

Central Academies Trust

School Business Manager

Applicant Information Pack

Contract	Permanent, full time, all year round
Salary	NJC Principal Officer SCP 29-32: £39,862 - £42,839 (subject to the 2026 pay award)
Reporting to	Chief Finance and Operations Officer
Location	Central Academies Trust / Lordswood Boys' School

A pivotal school-based leadership role

This role provides the operational grip, financial discipline and high-quality business support that allow school leaders and staff to focus on what matters most: excellent education, strong relationships and better outcomes for young people.

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About this pack

This pack sets out the context, purpose and expectations of the School Business Manager role. It should be read alongside the vacancy advert and application form. The role profile is intended to provide clarity while allowing the post to develop as the school and Trust continue to grow.

1. Welcome from the Chief Executive Officer

Dear prospective candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the School Business Manager role at Central Academies Trust and Lordswood Boys' School.

This is an exciting time to join our organisation. Lordswood Boys' School has grown significantly in recent years and has developed a strong culture, a clear educational identity and an ambitious direction for the future. As we enter the next phase of our development, we are strengthening the business and operational infrastructure that supports the school every day.

The School Business Manager will be central to that work. We are looking for an experienced, organised and values-led professional who can bring clarity to complex processes, maintain strong financial and operational controls, lead colleagues effectively and ensure that our business services are responsive to the needs of students, staff and families.

This is a practical leadership role with real influence. You will work closely with the Chief Finance and Operations Officer, the Head of School, senior leaders and external partners. You will lead the day-to-day delivery and continuous improvement of key school business functions, helping to ensure that resources are used well and that our systems are accurate, efficient and compliant.

We are seeking someone who combines professional expertise with approachability; someone who can challenge constructively, solve problems calmly and build trusted relationships across the school. Above all, we want a colleague who understands that excellent business management is an essential enabler of excellent education.

If this opportunity aligns with your experience, values and ambition, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Yours sincerely,

Lee Williams

Chief Executive Officer / Executive Headteacher

2. About Central Academies Trust and Lordswood Boys' School

Central Academies Trust is currently a single-school academy trust responsible for Lordswood Boys' School, an 11-16 boys' secondary school in Birmingham. The school has grown from approximately 280 students in 2018 to more than 670 students and is approaching its capacity of 750.

The Trust's purpose is rooted in a simple belief: learning and relationships matter most. We want every student to experience high expectations, strong support and a rich education that builds knowledge, character, confidence and future opportunity.

Our culture

- Leadership: taking responsibility, modelling professionalism and helping others to succeed.
- Belief: being ambitious for our students, our colleagues and our community.
- Self-discipline: showing consistency, preparation and the determination to do the right things well.
- Ready, Respectful, Safe: the everyday expectations that create clarity, belonging and strong conditions for learning.

Our next phase

The school has a compelling improvement story, strong relationships with its community and a clear commitment to literacy, curriculum quality, attendance, enrichment and personal development. The next phase is about sustaining what works, strengthening leadership capacity and building enabling functions that are resilient, efficient and ready to support future opportunity.

Creating Amazing Together

We believe that sustainable improvement is achieved through collective responsibility. The School Business Manager will work across teams and functions, bringing people, systems and resources together to support the school's educational mission.

3. Why this role matters

Excellent schools depend on excellent business operations. Financial accuracy, effective procurement, dependable HR and payroll processes, safe and well-managed premises, strong administrative systems and responsive support services all shape the daily experience of students and staff.

The School Business Manager will provide the day-to-day leadership and coordination needed to make these functions work well. The postholder will turn strategic direction into reliable routines, maintain effective controls, identify opportunities for improvement and ensure that leaders receive the information and support they need to make sound decisions.

The School Business Manager will provide

- day-to-day leadership of school finance and business operations;
- accurate, timely financial information and effective budget monitoring;
- strong transactional controls and audit-ready records;
- high-quality procurement, contract management and value-for-money practice;
- effective coordination of HR administration, payroll inputs and recruitment processes;
- operational oversight of premises, facilities, health and safety systems and contracted services;
- leadership and development of relevant finance, administration and operational colleagues;
- a responsive, professional service to students, families, staff, leaders and external partners.

Working within the Trust structure

The postholder will report to the Chief Finance and Operations Officer (CFOO), who provides strategic oversight, assurance and Trust-level leadership. The School Business Manager will lead school-based implementation and operational delivery, working closely with the Head of School and senior leadership team.

Strategic oversight	Chief Finance and Operations Officer
School-level leadership	School Business Manager
Operational delivery	Finance, administration, site and business support teams, alongside external providers

4. Appointment details and benefits

Post title	School Business Manager
Responsible to	Chief Finance and Operations Officer
Works closely with	Head of School, CEO / Executive Headteacher, senior leaders and external partners
Contract	Permanent
Working pattern	Full time, all year round
Salary	NJC Principal Officer SCP 29-32: £39,862 - £42,839
Location	Lordswood Boys' School / Central Academies Trust
Start date	1 September 2026
Closing date	15 July 2026

What we offer

- membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme, subject to eligibility;
- a generous annual leave entitlement in accordance with Trust support staff terms and conditions;
- access to professional development aligned to the role and the ISBL Professional Standards;
- the opportunity to shape and improve key business systems within a growing school;
- close working relationships with senior leaders, trustees and professional advisers;
- a supportive, values-led culture with a strong commitment to staff wellbeing and professional growth;
- the opportunity to make a visible contribution to the life chances of young people.

Professional growth

We want the successful candidate to continue developing as a school business professional. Relevant accredited training, professional membership and development opportunities will be considered as part of an agreed professional development plan.

5. Job description

Post title	School Business Manager
Responsible to	Chief Finance and Operations Officer
Direct reports	Relevant finance, administration and operational support colleagues, as determined by the Trust structure
Contract	Permanent, full time, all year round
Salary	NJC Principal Officer SCP 29-32: £39,862 - £42,839

Main purpose of the role

- Lead the efficient and effective day-to-day delivery of the school's finance, business and operational functions.
- Provide accurate financial information, strong budget monitoring and high-quality operational advice to the CFOO, Head of School and senior leaders.
- Ensure that school-level financial processes, records and controls are accurate, timely, compliant and audit-ready.
- Lead and develop relevant business support teams, promoting high standards of service, accountability and continuous improvement.
- Coordinate key areas including finance administration, procurement, HR administration, payroll inputs, contracts, premises operations and business compliance.
- Ensure that business services are aligned with the school's educational priorities and contribute positively to the experience of students, staff and families.

Leadership and operational management

- Translate Trust and school priorities into clear operational plans, systems, routines and service standards.
- Provide visible, calm and solution-focused leadership across school business functions.
- Contribute to leadership meetings and decision-making as required, bringing a clear understanding of resources, risk and operational implications.
- Identify inefficiencies, risks and service gaps, recommending and implementing sustainable improvements.
- Develop a strong culture of customer service, professional accountability and collaboration within business support teams.
- Maintain effective relationships with external providers, contractors, professional advisers and partner organisations.

Job description - responsibilities

Finance and resource management

- Lead the day-to-day operation of the school finance function in accordance with the Trust financial scheme, policies and delegated authorities.
- Support annual budget setting and medium-term planning by coordinating accurate staffing, curriculum, contract and operational information.
- Monitor delegated budgets, commitments and income; investigate variances; and provide timely, clear information and commentary to budget holders and senior leaders.
- Coordinate and quality-assure the information required for management accounts, forecasts, statutory returns and Board reporting.
- Oversee purchase-to-pay processes, income collection, banking, reconciliations, payroll information, grants, assets and other financial records.
- Ensure that separation of duties, authorisation limits, record keeping and other internal controls are understood and applied consistently.
- Maintain organised, accurate and audit-ready evidence, responding promptly to internal scrutiny and external audit requirements.
- Promote value for money and support the effective deployment of resources to improve educational outcomes.

Procurement, contracts and commercial activity

- Lead and coordinate school procurement activity in line with Trust policy, delegated authority and relevant procurement requirements.
- Support specifications, quotations, tenders, evaluation, due diligence and contract award processes.
- Maintain a clear contracts register and forward plan, monitoring renewal dates, performance, compliance and value for money.
- Build constructive supplier relationships while ensuring appropriate challenge, accountability and service quality.
- Support income-generation, lettings and grant-funding opportunities where these align with Trust priorities.

People, HR administration and payroll

- Oversee effective school-level HR administration, including recruitment, onboarding, contractual documentation, employee records and leaver processes.
- Coordinate accurate and timely payroll information and changes, working with managers, finance colleagues and external providers.
- Maintain appropriate records relating to absence, staffing, workforce information and statutory returns.
- Support leaders to apply Trust HR procedures consistently, seeking specialist advice where required.
- Line manage, develop and support relevant colleagues through clear objectives, regular feedback and appropriate professional development.

Job description - responsibilities continued

Estates, facilities and health and safety

- Coordinate the day-to-day business management of premises, facilities and contracted services, working closely with site colleagues and the CFOO.
- Ensure that planned maintenance, statutory checks, compliance records and contractor documentation are organised, current and readily accessible.
- Support the implementation of the Trust estates strategy, asset management plan and capital projects.
- Monitor the performance of key services such as cleaning, catering, waste, utilities, security and facilities contracts.
- Support effective health and safety management, including risk assessments, incident records, action tracking and compliance reporting.
- Help ensure that the school environment is safe, welcoming, well maintained and able to support high-quality education.

Administration, systems and compliance

- Ensure that business administration systems are efficient, consistent and responsive to the needs of the school community.
- Use digital systems and data intelligently to improve workflows, accuracy, reporting and service quality.
- Maintain appropriate business continuity, insurance, risk and compliance records, escalating issues where necessary.
- Support compliance with data protection, information security, cyber security and records-management requirements.
- Coordinate timely responses to information requests, returns, audits and assurance activity within the remit of the role.
- Prepare clear reports, briefings and recommendations for the CFOO, senior leaders and relevant governance meetings.

General responsibilities

- Promote and model the Trust values and the school expectations of Ready, Respectful and Safe.
- Maintain the highest standards of integrity, confidentiality, professional conduct and public-service ethics.
- Contribute to safeguarding, equality, inclusion and the wellbeing of students and colleagues.
- Undertake relevant training and maintain up-to-date professional knowledge.
- Carry out other duties commensurate with the grade and seniority of the role, following reasonable direction from the CFOO or CEO.

This job description is intended to describe the principal responsibilities of the post. It may be reviewed and amended in consultation with the postholder to reflect organisational development and changing priorities.

6. Person specification

Assessment methods: A = Application | I = Interview | T = Task / exercise | R = References

Criteria	Requirement	E/D	Assessment
Experience and knowledge	Substantial experience of leading school business, finance or operational functions in a school, academy trust or similarly regulated organisation.	Essential	A / I
Experience and knowledge	Strong practical experience of budget monitoring, financial administration, internal controls and financial reporting.	Essential	A / I / T
Experience and knowledge	Experience of coordinating procurement, contracts and supplier performance.	Essential	A / I / T
Experience and knowledge	Experience of HR administration, recruitment processes and payroll information.	Essential	A / I
Experience and knowledge	Experience of managing and developing staff, setting clear expectations and improving service delivery.	Essential	A / I / R
Experience and knowledge	Experience of working with senior leaders and presenting clear information, analysis and recommendations.	Essential	A / I / T
Experience and knowledge	Understanding of financial governance, audit, risk, compliance and value for money.	Essential	A / I / T
Experience and knowledge	Knowledge of academy or school finance requirements and the operating context of publicly funded education.	Desirable	A / I
Experience and knowledge	Experience of premises, facilities, health and safety or capital project coordination.	Desirable	A / I
Experience and knowledge	Experience of supporting organisational change, process improvement or the implementation of new systems.	Desirable	A / I

Person specification - continued

Criteria	Requirement	E/D	Assessment
Skills and abilities	Excellent numerical and analytical skills, with the ability to interpret financial and operational information accurately.	Essential	A / I / T
Skills and abilities	Advanced organisational skills and the ability to manage competing priorities, deadlines and operational pressures.	Essential	A / I / T
Skills and abilities	Strong written communication, including the ability to prepare clear reports, procedures and professional correspondence.	Essential	A / I / T
Skills and abilities	Confident verbal communication and the ability to build constructive relationships with staff, leaders, trustees, families, suppliers and external partners.	Essential	A / I / R
Skills and abilities	Strong digital capability, including confident use of spreadsheets, finance systems and Microsoft 365 or equivalent.	Essential	A / I / T
Skills and abilities	Ability to identify risks, solve problems, improve systems and follow through on agreed actions.	Essential	A / I / T
Qualifications	GCSE English and mathematics at grade 4/C or above, or equivalent.	Essential	A
Qualifications	Relevant qualification at Level 4 or above in school business management, finance, business, HR, management or a related discipline, or substantial equivalent professional experience.	Essential	A / I
Qualifications	School business management, accountancy, HR, procurement, project management or health and safety qualification.	Desirable	A

Person specification - professional qualities

Criteria	Requirement	E/D	Assessment
Professional qualities	High levels of integrity, discretion, accuracy and professional judgement.	Essential	I / R
Professional qualities	Collaborative, approachable and service-focused, while able to challenge appropriately and hold others to account.	Essential	I / R
Professional qualities	Calm, resilient and adaptable, with a positive and practical approach to change.	Essential	I / R
Professional qualities	Commitment to equality, safeguarding, public service and improving outcomes for young people.	Essential	A / I / R

The person we are seeking

We are looking for a credible and practical school business professional: someone who can see the bigger picture while maintaining close attention to detail; who can develop people as well as systems; and who will bring professionalism, warmth and dependable follow-through to a fast-moving school environment.

7. Safeguarding and pre-employment checks

Central Academies Trust and Lordswood Boys' School are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff, trustees and volunteers to share this commitment.

The successful candidate will be subject to relevant pre-employment checks, which may include:

- an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, including barred-list information where applicable;
- verification of identity, qualifications and the right to work in the UK;
- satisfactory references, including the most recent employer;
- a check of employment history and appropriate exploration of any gaps;
- online searches for shortlisted candidates in line with current safeguarding guidance;
- medical fitness and any other checks relevant to the role.

This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Applicants will be required to disclose relevant convictions and cautions in accordance with the applicable legislation and recruitment guidance.

8. Application and selection process

Applicants should complete the Trust application form and provide a supporting statement explaining how their experience, knowledge and professional qualities meet the requirements of the role.

The selection process is expected to include:

- a structured panel interview;
- a finance and business-management task or case study;
- an operational scenario or presentation;
- a professional conversation with senior leaders and/or trustees;
- appropriate opportunities to learn more about the school and the role.

For an informal and confidential discussion about the role, please contact Lee Williams, Chief Executive Officer / Executive Headteacher, at l.williams@centralacademiestrust.co.uk.

Final note for candidates

This is an opportunity to join a school with a strong sense of identity and ambition, and to shape the systems and services that underpin its next phase. We welcome applications from experienced school business professionals and from candidates who can demonstrate highly transferable expertise from a similarly complex, accountable and values-led environment.