

St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust



Chief Finance Officer

Candidate Information Pack



www.OscarRomero.co.uk



CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER (CFO)

Contract Length: Permanent

Salary Range: Highly competitive + benefits

Location: Flexible. The nature of work will largely involve the post-holder carrying out work at different schools within the Trust. There is also a Head office at Shirley Court, Croydon, CR9 5AS.

Accountable to: Chief Executive Officer

We are looking for an exceptional individual to join the Central Services team at St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust, as our Chief Financial Officer. We are a growing Trust and currently have four secondary schools and twelve primary schools. We are a growing Trust and are supported by the Archdiocese of Southwark to grow to thirty-five schools over the next three to five years.

The Chief Financial Officer will play a crucial role in ensuring the financial health and sustainability of our academies. We are seeking an individual who possesses not only exceptional financial acumen but also a passion for fostering a positive and innovative environment where both students and staff can thrive. Our Catholic ethos and mission is at the heart of everything we do and we expect candidates to share and embrace those values.

The ideal candidate will:

- Have extensive previous experience of working as part of a Executive Leadership Team.
- Be able to communicate complex financial concepts to a diverse audience and who shares our commitment to transparency and accountability.
- Play a key role in shaping the strategy of the Trust and ensuring that strong financial practices and strategy are embedded within all strategic planning.
- Align to the mission, vision and values of St Oscar Romero and the Diocese.

In return we offer:

- Opportunity to work within a highly skilled and supportive team
- A commitment to continue with national pay, terms and conditions
- Access to the generous Local Government Pension Scheme
- Staff benefits including a cycle to work scheme
- Opportunities for personal and professional growth and access to our Training Portal
- Opportunity to join a growing Trust

Closing date: 9:00am on Monday 23rd

February

Interview date: w/c 2nd March

Start date: To be agreed

Please also see the Annual report and Financial Statement booklet and further information on our website:

www.OscarRomero.co.uk

Welcome from Allison MacQuire, Chair of the Board, St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust



Dear Prospective Colleague,

Thank you for your interest in the St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust and for taking the time to explore the opportunities available within our family of schools.

As Chair of the Board, it is my privilege to welcome you to a community of Catholic Schools, rooted deeply in the teachings of Christ and inspired by the life and legacy of St Oscar Romero — a champion of justice, compassion and courage. At the heart of all we do is the belief that every young person is called to live with purpose; and that every child in our care deserves the very best we can provide for them.

We are a growing Trust of distinctive Catholic schools across the Archdiocese of Southwark, committed to excellence in academic and spiritual formation. In our schools, Christ is at the centre of daily life, and our shared mission — to serve children, families and staff with love, dignity and respect — shapes every aspect of our work.

Our Trust values the contribution of every member of staff, recognising that it is our people who bring our mission to life. We are committed to professional growth, collaboration between schools, and fostering a culture where staff feel supported, inspired and empowered to be their best. This means investing in development, building strong communities of practice, and embracing the distinct gifts each colleague brings to our shared purpose.

This information pack is designed to give you a meaningful picture of who we are and what it means to serve within the St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust. I hope it speaks to both your professional aspirations and your vocational calling.

Thank you again for considering joining us. If you feel called to contribute to our mission, I warmly encourage you to apply, and I do hope you get the chance to join our amazing community and family; and be part of our journey in Christ.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Allison MacQuire".

Allison MacQuire
Chair of the Board
St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust



Welcome from: Clare Verga, Interim CEO, St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust



Dear Prospective Colleague,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chief Finance Officer at St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust and for taking the time to consider this exciting opportunity.

As Chief Executive Officer, I am honoured to have the privilege to serve our school communities and work alongside dedicated and inspiring colleagues. Our focus is on enhancing the opportunities that Trust membership delivers to each distinctive school community. Through collaboration, partnership, support and challenge, we strengthen the capacity of individual schools to serve as beacons of learning and love.

A group of sixteen schools, we are made up of four secondaries and twelve primaries. We are on an exciting journey. A journey of growth that has as its goal our determination to provide the young people in our schools the very best that Catholic education has to offer. Sponsored by the Archdiocese of Southwark, the development of our Trust is key to our Archbishop's education strategy for the future. As such, we are growing our Trust to become a group of thirty-five Catholic schools over the next three to five years.

Our commitment is guided by the teachings of Christ and His Church. We care for, support and educate our children and young people to the highest possible standards. Our schools are inclusive and are driven by a passion to do the very best for every child and young people in our care. Every day we strive to add value to our schools to ensure they are vibrant, exciting, welcoming places, so our children and young people learn, grow and flourish.

If you would like to arrange a visit or an informal conversation with Clare Verga (Interim CEO), please contact Sarah Yusuf-Watson : syusufwatson@oscarromero.co.uk

Information about the role can be found in this candidate information pack and further information about the Trust can be found in the Annual report and Financial Statements booklet. Completed applications should be submitted by 9.00am on Monday 23rd February 2026. Interviews are set for the week beginning Monday 2nd March 2026.

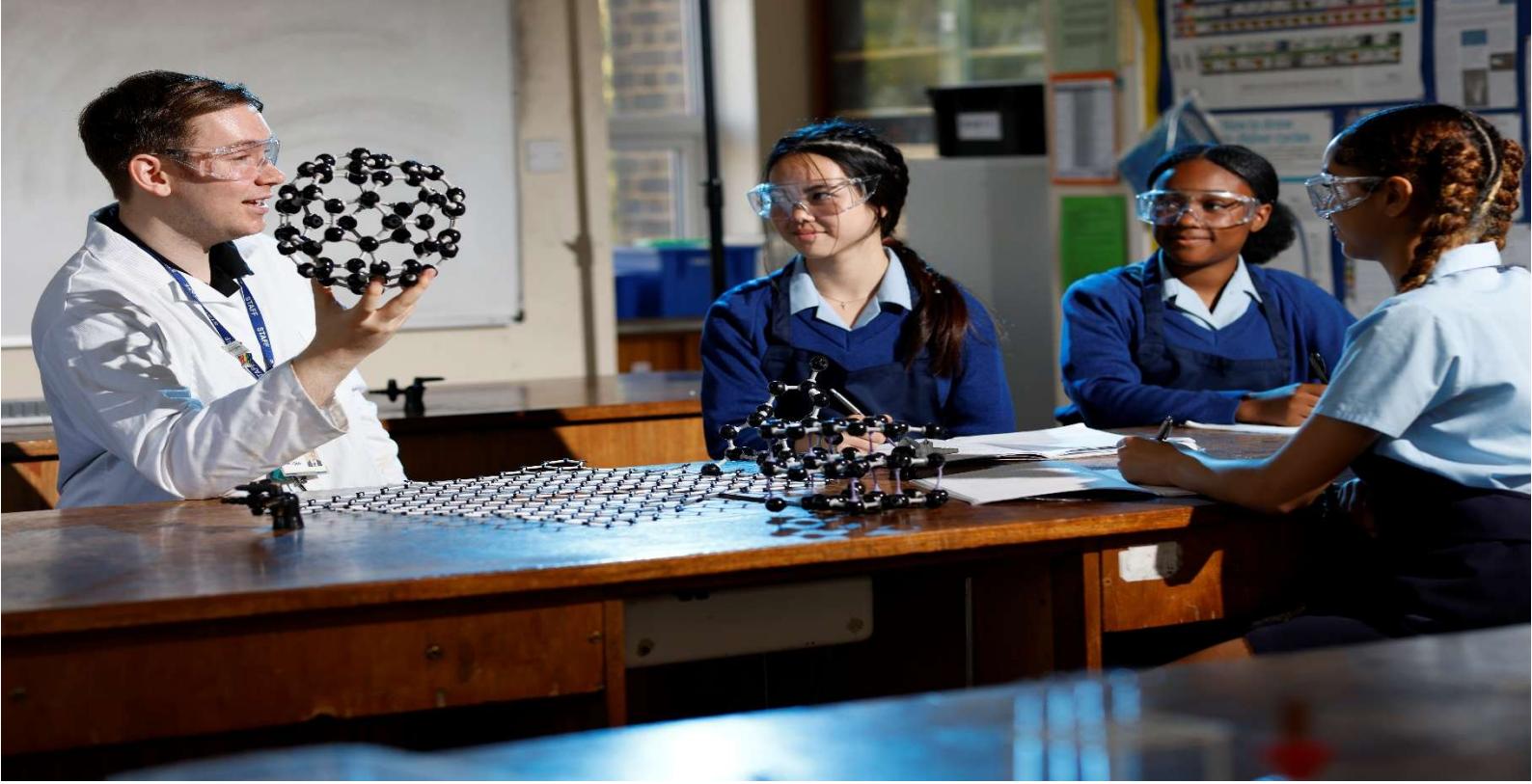
We hope this exciting opportunity and joining our Trust is of interest to you and we look forward to receiving your application.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clare Verga".

Clare Verga
Chief Executive officer
St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust

Email: syusufwatson@oscarromero.co.uk
Tel: (0207) 202 8199





Chief Finance Officer (CFO)

Accountable to: Chief Executive Officer

Post Type: Permanent

Salary: Highly competitive + benefits

Working Pattern: Full time

Location: Flexible. The role will be based at our Head office at Shirley Court, Coloma School and will involve working at schools within the Trust.

Disclosure Level: Enhanced DBS

Responsible for: As a member of the Trust Executive Team, the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) will have responsibility for all aspects of finance in the Trust. The role will involve delivering operational integrity providing high level direction and maintaining rigorous controls.

The successful candidate will play an integral role in developing the potential of this expanding Trust, so that it is financially sustainable and enable the Trust to fulfil its potential in Catholic education.

The CFO will provide insight into opportunities for commercial decision making through excellent strategic financial guidance and leadership. Through day-to-day accounting, the CFO will help embed a culture where the individual academies work together using resources effectively, in the interests of children and young people across the Trust.

Job Description: As a member of the Trust's Executive Team, the CFO will have strategic responsibility for all aspects of Trust finance, asset management, risk management, capital planning and procurement. Delivering strategic direction through the effective use of assets and resources, this role is integral in leading a successful Trust that is financially sustainable. The role will identify opportunities for commercial income development working collaboratively with academies in the Trust and with due regard to the Catholic ethos of the Trust.

Finance, Audit and Risk

- To provide strategic guidance of all the Trust's finances within the scheme of delegation advising the Trust Board Directors, CEO, governors and headteachers on all financial matters and develop appropriate policies for depreciation and reserves etc.
- To ensure the Trust complies with the obligations of the funding agreement, Academy Trust Handbook, Trust's financial regulations and Company and Charity Law accounting requirements.
- To ensure accurate and timely financial returns as the main point of contact for ESFA, as well as providing effective reports to members, the Trust Board and its committees, as required including the statutory financial and Companies House returns.
- Ensure effective risk management and record keeping including non financial risks and the drafting of appropriate short, medium and long term budgets and cash flows to allow the required monitoring by the Board of the Trust including Key Performance Indicators.
- Use analysis and complex financial data for project management to support the development of Trust activities, develop solutions alongside strategic guidance on targets and activities to create success.
- Continually review and improve financial systems and policies, so that they are streamlined, effective, efficient, robust and compliant with the latest requirements.
- Lead on the Trust's approach to audit and risk management, ensuring the internal and external audit needs of the Trust are met in line with statutory guidance.
- Be responsible for the preparation of annual accounts to prescribed standards meeting, statutory timelines and supporting the Board's responsibilities.
- Manage income and expenditure across all academies in the Trust, identifying any risks or concerns arising and implementing strategies to mitigate such situations.
- Proactively manage cash flows, co-ordinating banking and treasury matters and policies to protect assets and charitable status.
- Maintain the Trust's relationship with its bankers.
- Develop a long-term capital strategy aligned to that of the Archdiocese for all land and buildings, preparing timely applications for submission as grants are available.
- Ensure the adherence to Diocesan protocols and guidance relating to asset accounting and management and non educational activities such as insurance requirements.



Procurement and Services

- Ensure the Trust has an appropriate procurement policy meeting statutory requirements and ethical considerations to support best value and innovative approaches to services.
- Ensure a comprehensive and effective financial system is in place, meeting best practice for ESFA and statutory requirements.
- Ensure payroll and pension services are best value, proprietary and compliant with all legislation.
- Lead negotiations for effective and efficient service contracts to ensure value for money across all Trust activities, maintaining a strategic overview of services as the Trust grows.
- Ensure an appropriate programme is in place for replacement of fixtures and fittings, such as IT and technical equipment.

Other Responsibilities

- Undertake a lead role in due diligence and supporting new schools converting into the Trust.
- Audit all functions across the Trust recommending new structures, where there are evolving needs.
- Promote awareness of financial propriety across the Trust, including cybercrime and other risks.
- Identify opportunities for collaborative working across the Diocesan CATs.
- Uphold the ethos of the Trust at all times, inspiring and supporting others to be effective team workers.
- Maintain a presence in local, regional and national networks.

General responsibilities

- Manage and ensure compliance with the policies, ethos and aims of the Trust, as well as the policies and procedures relating to safeguarding, child protection, health and safety, security, confidentiality and data protection.
- Alert the school leadership and the CEO where there are serious concerns in any school of any nature.
- Take personal responsibility for integrity, propriety and regularity in the management of public funds and in the day-to-day operations of the organisation.
- Attend staff meetings and training courses, conferences, seminars or other meetings, as required by own training needs and the needs of the Trust.
- Any other duties commensurate with a leader senior as directed by the CEO or Trust Board.
- The duties and responsibilities in this job description are indicative and may vary over time. The role has been established on this basis.

Safeguarding Children

- The Trust is 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 enhanced DBS checks. We also expect full compliance with all statutory policies and procedures on safeguarding and child protection.

Confidentiality

- We expect all staff ensure that confidentiality is maintained and work in line with agreed Trust policies and protocols. Staff are also expected to maintain statutory responsibilities e.g. Data Protection and Freedom of Information.

General

- The above responsibilities are subject to the general duties and responsibilities contained in the Statement of Conditions of Employment. The duties of this post may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or level of responsibility entailed. Undertaking any other duties which may be reasonably assigned and regarded as within the responsibilities of the post, subject to the proviso that any changes of a permanent nature shall be incorporated into the job description in specific terms.
- The post holder will be expected to have an agreed flexible working pattern to ensure that all relevant functions are fulfilled through direct dialogue with the CEO and Directors.



Person Specification

A. Accountancy Qualifications	Essential	Desirable
Accountancy qualifications (ACA, ACCA, CIMA or CIPFA).	Y	
Educated to degree level.	Y	
B. Faith Commitment	Essential	Desirable
Practicing Catholic.		Y
Understanding the context of Catholic Education.	Y	
Understanding of Catholic values and empathy working for a Catholic organisation.	Y	
C. Experience of Strategic Leadership and Management	Essential	Desirable
Senior financial and strategic leadership in the public or private sector with accountability for a complex resource base.	Y	
Proven track record of financial leadership and building effective teams	Y	
Significant experience of managing budgets, working with stakeholders to develop strong systems and financial understanding across an organisation	Y	
Experience of developing good relationships and working at Board level and reporting to regulatory organisations	Y	
Experience of working in the educational sector		Y
Experience of working with Trustees, governors or similar.		Y
Experience of successful grant applications.		Y
D. Knowledge and Statutory Requirements	Essential	Desirable
Detailed and up to date knowledge of accountancy and professional codes of practice.	Y	
Advanced knowledge of statutory requirements of educational Trusts.		Y
Substantial knowledge and experience of managing procurement and contracts.	Y	
Up to date knowledge of Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts.		Y
An understanding of working with external and internal auditors.	Y	

Person Specification

E. Personal Skills	Essential	Desirable
Strong analytical judgement skills of complex projects.	Y	
Significant ability to view risk management through various lenses not just financial.	Y	
A strong moral purpose able to be reflective and self-critical as well as resilient, proactive and motivating.	Y	
Ability to build and direct a multi-disciplinary team effectively, demonstrating excellent leadership skills.	Y	
Ability to demonstrate innovative solutions and identify opportunities to maximise income.	Y	
Ability to manage a diverse workload effectively and in a timely manner meeting the expectations senior staff.	Y	
Highly effective communicator able to influence and negotiate successfully.	Y	
Ability to present complex information to a wide audience requiring high levels of persuasive skills, diplomatically and confidentially, challenging where necessary.	Y	
As a strategic executive leader in the Trust, you will represent the trust at external meetings and in the wider community using discretion, professionalism and initiative as required,	Y	
Ability to relate well to educational environments, especially staff, children and young people.	Y	
Excellent written and presentational skills.	Y	
Proficient in the use of office and financial and office information systems.	Y	



How to apply:

The deadline for receipt of applications is **9:00am on Monday 23rd February 2026**

If you would like to arrange a visit or an informal conversation with Clare Verga (CEO), please contact Sarah Yusuf-Watson : syusufwatson@OscarRomero.co.uk

Applicants should complete the Catholic Education Service Leadership form, attached in supporting documents. Please use the personal statement on your application form to demonstrate how you meet the person specification, with evidence provided wherever possible of outcomes and positive impact.

Candidates will be shortlisted on how well they demonstrate the knowledge, skills and attributes set out in the job description and person specification.

Completed forms should be submitted to: HR@OscarRomero.co.uk or call 0207 202 8199.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview in the week commencing on Monday 2nd March 2026.

The interview process will consist of a series of job-related exercises designed to give candidates the opportunity to demonstrate the key attitudes, skills and knowledge required for the role. Shortlisted candidates will be fully briefed at the beginning of the process and supported throughout the day.

Safeguarding: St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All staff and volunteers are expected to behave in such a way that supports this commitment. Appointment to this post will be subject to satisfactory shortlisting and pre-employment checks, including an Enhanced DBS check.

St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust

