Job Description

Job Title	**Head of Catering**
Grade	**Scale 10**
Reports to	Chief Financial and Operating Officer (CFOO)
Liaison with	School Staff, Trust Coordinators, Finance Partners, Senior Leadership Teams, Head of Operations and Data Protection, Director of Finance (DOF)
Job Purpose	To provide strategic leadership, operational oversight and financial management of catering services across all Academies within The Vine Schools Trust. The postholder will ensure the delivery of safe, fully compliant, nutritious and sustainable school meal provision while driving continuous improvement, excellent value for money and high pupil participation.
Duties	Key Responsibilities and Duties **1. Strategic Leadership & Operational Management** · Provide strategic direction and day-to-day operational oversight of catering services across all Trust kitchens and relevant wraparound provision. · Establish consistent service standards, quality controls and hygiene benchmarks across all academy sites. · Conduct regular site visits and quality audits to maintain a 5-star Food Hygiene Rating across all Trust kitchens. · Provide operational cover or emergency support across sites only in exceptional, unforeseen circumstances. · Plan and coordinate emergency or satellite meal provision, including transported meal services, when required. **2. Regulatory Compliance, Legislation & Food Safety** · Ensure organisational compliance with all relevant statutory legislation and national guidance, including the Food Safety Act 1990, the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013, Department for Education mandatory School Food Standards, Natasha's Law, COSHH regulations and the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. · Maintain robust medical diet and allergen management systems, ensuring

effective liaison with academies and parents/carers regarding pupils' medical, allergy, dietary and cultural requirements, and strict adherence to Trust policies and pupil allergy registers

· Maintain accurate statutory compliance records, risk assessments and hygiene documentation in coordination with the CFOO.

3. Financial Management & Procurement

· Work collaboratively with the CFOO, Director of Finance and Finance Partners to prepare, manage and monitor the annual catering budget.

· Oversee procurement across all kitchens, working with suppliers to secure best value while maintaining effective stock control and inventory management.

· Ensure timely end-of-month invoice reconciliations and stock audits are collated and submitted to Finance Partners.

· Drive communications, marketing initiatives and pupil engagement activities to increase school meal uptake and income.

4. Menu Planning, Health & Nutrition

· Design and implement rotating seasonal menus that comply with mandatory School Food Standards and promote healthy eating choices.

· Oversee food preparation to ensure meals are freshly prepared and cooked, high quality, visually appealing and delivered consistently in accordance with approved Trust menus and School Food Standards.

· Support catering requirements for internal Trust training courses, governance meetings and hospitality events.

5. People Management & Development

· Directly line manage Academy Catering Managers conducting regular performance management reviews, one-to-ones and team briefings.

· Oversee recruitment, induction and continuing professional development for catering personnel.

· Manage day-to-day staffing matters, including rotas, training schedules and absence management, liaising with central HR and the CFOO on complex casework.

	6. Trust Culture, Safeguarding & General Requirements · Support the Christian ethos, aims, values and mission of The Vine Schools Trust and promote a collaborative and inclusive culture across all academies and central services. · Actively safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education. · Ensure compliance with equal opportunities, data protection and health and safety policies across all catering activities. · Maintain current knowledge of legislation, national guidance and best practice relating to school catering, nutrition, sustainability and healthy eating. The list of duties in the job description should not be regarded as exclusive or exhaustive. There will be other duties and requirements associated with your job and, in addition, as a term of your employment you may be required to undertake various other duties as may reasonably be required.
General	· The duties listed are neither exclusive nor exhaustive. The postholder may be required by the Chief Financial and Operating Officer to undertake other duties appropriate to the role, skills and grade. · Comply with individual responsibilities for health and safety in the workplace and actively promote safe working practices. · Ensure all duties and services are delivered in accordance with the Trust's Equal Opportunities Policy and data protection requirements. · 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. · Be supportive of the Christian ethos of the Church of England and The Vine Schools Trust.

PERSON SPECIFICATION – HEAD OF CATERING

General heading	Detail	Examples
Qualifications & Experience	Specific qualifications & Training	Essential: Level 3 or 4 Award in Food Safety in Catering; professional catering or culinary qualification at NVQ Level 3, City & Guilds or equivalent; Allergen Awareness training certification; Level 3 Supervising Health & Safety qualification, or willingness to obtain. Desirable: Degree or higher diploma in Catering Management or Hospitality; intermediate or advanced COSHH certification; First Aid at Work qualification.
	Experience	Essential: Proven experience managing multi-site catering operations or large-scale kitchen operations; budget management, financial control and stock reconciliation; strong line management experience, including performance management and staff development; successful food safety compliance and allergen management. Desirable: Experience within an educational setting or Multi-Academy Trust; implementing Natasha's Law and School Food Standards; procuring and managing supplier contracts.
	Knowledge and understanding	Essential: In-depth knowledge of UK food safety regulations, COSHH and allergen legislation; clear understanding of Department for Education School Food Standards and nutritional requirements; knowledge of statutory safeguarding responsibilities, including Keeping Children Safe in Education. Desirable: Understanding of Church of England school ethos and values; knowledge of sustainable food sourcing and waste reduction strategies.
	Literacy	Reading and writing skills
	Numeracy	Ability to count and undertake calculations
	Technology	Ability to use kitchen and cleaning equipment. Proficiency in Word, Excel, Outlook and inventory systems
Communication	Written	Ability to write menus and reports

	Verbal	Listening Skills Ability to exchange verbal information clearly with children and adults
Working with children	Behaviour Management	Understand and implement the Trust's Behaviour Management Policy, as required.
	Curriculum	Good understanding of the learning experience provided by Academies in relation to the role
	Health & Well being	Understand the importance of physical and emotional wellbeing
Working with others	Working with partners	Understand the role of others working in the school
	Relationships	Ability to build open and honest relationships
	Teamwork	Work effectively as part of a team and the ability to work independently. Know when and how to seek support. Know when and how to hand over control. Knowledge of own position within a team environment and the boundaries which apply
	Information	Ability to provide timely and accurate information
Responsibilities	Organisational skills	Able to self manage and make decisions and work on own initiative
	Line Management	Ability to manage and support the work of others
	Time Management	Be well organised, have a high level of initiative and be able to delegate effectively and appropriately Flexible and able to respond to rapidly changing demands, environment and meet deadlines
	Creativity	Demonstrate creativity and an ability to resolve problems independently
General	Equalities	Demonstrate a commitment to equality
	Health & Safety	Understanding of Health & Safety.
	Child Protection	Understand and comply with Child Protection procedures.
	Confidentiality/Data	Understand procedures and legislation

	Protection	relating to confidentiality
	CPD	Demonstrate a clear commitment to develop and learn in the role.
	Car and driving licence	Be in possession of a full clean driving licence and have use of own car