

Job Description: Senior Finance Manager

Reporting to:	Regional Finance Director
Salary:	£42,000 – £46,000 per annum, depending on experience
Location:	Portsmouth Cluster (with occasional travel to Hastings and London)
Contract:	1-Year Fixed Term

The Role

As Senior Finance Manager (SFM), you will be an integral part of the team responsible for ensuring high standards of financial probity within the cluster academies. This role supports a cluster of 3 schools.

You will manage the monthly financial processes, ensuring compliance with the Academies Financial Handbook. You will also support with reviewing processes across the schools to implement standardised procedures, improving efficiency and sharing best practice.

You will lead by example and provide professional leadership across the cluster, in partnership with stakeholders. You will be flexible and open minded in your approach and it is essential that you have excellent communication and leadership skills and promote the ethos of Ark Schools.

Cluster - Key Responsibilities

- Responsible for all financial accounting procedures across your cluster schools, ensuring a clear direction of responsibility for finance managers
- Ensure timely production and issue of financial reports and returns, as required for your Cluster
- Work closely with school Principals and Operations Leads across the cluster to ensure financial information is up to date and available for review
- Prepare the management accounts and related analysis, posting month end journals, ensuring bank and control account reconciliations are updated monthly
- Review processes and procedures to identify where efficiencies can be implemented, sharing best practice across all 3 schools
- Ensure financial filing systems and records are continually updated and appropriate evidence of financial controls are always available for audit
- Prepare monthly financial reports and analysis for the Finance Link Governor (FLG), meeting at least 4 times per year in line with FLG/ Governors' requests and school needs.
- Attend LGBs across the cluster as directed by the RFD.
- Prepare annual budgets and termly reforecasting for review with the RFD before going for final approval

- Take responsibility for the academies' accounting procedures, ensuring financial handbooks are kept up to date and all policies and procedures are adhered to across the cluster
- Ensure that monthly reconciliations are carried out in line with the Ark month end pack
- Be responsible for bank reconciliations and monthly cash flow forecasting and highlighting any areas of concern across the cluster to the RFD
- Take responsibility for ensuring that intercompany accounts are reconciled and journals posted accordingly
- Take responsibility for ensuring payroll and pensions processing is managed efficiently and correctly across the cluster
- Ensure that all Fixed Assets are treated in line with the Ark Policy
- Ensure support and communications are consistent across the cluster, diarising regular meetings with Principals and Operations Leads, thus promoting excellent working relationships
- Take responsibility for, and line management of, Finance Managers and Finance Assistants, including arranging appropriate training and development across the cluster, conducting induction, probation and performance management reviews and identifying succession plans where the opportunity arises
- Support the RFD and school Operations Leads to ensure goods and services are processed in compliance with current and relevant procurement legislation
- Be pro-active in identifying and pursuing income generating activities across the cluster
- Drive forward change and initiatives which promote regularity, propriety, value for money and best standards
- Share best practice across the region, promoting a positive environment and delivering training on new initiatives
- Support the cluster finance team with managing work-loads, delegating and stepping in as required
- Own, analyse and report financial data in ways that underpin best practice and develop cost reduction strategies as appropriate
- Deputise for the RFD as required

Other

- Carry out other reasonable tasks as directed by the Regional Finance Director
- Actively promote the safety and welfare of our children and young people
- Ensure compliance with Arks data protection rules and procedures
- Liaise with colleagues and external contacts at all levels of seniority with confidence, tact and diplomacy

This job description is not an exhaustive list and you will be expected to carry out any other reasonable tasks as directed by your line manager.

Person Specification: Senior Finance Manager

Qualification Criteria

- Right to work in the UK
- Qualified AAT or part-qualified accountant (ACCA or CIMA)

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

- Experience of running effective administrative and financial systems, ideally within a school environment
- Experience of working across a number of financial institutions or multiple projects, managing conflicting priorities
- High level of proficiency with Microsoft Office
- Experience using financial databases and confidence and interest in learning new technologies
- Demonstrable finance management skills, including managing through others to deliver - effectively motivating and engaging team members
- Ability to analyse and interpret complex information and prepare and deliver briefings and or presentations
- Experience of providing ad hoc financial analysis to support decision making
- Experience in managing and negotiating contracts, tenders and agreements
- Understanding of relevant legislation, policies and procedures and the ability to apply this understanding to real situations
- Professional integrity and resilience, being resourceful and solution-oriented
- Knowledge and understanding of the education sector, desirable

Personal Characteristics

- Genuine passion for and a belief in the potential, and right to access an excellent education regardless of background, of every student
- A robust awareness of keeping children safe, noticing safeguarding and welfare concerns and understanding how and when to take appropriate action
- Strong organisational and time-management skills and the ability to delegate appropriately
- Ability to skilfully manage and maintain effective working relationships with school principals and budget holders, governors and other stakeholders
- Works productively in a high pressure environment, keeping calm and professional under pressure
- High standards and a keen eye for detail
- Keen to learn and further develop own skills
- Exercises sound judgment, especially relating to confidentiality and discretion
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Detailed orientated and with a flexible attitude to work, being able to multi task and meet deadlines
- A team player who can work collaboratively as well as using own initiative

Other

- Commitment to equality of opportunity and the safeguarding and welfare of all students
- Willingness to undertake training
- This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check

Ark is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in our academies. In order to meet this responsibility, we follow a rigorous selection process. This process is outlined [here](#) but can be provided in more detail if requested. All successful candidates will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check.