

Senior Financial Controller

Department: Finance

Location: Fully site based at Little Dean's Yard, London SW1P 3PF

Some hybrid working can be considered following the successful completion of the probationary period, but with the expectation that the majority of the time will be on site during term time.

Reports to: Finance Bursar

Line Management responsibility for: The team responsible for Billings, Purchase to Pay, Cash Collection and management of bank accounts.

Employee benefits:

- **25 days holidays plus discretionary Christmas closure**
- **Free school lunches when on site**
- **Generous pension**
- **Membership of private health scheme (opt-in)**
- **Use of onsite gym (restricted hours)**
- **Cycle to work scheme**
- **Season ticket loan and tickets for school concerts, performances, and other activities**

We also offer fee remission for pupils who are awarded a place at the schools through the admission process.

Summary

The Senior Financial Controller will be responsible for leading the finance team and managing the day-to-day financial operations for the School and associated charities and companies. This includes month end and year end processes and management of the sales, purchase and general ledgers, bank accounts, expenses system and fixed asset register. They will also be responsible for maintaining a strong control environment, ensuring the accuracy of the Trial Balance and providing a responsive and customer facing transaction processing service.

Key responsibilities for this role will include:

- Owning the month end and year-end financial accounting processes to deliver accurate and timely trial balance to support the production of monthly Management Accounts.
- Support the year end process to deliver a clean audit and accurate and timely Annual Accounts.
- Responsible for the accuracy and timeliness of the Purchase requisition to Invoice Payment process, fee and extras billings including for fundraising and commercial activity, and collection of income.

They will be responsible for leadership and development of the team to effectively embed the recently implemented iFinance system. They will drive continuous improvement in financial processes, ways of working and engagement with all internal and external stakeholders and customers.

Key relationships

Internal customers

- Finance Bursar
- Bursar & COO
- Finance team
- Financial Planning & Analysis Manager
- Budget holders on all transaction processing queries
- Owners of key financial inputs (e.g. Head of Payroll Pensions & Benefits, Development office for gift aid)
- School leadership teams
- Internal Audit in relation to financial accounting (when appointed)

External customers

- HMRC (Corporation Tax, VAT, MTD, Gift Aid)
- External Audit
- Banks and other advisers

Leadership and management

- Leading by example through visible and impactful line management of the finance team.
- Providing the necessary training, guidance and support for staff members to enable them to carry out their duties effectively, maintaining visibility with the team and stakeholders.
- Driving the development of the team to ensure delivery of a visibly customer focused (internal and external) ways of working.
- Acting as a technical expert on day-to-day accounting matters.
- Deputising for the Finance Bursar as required.
- Advising and engage with members of School's management teams on relevant financial matters as necessary.

Accountable for

- Leading the transactional accounting team to provide a responsive, efficient and customer facing transaction processing service. Develop and maintain relationships with internal and external stakeholders.
- Ensuring the accuracy of the Trial Balance through both ad hoc and regular forensic review of key figures and processes.
- Ensuring all balance sheet reconciliations and control accounts are completed and reconciled monthly in accordance with a month end close timetable.
- Ensuring bank accounts are reconciled monthly.
- Processing and post journals to ensure that income and expenditure is accurately and appropriately recorded.
- Working with the Payroll, Pensions and Benefits team to ensure that salaries journals are posted accurately each month.
- Owning the Chart of Accounts and ensure that it is fit for purpose.
- Ensuring compliance with Charity and other accounting regulations, including correct allocations between reserves and an accurate Fixed Asset Register.
- Supporting decision making on capital expenditure as required.

- Working with the Financial Planning & Analysis Manager to ensure that the budget is loaded into the iFinance system before the start of the financial year.
- Management of the accuracy and timeliness of the Purchase Requisition to Invoice Payment process.
- Management of the accuracy and timeliness of the billing process and collections including iSAMs ledger management (as well as iFinance).
- Responsibility for fixed asset and depreciation accounting (as well as the Fixed Asset Register).
- Managing and instigating the BACS receipts and payments processing on PTX.
- Managing and overseeing the staff expenses processing.
- Managing the credit card and debit card accounting and processes.
- Production and review of aged debtor and aged creditor reports on a monthly basis.
- Working with the Development team to ensure accurate and timely reporting and management of Gift Aid, and compliance with HMRC requirements.
- Owning the year end process to deliver a clean audit and accurate and timely Annual Accounts, including input on the final design and wording and provision of information for the Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee. Manage any audits required for any other regulatory reasons.
- Ensuring timely and accurate returns and compliance with all HMRC requirements, including VAT, Gift Aid and other taxation. Support the Head of Payroll, Pensions & Benefits as required to ensure HMRC compliance with all employment tax issues. Lead on providing other tax advice as required by the charity.
- Ensuring a professional and responsive relationship between the transactional accounting team and Internal and external Auditors and timely and accurate responses to Internal and External Audit information requests and recommendations. Ensure timely delivery of agreed internal and External Audit actions and process changes.
- Ensuring iFinance and other financial systems are able to deliver accurate numbers and strong controls through the work of the team.
- Working with the Finance Bursar to develop and maintain the department's risk register, ensuring appropriate risk mitigations are in place and reviewed regularly.
- Working with the Finance Bursar to ensure business continuity plans are in place and reviewed regularly.
- Working with the Finance Bursar to develop, embed and maintain appropriate financial policies and procedures. Ensure regular review of key processes.
- Ensuring the School's finance policies and procedures for recording financial transactions operate in accordance with statutory guidelines, Companies House and Charity Commission financial regulations and guidelines set out in the school's policy and procedures.
- Consistently looking for improvements that can be made to financial systems and processes to ensure that the school benefits from the use of new technology, products and services.
- Adopting a coaching leadership style to lead the finance team to achievement of its objectives.
- Any other duties as required.

General

In addition to the specific duties and responsibilities outlined in this job description, all Westminster employees should be aware of their specific responsibilities towards the following:

- Adhere to all Safeguarding, health and safety and fire regulations and to co-operate with the Charity in maintaining good standards of safeguarding and health and safety.
- Adherence to, understanding of and commitment to the Charity's ethos, values, vision and expectations

- Uphold ethical and professional standards and not behave in a manner that is likely to bring the Charity into disrepute.
- Promote and sustain a responsible attitude towards equality, diversity and inclusion within the Charity.
- Demonstrate a commitment to ongoing registration requirements or any national professional or occupational standards associated with the role.
- Demonstrate a commitment to ongoing learning and development and to participate in any training relevant to the role.

	Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications/Professional Development	Formal education to at least A-Level (or equivalent)	Yes	
	Degree level (or equivalent) in any discipline		Yes
	Recognised accountancy qualification i.e. ACA; CIMA; ACCA; CIPFA (or equivalent)	Yes	
	Evidence of continuing professional development	Yes	
Knowledge/Experience	Experience of working in a comparative role	Yes	
	Extensive financial accounting and tax experience in roles within a medium/large sized finance function	Yes	
	The management and leadership of a team of staff	Yes	
	Working with and supporting / interacting with senior management teams	Yes	
	Knowledge of Gift Aid, VAT and direct tax within the charity sector or demonstration of the ability to acquire new knowledge in this area	Yes	
	Knowledge of charity finance (SORP for charities)		Yes
	Experience of working with finance systems, specifically iFinance/iSAMs		Yes
	Experience of working in an educational setting		Yes
	An understanding of safeguarding	Yes	
	An understanding of, and commitment to, the School's Equal Opportunities policies and a willingness to promote equality of opportunity an all aspects of the work	Yes	
Skills and abilities	Customer focused, with the ability to see issues from a stakeholder's perspective	Yes	

	Ability to communicate financial information clearly and effectively to non-financial stakeholders	Yes	
	Ability to understand complex processes and implement improvements	Yes	
	Attention to detail and high level of accuracy	Yes	
	Lead on the implementation and development of new ways of working across a finance team	Yes	
	Lead and coaching a diverse team to success	Yes	
	Excellent communication skills both written and verbal	Yes	
	Proficiency in working with different software applications, including the Microsoft Office suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)	Yes	