



Executive Director of Finance Astrea Academy Trust

Central Team Recruitment Pack

Astrea Academy Trust

London, Sheffield or Cambridge



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Welcome Letter from Libby Nicholas, CEO

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in this role within the Astrea Academy Trust.

This is a hugely exciting time for our family of academies. The Trust has been recognised by the Department for Education as being well placed to raise standards and achieve excellence for pupils in a growing number of academies. We are presented with a rare opportunity to make a real difference to the lives and life chances of so many primary school children – many of whom haven't previously received the educational opportunities they deserve.

The Trust currently has 27 academies based across South Yorkshire and Cambridgeshire, including academies at various stages of school improvement. As a Trust, we are clear about the importance of achieving long term sustainability for our academies. Our vision is to enable individual academies to flourish whilst ensuring a strong ethos of support and collaboration across our Academies.

Employees within Astrea belong to a community of professionals, and benefit from a wide range of networks and development opportunities across the Trust. The Trust provides a strong culture of collaboration and support, together with high expectations for staff and pupils alike.

Those we recruit can demonstrate that they share our values, are highly motivated to work with colleagues to continuously develop their skills, pursue professional excellence and are committed to providing the highest standards. If that is you then we would be delighted to receive your application.

Libby Nicholas

Chief Executive, Astrea Academy Trust



Astrea Academy Trust

We value all-round development of the individual, through arts, sports, leadership opportunities, enrichment and community. This is encapsulated in the skills, qualities and personalities we foster in our pupils.

The Astrea Academy Trust logo communicates the values of collaboration, development and aspiration. The three figures are coming together in the shape of a tree, which represents growth, whilst the tallest figure reaches upwards, towards a star, which is above and beyond the highest branch of the tree.

Academies, staff and children within the Trust benefit from a strong ethos of support and collaboration across the Astrea family. Teachers within Astrea belong to a national community of professionals, and benefit from a wide range of networks and development opportunities across the Trust.

Astrea benefits from the involvement of leading educationalists, including our Professional Adviser Professor John West-Burnham, and strong links to prestigious institutions such as the Institute of Education and Sheffield Hallam University.



All members of staff are encouraged to use the Astrea Academy Sheffield Nursery for any eligible children in their care. The Nursery and Primary prospectus can be found here;
<https://astreasheffield.org/nursery/>



Astrea Academy Trust Ethos

The work of the Astrea Academy Trust is underpinned by five core Value Partners, which are equally applicable to pupils, staff and the work of the Trust itself.

Each pair of Value Partners is accompanied by a call for action in the form of a hashtag, which is used in verbal, digital and hard copy communications.

The Value Partners can be used as a measure of individual, Academy and Trust progress and as a guide to inform the direction of change.

Responsibility and Leadership

Individuals in the Astrea community are accountable for their own decisions and actions and are supported by strong leaders, while trailblazers are encouraged to develop skills and talents in others. The Trust has a strong commitment to developing and nurturing our own leaders. **#4equity**

Enjoyment and Innovation

We know that everyone learns best when they enjoy what they do and can follow their innate desire to achieve. Astrea pushes boundaries so that pioneering ideas are tried and tested so that our academies remain leaders in the advancement of teaching and learning methods. **#go4it**

Aspiration and Development

Every member of the Astrea community, from the youngest pupil to the oldest member of staff, is encouraged to cultivate opportunities to grow. We achieve excellence by being inspired to become the best we can be. The progress and well-being of pupils is our top priority, at the centre of every decision. **#Astreastars**

Collaboration and Inclusion

Astrea honours and applauds the differences that make us unique whilst actively seeking and celebrating the common ground that binds us together as a strong community. We work together in a productive environment where dynamic ideas are shared in partnership, so that every member of the community may thrive **#all4one**

Honesty and Integrity

We are honest and open. Astrea decisions and responses are grounded in time-honoured moral principles that remain constant in the face of challenges and change **#4good**

You can learn more about the Values, and hear from staff and pupils across Astrea Academies, at our website: <https://astreaacademytrust.org/>



Astrea Academy Trust Family

Academies currently within Astrea Academy Trust:

Primary	Website
★ Atlas Primary Academy, Doncaster	http://www.stirling.doncaster.sch.uk/
★ Byron Wood Academy, Sheffield	https://astreabyronwood.org/
★ Carrfield Primary Academy, Rotherham	https://www.astreacarrfield.org/
★ Castle Academy, Doncaster	https://www.astreacastle.org/
★ Denaby Main Primary Academy, Doncaster	https://www.astreadenabymain.org/
★ Edenthorpe Hall Academy, Doncaster	https://astreaedenthorpehall.org/
★ Gooseacre Primary Academy, Rotherham	https://www.astreagooseacre.org/
★ Greengate Lane Academy, Sheffield	https://www.astreagreengatelane.org/
★ Hartley Brook Primary Academy, Sheffield	https://www.astreahartleybrook.org/
★ Hatfield Primary Academy, Sheffield	https://www.astreahatfield.org/
★ Hexthorpe Primary Academy, Doncaster	https://www.astreahexthorpe.org/
★ Highgate Primary Academy, Rotherham	https://www.astreahighgate.org/
★ Hillside Academy, Doncaster	https://astreahillside.org/
★ Intake Primary Academy, Doncaster	https://www.astreaintake.org/
★ Kingfisher Primary Academy, Doncaster	https://www.astrea-kingfisher.org/
★ Lower Meadow Primary Academy, Sheffield	https://www.astrealowermeadow.org/
★ The Hill Primary Academy, Rotherham	https://www.astreathehill.org/
★ Waverley Primary Academy, Doncaster	https://www.astreawaverley.org/
Secondary	
★ Astrea Academy Woodfields, Doncaster	http://astreawoodfields.uk/
★ Cottenham Village College, Cambridgeshire	https://www.astreacottenham.org/
★ Ernulf Academy, Cambridgeshire	http://www.ernulf.cambs.sch.uk/
★ Longsands Academy, Cambridgeshire	http://www.longsands.cambs.sch.uk/
★ Netherwood Academy, Barnsley	https://astreanetherwood.org/
★ St Ivo School, Cambridgeshire	http://stivoschool.org/
★ The Dearne Academy, Rotherham	https://thedearnealc.org/
Special School	
★ The Centre School, Cambridgeshire	https://www.astreacentreschool.org/
All-through	
★ Astrea Academy Sheffield, Sheffield	https://astreasheffield.org/

Job Description

Position: Executive Director of Finance

Salary Range: Highly competitive

Contract Type: Permanent. Full time or part time (3 days) considered

Reporting to: Chief Executive Officer

Location of this position: South Yorkshire, Cambridgeshire or London

Part time working hours would be considered for the right candidate

Purpose of this role:

The Executive Director of Finance is responsible for the all aspects of Finance within the Astrea Academy Trust family of schools.

The Executive Director of Finance will line manage the Head of Trust Finance and Head of Academies Finance and will work in close co-operation with the Chief Executive to ensure that an appropriate financial policy framework is in place to guide the Trust's financial decision making.

The post holder will be accountable to:

- Astrea Academy Trust
- Board Finance Director and Audit Committee
- The Chief Executive
- ESFA

The post holder will be accountable for:

- The overall performance of the finance function, including line management as identified.
- The strategic leadership and direction of the finance service across the family of Schools, ensuring a customer led approach, support for academy based teams and the training of new academies joining the family of Schools.

The post holder will be required to travel to any of the academies within the Astrea Academy Trust family, across South Yorkshire and Cambridgeshire and attend meetings with Department for Education and the Education and Skills Funding Agency.



Executive Director of Finance


Leadership and Strategy

- To play a full role in supporting the collective functions and responsibilities of the Executive Board.
- Support the wider strategic vision of the Trust, always acting as an advocate and ambassador for the Trust.
- Develop and manage Trust wide financial strategy including the 'balances policy' to ensure: active management of academy and Trust financial surpluses; contribute to the risk and contingency management strategies of the Trust.

Management and Planning

- Supporting the CEO and Executive Director team with strategic planning and scenario planning
- Taking the lead for developing financial projections and plans for Trust wide development.
- Providing routine financial management reports to the CEO and Executive Board to support effective financial monitoring against budget plans.
- To ensure robust financial controls are effective and regularly reviewed.
- Lead on identifying key financial risks and their mitigations as part of the Trust wide risk matrix and risk management process.
- Manage the Head of Academies Finance and Head of Trust Finance to deliver high quality services to academies and ensure best practice is observed within the academies.
- Ensure that cash-flow practices and procedures, at all levels of the Trust, are competently managed operationally and strategically to ensure that each academy and the wider Trust are always in a positive cash position.
- Review and report on the financial implication of the new fairer funding formula and the financial impact this will have on our academies.

Governance

- To be the Principal Finance Officer for the Astrea Academy Trust Board.
 - To ensure that the Trustees comply with their obligations and responsibilities as set out by the ESFA in the latest version of the Academies Financial Handbook.
 - To advise and support the CEO in the financial aspects of their responsibilities as the Trust Accounting Officer.
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- To provide financial management reports to Executive Board, Trustee Finance, Risk and Audit Committee, Trust Board Trustee meetings and DfE/ESFA reviews.
- To commission external audit services, to support the Head of Finance (Trust) in the completion of the external audit process and the preparation and submission of statutory returns to the Education and Skills Funding Agency, Companies House and the Charities Commission.
- To maintain a register of Trustees Business Interests and advise the Board on potential conflicts of interest and related party transactions.
- To draft, communicate and monitor the Trust financial scheme of delegation and all financial policies.

Systems

- Procure and maintain an effective accountancy and financial planning system. As a minimum, the system must be consistent, resilient, secure and able to meet the operational and regulatory requirements of the Trust as well as the reporting needs for management, governance and regulatory compliance.
- Lead on financial and KPI reporting across the Trust.

Regulatory Compliance

- Lead on liaison with the Education Skills Funding Agency, Companies House and Charities Commission in regard of all statutory returns and financial regulatory compliance.
- Monitor and report to the CEO and the Board on regulatory compliance of academies within the limits that apply to each set out in the Scheme of Delegation.

HMRC

- Lead on relationships with HMRC and manage the Trust's position in regard of: VAT; Corporation Tax; PAYE.
- Hold a central record of consultant and/or contractor declarations of HMRC compliance where appropriate (most likely to apply to sole traders and personal service companies potentially subject to IR35 or equivalent regulations)

Training and Development

- Ensure that cost effective training and development is available to academy finance staff.
- Ensure that the finance team support and contribute to the termly School Business Manager conferences.
Ensure, through line management of the Head of Academies Finance, that Curriculum Led Financial Planning is embedded across schools.



Academy Acquisition Due Diligence

- Ensure that the financial due diligence is completed for new academy acquisitions in a timely manner. This includes a full business case and risk assessment for the Trust Board for each academy conversion/sponsorship/trust-to-trust-transfer.
- Provide full financial support for applications to establish new free schools or targeted-basic-need new provisions.

Academy Support

- Maintain outstanding relationships with Academy Principals and Local Education Consultative Committees.
- Ensure services supplied to academies are of the highest quality and deliver against best value for money tests.

The Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment.

The above duties are not exhaustive and the post holder may be required to undertake tasks, roles and responsibilities as may be reasonably assigned to them by the Chief Executive.



Person Specification

This part will allow you to understand who we are looking for within this role and the skills knowledge or experience that we would expect.

Knowledge, Qualifications and Experience	Essential	Desirable
Relevant Experience		
A proven track record of leading a large team of financial professionals and colleagues.	*	
Experience of negotiating contractual agreements	*	
An innovative leader, with a clear understanding of how Finance can support the desired outcomes of the organisation	*	
Education and Training		
Qualified accountant (ACCA, ACA, CIMA)	*	
An Honours Degree	*	
Knowledge		
In-depth knowledge and application of financial and non-financial modelling	*	
Understanding of group accounting including the ability to produce and interpret UK GAAP compliant consolidated financial statements	*	
Knowledge and experience of the charity sector	*	
Knowledge of legislation affecting payment of salaries, pensions and provision of benefits	*	
Skills and Ability		
Ability to demonstrate a business focus and commercially minded approach to managing a public sector finance function	*	
The ability to translate a visionary/innovative concept into a practical implementation plan	*	
Ability to win support for new ideas and concepts through effective advocacy skills	*	
A strong understanding of IT and its potential for the organization		*
A proven ability to successfully manage all resources effectively	*	
A Team player with excellent communication skills and a robust and focussed approach to the delivery of key strategic imperatives	*	
Energetic, highly motivated, with an inquiring mind and passion for excellence and innovation in pursuit of success	*	
An ability to use the full range of leadership skills and qualities including emotional intelligence as appropriate to the situation	*	



An enthusiastic and motivational leader with strong morale building skills	*	
The ability to drive forward change often in very challenging circumstances	*	
Someone who is resilient and determined but can also provide support, demonstrate empathy and deal with staff and situations in a sensitive and considerate manner	*	
A strong commitment to personal development for all staff including themselves	*	
Additional Attributes		
To be a commercially astute, articulate, technically strong, dynamic, insightful and influential leader, with the ability to operate at both strategic and operational levels	*	
High integrity and openness combined with commitment to good governance	*	
A mature and balanced approach to the assessment and management of risk	*	



Child Safeguarding Policy

The Trust is committed to Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of all its pupils. Each pupils's welfare is of paramount importance. We recognise that some children *may* be especially vulnerable to abuse e.g. those with Special Educational Needs, those living in adverse circumstances.

We recognise that children who are abused or neglected may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. Whilst at the Academies, their behaviour may be challenging. We will always take a considered and sensitive approach in order that we can support all our pupils.

The Trust's Child Safeguarding Policy applies to all adults, including volunteers, working in or on behalf of the Trust.

Everyone in the education service shares an objective to help keep children and young people safe by contributing to:

- Providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn in education settings; and
- Identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and in the education setting'

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016

The Trust pays full regard to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance 2016. We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works for the Trust who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult including e.g. volunteers and staff employed by contractors. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and an Enhanced DBS check.

Please visit <https://astreaacademytrust.org/about-us/statutory-documents/> for the full policy.



Explanatory Notes

Applications will only be accepted from candidates completing the Trust's Application Form. Please complete ALL sections of the Application Form which are relevant to you as clearly and fully as possible. CVs will **not** be accepted in place of a completed Application Form.

Safeguarding Children and Young People


We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff to share this commitment and to undergo appropriate checks, including an enhanced DBS check.

- Candidates should be aware that all posts in Astrea Academy Trust involve some degree of responsibility for safeguarding children and young people, although the extent of that responsibility will vary depending on the nature of the post. Please see the job description enclosed in this Application Pack for further details.
- Accordingly, this post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore all convictions, cautions and bind-overs, including those regarded as "spent" must be declared.
- If you are currently working with children, on either a paid or voluntary basis, your current employer will be asked about disciplinary offence, including those related to children or young people (whether disciplinary sanction is current or time-expired), and whether you have been the subject of any child protection allegations or concerns and if so the outcome of any investigation or disciplinary proceedings. If you are not currently working with children, but have done in the past, that previous employer will be asked about these issues.
- Where neither your current or previous employment has involved working with children, your current employer will be asked about your suitability to work with children, although it may be answered not applicable where it is appropriate; if your duties have not brought you into contact with children or young people for instance.

Interview Process

After the closing date, short listing will be conducted by a Panel. You will be selected for interview entirely on the contents of your application form, so please read the Job Description and Person Specification carefully before you complete your form.

All candidates invited to interview must bring the following documents:

- Documentary evidence of right to work in the UK
 - Documentary evidence of identity that will satisfy DBS requirements
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- Documentary proof of current name and address
- Where appropriate any documentation evidencing change of name
- Documents confirming any educational or professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post

Please note that originals of the above are necessary, photocopies or certified copies are **not** sufficient.


We will seek references on shortlisted candidates for Trust based positions and may approach previous employers for information to verify experience or qualifications before interview. Any relevant issues arising from references will be taken up at interview.

In addition to candidate's ability to perform the duties of the post, the interview will also explore issues relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including:

- Motivation to work with children and young people
- Ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children and young people
- Emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours
- Attitudes to use of authority and maintaining discipline

Conditional Offer: Pre-Employment Checks

Any offer to a successful candidate will be conditional upon:

- Verification of right to work in the UK
 - Receipt of at least two satisfactory references (if these have not already been received)
 - Verification of identity checks and qualifications
 - Satisfactory Enhanced DBS Check
 - Verification of professional status such as QTS Status, NPQH (where required)
 - Satisfactory completion of a Health Assessment
 - Satisfactory completion of the probationary period (where relevant)
 - Where the successful candidate has worked, or been resident overseas in the previous five years, such checks and confirmations as may be required in accordance with statutory guidance
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How can I Apply?

This is an exciting and very rewarding role and we look forward to receiving your application.

Please complete and send the Astrea Application Form and Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form which are available together with this document to the below contact;

Name: Ben Ellis

Position: Recruitment Officer

Contact: recruitment@astreaacademytrust.org

The Application Process

All applications will receive an email confirmation within 24 hours of receipt of application; if you do not receive this please contact Astrea Recruitment on 0114 478 3837. The candidates selected for interview will be informed after shortlisting and full details of the interview programme will be provided. If you do not hear from us within 14 days of the closing date of this position, unfortunately you have been unsuccessful on this occasion.



Astrea Academy Trust pays full regard to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance 2016. We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works for the Trust. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and an Enhanced DBS check. Please visit <https://astreaacademytrust.org/about-us/statutory-documents/> for the full policy. The information supplied in your application, as well as any supporting documents provided at the application or interview stage, will be used as part of the Astrea Academy Trusts Recruitment and Selection Process. All information is stored securely and all data submitted by unsuccessful candidates will be destroyed responsibly after 6 months from the date of interview.