**DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND HEAD OF SUPPORT SERVICES**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

The Director of Finance and Head of Support Services will report directly to the Board of Directors of the Emmanuel Schools Foundation (“Foundation”). The individual will be responsible for providing both a technical and leadership role in respect of the proper management of public funds managed by the Foundation and its schools, alongside ensuring the efficient and effective operations of support services activities, supporting schools to meet their strategic and operational objectives. In addition the individual will, as a member of the Executive Team, work closely with the Executive Principals of ESF and will have close interaction with the MAT board of directors and the Principals of the Foundation’s schools.

The Director of Finance and Head of Support Services provides line-management of the Support service team which includes, Finance, IT, HR and Payroll, Building and Projects, Business Development and uniform procurement and associated services of running the uniform shops.

**KEY DUTIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES**

* Provision of strategic oversight of the effective conduct of the Finance function within Support Services and within the schools of the Foundation.
* In conjunction with other members of the Executive Team to strengthen across the Foundation’s schools the quality and consistency of educational provision and of the support services to ensure best outcomes, practice and value.
* Provision of strategic oversight of the effective conduct of the Support Services team.
* Ensuring that the Foundation, and each of the schools, are financially viable and compliant in meeting all of their obligations as publically-funded organisations with national bodies (DfE, EFA, HMRC etc.) and United Learning.
* Coordination and preparation of the statutory accounts of the Foundation and the completion of statutory returns to the Education Funding Agency, HMRC.
* Provision of professional finance support to the Executive Team in the discharge of their formal and statutory responsibilities as accounting officer for the Foundation schools.
* Identifying and informing the Accounting Officer and the Board of the causes of significant variance to the budget and recommending prompt corrective action as required; proposing revisions to the budget if necessary, in response to significant or unforeseen developments.
* Acting as lead contact with the Education Funding Agency for all matters relating to the funding of the Foundation and its Academies.
* The oversight and appropriate reporting of all financial matters for the Foundation. This will include the creation development and review of appropriate policies and procedures for the control and reporting of financial outcomes in line with the scheme of delegation in place for the Foundation.
* Ensuring resources are efficiently and effectively utilised to achieve value for money.
* Working with external schools in respect of arrangements for the assessment of the financial systems and arrangements used by schools proposing to join the Foundation, including producing an analysis of their fitness for purpose or the steps/changes required to ensure their safe transfer to the Foundation.
* Preliminary approval of all school budgets, prior to final Board approval. Working with the Schools’ Finance teams to ensure continuing oversight, to provide regular reporting as part of the executive team of the Foundation and to the Board.
* The contract monitoring of systems and external providers/organisations of those systems connected with the secure delivery of the finance function for the Foundation. This may involve the tendering arrangements for financial works or systems required by the Foundation.
* Advice and Guidance as a member of the Executive Team and to the Board of Directors of the Emmanuel Schools Foundation on financial matters. This will include being the lead officer in an advisory capacity for the Finance & General Purposes Committee of the Foundation.
* Advice and guidance to Principals, school finance managers and administration staff across the Foundation on the working arrangements required for the secure conduct of the finance function.
* Liaison with audit and accountancy providers on behalf of the Foundation to secure the appropriate delivery of their services including banking arrangements and ensuring that appropriate insurances are in place for the Foundation’s assets and activities.
* Attending meetings and ensuring the effective working of the Finance Committee of the Foundation (although not participating as a member when audit matters are discussed).
* Managing the cash position of the Trust and ensure bank accounts and control accounts are reconciled monthly.
* Providing the Accounting Officer and the Board’s with monthly management reports as required by the EFA’s Academies Financial Handbook.
* Advising the Accounting Officer and the Board if fraudulent activities are suspected or uncovered.
* Maintaining a strategic financial plan that will indicate the trends and requirements of the Foundation’s business plan and will forecast future years’ budgets.
* Work with the Foundation Board, Principals, premises and IT managers in developing a contingency and business continuity plan.
* Working with Support Services to identify and actively source additional finance required to fund the Foundation’s proposed activities.
* Selecting types of investments which are appropriate for the Foundation (with appropriate advice from a suitably qualified financial experts), taking account of risks and the views of stakeholders, and identifying possible and suitable providers in order to maximise returns.
* Leading on the compilation of end of year accounts, producing the annual report (for approval by the Governors), liaising with auditors, submitting the accounts to the EFA in a timely manner and ensuring the annual report is uploaded to the Foundation’s website. Ensuring that the Foundation’s Company Secretary is provided with copies of the Foundation’s accounts in a timely manner for filing at Companies House.
* Ensuring compliance with procurement regulations and managing tenders for service contracts.
* Comparing of actual payroll costs each month against budgeted costs, such reports to be passed to the Principals and retained for future audit purposes.
* Advising Accounting Officer and Board regarding compliance with Funding Agreement requirements for the use of the Foundation’s assets and GAG funding.

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

**Qualification Criteria**

* Qualified accountant with relevant post-qualification experience.

**Experience**

* Experience of managing and motivating staff.
* Understanding and experience of the challenges presented by working in a network environment with some devolved financial functions.
* Financial reporting variance analysis and benchmarking school performance.
* Experience on all aspects of school funding.
* Planning and budgeting experience.
* Experience of VAT regulations.
* Excellent skills in strategic planning and strategic management of financial resources
* Well-developed skills in spreadsheet and accountancy software.
* Good communication and training skills, as well as the ability to write clearly and concisely and to produce and maintain documents.
* You will be highly experienced at working at a senior operational level within a school or education setting. You will be a key player in a strong leadership team, collaborating on crucial decisions whilst working closely with the Executive Team and Principals to build and support a strong relationship between the educational and operational strands of the schools.

**Personal characteristics**

* You will be comfortable in operating at board level and as a member of the executive team, offering sound commercial and strategic advice.
* Strong persuasive, influencing and interpersonal skills with the ability to communicate clearly and confidently.

**Values**

* Personal vision is aligned with the values of Emmanuel Schools Foundation.
* Genuine passion and a belief in the potential of every student.
* Motivation to continually improve standards and achieve excellence.

**Salary**

* Competitive Salary, attractive pension scheme.

For further information, / initial discussion speak to Patricia Rowland Finance Director and Head of Support Services. prowland@esf-mail.org.uk. 01670 543570