

## Job Profile comprising Job Description and Person Specification

### Job Description

<b>Job Title:</b> Finance Officer – Education	<b>Grade:</b> PO1
<b>Section:</b> Schools Finance Team	<b>Directorate:</b> Education and Social Services
<b>Responsible to:</b> Assistant Finance Business Partner for Education	<b>Responsible for:</b> N/A
<b>Post Numbers:</b>	<b>Date:</b> August 2022

#### Working for the Richmond/ Wandsworth Shared Staffing Arrangement

This role is employed under the Shared Staffing Arrangement between Richmond and Wandsworth Borough Councils. The overall purpose of the Shared Staffing Arrangement is to provide the highest quality of service at the lowest attainable cost.

Staff are expected to deliver high quality and responsive services wherever they are based, as well as having the ability to adapt to sometimes differing processes and expectations.

The Shared Staffing Arrangement aims to be at the forefront of innovation in local government and the organisation will invest in your development and ensure the opportunities for progression that only a large organisation can provide.

#### Job Purpose:

1. The postholder will have strong skills in Excel and experience in data analysis and financial reporting,
2. The postholder will critically assess data to ensure accuracy. The role requires an inquisitive nature and an ability to question data and challenge both schools and colleagues to gain understanding and ensure the funding granted to schools is correct.
3. The postholder must contribute to the monthly budget forecasting process, ensuring forecasts are as robust and accurate as possible.
4. To work as part of a team to keep the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) individual school allocations up to date, particularly but not limited to the High Needs Block top-up payments and recoument and Early Years Block.

5. To liaise with schools and placement boroughs to ensure data is up to date so accurate payments are made to schools and recoupment for high needs costs is effective. To make payments using the schools' allocation data. To recover any overpaid funds from schools and to invoice for all out-of-borough placements operated as a trading account with special school. To challenge the payment requests from schools and ensure the correct funding supports the children and young people in Wandsworth.
6. The core tasks of this role include working as a team to monitor and maintain complex pupil data, upload payment journals into the accounting system and post budget changes. This includes being able to proactively identify data needs in relation to missing, incomplete or inaccurate data, and liaise with the relevant schools to resolve and make accurate data entry to the team database/spreadsheets, schedules, and make accurate and timely payments.

### **Customer Management**

- To work closely with the Senior Managers within the Directorate so that they are fully informed of the financial position and risks for their services and take the necessary actions to stay within budget.
- To work closely with school professionals on SEN funding queries to ensure that schools are correctly funded for the children and young people they teach.
- To maintain and further develop effective internal and external working relationships with key stakeholders within the council and schools, parents, and other suppliers to ensure the service has the knowledge and expertise to continuously improve its financial performance.

### **Specific Duties and Responsibilities:**

- Ensure that budget managers are provided with high quality financial advice and direction on financial strategies, policy, standards and practices, enabling service Directorates to make timely and well-informed strategic and operational decisions in the knowledge of the impact those decisions will have financially on the Council
- Understand the business of the Special Educational Needs service and the customer's needs and provide a finance service that adds value, and to assist in the development of structure, systems and policies to support service delivery
- To be responsible for maintaining and monitoring complex pupil data in the Special Education Needs (SEN) Placements Database by analysing, challenging and entering accurate and up to date pupil data provided by the Special Needs Assessment (SNAS) Team and schools.

- To be responsible for regularly issuing schedules to schools and local authorities containing lists of SEN pupil details and the relevant annual funding using macro enabled spreadsheets.
- To liaise with schools and other local authorities to agree pupils' details in respect of out-borough pupils in Wandsworth schools, including special schools.
- To be responsible for processing timely payments via BACS or budget virements to schools from the up-to-date information in the placements database.
- To assist with calculations of the top up rates applicable for placements in Wandsworth's special schools, special units, and bases. To calculate amounts payable by other local authorities and be responsible for raising invoices for top-up charges owing.
- To be responsible for pursuing high needs top-up charge debts. To ensure income is maximised and invoiced for in a timely and accurate way, with effective monitoring and recovery processes in place and being followed.
- To produce and present detailed aged debt reports on a regular basis.
- To analyse SEN data and provide budgetary/statistical information to senior management.
- To produce high quality and well-presented financial analysis and management information to Senior Management Team as required. Experience in translating data to inform strategic decisions is required.
- To work professionally and collaboratively with schools, the SNAS team, and colleagues, maintaining a close working relationship and effective communication channels.
- To maintain and abide by the payment schedule to schools of Early Years (EY) funding as directed by the Early Years Block of DSG income.
- Liaise with the EY team to support EY funding and accuracy of data and census information and returns to the DfE.
- To assist with forecasting and reconciling EY funding streams on a regular basis.
- To produce, summarise and analyse Early Years and High Needs income, expenditure, KPIs and trends.
- To investigate and respond to enquiries from both internal and external stakeholders and correspondents, including complaints and Freedom of Information requests related to areas of responsibility.

- To reconcile monthly expenditure using the councils accounting system, identifies any variances, and apply corrective action promptly.
- To ensure that all Free School Meal (FSM) eligible families across the borough receive FSM payment during school breaks.
- To use Wandsworth official channels of communication to publish updates with key FSM details.
- To record, analyse and produce reports to Senior Management Team with key FSM figures.
- To create new and maintain existing providers' details using Wandsworth accounting platform/ raise POs/pay invoices.
- The post holder will be responsible for identifying financial issues within the service Directorate that require attention and seek resolutions to areas of financial concern to ensure expenditure and income is contained within the Budget.
- Carry out additional ad-hoc requests as required by the finance teams to ensure a quality service is delivered.

### **Continuos Improvement**

- To support the Finance Business Partner and Assistant Finance Business Partner in the provision of financial input to the transformational agenda across the Council.
- Support the implementation of improvement initiatives and change programmes using the Council's Project Management and Service Improvement methodologies.
- To contribute to corporate areas of activity, organisational development and council-wide, cross-departmental strategies, projects, or policies, as required from time to time.

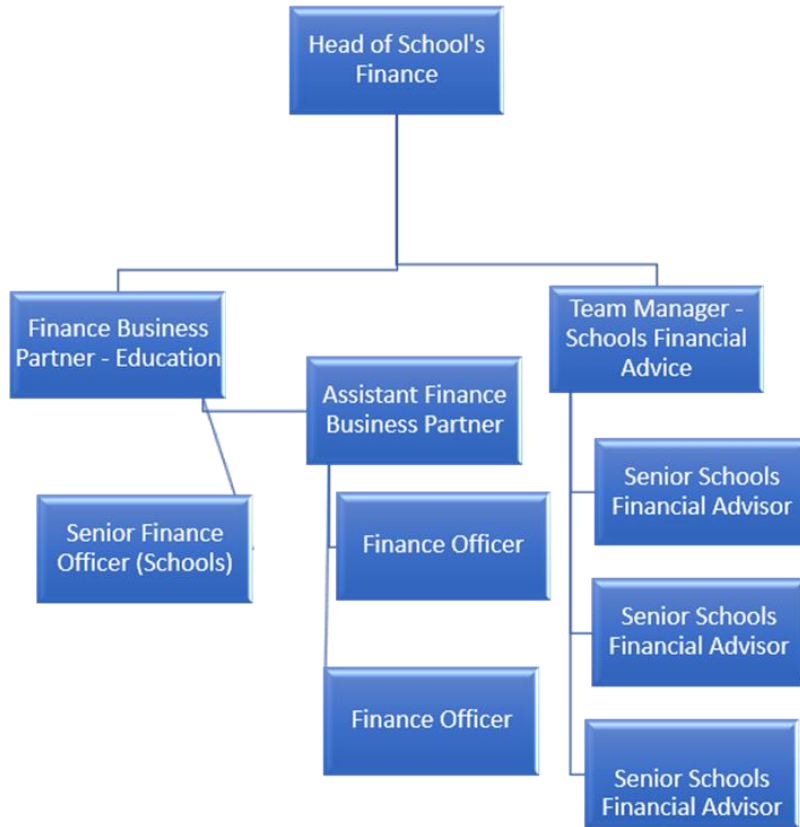
### **Contacts**

- Primary contact will be with other officers within the Council with financial or budget holding responsibilities and service users / residents and their representative bodies.
- To develop and promote internal and external partnerships that reflect the Council's commitment to work in active partnership with the community, so that coherent and value for money services are provided.
- To be aware of and assist in managing effective cross-Directorate working relationships, while maintaining professional integrity and without compromising good financial and accounting practice.

## Generic Duties and Responsibilities

- To be aware of and assist in managing effective cross-Directorate working relationships, while maintaining professional integrity and without compromising good financial and accounting practice.
- Complete other reasonable tasks to fulfil role purpose or as instructed by management.
- To contribute to the continuous improvement of the services of the Boroughs of Wandsworth and Richmond.
- To comply with relevant Codes of Practice, including the Code of Conduct and policies concerning Data Protection and Health and Safety.
- To adhere to security controls and requirements as mandated by the SSA's policies, procedures, and local risk assessments to maintain confidentiality, integrity, availability and legal compliance of information and systems.
- To promote equality, diversity, and inclusion, maintaining an awareness of the equality and diversity protocol/ policy and working to create and maintain a safe, supportive, and welcoming environment where all people are treated with dignity and their identity and culture are valued and respected.
- To understand both Councils duties and responsibilities for safeguarding children, young people, and adults as they apply to the role within the council.
- The Shared Staffing Arrangement will keep its structures under continual review and as a result the post holder should expect to carry out any other reasonable duties within the overall function, commensurate with the level of the post.

**Current team structure**



## Person Specification

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### Our Values and Behaviours

The values and behaviours we seek from our staff draw on the high standards of the two boroughs, and we prize these qualities in particular:

**Being open.** This means we share our views openly, honestly and in a thoughtful way. We encourage new ideas and ways of doing things. We appreciate and listen to feedback from each other.

**Being supportive.** This means we drive the success of the organisation by making sure that our colleagues are successful. We encourage others and take account of the challenges they face. We help each other to do our jobs.

**Being positive.** Being positive and helpful means, we keep our goals in mind and look for ways to achieve them. We listen constructively and help others see opportunities and the way forward. We have a ‘can do’ attitude and are continuously looking for ways to help each other improve

Person Specification Requirements	Assessed by A & I/ T/ C (see below for explanation)
<b>Knowledge</b>	
Knowledge of accounting principles and practices necessary to provide financial control and direction	A/ I
Strong analytical and technical skills and the ability to clearly present financial information in a manner appropriate to the recipients of the information.	A/ I

<b>Person Specification Requirements</b>	<b>Assessed by A &amp; I/ T/ C (see below for explanation)</b>
Knowledge and understanding of the Council's core objectives, and an understanding of the legislative frameworks and key issues relevant to local government financial management generally.	A/ I
Ability to extract and manipulate relevant financial data from the core financial information systems with advanced Microsoft Office skills	A/ I
Strong interpersonal skills including the ability to communicate with Budget Managers	A/ I
Ability to provide constructive challenge and to exert influence	A/ I
<b>Experience</b>	
Experience as a finance professional in a large and complex public sector organisation and an understanding of the annual financial cycle and regime within local authorities	A/ I
Evidence of developing financial strategies and project work in an operational finance setting and across service boundaries	A/ I
Experience of designing complex spreadsheets and using them as models for decision making	A/ T
Experience of building partnerships and working effectively with a range of internal and external stakeholders	A/ I
Ability to effectively and proactively organise and prioritise own workload, within defined requirements for the role	A/ I
<b>Skills</b>	
Significant experience of using standard IT packages (MS Office) and have ability to train and support others in their effective day-to-day use	A/ T
Excellent level of communication skills e.g., oral, and written skills to provide clear and concise messages, financial advice, and financial reports	A/ T
Ability to simplify complex financial issues and present them in a manner that the recipient understands, and in a relevant format with the right level of information	A/ I
<b>Qualifications</b>	
Part-qualified Accountant - CIPFA, ACA, ACCA, CIMA or equivalent experience	A/ C

**A – Application form / CV**

**I – Interview**

**T – Test**

**C – Certificate**