



Tenterden Schools Trust

Candidate Information Pack

Chief Finance and Operations Officer



POST TITLE: Chief Finance and Operations Officer

SALARY: Starting £90,000 - £110,000 depending on experience

START DATE: September 2024 or soon afterwards

ARRANGEMENT: Full time, permanent, hybrid

REPORTS TO: CEO

LINE MANAGEMENT OF: IT Director, Management Accountant, Estates Manager

MAIN PURPOSE: The CFOO will be accountable for strategic leadership of finance and operations to ensure the Trust's development, resilience, integrity and sustainability. They will hold responsibility for estates and facilities including capital projects. They will lead on the Health and Safety provision across the organisation.

Message from Stuart Reeves, CEO

Dear Candidate

We are keen to find an exceptional leader who shares our vision and enthusiasm for improving education in Kent and beyond. At Tenterden Schools Trust, we value innovation, dedication, and a collaborative spirit. Our team is passionate about making a difference, and we believe that with the right leadership, we can achieve remarkable outcomes for our students and community.

As the Chief Finance and Operations Officer, you will play a critical role in shaping the future of our Trust. You will work closely with a dedicated team of professionals who are committed to excellence and continuous improvement. Your strategic insights and operational acumen will be essential in driving our initiatives forward.

You may not have an accountancy background but you will be financially astute; you will have an eye for detail and sound strategic use of money. You may not have worked in the public sector before but you are someone who can quickly understand and work effectively within a regulatory framework. This is an amazing opportunity for someone who has a passion for leadership in both finance and operations and who is looking to work within an organisation committed to improving the life chances of young people.

We are looking for a candidate who is not only skilled but also empathetic and approachable. Your ability to build strong relationships with all stakeholders will be key to your success in this role. We are confident that the right person will thrive in our supportive and forward-thinking environment.

Thank you for considering this exciting opportunity. If you can see yourself in this role please do get in touch, I would be delighted to discuss the post with you. You can email me on s.reeves@tenterden-schools-trust.com and we can arrange to meet in person, virtually or chat over the phone.

I look forward to hearing from you and exploring how your unique talents and experiences can contribute to the ongoing success of Tenterden Schools Trust.

Best wishes

Stuart Reeves
Chief Executive Officer

Advert- Chief Financial and Operations Officer

Trust Vision

Educational Excellence

Students thrive in ambitious and successful schools, ready for what the future has in store for them.

Community

Excellent Community and Church Schools, maintaining their own identity and serving their local community.

Seamless Learning

A continuous, all-through educational experience from Birth to 19, creating smooth transitions between phases.

Tenterden Schools Trust is a mixed multi academy trust in mid-Kent that currently runs one large secondary, five primaries and two nurseries.

We are seeking an inspirational leader who will be responsible for the financial development and sustainability of Tenterden Schools Trust and for overall strategic management of our buildings and estates. Working closely with the CEO and senior leaders you will provide leadership and management of the trust's finance and business functions, enabling the trust to work effectively towards its aims.

You will develop an effective and efficient business model for the Central Services of the Trust and modernise and strengthen processes within the organisation to enable us to expand and embed a culture of compliance with financial and operational regulations.

The successful candidate will be an experienced and innovative senior finance professional with a track record of delivering significant improvement within an organisation. You will combine a record of successful strategic leadership and sustainable improvement with energy, flair and a determination to succeed. Additionally, you will possess exceptional interpersonal skills, allowing you to build strong relationships with stakeholders, including school leaders, staff, governors, and external partners. Your ability to communicate clearly and persuasively will be crucial in driving the Trust's vision and goals forward.

Key Responsibilities:

- Develop and implement financial strategies that support the Trust's educational objectives and long-term growth.
- Ensure robust financial controls and risk management processes are in place.
- Oversee budget preparation, monitoring, and reporting to ensure financial transparency and accountability.
- Manage procurement and contract negotiations to maximise value for money.
- Lead the estates management team to ensure our facilities are safe, well-maintained, and conducive to high-quality teaching and learning.
- Foster a culture of continuous improvement and professional development within the finance and operations teams.
- Lead on and manage CIF bids across the Trust

We seek to develop our staff through a professional growth model and treat everyone as an individual; we value personal strengths and qualities. Our office is set in a 55 acre site midway between London and the Channel Ports and is easily commutable via major roads and motorways. You will enjoy a unique working environment in the heart of the Weald of Kent including discounts and offers with Kent Rewards, RAC and enhanced pension contributions. There is also a nursery based next door to the Trust office which offers discounts to Trust Staff. There is the opportunity for hybrid working with this role.

More information on this successful Trust can be accessed on the following website: <https://www.tenterden-schools-trust.com>

For any queries, please contact Megan Wanstall, Human Resources 01580 764222 Ext 2351 or email vacancies@tenterden-schools-trust.com.

Closing date: 8th July 2024

Interview date: 15th and 16th July 2024

We are an equal opportunities employer and welcome applications from all members of the community. Tenterden Schools Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all employees to share this commitment. You are advised that this post is subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2020 and therefore this post is subject to an Enhanced Disclosure Application to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Job Description

KEY PRIORITIES:

Strategic Leadership

- Promote the core vision of Tenterden Schools Trust through inspirational and motivational leadership
- Support the CEO in his role as Accounting Officer
- Advise the CEO and Trust Board on all matters relating to financial strategy, operations and all matters relating to capital projects
- Carry out accurate financial and estates and facilities due diligence on schools wanting to join the Trust and make recommendations to the CEO and Trust Board accordingly
- Work with the CEO on effective risk management, identifying operational and financial risks, mitigating against these, and maintaining the Trust's risk register
- Report to the Finance and Resources Committee and the Audit and Risk Committee to advise the Board to enable them to make informed financial decisions regarding the management of Trust funds

Finance

- Accountable for maintaining robust financial management of the Trust
- Prepare accurate and timely budgets to internal stakeholders to enable effective budgetary control
- Lead and manage the finance function to allow the trust to deliver its educational aims
- Meet all DfE and ESFA regulatory requirements
- Provide strong leadership for the Finance team, supporting the professional development of colleagues and ensuring a high level of service quality is provided to individual schools and nurseries
- Manage the external audit process as well as internal controls
- Manage the Risk Protection Arrangement scheme
- Manage the Trust's cash position at all times
- Support the income generation strategy for the Trust and its schools

Operations

- Develop an effective and efficient business model for the Central Services Team

Estates

- Lead on and develop a Trust estates master plan and individual estate development plans for each academy, and lead the implementation of these plans within the Trust to deliver the objectives for each individual academy and the Trust as a whole
- Oversee the provision of all aspects of facilities management in the schools/nurseries in the Trust, including teaching & learning facilities, security, planned preventative maintenance, heating, and other general site services
- Lead on estates-related issues relating to land & buildings, freehold & leasehold tenure and other related matters (e.g. lettings)
- Responsible for the completion of annual maintenance inspections and condition surveys for each school
- Identify opportunities to enhance and continuously improve the service for the benefit of our students and staff, considering the impact on school operations and the end-user in all planning and decision-making and communicate effectively with senior colleagues regarding any works
- Lead on the development of bids for capital and other grant funding opportunities and be pro-active in identifying & bidding for all external funding opportunities that are related to estates and facilities development
- Prepare lifecycle and capital budgets for individual schools and the Trust, managing delivery timing against the availability of funds
- Responsible for the Estates and Facilities section of the Trust Development Plan
- Act as director and budget holder for the Trust's major projects (such as fit out and building works) and project manage key capital developments, utilising external professional teams as needed
- Responsible for the security of Trust resources and estate including the operation of fire, smoke and intruder alarms, emergency key holder responsibilities and risk management. To ensure that all site security is robust and ensure that appropriate out of hours locking/unlocking procedures are in place to respond to emergencies
- Maintain business continuity and disaster recovery plans to enable the Trust to maintain educational delivery
- Develop a sustainability policy addressing all the strands of premises-related consumption of energy, building materials and other goods & services, and the consequential direct & indirect waste generation – aiming to reduce, reuse & recycle in accordance with government and industry best practice

- Oversee outsourced contracts, including cleaning, M&E maintenance and professional consultancy services
- Ensure that Trust buildings are routinely & reliably cleaned and that grounds are properly maintained through effective contract and line management
- Lead on premises-related procurement & negotiation of premises-related outsourced contracts, alongside catering procurement
- Develop and maintain easily accessible and auditable records, including asset registers, records of inspections, maintenance requests, complaints, costs and repairs
- Oversee the management of commercial lettings, in relation to maximising revenue for the Trust and staffing/security arrangements regarding lettings and events on site

Health and safety

- Responsible for ensuring that in all activities undertaken, the Trust properly discharges its duties under its Health and Safety Policy; the Health & Safety at Work Act; COSHH regulations; and any other relevant statute, regulation or directive
- Responsible for Health and Safety policy and practice across the Trust
- Ensure that contractors operate safely in accordance with these same statutes etc. To oversee implementation and compliance with the Trust’s Health & Safety Policy in relation to estates & facilities, and provide professional advice on premises-related health & safety, for example critical incidents, fire evacuation, lockdown and risk assessments
- To act as the Health and Safety Coordinator for construction projects, and to perform similar roles in relation to asbestos control, legionella and health & safety within the Trust
- Maintain business continuity and disaster recovery plans to enable the Trust to maintain educational delivery

Reporting and compliance

- Accountable for ensuring that the Trust meets its financial and legal obligations including those set out in the Academies Trust Handbook and submits financial reports/returns in a timely manner.
- Manage contracts that support the Central Services Team
- Prepare and submit the Trust’s financial returns, annual accounts and monthly management accounts
- Keep abreast of developments in legislation, implementing any changes and adapting processes linked to payroll, pensions and benefits as required
- Manage the production and submission of any required DfE/ESFA and other government/statutory returns relating to premises (e.g. Land & Building Collection Tool, HSE) and capital project grants.

Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Experience Qualified by experience in Finance/Accounting Significant post qualifying experience and in depth professional knowledge Experience managing significant financial resources with a good appreciation of relevant regulatory frameworks Familiarity of financial procedures and processes Experience of effectively managing a team and building effective working relationships	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	
Qualifications Qualified ACA, CIMA, or ACCA, AAT (Level 4) Educated to degree level		✓ ✓

	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge Working knowledge of payroll Experience of producing management accounts including full profit and loss, cash flow and balance sheet reviews Experience of managing Company bank accounts including reconciliation, balance sheet reporting and cash flow Line management experience Experience of budget management from planning to approval Experience of interpreting financial statements and accounts In depth knowledge of statutory requirements, procedures and regulatory requirements relating to academies Experience of managing health and safety at an organisational level and the compliance requirements linked with this responsibility Experience of project management, liaising with contractors and external consultants	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
Skills and Abilities Highly developed influencing and interpersonal skills Excellent skills in strategic planning and management of financial resources Good leadership skills with the ability to motivate and challenge colleagues Ability to have a positive impact at all levels within the organisation Strong attention to detail and commercial awareness Ability to identify opportunities for improvements within the Operations and Finance functions Ability to keep up to date on key external policies and economic, political, and social trends that affect the organisation. Clear analytical skills; able to explore, evaluate and interpret information and opinions and utilise data from MIS Strong decision-making skills; able to make decisions and recommendations based on an analysis of all options	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	
Personal Qualities Team player Confident and clear communicator A high degree of integrity and commitment to The Nolan Principles A positive outlook, motivated and enthusiastic Reflective and committed to continuous development for self and others Organised, efficient and flexible Patient and resilient with a sense of humour Displays a high level of emotional intelligence Capacity to work under pressure to meet organisational deadlines	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	

