

# Financial Controller

Creative Education Trust

September 2024



*Creative  
Education  
Trust*



## Dear Colleague

**Thank you for your interest in the role of Financial Controller.**

Our network consists of eleven secondary and six primary academies in the Midlands and Norfolk plus a central team. Further schools are in the pipeline and our medium-term ambition is to be a trust of 25 schools.

As an academy sponsor, Creative Education Trust is focused on the quality of the educational experience it

provides for its students.

In addition, in joining a growing group of schools, you will have the opportunity to have an impact on how the wider network develops, to collaborate closely with our team and the Director of HR and to influence Creative Education Trust's ethos and processes.

Those of us who have set up Creative Education Trust come from a wide variety of professional backgrounds in education, academia, business and the creative industries. What unites us is the desire to improve educational prospects and life chances for children who have not always had the schools they deserve, nor had access to the knowledge and skills that will equip them to be successful in the world they will encounter when they leave full-time education.

Our schools pursue a rigorous and continuous programme of educational improvement, but they also aim to provide pupils with a rich programme of co-curricular activities. In addition, our unique Knowledge Connected approach teaches pupils to analyse and understand their curriculum of study through the application of six key concepts, encouraging them to identify and solve problems in practical and creative ways that give them a sense that they can have impact on the world around them.

You can watch a short video on what it means to be part of Creative Education Trust, illustrating our 'Knowledge Connected' approach to learning on our YouTube channel:

[www.youtube.com/user/creedacad](http://www.youtube.com/user/creedacad).

Our Recruitment Manager, Katy Youngman, would be delighted to discuss this role with you and is available on [katy.youngman@creativeeducationtrust.org.uk](mailto:katy.youngman@creativeeducationtrust.org.uk)

I look forward to receiving your application.

Yours sincerely,  
Marc Jordan - CEO

“We are looking for a professional who can provide a high-quality financial service across the Trust.”

You can find out more at:  
[www.creativeeducationtrust.org.uk](http://www.creativeeducationtrust.org.uk)

# ABOUT CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST



**Creative Education Trust inspires and enables young people to build successful lives on foundations of learning, resilience and employability. We believe that a rewarding educational experience and the highest possible qualifications are the best way to ensure social mobility for young people.**

Creative Education Trust is a growing multi-academy trust educating over 13,000 children in England. It was established in 2010 to work in England's post-industrial cities and coastal towns: areas of economic disadvantage and with a history of academic underachievement. We transform these schools by integrating a knowledge-rich curriculum with skills and creativity.

Creative Education Trust defines creativity as the ability to find connections between the things we know and turn these connections into new ideas and action. The academic arts and the sciences, practical subjects and life skills all need this creativity, and creativity is valued highly by employers. Our staff and expert advisers use imaginative methods for linking knowledge across subject boundaries, fostering personal development and resilience and developing practical skills that prepare students for their transition to adult life and employment.



## Our Mission

To give every child in our schools the best possible start in life through excellent education and wide-ranging co-curricular opportunities

## Our Vision

To send out into the world educated, creative, confident and responsible young people, who can succeed in their ambitions and make their communities better places

## Our Values

### Ambition

We are ambitious in everything because only the best will do

### Excellence

We do not stop at 'good enough'

### Creativity

We connect our knowledge in innovative ways

### Resilience

When the going gets hard, we up our game and reach our goal

### Inclusion

Every child and every colleague matters – we will work for and with them all

### Respect

We value the ideas of others and make sure all voices are heard

You can find out more at:

[www.creativeeducationtrust.org.uk](http://www.creativeeducationtrust.org.uk)

# FINANCIAL CONTROLLER

## JOB DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

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### LOCATION

Home based with travel to Head Office and Trust schools.

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### HOURS

Full time, 52 weeks per year

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### SALARY

Competitive

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### REPORTS TO

Director of Finance

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### THE ROLE

The overall purpose of this post is to be professionally responsible and accountable for providing a high-quality financial service that enables the Trust to achieve its strategic aims and objectives via high quality financial reporting, a strong internal financial control framework, rigorous financial compliance processes and financial governance.

The postholder will promote best practice in the development of the finance function whilst ensuring the Trust meets the requirements of its continuously evolving regulatory environment.

The Financial Controller will have a key role in the management of the Trust and will have effective responsibility for:

- Maintenance and development of the financial reporting framework including internal financial controls and year-end financial statements
- Financial compliance including VAT, PAYE and Corporation tax
- Audit liaison
- Outsourced payroll service liaison
- Line management of finance teams
- Other areas of work commensurate with the purpose of the post.

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### KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

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#### FINANCIAL REPORTING AND INTERNAL CONTROL FRAMEWORK

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- Ensure the effective operation of financial controls across the Trust.
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- Lead on the relationship with the finance system provider and the development of the finance system and oversee maintenance of the accounting system.
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- Update financial policies and procedures on an annual basis, or as required.
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- Oversee the intercompany recharge process to enable a clear, transparent reconciliation process to take place between the sites operated by the Trust.
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- Manage the declaration of business interests process for budget holders and the finance team, and work with the Head of Governance to ensure the circulation and management of all declared business interests across the Trust.
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- Work with the Director of Estates and Facilities and Director of IT to ensure asset management processes are in place to safeguard all of the Trust's assets.
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- Oversight of purchase ledger processes including new supplier set up and approved preferred supplier process to determine the list of suppliers that are eligible for a reduced level of quotes.
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- Oversight over credit control processes to ensure timely receipt of monies due.
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- Oversight over procedures for authorisation of BACs and direct debits.
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- Oversight of the leases register and the process for approving new leases.
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- Oversight of the interaction between the payroll system and the finance system and ensuring workflows in the HR and payroll system provide an appropriate system of control.
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- Ensure balance sheet control account reconciliations are performed across the Trust and reconciling items are clearly documented.
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- Working in conjunction with the Head of Finance Business Partnering, review and implement effective financial management in the Trust via development and streamlining of processes and procedures to maintain an efficient and effective finance function.
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#### FINANCIAL COMPLIANCE

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- Coordinate the preparation and presentation of annual statutory accounts that are compliant with the applicable accounting framework.
  - Coordinate financial returns for the Department for Education, the Education and Skills Funding
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- Agency, HM Revenue and Customs, Companies House and other bodies as appropriate.
- Coordinate the submission of monthly VAT returns, and responsibility for training Trust finance staff regarding VAT compliance.
- Responsible for the timely submission of corporation tax returns.
- Oversight over the payment of PAYE and NIC, in liaison with the outsourced payroll provider.

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## AUDIT SERVICES

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- Lead the relationship with auditors and facilitate all audit arrangements including the central coordination of external audit, internal audit, teachers' pension audits and the audit of the August Accounts Return.
- Implement and integrate audit requirements and recommendations into the normal day to day financial activities of the Trust.

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## OTHER SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

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- Work closely with the Director of Finance to deliver their strategic objectives and aims for the development of the finance function.
- Assist the Director of Finance with preparation for Trust Audit and Risk Committee meetings and Board reporting.
- Provide guidance to relevant stakeholders in respect of new technical guidance issued by the ESFA and act as the main point of contact for all technical accounting queries and updates.
- Manage the procurement strategy of the Trust, ensuring compliance with latest legislation, value for money on all transactions and identification of opportunities for economies of scale.
- Oversee the payroll checking process and financial reporting of payroll data.
- Manage the set-up process for new schools joining the Trust in respect of payroll, financial compliance and accounting software.
- Work with the Head of Finance Business Partnering to arrange a complete training and induction for new schools that encompasses all areas of responsibility.
- Proactively manage the Trust's relationship with bank and investment fund managers.

- Manage the Trust's cash-flow, ensuring that surplus funds are invested in line with the Trust's investment policy.
- Maintain the operational risk register for the finance function.
- Promote a culture of continuous improvement within the finance function and promote shared learning and good practice across Trust academies.
- Support new Trust-wide projects under the direction of the Director of Finance

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## SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF

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- Line management of direct reports to include appraisals, induction, continuing professional development, training, and recruitment.
- Provide leadership, motivation, training and support to finance staff, ensuring that appropriate standards of behaviour, performance and customer care are demonstrated at all times
- Support finance staff to fulfil their financial responsibilities, in line with the Trust's policies and procedures.
- Actively contribute to the development of quality improvement programmes across the Trust.
- Proactively implement the Trust's policies and procedures.

This job description is not necessarily a comprehensive definition of the post, and the post holder will be required to undertake other duties appropriate to the grade and character of the work as directed.

The post holder's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people for whom s/he comes into contact will be to adhere to and always ensure compliance with the Trust's Child Protection Policy. If, while carrying out the duties of the post, the post holder becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children in the Academy they must report any concerns to their Line Manager or the Academy's Child Protection Officer

The job description will be reviewed at least once a year, and it may be subject to modification or amendment at any time after consultation with the post holder.

The duties may be varied to meet the changing demands of each school at the reasonable discretion of the Director of Finance.

	<b>ESSENTIAL</b>	<b>DESIRABLE</b>
<b>QUALIFICATIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professionally qualified accountant (ACA, ACCA etc) with significant post- qualification experience.</li> </ul>	
<b>EXPERIENCE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proven experience in financial reporting and in the preparation of statutory accounts.</li> <li>Experience of running the financial accounting function for an organisation that has a number of branches, subsidiaries or locations.</li> <li>Experience of introducing, developing and maintaining effective and robust financial systems.</li> <li>Experience of setting up and managing internal control environments.</li> <li>Experience of acting as liaison with the Trust auditors.</li> <li>Experience of managing teams, providing motivation and training to up-skill team members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Successful experience of working in a School or Academy financial management role, or in a similar position working alongside schools e.g., Local Authority, MAT or independent education sector.</li> <li>Experience of developing financial systems.</li> <li>Experience of acquisitions or mergers.</li> </ul>
<b>KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong technical accounting knowledge with ability to guide, challenge and advise others on accounting queries.</li> <li>Sound knowledge of academy specific guidance from the ESFA including Accounts Direction and the Academy Trust Handbook.</li> <li>Knowledge of PAYE and VAT regulations.</li> <li>Understanding of data protection issues.</li> <li>Basic knowledge of company law.</li> <li>Knowledge of trading activities within schools and impact of these on both VAT and Corporation Tax returns.</li> <li>Knowledge of relevant procurement legislation.</li> <li>A good understanding of the work of a MAT and school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sound knowledge of the Charities' SORP.</li> <li>Basic knowledge of charity law.</li> <li>Good working knowledge of PS Financials accounting software</li> </ul>
<b>SKILLS AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A desire to participate in the delivery of the Trust's vision for a high-quality financial service for the Trust and its schools.</li> <li>Ability to introduce and maintain effective and robust financial systems.</li> <li>Excellent interpersonal skills, with the ability to build effective relationships, both internally and externally.</li> <li>Sound decision making that is proactive and solution oriented.</li> <li>Efficient and organised</li> <li>Ability to delegate and organise workloads of others in an efficient and effective manner.</li> <li>Proactive, flexible, trustworthy, dependable and reliable.</li> <li>Proven ability to manage a significant workload and prioritise responsibilities to maintain effectiveness and deliver results.</li> <li>Outstanding communication skills (oral, written and presentation) and the ability to tailor effective communication with various stakeholders</li> <li>Excellent negotiation skills.</li> <li>Aligned with Creative Education Trust's high aspirations and high expectations of self and Others.</li> <li>Competent and confident in Microsoft Office skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced Excel skills including the use of pivot tables and macros.</li> <li>Ability to analyse financial issues and to interpret complex information and to offer sound, reliable professional advice.</li> </ul>

<b>EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A demonstrable commitment to supporting and promoting safeguarding, student welfare, equality and diversity</li> </ul>	
<b>SAFEGUARDING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A thorough understanding of up-to-date safeguarding requirements and best practice</li> </ul>	
<b>OTHER REQUIREMENTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to work out of working hours on occasion in accordance with the needs of the cluster.</li> </ul>	

Creative Education Trust (CET) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, workers and all other members of the school community to share this commitment. The CET Recruitment Policy follows the guidance set out by Keeping Children Safe in Education. All shortlisted candidates are subject to online checks and referencing prior to interview, and all offers of employment are subject to an enhanced DBS Check and where appropriate a Prohibition from Teaching search. This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974. CET is committed to developing, maintaining, and supporting an inclusive culture and environment for the benefit of its employees and the communities it serves.