percentile rank)	0.28	0.00
% 9 – 5 in English and Maths	41%	45%
% EBacc achieved (9 – 5)	18%	17%
% EBacc achieved (9 – 4)	29%	24%
% EBacc entered	66%	39%
EBacc average point score	4.27	4.05
% 9 – 5 English	53%	60%
% 9 – 5 Maths	57%	51%
% 9 – 4 English	75%	75%
% 9 – 4 Maths	74%	70%



Khalsa Primary School

Khalsa Primary School unique primary school: it is the founding school of Sikh Academies Trust, and it was judged 'Outstanding' in its recent Ofsted inspection in September 2023. The school is housed in a spacious and purpose-built building with exceptional resources. There is a Gurdwara on site.

Khalsa Primary School is a 2 form-entry school with nearly 500 pupils. Our results to date for Early Years, Phonics, KS1 and KS2 are significantly above the national averages. Places at Khalsa Primary School are in demand and community confidence in the school is very high.

Leaders have an unwavering vision that all pupils will achieve highly and become exemplary citizens. Leaders' belief that 'better never stops' has driven them to create an inspirational curriculum from Nursery to Year 6. In every subject, the key knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils must understand and learn are structured in a logical order. Teachers know precisely what pupils must learn. In the Nursery and Reception Years, teachers skilfully weave children's interests through the curriculum. Pupils in all year groups delight in their learning and are exceptionally well prepared for what comes next.

	Khalsa Primary School	Slough	National 2023
RECEPTION %			
% of pupils attaining a Good Level of Development	68.3%	67.2%	65%
YEAR 1			
% passing the phonics screening check	81.7%	81.1%	76%
KS1			
% of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading	71.7%	67.5%	68%
% of pupils reaching the expected standard in writing	70%	61.8%	60%
% of pupils reaching the expected standard in maths	70%	71%	70%
% of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths	66.7%	57.5%	56%
KS2			
% of pupils reaching the expected standard in maths	93%	TBC	73%
% of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading	94%	TBC	73%
% of pupils reaching the expected standard in writing	81%	TBC	71%
% of pupils reaching greater depth in reading, writing and maths	78%	TBC	59%
Reading Progress Score	4.4+		
Writing Progress Score	1.1+		
Maths Progress Score	6.1+		



Chief Finance Officer - JOB DESCRIPTION

Grade:	£60 - 70K (depending on experience)
Responsible to:	Executive Headteacher, Trust board
Hours:	All year-round (Part time 2 or 3 days, days/hours negotiable)

As the Sikh Academies Trust Chief Finance Officer, you will play a pivotal role in providing clear financial and commercial strategy and direction for the Trust. You will need to be fully aware of all funding and legislative changes that apply to the education sector and advise the Trust Board on strategic financial information to enable them to make informed decisions. You will be responsible for managing all budgeting and accounting activity; take on executive responsibilities as part of the senior management team; and the operational line management of the finance function, ensuring all systems are updated and reporting is timely and in line with required annual returns. In addition, you will coordinate the work of the external auditor and prepare and submit audited, statutory, consolidated accounts.

The ideal candidate will be commercially astute and have excellent communication and negotiation skills. Knowledge and/or experience of the school [academy sector] is essential, and an understanding of special school budgeting and alternative provision would be beneficial. This will be a challenging environment, so we are looking for someone who is adept at building strong, positive relationships with a variety of stakeholders and can foster respect and trust easily.

This is a post that will change over time; the post holder will be responsive and proactive in the context of strategic priorities.

The Academy is designated by the Secretary of State as a school with a religious character. The school's within the Trust are Sikh Faith Schools and are to be conducted as a Sikh school in accordance with Rayat Maryada.

Role requirements

This post offers an exciting opportunity for an ambitious and enthusiastic professional to join a new and growing multi academy trust. The Chief Finance Officer will provide leadership and management of all aspects of finance, as well as contributing to the strategic direction of the Trust.

All the work will be rooted in ensuring benefit to the learners and Finance communities the Trust serves.

As a key member of the Leadership Team, the Chief Finance Officer will play an important part in setting the direction of strategic development. This will include regular reporting to the Trust Board and the production of high quality reports to enable them to make informed decisions.

The Chief Finance Officer will keep ahead of funding and legislative changes that apply to the education sector and will provide the Board of Trustees with strategic financial information to enable them to make informed financial decisions.

The Chief Finance Officer will be responsible for the operational line management of the finance function and managing all the financial accounting and transactional finance for the Trust, ensuring all systems are up-to-date and reporting is timely and in line with required annual financial returns. They will lead the work of the finance team and to coordinate with the work of the external auditor to prepare and submit audited statutory consolidated accounts.

Robust systems, processes and controls will be implemented and a fixed asset register and risk register maintained. The Chief Finance Officer will monitor financial performance and will drive change within the finance operation of the Trust, bringing greater efficiency in the way the Trust carries out its business.

The Chief Finance Officer will regularly visit schools within the Trust to develop a good working knowledge of those schools and how they serve their communities. They will ensure good use of resources by utilising and developing capacity from within the Trust and contracting from outside the Trust where this is not available.

The Chief Finance Officer will line manage the Facilities and Operations Manager to achieve the successful sustainable management of the Trust sites, buildings and facilities.

In all their work the Chief Finance Officer will recognise that their prime responsibility is to the children, families and communities that the Trust serves.

Key Purpose:

- The overall purpose of this post is to provide professional leadership and management of financial services for the Trust.
- Be accountable for ensuring the provision of the financial reporting to enable the Trust to achieve its aims and objectives through the effective and efficient management of its financial resources.
- To promote best practice and to ensure compliance with the financial processes and procedures set out in the policies of the Trust and in accordance with the EFSA Academies Trust Handbook, and the requirements of the DfE and the EFSA.
- To take responsibility for the prompt and effective introduction of financial systems and processes in the Trust.
- The postholder will have a key role in the management of the Trust and will have effective responsibility for the following:
 - Financial Statements
 - Management Accounts
 - Financial Compliance
 - Budget Preparation
 - Financial Reporting
 - Income Generation
 - Financial monitoring - including payroll and staff pensions
 - Securing "best value" in all areas
 - Audit services (internal and external)
 - Other areas of work commensurate with the purpose of the post.

Financial Management:

- Ensure the Trust has appropriate financial systems in place and managing these in accordance with the agreed policies and timetable; ensuring accurate financial records are maintained and reported to the DfE, EFSA, Companies House and the Charity Commission.
- Prepare year end statutory Trust Trustees Report and Financial Statements.
- Submit Financial Statements in accordance with EFSA guidelines, following the Finance & Audit Committee and Trust Board approval.
- Prepare Value for Money Statement on behalf of the Accounting Officer.
- Devise appropriate accounting procedures to plan and monitor each Academy's 3 year budget plan.
- Produce timely, accurate and appropriate reports and financial forecasts for the Trust
- Finance & Audit Committee and Trust Board.
- Review cash flow for each school within the Trust.
- Liaise with Headteachers to ensure financial action plans are on track for implementation.
- Ensure timely and effective financial information to Trustees and provide general support to ensure the effective conduct of their business in accordance with the Articles of Association and financial regulations.
- Research and bid for additional funding to DfE for the Trust and in support of individual academies and assist with the financial monitoring of projects as they are agreed.
- To oversee the recovery of VAT.
- To oversee appropriate credit control processes thus ensuring that the payment of outstanding sums are received as swiftly as possible.
- To advise the Trust Board, LAB Governors and Headteachers on financial and budget matters.
- To provide training as required to meet the needs of the Trust.

Audit Services

- Advise the Executive Principal and the Board on external and internal audit arrangements as required by financial regulations and memoranda.
- Liaise with auditors and facilitate all audit arrangements
- Implement and monitor audit requirements.
- To undertake benchmarking exercises.

Business Planning

- Contribute to the development and review of a 3 year strategic business plan ensuring objectives are linked to the overall long term financial plan of the Trust.
- To manage special projects as required, particularly those concerned with income generation and to write bids for funding as required
- To make a significant contribution to the growth and development of the academies by maximising the use of financial resources, investment and generating sources of income for the academies.
- To contribute to development and review of the Business Continuity Plan for the Trust.
- To compile, monitor and review the Risk Register for the Trust.

Key Organisational Objectives

The postholder will contribute to the Trust's objectives in service delivery by:

- Enactment of Health and Safety requirements and initiatives, as directed.
- Ensuring compliance with Data Protection legislation.
- Operating within the Trust's Equalities Framework at all times.
- Commitment and contribution to improving standards for students, as appropriate.
- Acknowledging customer care and quality initiatives.
- Contributing to the maintenance of a caring and stimulating environment for young people.

Conditions of Service

Governed by the National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service supplemented by any local conditions as may be agreed by Governors.

Special Conditions of Service

Because of the nature of the post, candidates are not entitled to withhold information regarding convictions by virtue of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1971 [Exemptions] Order 1975, as amended. Candidates are required to give details of any convictions on their Application Form and are expected to disclose such information at the Appointment Interview.

Because this post allows substantial access to children, candidates are required to comply with procedures in relation to Police Checks. Prior to taking up the post, the successful candidate will be required to give written permission to the Trust to ascertain details from the Police regarding any convictions against them and, as appropriate, the nature of such convictions.

Equal Opportunities

The postholder will be expected to carry out all duties in the context of and in compliance with the Trust's Equal Opportunities Policies.

This Job Description will be subject to review in the light of the new opportunities and strengths that may be brought to the Trust.

This job description is normally subject to annual review. It may be amended at the request of the Line Manager or the post holder but only after full consultation with the post holder.

Signed _____

(Post holder)

Name: _____

Date _____

Signed _____

(Executive Headteacher)

Name: _____

Date _____

Sikh Academies Trust

Person Specification: Chief Finance Officer

You will be/have:

- Commercially astute and have exceptional analytical and problem solving skills with the ability to make decisions based on accurate and appropriate analysis
- Flexible in managing, planning and executing daily, weekly, monthly workloads in a busy environment
- Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to influence and build relationships at all levels whilst working across a range of sites
- Committed to providing the best possible service to the staff and Trustees and able to maintain confidentiality
- Able to balance strategy with operations
- Qualifications and previous experience

A finance professional who is/has:

- ACCA (or equivalent) qualified or relevant experience to demonstrate good understanding of financial management within multi academy trusts
- Over five years' experience in a progressive finance leadership role
- Extensive experience in budget management and forecasting delivering management and financial accounts gained in a 'hands on' role
- Experience of leading successful teams, preferably across multi-site organisations with a proven track record of making and implementing essential change
- Detailed knowledge of public finances, procedures, practice and regulations (preferably ESFA and sector requirements)
- Experience of managing a computerised data system and handling large amounts of complex finance data
- An exceptional professional with ambition and drive, who shares the Trust's values and passion for improving the lives and opportunities of children and young people
- A commitment to inclusion and enhancing the life chances of children, whatever their starting points
- A non-negotiable approach to safeguarding the wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults.



SIKH ACADEMIES TRUST
Faith Inspired Education

How to apply

We welcome your application. Please email vacancies@sikhacademiestrust.com for an informal conversation or to arrange a visit.

Completed application forms should be returned to vacancies@sikhacademiestrust.com by 9am 12 August 2024 (early applications are welcome)

Candidates invited for interview will be notified by 16 August 2024. Interviews will be held in person week beginning 19 August 2024.

