

Job description: Regional Finance Business Partner - London

Overview

You will be a critical member of the Finance team. You will provide operational leadership, financial management and support and advice for the individual academies that fall within the Region. To contribute, as a senior finance and operational member of the Trust, to ensure that efficient and effective operational and business management is conducted by academies within the Region and to support their (and the Trust's) opportunities for future growth/ expansion. The trust views this role as central to academy improvement and effectiveness.

Department: Finance & Operations

Manager: Director of Finance – Operations

Salary: OAT Central pay spine 32-34 £82794 - £88766 (inclusive of London weighting)

Location: You will need to visit academies in your region (London) on a frequent (minimum 4 times per week) basis. In addition, you may need to travel to other locations.

Context

Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT) is one of the largest not-for-profit multi-academy trusts in England. As a national trust, we educate over 35,000 pupils in forty-two schools – currently thirty-two secondary schools, six primary schools, three alternative provision schools and one special school. We are one of the longest-established trusts and have been sponsoring academies since 2009.

Founded in memory of Fiona Ormiston Murray, we have three fundamental beliefs:

- Every child can thrive, regardless of their background.
- We work where the challenge is greatest and embrace that challenge.
- We believe in high quality education and enrichment, both inside and outside the classroom so that young people can learn and develop in all the ways we want them to

In this next phase of our trust development, we are building the organisational capability to deliver higher school performance in areas of socio-economic deprivation at national scale and at pace.

What you will deliver

As a member of the Finance and wider Operational leadership team you will:

1. Have a passion for making a difference to the lives of young people and their wider communities. In particular, have a passion for helping those that are disadvantaged, SEND or requiring other educational support.
2. Be an active and supportive member of the finance team and contribute to the Trust decision making process.
3. Lead on financial planning and budgetary control within the Region, including reporting on financial performance, and ensuring funds are used effectively to support educational goals.

4. Be accountable for the effective management of the Region's financial resources and the provision of technical advice and expertise on financial and commercial matters to the senior management team and local governing bodies.
5. Lead and/ or support on financial discussions around funding and on commercial discussions with external parties including but not limited to the Local Authorities, ESFA, other Trusts/ academies and other partners.
6. Regularly engage with local authorities to secure appropriate funding for AP and SEND provisions, ensuring compliance with all regulations and optimising available resources.
7. Ensure that the impact of astute business development, a focused financial strategy and a strong overall management directly affects educational outcomes for pupils at all London academies.
8. Lead and coordinate funding applications and negotiations for AP and SEND projects, ensuring that financial needs are met, and programmes are sustainable.
9. Provide on the ground leadership and support on all finance and operational matters in our London academies – working proactively and collaboratively, vertically, and horizontally across the wider Trust, to remove any blockers to success.
10. Have the gravitas and proactive mindset to drive initiatives, ensuring the right actions are taken by the right people at the right time, effectively taking people with you including finance, non-finance, internal and external stakeholders.
11. Provide coaching, guidance, and support to staff especially those with financial responsibilities and arrange training and development where required, to support effective management across the Region.
12. Proactively collaborate and help to develop cohesive relationships across the Trust and support the leveraging of benefits for children, staff, and communities in the Region.

You will also support growth and development by:

13. Actively supporting the incorporation of new academies into the Trust.
14. Identifying and supporting delivery of further income generation opportunities for individual academies, within the Region and for the trust in general.

A key part of your role will be financial planning, management & reporting. You will:

15. Undertake financial planning and monitoring of finances across the Region in line with best practice and policies and guidance issued by the central team.
16. Ensure prompt and timely preparation of regular management accounts, and analysis of variances with budgets, prepare regular budget reforecasts (in-line with agreed policies) and reporting thereon to the National Finance Directors, senior management team and local governing bodies as appropriate.
17. Contribute to the development of OAT's financial policies, procedures, and systems.
18. Ensure that the annual accounts are properly presented and adequately supported by the underlying books and records of each academy within the Region.
19. Along with finance colleagues ensure all ESFA requirements are met within the timetable set out in EFA guidance.
20. Proactively consult with education, estates, ICT and HR colleagues (and others) to ensure that resource, estates, and ICT planning is developed in such a way as to optimise outcomes for children by focusing on delivery of academy development plans and management of long-term risks.
21. Prepare the academy budgets for each academy within the Region for review and recommendation by the senior management team/ local governing body and ultimate approval by the Trust Board.
22. Liaise with Principal / Headteachers in relation to the management of the Trust's risk policy and procurement policies.

23. Consult with the Trust's payroll and pensions providers as necessary to ensure payroll and pension processes run effectively and efficiently for the academies within the Region.
24. Produce financial information and reports as required by the National Director of Finance and others.
25. Ensure that effective financial and management oversight for the Region.
26. Liaise with internal and external auditors as appropriate.

The above list is not exhaustive or exclusive.

The role requires the post holder to be professional, collaborative, easy to work with, forward thinking, motivating and flexible in line with business needs of the Trust.

The post holder is required to undertake additional such duties as may be reasonably be expected within the scope and grading for the post.

Your skills and experience

- Resilience with the ability to run multiple objectives and complex political processes concurrently.
- Attention to detail and working to a high-level of accuracy.
- Significant recent experience of leading business partnering, financial support and advice functions and services.
- Exceptional business case financial appraisal and modelling skills.
- Ability to communicate clearly and effectively in the written word and in person in a variety of formats including committee presentations and policy documentation.
- Leadership/ management of professional/ operational staff who manage their own work and activities.
- Experience of having worked in the education sector and/ or with/within local authorities.
- Strong relationship management skills and experience of developing strong relationships with key stakeholders across multiple locations.
- Experience of contributing and/ or leading on the delivery of improvement programmes.
- Degree level qualification (preferred but not necessary depending on experience)
- CCAB (or with equivalent experience).

We pride ourselves on being inclusive and welcoming. We embrace diversity and want everyone to feel that they belong and are connected to others in our community.

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