**Job Description**

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| **Post Title** | Head of Finance ( Chief Finance Officer) |
| **Responsible To** | CEO |
| **Salary/Grade** | Leadership scale point L2 – L6 (£42,093 - £46,457) (negotiable commensurate with a post with this level of challenge) |
| **Hours** | Full Time, Full Year  |

**Main Purpose:**

Together with the Finance team, the Chief Executive Officer and the Operations Director, develop the financial operations within Cumbria Education Trust (CET), ensuring compliance with statutory duties and to provide robust reporting on the Trust’s financial position to enable the Leadership team to make appropriate decisions and ensure the financial stability of CET.

**Direct Line Management:**

Line manage the CET Finance team to ensure effective operational and strategic financial support for the Trust.

**Accountabilities** **under the direction and guidance of the CEO and Operations Director:**

1. Assist the Trustees, CEO and Operations Director in formulating the financial aims and objectives of the Trust and in establishing the policies, systems and procedures through which they shall be achieved.
2. Support the Trust to achieve compliance with financial guidelines and requirements regarding: Department for Education/Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) including Academies Financial Handbook, company law, and charity law, local and national legislation.
3. Fulfil the duties of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of CET and discharge the duties as defined in the Academies Financial Handbook (annually revised), Funding Agreements and Articles.
4. Ensure that CET has appropriate reporting mechanisms to the Trust Board and relevant sub committees on actual and projected financial positions throughout the year.
5. Specific responsibility over budget setting and financial monitoring for the ‘Central Team’ and any other school or academies as designated, recognising that as the Trust grows, this may evolve.
6. Design and implement a central finance shared services structure and systems that support the development of financial strategy.

**Organisational Support:**

1. Deputise for the Operations Director when required and carry out any other duties as required to contribute to the smooth and effective running of the Trust.
2. Develop and lead on risk management policies, procedures and systems to ensure that all financial risks are known and managed across the Trust including risk analysis of all trust financial activities to enable it to expand.
3. Contribute to the development of the financial strategy, policies and procedures for CET.
4. Provide guidance and training to CET finance managers where needed to ensure financial recording meets statutory requirements (i.e. VAT/Financial Handbook Requirements).
5. Attend CET Leadership Team meetings and Business Leadership Team Meetings.
6. Contribute to CET’s business planning process.

**Finance and accounting:**

1. In consultation with the CEO and Operations Director, prepare the Trust’s annual budget and update as necessary.
2. In liaison with the CEO and Operations Director devise and implement the MAT Finance Strategy
3. Monitor income and expenditure in relation to the Trust budget, and produce monthly reports for the CEO and Operations Director and the Trustees.
4. Manage the Trust Finance systems, income (including lettings, consultancy etc.), invoicing, purchase order, asset register & depreciation.
5. Maintain accurate VAT accounting systems and procedures.
6. Carry out and keep analyses of costs and other statistical information.
7. Ensure compliance with all Trust financial policies and procedures and with DfE/ESFA regulations including the Academies Financial Handbook and Academies Accounts Direction. Report any non-compliances to the CEO, Operations Director and Trustees.
8. Be conversant with the general principal of taxation applicable to the Trust and the financial implications of charitable status.
9. Deal with the Trust rating assessments.
10. Be conversant with the formulae used for funding Academies and keep abreast of any proposed changes to model impact on the Trust's long term financial viability.
11. Co-ordinate the annual external audits, liaising with all parties involved.
12. Manage the payroll system, ensuring all staff are paid correctly, including new appointments, changes and terminations, and the system is operating in accordance with best practice. Ensure compliance with all legislation, HMRC, Teachers Pensions Service, Local Government Pensions Scheme, and other deduction schemes (childcare, cycle scheme etc.).
13. Ensure that all the necessary financial data required for payroll, the Teachers’ Pension and Local Government Pension agencies is submitted.
14. Ensure staff expenses and claims are paid correctly.
15. Prevention of fraud. Ensure all Trust Finance systems and procedures are designed to minimise opportunities for fraud. Keep up to date with fraud awareness, topical fraud issues. Work with the Operations Director and CEO in supporting fraud awareness information and training to staff.
16. Ensure that all necessary returns, reports and documentation are completed accurately within time constraints including financial reporting requirements, claims, bids, reports to Trustees and Local Academy Boards (LABs), and statistical returns (internal and external).

**Communication:**

* As a senior member of the Business Leadership Team, you will be actively involved with ensuring the operational effectiveness of the Trust.
* Establish and maintain outstanding professional relationships with internal and external stakeholders and ensure effective communication across the Trust.

**General:**

* To support and encourage the Trust’s ethos and objectives, policies and procedures.
* Comply with and assist with the development of policies and procedures across CET.
* Be aware of and support difference and ensure equal opportunities for all.
* Contribute to the development and implementation of the vision and values of CET.
* Develop constructive relationships and communicate with other agencies/professionals.
* Take responsibility for your own ongoing personal development and growth of expertise.
* Participate in training and other learning activities and appraisal as required.
* Train and develop other employees, for proper succession planning and risk management.
* Other duties as required by the CEO and Operations Director within the scope of this post.

**Location:**

Although the role will be based at CET’s head offices in William Howard School, Brampton, the postholder will be required to work at other schools. A valid driving licence and access to a vehicle is necessary to fulfil this role.

**Safeguarding:**

CET is committed to the safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of all children and young people in its care. All staff have a key role and responsibility in this area and will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure check.

**Review:**

It is the practice of the Trust periodically to examine employees’ job descriptions and to update them to ensure that they relate to jobs as they are being performed, or to incorporate whatever changes are being proposed. It is CET’s aim to reach agreement on any alterations.

**Person Specification**

**Post Title:** Head of Finance (Chief Finance Officer)

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|  | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| **Qualifications/ Training/****Competences** | 1. An appropriate professional financial qualification (e.g. ACA/ACCA/CIPFA/CIMA and/or 2 years’ experience in a senior finance role) and can demonstrate a sound understanding of financial procedures, including those listed in the job description.
2. Appropriate academic qualifications to at least ‘A’ level standard, or be able to demonstrate competency through proven experience in a similar role.
3. Evidence of significant recent CPD and updating professional skills.
 | 1. Educated to degree level standard or equivalent.
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| **Experience/ Knowledge** | * Experience of financial management systems, strategic business and financial planning.
* Experience of managing a finance function in line with accounting best practice and within financial constraints.
* Experience of managing expenditure.
* Experience of managing payroll.
* Experience of planning, organising, prioritising and delegating workloads effectively and meeting deadlines.
* Knowledge of Financial Reporting Standards (UK GAAP, IFRS and Charities Accounting).
* Knowledge of UK taxation – PAYE, Corporation Tax and VAT.
* Knowledge of principles and methods of financial control and reporting, and their adaptation to various purposes, including the preparation of financial accounts.
 | * Experience of schools’ finance systems.
* Experience of managing change and implementing new systems/procedures/controls.
* Successful track record in working within the education sector in a finance role.
* Good working knowledge of school finance systems.
* Knowledge of academies financial reporting systems.
* Knowledge of academies funding.
* Knowledge of company accounts and reporting.
* Good understanding of safeguarding and compliance with Child Protection Procedures.
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| **Skills** | * Excellent working knowledge of finance, computerised finance systems and accounts, VAT, spreadsheet and word processing software packages.
* Excellent prioritisation and time-management skills, including supervisory experience and the ability to work effectively and efficiently within set deadlines and timescales.
* Ability to lead a busy team and a willingness to carry out all

aspects of the finance duties if required at times of peak pressure.* Excellent inter-personal skills and be able to communicate effectively with a wide range of people, both orally and in writing.
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| **Working Arrangements /Requirements** | * Ability to work at times convenient to the Trust requirements i.e. attendance at Trust Board and LAB meetings, this may include evenings.
* Ability to travel to meetings across Cumbria on a frequent basis.
* A full driving licence and access to transport is essential to fulfil this role.
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| **Moral Purpose** | * Pupils/students first – a belief that all pupils/students can achieve and ‘Be the Best They Can Be’.
* Championing the vulnerable.
* Commitment to equality of opportunity.
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| **An Effective Team Player to the support and development of the vision and ethos of CET** | * Dynamic and supportive.
* Committed and passionate.
* Innovative and high performing.
* Emotionally intelligent.
* Proactive contribution.
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| **Dynamic and Creative Leadership** | * Leading through others.
* Commitment to the principle of working collaboratively with all schools within the Cumbria Education Trust.
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| **A significant contributor to strategic thinking and development** | * Inspire and drive.
* Oversee the development of strategy and policy.
* Lead consultation and implementation.
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