

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Director of Finance

Reports To: Chief Operations Officer (COO)

Direct Reports: Finance officers / assistants in each school. As the Trust and the role grows, this will include Business Managers, either in each school or across groups of schools.



Key Tasks:

- Provide leadership and professional financial management for Advantage Schools (AS).
- Deliver comprehensive financial planning, ensure robust financial systems and controls to safeguard finances and ensure efficiency and value for money.
- Manage and develop the central finance services across AS.
- Ensure compliance with charity regulations, the Academies Financial Handbook, the Education & Skills Funding Agency Financial Handbook (if required when we have 6th forms), the Governance Handbook, the Trust's school funding agreements, and AS financial procedures.
- Regular reporting to and attendance at the Board of Trustees meetings and committees, including detailed monthly management accounts to allow forecasting and budget management.
- Support Grant applications and Condition Improvement Fund bids to the DFE.
- Play a key role in the governance, development and implementation of AS strategies and projects, including supporting the growth of AS.

Leadership and Management:

- Act as the Chief Financial Officer for AS.
- Undertake line and performance management responsibilities for the central finance team.
- Advise senior management, governing bodies, and trustees on the financial implications of government and local authority policies, and provide appropriate guidance on financial governance.
- Ensure the impact of financial strategy and management directly impacts on educational outcomes for AS pupils.
- Participate and represent AS in national and local networks so that AS is alert to new trends and is familiar with current best practice.
- Establish a high level of credibility and manage strong working relationship with internal and external parties.
- Ensure AS and school policies related to finance are regularly updated and fit for purpose.
- Advise trustees regularly to ensure the AS scheme of delegation is fit for purpose with regard to finance.
- Play a key role in financial due diligence for schools that are likely to join AS.
- Ensure that line managees are developed, performance managed appropriately, and are given sufficient development and support to pursue their chose career paths.
- Inside AS liaises with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), COO, Director of Estates and IT, AS Principals.
- Externally liaises with the Chair of AS Finance and Resource committee, Local Governing Bodies, AS Board of Trustees, external auditors, external accountants, external solicitors, HMRC, Department for Education, local authority, finance software providers, payroll provider and other key suppliers and stakeholders.

Financial Management

- Prepare and submit financial returns, including the annual accounts, to the ESFA,

- government departments, and Companies House.
- Oversee the preparation and development of the monthly management accounts.
- Present detailed management information to trustees, governors, and senior management.
- Ensure compliance with AS financial accounting procedures.
- Maintain and update the financial procedures manual and scheme of delegation, for approval by trustees.
- In conjunction with the Director of Estates and IT, monitor expenditure on capital projects.
- Manage the integrity of data input to the accounting system.
- In conjunction with the COO maintain an effective payroll system and ensure compliance with all relevant legislation.
- Liaise with auditors and facilitate all audit arrangements.
- Implement internal and external audit requirements.
- Report on all financial compliance matters to the trustees and CEO.
- Manage VAT claims in line with financial regulations.
- Benchmarking costs and expenditure where possible to ascertain how effective the Trust is in obtaining value for money.

Financial Planning:

- Working alongside Trustees and the Executive Team, ensure robust financial management in support of the AS's growth strategy.
- Responsible for ensuring the finance function is able to deliver on all statutory obligations, and provide first class support on all financial matters.
- Develop the annual and 3-year forecast budgets for approval by the AS finance committees.

General Administrative Duties:

- Carry out any duties and responsibilities commensurate with the post necessary for the smooth running of AS, as required by the COO.

Other specific duties

- Attend, as required, any relevant meetings, including but not limited to, Trustees, Governors, AS Finance & Resources Committee meetings.
- Participate in the performance review process.
- To undertake, as required, any other duties and responsibilities relevant to the job as directed by the COO.

Safeguarding

- To be responsible for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of pupils and for raising any concerns in line with school procedures.

Equality and Diversity

- To be responsible for promoting equality and diversity in line with AS and school policies and procedures.

Health and Safety

- To be responsible for following Health and Safety requirements in line with AS and school policies and procedures.

Training and development

- To participate proactively in training and development including qualification development required in the job role.