

JOB DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title	Head of Finance Business Partnering	Location	Home based with regular travel across the trust's schools and head office, with occasional overnight stays required.
Salary	Competitive	Hours	Permanent, Full time
Department	Finance	Reports To	Chief Financial Officer

JOB PURPOSE:

The overall purpose of this post is to be professionally responsible and accountable for providing a high- quality financial service that enables the Trust to achieve its strategic aims and objectives via effective, innovative and efficient management of its financial resources.

The postholder will work closely with the Senior Finance Business Partners to develop the existing processes for financial planning, management reporting and financial analysis to ensure that the finance function facilitates and underpins the advancement of the strategic priorities of The Trust and its schools. The postholder will promote best practice in the development of the finance function.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES:

Trust Management

- The Head of Finance Business Partnering will have a key role in the management of the Trust and will have effective responsibility for:
 - Management accounts
 - Financial planning including Integrated Curriculum and Financial Planning ("ICFP"), budgeting and forecasting
 - The ongoing development of insightful financial analysis
 - Line management of the Senior Finance Business Partners
 - Other areas of work commensurate with the purpose of the post.

Financial Planning

- Lead on impact-driven expenditure reviews across Trust schools.
- Oversight and delivery of the Trust's ICFP and budgeting processes, incorporating organisation of the timetable to achieve agreed deadlines, delivery of templates and guidance and supporting Senior Finance Business Partners and their schools with preparation of ICFP and budgets.
- Lead on the relationship with the ICFP and budgeting system provider and the development of the budgeting system and processes.
- Continuously develop and improve the Trust's ICFP and budgeting processes to facilitate evolving strategic organisational goals.
- Oversee the linkage between the budgeting software and accounting software (PS Financials) to ensure synchronicity of the data in management accounts reporting and other reports.
- Support the generation of additional income, including central co-ordination of grant applications, cost/ benefit analysis of new income generating measures, the development of new initiatives and support to Senior Finance Business Partners with grant applications.
- Ownership and delivery of relevant statutory reporting to the DfE including but not limited to Academies budget forecast return (BFR) ensuring timely and accurate submissions.

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- Stay abreast of sector developments and estimate the financial impact of sector announcements, for discussion with the Chief Financial Officer. Communicate sector developments onwards with the team and wider Trust, as agreed with the Chief Financial Officer.

Financial Management

- Working with the Financial Controller, ensure effective financial management across the Trust via development and streamlining of processes and procedures to maintain an efficient and effective finance function.
- Manage the preparation and presentation of consolidated monthly management accounts, including income and expenditure accounts and balance sheets, and financial planning information to the Chief Financial Officer, the Chief Executive, the Executive and the Board of Trustees.
- Continuously review and develop the template for school management accounts to ensure it encompasses insightful data to inform both school leaders, the Chief Financial Officer and other stakeholders.
- Support Senior Finance Business Partners with the preparation of business cases for additional expenditure that require the approval of the Chief Financial Officer (both staffing and other resources).
- Maintain a register of grants, ensuring reporting deadlines are met and completeness of income receipts. In addition, review grant monitoring paperwork prepared by the Senior Finance Business Partners, prior to its submission.

Financial Analysis

- Develop detailed and insightful financial analysis that informs the decision making of key stakeholders including the Executive team and school leadership teams.
- Lead the development of consistent, insightful and high-quality budget holder reporting for school senior and middle leaders and Central Team colleagues.
- Lead the development of comprehensive benchmarking to inform decision making of stakeholders.

Support & Development Of Staff

- Line management of the Senior Finance Business Partners to include appraisals, induction, continuing professional development, training, and recruitment.
- Assist the Chief Financial Officer in providing leadership, motivation, training and support of finance staff, ensuring that appropriate standards of behaviour, performance and customer care are demonstrated at all times
- Support Senior Finance Business Partners with financial responsibilities, in line with the Trust's policies and procedures.
- Actively contribute to the development of quality improvement programmes across the Trust.
- Proactively implement the Trust's policies and procedures.

Other Specific Responsibilities

- Undertake business partnering responsibilities for a number of schools in the Trust.
- Work closely with the Chief Financial Officer to deliver their strategic objectives and aims for the development of the finance function.
- Assist the Chief Financial Officer with preparation for Trust Finance Committee meetings and Board reporting.
- Lead on the preparation of Budgets, 3-year forecasts, ICFP and financial due diligence for potential new schools joining the Trust.

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- Manage the set-up process for new schools joining the Trust in respect of management reporting, ICF and budgeting software and the adoption of Trust financial planning and analysis procedures.
- Lead on the integration of new schools in terms of day-to-day finance processes and delivery of desired outcomes for Principals and Headteachers.
- Work with the Financial Controller to arrange a complete training and induction for new schools that encompasses all areas of responsibility.
- Promote a culture of continuous improvement within the finance function and promote shared learning and good practice across Trust academies.
- Support new Trust wide projects under the direction of the Chief Financial Officer.

This job description is not necessarily a comprehensive definition of the post, and the post holder will be required to undertake other duties appropriate to the grade and character of the work as directed.

JOB REQUIREMENTS:		
	Essential	Desirable
QUALIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionally qualified accountant (ACCA, CIMA, ICAEW, CIPFA etc) with significant post-qualification experience. 	
EXPERIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in the preparation of large or complex budgets and forecasts, working within budgetary constraints. • Experience of producing and presenting consolidated management accounts for a decentralised group that has a number of branches and/or subsidiaries, each having their own accounting functions. • Experience of developing insightful financial analysis informed by stakeholder outcomes. • Experience of managing a team, providing motivation and training to up-skill team members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful experience of working in a School or Academy financial management role, or in a similar position working alongside schools e.g., Local Authority, MAT or independent education sector. • Experience of ICFP. • Experience of developing insightful benchmarking capable of informing decision making. • Experience of acquisitions or mergers.
KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working knowledge of Academy financial rules and regulations. • Strong working knowledge of operating a budgeting system and process for a number of branches/ sites or subsidiaries • A good understanding of the work of a MAT and school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound knowledge of academy specific guidance from the ESFA including Accounts Direction and the Academy Trust Handbook. • Basic knowledge of charity law.

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<p>SKILLS AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A desire to participate in the delivery of the Trust’s vision for a high-quality financial service for the Trust and its schools. • The ability to discuss complex requirements with stakeholders and to develop analysis that fulfils their needs. • Ability to work pro-actively with budget owners to ensure performance meets agreed targets including KPI’s (e.g., ratios of spend to income) • Customer focused attitude and proven ability to deliver service improvements. • Excellent interpersonal skills, with the ability to build effective relationships, both internally and externally. • Sound decision making that is proactive and solution oriented. • Competent and Confident in using Microsoft Office • Advanced Excel skills including the use of pivot tables and macros. • Efficient and organised • Proactive, flexible, trustworthy, dependable and reliable. • Outstanding communication skills (oral, written and presentation) and the ability to tailor effective communication with various stakeholders • Proven ability to manage a significant workload and prioritise responsibilities to maintain effectiveness and deliver results. • Excellent negotiation skills. • Aligned with Creative Education Trust’s high aspirations and high expectations of self and others 	
<p>CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST VALUES</p>	<p>All colleagues are expected to demonstrate the Creative Education Trust values in their work by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowering Ambition: Supporting personal growth, innovation and high performance. • Championing Equity: Promoting fairness, inclusion and high expectations for every student. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unlocking Opportunity: Helping create access to knowledge, experiences and networks that broaden horizons. <p>These values should be evident in how the post-holder works, collaborates and contributes to the wider Trust community.</p>
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES	A demonstrable commitment to supporting and promoting safeguarding, student welfare, equality and diversity
SAFEGUARDING	A thorough understanding of up-to-date safeguarding requirements and best practice
OTHER REQUIREMENTS	High expectations for every pupil and a proven track record of making a difference to the learning and experiences of pupils inside and outside the classroom.

Creative Education Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be required to undertake relevant safeguarding checks in line with Government safer recruitment guidelines.