



ONE (Owl North East) Trust

# Chief Financial Officer

INFORMATION PACK

June 2023

## About the ONE (Owl North East) Trust

From 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024, the ONE Trust will be a newly established multi-academy trust responsible for a number of schools serving communities in the outer west of the city of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The area is mixed socio-economically but serves a high percentage of disadvantaged families. Several of the schools have particularly high numbers of disadvantaged pupils who eventually go onto a number of secondary school settings post Key Stage Two. The schools are united by their commitment to the principles of the Trust and a common belief in the strength of collaboration together.

The primary schools of the Outer West Learning Trust have worked together closely, and in a structured way, for over nine years as part of a Foundation Trust.

We believe that forming a new MAT will be a progressive step that will formalise, strengthen and sharpen the school improvement focus of our current partnership with like-minded schools. Our aim is to provide the best possible educational experience in which all pupils thrive now, and in future. Our schools will continue to collaborate towards the following vision:

***‘To build a shared learning community in which children, young people, staff and parents discover their talents, realise their potential, and develop a passion for learning that endures throughout their lives.’***

This will underpin everything we do as an Academy Trust. It will be supported by the following 5 key factors we aim to achieve as a strong trust:

- A cutting-edge school improvement system
- A high quality, inclusive education
- Strategic and expert governance
- Financial sustainability
- Workforce development

## Chief Financial Officer Purpose

To lead and manage all non-educational aspects of the Trust's operations to excellent standards, and to support the Chief Executive in developing the Trust.

This senior post is required from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023 and offers considerable scope for the post holder to play a key role in delivering the Trust's strategy, driving performance improvement, and contributing to the successful implementation of our planned growth.

**Accountable to:** Chief Executive Officer

**Working time:** Full time (37 hours/week, 30 days holiday plus bank holidays) throughout the year. At times there will be a need to work a flexible pattern to meet the demands of the role, including occasional attendance at evening meetings. The role will initially be based at our Trust central office within Throckley Primary School, with the opportunity to explore flexible working arrangements as the role develops.

**Salary:** £56,889-£60,233 per annum (subject to negotiation depending on experience and review following probationary period)

**Disclosure Level:** Enhanced DBS

The successful candidate will have access to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

## **Context of the Vacancy**

In March 2023, an application to the Regional Director for the North to establish a new multi-academy trust was accepted. The Trust will have 8 founding member schools:

Knop Law Primary  
Milecastle Primary  
Newburn Manor Primary  
Simonside Primary  
Throckley Primary  
Waverley Primary  
West Denton Primary  
Westerhope Primary

This is an exciting time to join our multi-academy trust as it forms, develops and grows. You will be joining a new Chief Executive Officer to help provide leadership, strategic direction and work together with school leaders and business managers to help realise the full potential of the ONE Trust.

The schools in the Trust are our strength. All schools are Ofsted rated 'good' or 'outstanding'.

The current priorities are to reinforce the central team and develop a new vision and direction that harnesses the undoubted talent within the Trust and begins to realise the financial savings, opportunities for income and explore options for partnership working and MAT growth.

The successful candidate will have overall responsibility for the business operations of the MAT. A key skill will be the ability to build highly productive relationships with the schools and their School Business Managers. We are looking for someone who can quickly build trust and strengthen the shared vision so that budgets are set and managed to maximize educational opportunity through efficiency savings.

## **Ethical Leadership**

Our ethos is one in which everything we do is for the benefit of the children in our schools. We are committed to building a strong and successful partnership of schools, so that we can enhance and grow the opportunity our children have to meet their full potential regardless of their start in life.

You will need a strong moral compass to always act in an ethical way, to do things 'properly' and with sound reasoning according to our principled approach.

## Role Summary

The Chief Financial Officer will lead and manage the business activities of the ONE Trust. The post holder will have a key strategic role in the management of the Trust, working with the CEO as part of the leadership team to:

- Ensure that all aspects of financial management are efficient and effective throughout the Trust.
- Provide professional leadership to senior post-holders and School Business Managers.
- Oversee the overall performance of the finance function, including line management as identified.
- Ensure Trust compliance with legal requirements and statutory guidance.
- Promote the highest standards of business ethos and efficiency across the Trust, ensuring the most effective use of resources in support of the Trust's objectives.
- Provide strategic leadership and direction of all the Trust's business activities including purchasing, administration, HR, premises management, ICT and health and safety. Some of these services are currently provided using specialised external contractors and some are handled by persons currently based in academies within the Trust. It is envisaged that there will be increased central control for these activities to enable greater efficiencies and the new CFO, along with the CEO, will have a significant role working with the schools in designing and implementing the changes required.

The following is typical of the post-holder's key responsibilities. It is not necessarily exhaustive and the job description may be amended at any time following consultation between the CEO and the academy trust board.

Candidates should use the information above, along with the following job description and person specification to complete the application form and personal statement, as well as the safer recruitment form.

If you have any further questions or would like to book an appointment with the CEO to discuss the role in more detail then please contact:

**Email: [recruitment@throckleyprim.newcastle.sch.uk](mailto:recruitment@throckleyprim.newcastle.sch.uk)**

**Tel: 0191 2675311.**



**ONE (Owl North East) Trust**  
**Chief Financial Officer**  
**Job Description and Person Specification**

Job title:	<b>Chief Financial Officer (CFO)</b>
Reports to (job title):	Chief Executive Officer
Hours of work:	Full time, 37 hours per week Holiday Entitlement of 30 days plus Bank Holidays
Salary:	£56,889 - £60,233 per annum (linked to spine points)

## Job Description

### Overall Responsibilities

Provide strategic leadership and direction for the MAT's finances within the vision, values, ethos and strategic direction set by the Board of Trustees.

Ensure the financial sustainability of the multi-academy trust (MAT) and set, monitor and maintain the MAT's central team budget whilst working with school leaders to establish realistic budgets and medium term financial plans for each component academy.

Maintain a secure overview of the management of all financial issues within each of the MAT's academies, providing financial assistance to the Headteacher of each academy, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and board of the MAT and overseeing the finance team's termly budget monitoring and annual budget setting processes for each academy.

Keep the CEO and the board up-to-date with the latest funding changes, company law and other statutory guidance and obtain and compile appropriate benchmarking reports to support the Trust board in fulfilling its duties.

Taking responsibility for the role of company secretary, ensure the MAT acts in compliance with relevant legislation and guidance at all times responding to requests for information from external bodies, eg ESFA, DFE, The Charities Commission, in a timely manner.

Uphold good governance and ethical behaviour, including embedding good accounting practices and internal control systems.

Ensure that the MAT's resources are managed efficiently, ethically and professionally and in line with the Academy Trust Handbook.

Taking due account of the Trust's primary and inclusive educational objectives, promote the highest standards of business efficiency across the Trust, ensuring the most effective use of resources in support of ONE Trust's objectives.

Analyse and interpret financial reports, communicating findings in a simplified manner when necessary.

Cooperate with, initiate and manage audit procedures and internal assurance processes.

Act as the leading point of contact for financial and commercial issues.

## Financial Strategy, Planning and Reporting

Contribute fully to the developments to the Trust's strategy across all areas of the business and provide financial analysis and guidance on all activities, plans and targets.

Analyse and interpret financial data in relation to the MAT; developing solutions and strategies over the medium and long term and monitoring performance.

Advise the CEO and the board on all matters relating to the financial strategy and oversight of central and academy budgets.

Produce and present comprehensive financial reports to the Board of Trustees and relevant sub-committees to facilitate effective decision making.

Oversee the finance team's monitoring of income and expenditure and report financial performance against the approved budget for each academy and the central team to the CEO and Board of Trustees, on a termly basis.

Develop and implement strategies for maximising the MAT's current finances, ensuring robust financial processes are in place for payroll, income and expenditure.

Review and deliver local and consolidated management accounts monthly (internal) and annually (external), forecasts and reports, informing CEO and ONE Trust Board of the financial position.

Ensure the ongoing implementation and development of financial policies and procedures across the MAT in order to streamline functions and ensure efficiency.

Continue the development and maintenance of the risk register for the MAT to record risks and opportunities as they arise.

Manage all financial aspects of major capital projects and applications for other funding streams.

Play a key role in due diligence assessments of possible additions to the MAT's schools in respect of financial management, development, improvement and maintenance.

Ensure that tax obligations are discharged correctly and effectively (VAT, Corporation Tax, PAYE/NI).

Complete and submit financial returns as required by Department for Education, ESFA and Charities Commission in accordance with reporting deadlines.

Oversee the preparation of an annual budget plan for each academy within the MAT before the start of each financial year and communicate this to the ESFA.

Submit reports on each academy's financial position to each meeting of the finance, audit and risk committee and/or the Trust board as required. Consolidated budgetary information is also required.

Assist and support the building and development of a future finance team and each academy's Headteacher in setting and managing their academy's budget.

Approve monetary transactions within the delegated financial limits for the MAT's core operations and report such approvals to the finance, audit and risk committee as required.

Review the quarterly, monthly and ad-hoc management accounts prepared by the finance team working with the School Business Managers and/or Headteachers.

Cash/Treasury management – both day to day and strategic deposits - including movement/deposit of funds to ensure maximum returns for the Trust.

Compare payroll costs each month to the budgeted costs and produce comparative reports for the CEO and School Leaders.

Work with the Trust internal assurance providers in producing and responding to the termly internal assurance reports which are shared and explained to the CEO and finance, audit and risk committee.

Advise the CEO and the board immediately if fraudulent activities are suspected or uncovered.

To keep the CEO and the Trust board up-to-date with the latest funding changes, Academy Trust Handbook, and finance related company law and other statutory guidance.

## Other Business Functions

Maintain an overview of all the academies within the MAT, providing best value options for key purchases, overseeing tenders for service contracts, evaluating cost effectiveness and value for money.

Provide advice to the Trust's School Business Managers/Headteachers and the CEO over retention of quotes obtained for goods and services.

Maintain the MAT's Trust-wide contracts register, ensuring compliance with purchasing regulations.

Monitor and control processes to ensure adherence to ONE Trust policies and procedures and safeguard Trust assets. Including maintenance of group procurement policies and procedures.

Liaise with all appropriate parties to develop, maintain and manage effective procedures for estate management and maintenance including agreed disaster recovery and business continuity plans.

Act as the Health and Safety Officer and Fire Officer taking the lead to ensure the schools meet all health and safety requirements and that regular review and monitoring is in place.

Provide leadership and management of HR issues, where appropriate using the Trust's external support services.

Ensure effective administration of all relevant staff processes, as required, including recruitment.

## Administration and Trust Services

Line manage finance team, as required, to ensure high standards of service to Trust Academies and ensure appropriate capacity within the team for future growth.

Ensure all forms and returns required by the ESFA are prepared and submitted in the specified format and filed before the deadline.

Working with the CEO and external auditors to prepare the annual report and prepare the consolidated financial statements in the specified format for auditing by external auditors.

Liaise with the finance, audit and risk committee, accountants, internal assurance and auditors where appropriate.

Prepare appropriate bids or tender documents to acquire identified additional funds or grants.

Ensure the monthly payroll is checked and certified by each academy's Headteacher/School Business Manager.

Report to the DfE and other relevant bodies in line with their specific requirements.

Maintain records to an appropriate standard in order to meet legal and tax requirements.

Ensure appropriate insurance cover/RPA cover is in place and arrangements are regularly reviewed and monitored. This includes arranging additional insurance, as appropriate.

Identify and implement opportunities for collaborative working across the whole financial function of the MAT.

Act as Administrator for the Trust's finance system; managing user access, training, security permissions, nominal code management and centrally managed processes.

Change management – leading development of Finance organisation through periods of growth driven by change, adapting shape/structure/team abilities to meet evolving organisational requirements.

Management of payroll including keeping abreast of all developments and legislation surrounding payroll, pensions and benefits. Ensuring all legislation is implemented and adhered to by the Trust.

Ensure the availability and effectiveness of ICT functions to support the schools' needs and to support the Trust's systems.

## Relationships

The CFO role is responsible to the CEO (accounting officer) and Trust Board.

The CFO will be required to liaise with all members of staff, the Trust board, the finance, audit and risk committee (and any other delegated finance committee of the Trust Board), external auditors and accountants, where appropriate, to inform them about training, policies, procedures and relay relevant information.

## Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
<b>Qualifications and Training</b>	<p>The successful candidate will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold a degree or equivalent qualification in a finance related discipline.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be a qualified accountant.</li> </ul>
<b>Experience</b>	<p>The successful candidate will have experience of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working at a senior level with financial management systems.</li> <li>Budget setting and budgetary control.</li> <li>Designing and implementing financial management processes and controls.</li> <li>Managing procurement and contracts.</li> <li>Generating income and preparing bids.</li> <li>Managing and working in a large and complex organisation which operates across multiple sites.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience of working in an educational setting.</li> <li>Experience of obtaining additional funding.</li> <li>Experience of working with external auditors and agencies.</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge and Skills</b>	<p>The successful candidate will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Up-to-date knowledge of accountancy and professional codes of practice.</li> <li>Advanced knowledge of statutory requirements and funding strategies regarding the education sector.</li> <li>Proven awareness and respect for the highly sensitive status of information and its confidentiality.</li> <li>The confidence to challenge opposing views by presenting robust arguments and reasons for the contrary view.</li> <li>Excellent written and verbal communication skills.</li> </ul> <p>The successful candidate will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpret complex financial information and statute, and devise policies and procedures in light of these.</li> <li>Work as part of a team as well as work independently.</li> <li>Work effectively with colleagues, governors and parents.</li> <li>Manage projects and lead a group.</li> <li>Efficiently collate and analyse data.</li> <li>Effectively demonstrate a high level of computer skills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An ability to motivate colleagues.</li> <li>An ability to identify commercial opportunities to maximise income.</li> </ul>



## Personal Qualities

The successful candidate will have:

- Excellent analytical and problem solving skills.
- An understanding of the principles and practice of risk management.
- A good attendance and punctuality record.
- Excellent time management and organisational skills.
- High expectations of self and professional standards.
- The ability to maintain successful working relationships with other colleagues.
- A willingness to work outside of the timetabled day, where necessary.
- High levels of drive, energy and integrity.

The successful candidate will be:

- Able to promote good behaviour consistently.
- Able to plan and take control of situations.
- Able to work flexibly, attending and contributing towards meetings and training outside of their specified work hours.
- Committed to contributing to the wider school and its community.
- Capable of handling a demanding workload and be able to successfully prioritise work.

- Have a sympathy towards the vision and Values of ONE Trust

\*This job description and the particular responsibilities are not exhaustive and will be under periodic review to ensure it meets the changing needs of the Trust.

**ONE Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and preventing extremism; all staff must ensure that the highest priority is given to following the guidance and regulations to safeguard children and young people.**

**The successful candidate will be required to undergo an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and obtain any other statutorily required clearance, which will include a Section 128 pre-employment check. Employment will also be conditional on the receipt of at least two acceptable references (one from current/latest employer) and evidence of the formal qualifications required for the role.**