



**Finance Assistant**

**Central Support Services Team – Sittingbourne, Kent**

**Recruitment Pack**



**Swale Academies Trust**

**Ashdown House**

**Johnson Road**

**Sittingbourne**

**Kent**

**ME10 1JS**

## **Finance Assistant**

**Salary** SAT band 4, points 12 – 14, £18,242 - £19,123

**Full Time, Permanent position**

37 hours a week, with 25 days annual leave, plus bank holidays.

### **Based at the Trust offices in Sittingbourne, Kent**

Swale Academies Trust wish to appoint an additional finance assistant to enhance our developing central services team providing a comprehensive and effective financial and administrative service to schools across the Trust.

The successful appointee will be enthusiastic and motivated with an adaptable and flexible attitude.

This is an excellent opportunity to pursue a rewarding career with the trust, to support our increasing family of schools in educating children in the south east.

The posts are based at our central offices in Sittingbourne although some travel to our schools may be necessary.

Full details of the requirements of the post can be found in the accompanying recruitment pack.

Applications should be made via Kent Teach. Please note, we cannot accept CVs.

If you experience any difficulty in completing the application form, please contact [recruitment@swale.at](mailto:recruitment@swale.at) or 01795 426091 ( option 2)

In accordance with current GDPR compliance we will not keep any details/application forms on file once the position is filled.

Interested applicants are welcome to contact Gavin Bailey, Head of Finance at the Trust for an informal discussion regarding the post [gavin.bailey@swale.at](mailto:gavin.bailey@swale.at) and 01795 426091

### **If I am successful in gaining an interview, how will this occur during the current COVID-19 pandemic?**

Due to the current situation we may plan to interview remotely using a video call. We would ensure that candidates who were successful in gaining an interview were supported with the technology so that this process is seamless. We will provide you with details of the process with your interview invite.

Our advice would be that those who were successful in gaining an interview should prepare as they would for a face to face and dress smart casual. We will allow plenty of time to ensure that you are able to answer our questions in full and you will not be judged if you are having problems with your technology.

We will leave plenty of opportunity for questions at the end of the interview, and we will spend lots of time talking and unpicking your answers. Please come prepared to share anything you'd like that we

didn't cover, or any questions you have about it. We really appreciate your adaptability in these unprecedented times.

**Interview Date: Week Commencing 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2021**

*Swale Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is exempt from ROA and will require an enhanced DBS disclosure*

**Head of Finance: Gavin Bailey**

## Job Description

**Job Title:** Finance Assistant

**Grade:** SAT 4

**Responsible to:** Finance Manager

### **Purpose of the Job:**

The postholder will work as part of a growing team based at Ashdown House providing an effective financial and administrative service to the all schools across the Trust. The postholder will be expected to work as part of the team and to complete tasks conscientiously and to a high standard.

They will be expected at all times to promote the ethos of Swale Academies Trust as caring and welcoming and this will be reflected in their dealings with all individuals. The postholder will be expected to work in a sensitive and diplomatic manner, having regard for the confidential nature of their work.

### **Main duties and responsibilities (Accountabilities):**

- Raise orders, process delivery notes and invoices/credit notes onto the Trust accounting software (PS Financials)
- Raise sales invoices/credit notes and receipts from PS Financials
- Process ParentPay income and maintain payment items
- Record income received from ESFA, Local Authorities and other grant providers
- Ensure all invoice requests are supported by the correct documentation e.g. letting contract
- Record all staff reimbursements
- Record and reconcile all direct debits and standing orders
- Prepare and upload BACS runs
- Manage finance email inboxes
- Ensure the electronic filing system is effectively maintained
- Monitor Trust purchase card scheme
- Maintain trip records
- Ensure all documentation is supported by the correct authority
- Deal with queries from staff, suppliers, customers, parents by telephone, email or in person

**General accountabilities:**

- Ensure that output and quality of work is to a high standard and complies with current legislation/standards.
- So far as reasonably practicable, the post holder must ensure that safe working practices are adopted by employees.
- Undertaking such other duties as reasonably correspond to the general character of the post.

This job description sets out the key outcomes required. It does not specifically detail the activities required to achieve these outcomes. In consultation with you, the job description may be changed by the Head of Finance to reflect or anticipate changes in the job commensurate with the grade and job title.

## Person Specification

**Job Title:** Finance Assistant

**Grade:** SAT 4

**Responsible to:** Finance Manager

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educated to GCSE or equivalent level, with English and Mathematics GCSE or equivalent at Grade C or above as a minimum</li> </ul>	
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience of working in a finance office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience in an education setting would be an advantage</li> </ul>
Skills and Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Able to communicate in a friendly and helpful manner with staff, students, parents and members of the general public, both in person and over the telephone</li> <li>Good literacy and numeracy skills</li> <li>Ability to cope with interruptions</li> <li>The ability to remain calm under pressure and handle a wide range of situations</li> <li>Be a strong team player and work well with other members of the office team</li> <li>Be adaptable and flexible, with a "can do" attitude</li> <li>Good interpersonal skills</li> <li>Ability to work efficiently and accurately, with excellent attention to detail</li> <li>Willingness to learn</li> <li>Ability to develop and maintain effective computerised and manual filing systems</li> <li>Ability to work on own initiative and prioritise personal workload to meet deadlines</li> </ul>	
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge of administrative procedures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience of using Parentpay, PS Financials and HCSS (or a</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good working knowledge of Microsoft packages, Word, Excel and Power Point and use of email</li><li>• An understanding of safeguarding responsibilities within an educational setting</li></ul>	similar database) would be a distinct advantage, although training will be provided
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## Letter from Jon Whitcombe – Trust Principal

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in this role within Swale Academies Trust.

Since its creation in September 2010 Swale Academies Trust has become a strong and successful school improvement service, specialising in taking schools in Ofsted category and turning them into good schools. A glance at our most recent Ofsted report will point to the effectiveness of the Trust in bringing about change and providing and enabling excellent leadership. First and foremost, Swale Academies Trust is about the provision and development of high quality leadership and management.

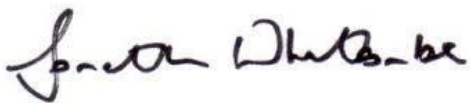
We don't seek to clone schools that deliver education in a regimented manner. Rather, we value the development in our schools of a spirit of enquiry and action research that provides the best possible education that is right for pupils in a local setting. We do, however, collectively value and strive for all pupils to produce work which showcases their development over time of which they, their teachers and support staff and parents can be really proud.

Our ambition is driven by enabling schools and children to succeed. We have a wide range of excellent and highly accomplished senior leaders who lead with a sense of purpose, charisma and a set of shared values. The Trust is fortunate to be overseen by a Board of Directors who share leaders' values and who provide the highest quality challenge and support.

We are proud of our schools and strive for a sense of shared pride in the achievements of all of our students.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jon Whitcombe". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and 'W'.

**Jon Whitcombe**  
Trust Principal



## **Welcome from Janet Garraway – Chief Operating Officer**

Thank you for your interest in this role within the Central Support Services Team at Swale Academies Trust. This is an exciting time to be joining the Central Team, which was established in 2017 and has seen a continued growth in capacity and expertise over the last year. We continue to develop new ways of working to ensure we can effectively respond to the needs of each school within the Trust and continuously improve the support we offer.

The team is pivotal in the successful running of the Trust and is focused on supporting the improvement of educational standards in every school. All of the work carried out by the Central Support Services Team is in relation to non-teaching and learning aspects of running a school, which includes IT, Finance, HR, Procurement, Projects and Estates.

We want to drive improvement further and faster, developing the efficiency of our schools through shared resources and collective procurement. Effective and efficient use of resources supports teaching and learning across the schools alongside ensuring both the long term viability of individual schools and the sustainable growth and strategic direction of the Trust.

As Chief Operating Officer, I constantly ensure that the services we offer are sustainable to support our future growth and provide strategic oversight of operational services across all schools.

As a team, we offer a high quality service to all of the schools across the Trust. This innovative centralised structure alleviates the burden of administrative responsibility from schools, allowing Headteachers to focus on teaching and learning.

We encourage our staff to be flexible thinkers with an open-minded approach to change as we continue to expand our successful Multi-Academy Trust. If you are as excited about this as we are and want to join us on our journey, we would be delighted to receive your application.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JGarraway', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Janet Garraway**  
Chief Operating Officer

## Swale Academies Trust

The Swale Academies Trust based in Kent came into being in September 2010 as one of the first few Academy Converter Schools based around Westlands School in Sittingbourne. As a National Support School and an Academy Sponsor, Westlands and Swale Academies Trust have developed into one of the South East's leading Academy Sponsors, currently consisting of seven secondary schools and ten primary schools. The Trust provides support for other schools, located in Kent and East Sussex.



As the Trust has grown and developed we continue to ensure that effective school support and leadership is maintained. Most of the schools that join us have had inherent weaknesses and challenges that need to be addressed. This involves intensive support and considerable levels of experience and intervention. The Trust's approach to school improvement is based on a combination of CPD, capacity building and collaboration, with a relentless focus on teaching and pupil progress, in order to effect rapid and sustained improvements in outcomes for young people.

## **Swale Academies Trust – Schools**

### **Primary**

- Beaver Green Primary School, Ashford
- Istead Rise Primary School, Istead Rise
- James Dixon Primary School, Bromley
- Langney Primary Academy, Eastbourne
- Parkland Infant School, Eastbourne
- Parkland Junior School, Eastbourne
- Regis Manor Primary School, Sittingbourne
- Shinewater Primary School, Eastbourne
- South Borough Primary School, Maidstone
- Westlands Primary School, Sittingbourne

### **Secondary**

- Causeway School, Eastbourne
- Meopham Secondary School, Meopham
- Peacehaven Community School, Peacehaven
- The Sittingbourne School, Sittingbourne
- The Eastbourne Academy, Eastbourne
- The Whitstable School, Whitstable
- Westlands Secondary School, Sittingbourne

### **Central Support Services**

- Ashdown House, Sittingbourne

## SWALE ACADEMIES TRUST SAFEGUARDING POSITION

### Introduction and Ethos

Swale Academies Trust is a community and all those directly connected (staff, governors, parents, families and pupils) have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure. All schools within the Trust recognise their moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

Trust Schools recognise the importance of providing an ethos and environment within school that will help children to feel safe, secure and respected; encourage them to talk openly; and enable them to feel confident that they will be listened to. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

The Trust core safeguarding principles are:

- It is a whole school responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- All children (defined as those up to the age of 18) regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection
- All children have a right to be heard and to have their wishes and feelings taken into account
- All staff understand safe professional practice and adhere to our code of conduct and other associated policies
- All staff have a responsibility to recognise vulnerability in children and act on any concern in accordance with this guidance

There are four main elements to our safeguarding policy:

- Prevention (e.g. positive, supportive, safe school culture, curriculum and pastoral opportunities for children, safer recruitment procedures)
- Protection (by following the agreed procedures, ensuring all staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to safeguarding concerns)
- Support (for all pupils, parents and staff, and where appropriate specific intervention for those who may be at risk of harm)
- Working with parents and other agencies (to ensure appropriate communications and actions are undertaken)

The procedures contained in our policy apply to all staff and governors and are consistent with those of each school's local safeguarding boards.

## **Recruitment of ex-offenders**

The Trust has a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is available on the Trust website under policies and documents.

## **The Application Process**

Applications will only be accepted from candidates completing the appropriate application form. All sections of the form which are applicable to you must be completed as clearly and fully as possible.

Please note CVs will not be accepted in place of a completed application form.

Application forms can be found on the [Kent-Teach](#) website and all electronic application should be made via this route. Alternatively, completed forms can be sent by post to the following address:

HR Team  
Swale Academies Trust  
Ashdown House  
Johnson Road  
Sittingbourne  
Kent  
ME10 1JS

## **The Shortlisting and Interview Process**

After the closing date for this post a panel will conduct the shortlisting process. You will be selected for interview based entirely on the contents of your application form, it is therefore important that you fully read the Job Description and Person Specification prior to completing your form.

After the shortlisting process has been completed candidates who have been selected for interview will be informed, and provided with full details of the interview programme. If you have not heard from us within 10 working days of the closing date for this post, you have, on this occasion, unfortunately been unsuccessful.

All candidates who are invited to interview must bring the following original documents:

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

## **Conditional Offer**

Any offer of employment will be conditional upon a number of formalities, including, but not restricted to the following:

- Verification of right to work in the UK
- Receipt of two satisfactory references
- Verification of identity checks and qualifications
- Satisfactory enhanced DBS check, as well as additional checks that may be appropriate if you have worked or been resident overseas in the previous five years
- Satisfactory pre-employment health clearance
- A check against the Teacher Service Register for any teaching prohibition or restriction orders where you are applying for a teaching role or if you have previously held a teaching role in past employment.

## **Retention of information**

All information is stored securely and any information supplied by unsuccessful candidates will be destroyed through the confidential waste system after six months from the date of the interview, in accordance with our retention of records procedure.

## **Privacy Notice**

Please refer to the Trust's Privacy Notice for job applicants for information about how we use any personal data about them we hold. This can be downloaded here:

<https://www.swale.at/page/?title=Privacy+Notice&pid=33>

