



**school21**  
FOR SUCCESS IN THE 21ST CENTURY



Candidate Information Pack:  
**Finance Director**



# Welcome to School 21



To join School 21 is to join a community of pioneers – staff and pupils who want to do things differently, who want to provide pupils with the opportunity to thrive in the 21st century.

Here we think deeply about how we can have the biggest impact on pupils who often come from fragile homes. We strive to give pupils the most challenging and exciting curriculum possible and we treat each other with respect, kindness and support.

We are a growing organisation, partnering with other schools, and with approval to set up two new schools in the next few years. So this is a great time to be part of the team and help shape the next stage of our journey.

This role is key to making that growth effective and we are looking for someone to join the strategic discussion as well as manage the finances with skill and rigour.

School 21 is a different kind of school and we are looking for people who have a belief that more of the same is just not ambitious enough. We would love you to visit and see the school in action or call us to talk things through.

**Peter Hyman**  
Executive Headteacher

**Oli de Botton**  
Headteacher

## Our Story

School 21 is a pioneering new 4 to 18 school in Stratford, East London, for girls and boys and children from all backgrounds.

The three founders of School 21 Peter Hyman, Oli de Botton and Ed Fidoie came together with a shared belief that education must be done differently if we are to prepare young people properly for the world they are going into. Their conviction was that we needed schools to rebalance head (academic success), heart (character and wellbeing) and hand (generating ideas, problem solving, making a difference).

So School 21 has developed a series of pedagogies and approaches that give students the chance to find their voice, develop deep knowledge and understanding, and create beautiful work that has real value beyond the classroom.

We have also been approved to open two new schools in the coming years and so there are plenty of opportunities to grow and develop.



## Ofsted “Outstanding”

In June 2014, School 21 was graded as ‘Outstanding’ in all categories, in its first Ofsted inspection since opening. Many of the findings reflected the impact of our innovation: “Pupils across the school make exceptional progress.” “Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning, impeccable manners and show respect for everyone.” Through project-based learning “pupils achieve remarkable standards of work and demonstrated knowledge and skills at levels beyond those expected for their age group.” “Pupils talk and discuss with a maturity and confidence that is remarkable for their years.” “Staff morale is exceptionally high. Teachers at the early stages of their career value the ‘fantastic’ professional development and opportunities to learn from each other. Those with more experience said that they have become much better teachers since joining the school.”



# Teaching and Learning at School 21



**English Language** is at the heart of everything we do with students given the chance to develop their reading and writing skills every day. It's our mission to ensure every student is an avid reader, fluent writer and confident public speaker.



## **Wellbeing and growth through coaching.**

Our small school and small class sizes mean that more time can be spent really understanding the needs of each child. All students join tight-knit coaching groups of 12-15 peers who support each other through their secondary school journey. Our wellbeing curriculum and use of coaching (all teachers are trained in these techniques) mean that all pupils are supported and none fall through the cracks.



**Oracy** is the ability to communicate effectively using spoken language, and is a key pillar of our approach to pedagogy. Our students engage in high quality talk in a range of settings built into the fabric of the school day. Working with Cambridge University we have developed a groundbreaking oracy programme which is being trialed and developed across the country by our sister organization, Voice 21.



## **Real World Learning.**

We go to great lengths to connect the learning of our students to the world outside the school gates. This culminates in year 10 & 11 where our students spend an afternoon of every week at their Real World Learning placement, working in small teams to solve a challenging and authentic problem faced by their host organisation.



## **Beautiful Work.**

We believe our purpose as an organisation is to create beautiful work that makes a difference to the world. Our school is a place where children craft stunning work with quality end products, for real audiences and as a result of deep teacher collaboration. In addition to teaching through discrete subject disciplines, our teachers collaborate to design and teach projects which tackle authentic issues and seek to create rich, beautiful outcomes of lasting value.



## **Integration of new technology.**

Through sophisticated use of technology including 1:1 iPads, online resources, apps and blogs, students harness the creative power of technology to organise and add value to their learning experience.



# Developing you and your practice

At School 21, we take your development extremely seriously. We are an organisation made up of people who are dissatisfied with the status quo in education, and our quest to build a school fit for the 21st century means that we are constantly seeking to improve and innovate. In this context, it is not enough to simply improve our processes, we believe it is absolutely imperative that we are proactive in developing our people.

The key ways in which we will support your personal and professional development are as follows:



## CPD

Our practice is our testing ground. For this to happen, we think CPD should be constantly asking us what we are working on and giving us the time, space, resources and challenge to improve our practice. This is why our CPD is carefully differentiated into pathways which offer staff choice of modules, clinics, research opportunities and rigorous conversations.

Every member of staff will have:

- Up to 5 planning days at the start of term to gear up for the new year
- Regular planning days throughout the year for collaboration, project design and developing practice
- 2 hours every Wednesday afternoon to work on “modules” that you have chosen from a menu designed by staff
- Regular feedback from peers, “critical friends” and those with expertise in areas you are working on



## Leadership & Growth

Every member of staff has a “flight path” conversation in which we discuss how they want to grow over the next two to three years and the training and support structures needed to achieve their goals.

We provide more routes to progression than most schools, with opportunities to:

- Lead departments
- Lead areas of our pedagogy, such as oracy or project-based learning
- Lead on aspects of curriculum design
- Lead within our small school structure – primary, middle, secondary, Sixth Form

We have distinctive leadership courses to develop the skills of staff so they can lead in a range of settings. Our leadership training includes inputs from great educationalists, entrepreneurs, leaders in diverse professional fields, and those with deep experience of building high performing teams.



## Strategic Direction

Every member of staff is in at least one “circle” or team to develop an aspect of the school. This gives everyone the chance to be strategic and have a genuine and deep input into the direction of the school. Some of the current circles include: literacy, oracy, project based learning, new technology, school culture, and curriculum.



## Line Management

You will have a line manager dedicated to helping you grow. The expectation is that the line manager observes you in action in some setting: teaching, coaching, chairing a meeting, working with parents, taking an assembly and then gives you specific feedback at line management meetings. That way you have more specific feedback on your practice.



## Feedback culture

There are plenty of other ways in which staff get regular and specific feedback not just on their teaching craft but on how they want to grow more widely as a leader, project designer, team builder or coach. Much of this is done through peer feedback – matching people with the right expertise – and sophisticated protocols that help people wrestle with dilemmas or tune-up something they are working on.



## Professional Portfolio

There is an expectation that every member of staff will develop a professional portfolio of their work, projects, professional development, interests, and reading. Staff find this very rewarding and provides them with a very personal story of their growth as well as a unique platform to engage outside practitioners and forge partnerships.



# What we are looking for

We have spent a lot of time thinking about the attributes that make staff successful at School 21. These four qualities sum it up as best we can.



**Pioneer**

We are looking for people who do not believe business as usual is good enough: people who want to develop new approaches, challenge outdated assumptions, and research new practice. We have, for example, redesigned how we do assemblies, parents' evenings, CPD, tutor time and work experience. **We are looking for new members of staff who can add fresh thinking and fresh insights.**



**Multiplier**

At School 21 we have a deeply held belief that our task is to grow ourselves, grow others and grow the organization. We also believe that the highest form of leadership is to build high functioning teams. So we are looking for genuine collaborators and people who have the interest and skills to grow other people as well as themselves; **people who seek to share, learn, and give to others.**



**Craftsperson**

School 21 is a rich environment for discussion, debate, thinking and evaluation. Staff read and research, they wrestle with deep questions about teaching and learning, and they constantly look to refine and reinvent their practice. Our CPD is layered, personalised, regular and in-depth with far more time than most schools to delve deeply into practice and impact. **Our staff support each other as critical friends and collaborate deeply in order to develop their teaching craft.**



**Humanity & Integrity**

School 21 is an organization that has core values at its heart. Whether a student or a member of staff, we look for people with integrity and humanity. Integrity is about being true to your word, stepping up and being accountable, taking responsibility. Humanity is about kindness to others, being supportive when colleagues need you most and going out of your way to build people up. Every meeting, for example, starts with specific recognition and kindness to others. **We look for people who bring these values to everything they do.**



# Facilities and Environment

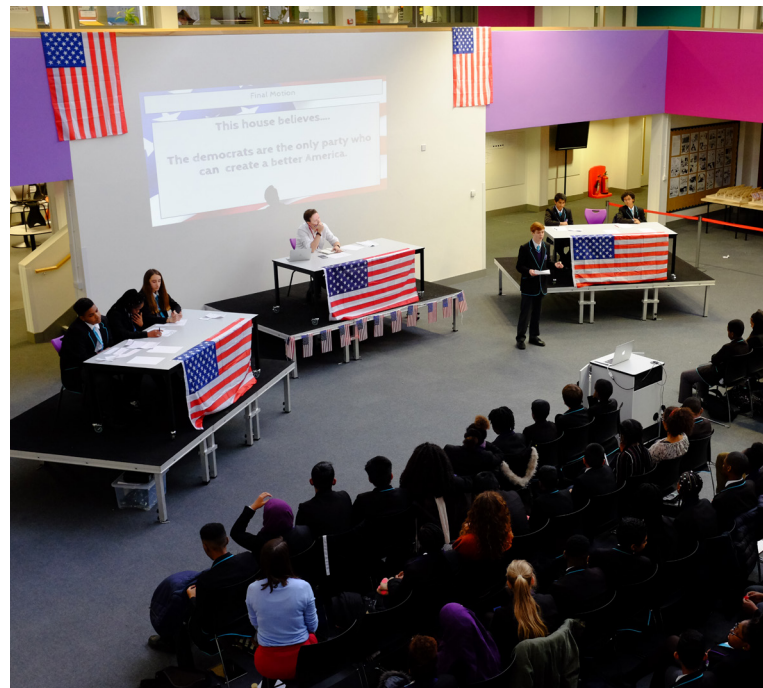
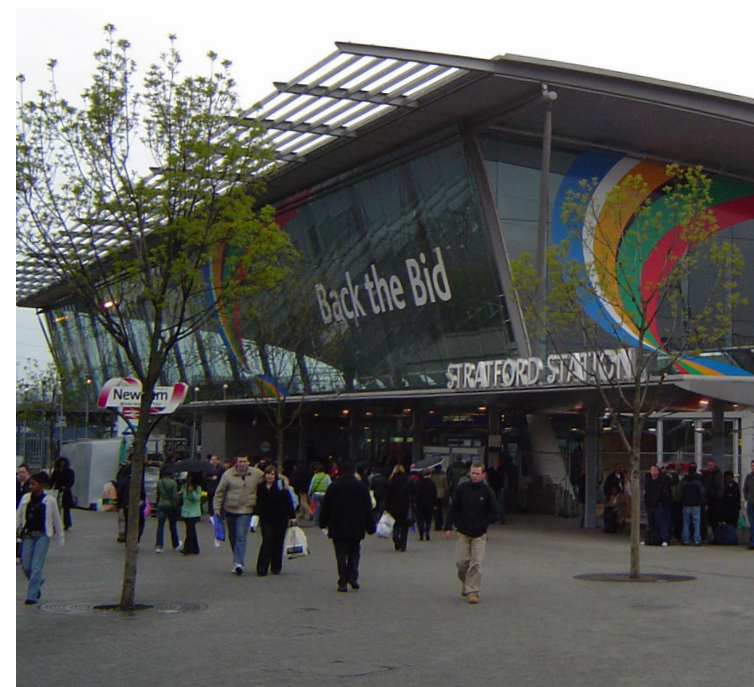
The School 21 site was completed in 2012, and represents an extensive rebuild and redesign of an existing school complex. The founders had considerable influence in the design and layout of the school, including the creation of large courtyard spaces which are used for assemblies, exhibition and break-out teaching spaces. There are also well-equipped specialist teaching facilities including four purpose built-science labs, two workshop spaces, two drama studios, several Harkness rooms, a sports hall and MUGA sports pitch.

## Location

School 21 is extremely well located at just 5 minutes walk from Stratford Tube station, Stratford bus terminal, and Westfield Shopping Centre.

With well-established and reliable public transport links throughout the area, Stratford is within easy reach from a wide range of areas and heading into Central London from the school takes about 20 minutes.

Our close proximity to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park means there are fantastic facilities on our doorstep and a constant flow of exciting organisations and start-ups into the area.





# Job Profile

**Title:** Finance Director

**Salary:** Inner London (competitive based on experience and skills)

**Start date:** As soon as possible

**Contract:** Full time, permanent, subject to an enhanced DBS check

School 21 represents a new force in education, adapting and developing at a fast pace. The school embodies the vision of the three founders, who bring significant educational expertise and drive to the project. Backed by government funding, School 21 opened in 2012 with just two full year groups and has grown to the point that come September 2018, all year groups encompassing ages 4-18 will be present.

Within this role, the majority of your time will be spent on the finances. In addition, however, you will be responsible for bringing together the consolidated accounts of the 3 (and in future possibly more) schools in our growing Trust. School 21 are looking to recruit a qualified and experienced Finance Director who will bring enthusiasm and drive to the finances of School 21 and the development and consolidation of the Trust’s finance operations in the next exciting stage of our growth.

For those currently employed within a non-educational environment, it is important to realise that the ‘finance’ focus of our school is ultimately on achieving the best educational outcomes, to maximise income rather than ‘turn a profit’ and subsequently contribute to ensuring that available funds are spent efficiently in all procurement decisions.

For any non-educationalist, the intial challenge will be to learn and appreciate the language of the education arena, to grasp the structure and relationship between the non-curricular and curricular elements of the school.

We are looking for somebody that is educated to degree-level or who has significant relevant experience and who also holds an accountancy qualification. Ideally, you will have significant previous experience at a Finance Director/Manager level in a relevant area - e.g. within education or other relevant public sector or business sector, you will have financial management experience of a large annual budget and also experience of producing and presenting management accounts.

School 21 has established a strong track record - an outstanding ofsted, excellent GCSE results and a growing reputation, for example being the first and only international case study chosen by US educators, Edutopia <https://www.edutopia.org/school/school-21>.

For any further queries regarding this position, please contact [careers@school21.org.uk](mailto:careers@school21.org.uk).

# Job description

## Financial Management

- Provide high quality financial advice and guidance to budget holders and the Senior Leadership Team.
- The preparation and implementation of financial forecasts, business plans, reports and returns etc. to ensure the strategic development of the school, and long term sustainability of the budget.
- Monitoring of all budgets and the production of regular comprehensive management reports to ensure efficient and effective control of income and expenditure complying with the Trust’s financial regulations and public procurement regulations at all times.
- Ensure that the finance systems reflect the latest accurate position, and the month end close and finalisation of management reports are made in a timely and accurate manner and are in accordance with the requirements of the Educational Fund Agency and the Trust Board.
- Preparation of the annual accounts, DFE returns and other financial statements in accordance with Companies House, DFE, EFA, Charities Commission and HMRC.
- Ensure that appropriate risk management processes are in place and monitoring is reported to the Trust Board.
- Managing the School 21 payroll.
- Ensure that the financial due diligence is completed for Academy requisitions in a timely manner. This includes a business case and financial report which is presented to executives with recommendations.
- Responsible for the school’s financial management system (FMS) ensuring that future systems developments are considered.
- Ensure regular banking/accounting of all monies
- To ensure ordering of goods and supplies and approval of invoices within agreed regulations and to monitor the quality of purchases
- Liaise with auditors and facilitate all audit requirements
- Contribute to the development of a three year strategic business plan ensuring objectives are linked to the overall long term financial plan of the MAT
- Review the school’s financial regulations manual and update as necessary and the the School’s Financial Value Standard is maintained as per DFE requirements.
- Ensure that the school has a robust cash management strategy in place and that regular monitoring and forecasting of cash balances takes place.



## Financial Accounting & Reporting

- Review of monthly management accounts and budget monitoring reports, highlighting areas requiring attention and providing feedback
- Plan the cash flow and implement creditor and debtor policies and procedures
- Ensure the effective operation of financial control at the school and ensure the school receives value for money in all its expenses
- Submit VAT returns to HMRC and ensure that monies owed are received
- Review the budget monitoring reports each month - actual vs budget and enquire into unexpected variances
- Ensure that financial statements to 31st August each year are prepared and audited and that the Trust board approve these by the required deadline
- Responsible for the completion of the school's payroll, ensuring all forms including new starter, leaver, variation forms and annual returns are submitted within required deadlines in liaison with the HR lead.
- Monitor the payment of salaries by the school's payroll provider, liaising with the provider as required.
- Administer the school's pension fund.
- Review annually the school's charging policy.
- Authorise supplier payment runs and administer payment authorities and on-line banking profiles.
- Monitor and update the school's fixed asset register, including additions, disposals, transfers and depreciation charges.
- Coordinate and maintain a list of all approved contractors and suppliers to ensure best value and to work with the Business Manager in negotiating and monitoring all contracts, leases and relationships with external contractors.
- Administer staff benefits scheme

## General

- To participate in school initiatives and events and act as a positive role model
- Keep up to date with with developments and changes in associated legislation and guidance, and communicate information to colleagues as appropriate
- To safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adhere to all specified procedures
- To comply with Health & Safety policies and statements, to report any incidents, accidents or hazards and take a proactive approach to health & safety matters in order to protect yourself and others
- To carry out other reasonable tasks from time to time as directed by the Headteacher and School Business Manager.

# How to Apply



To apply for this role, please complete the online form for this role, which can be found in the careers area of the School 21 website.

In compliance with Safer Recruitment guidelines, CVs cannot be accepted.

If you wish to have an informal discussion about this role, please email Anne Shaker at [careers@school21.org.uk](mailto:careers@school21.org.uk)

School 21 is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.