

Job Profile comprising Job Description and Person Specification

Job Description

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| Job Title: Head of Schools Finance | Grade: MG3 |
| Section: Children's Services Finance | Directorate: Children's Services |
| Responsible to following manager: Assistant Director – Business and Resources | Responsible for following staff: Finance Business Partner – Education and Team Manager – Schools Financial Advice |
| Post Number/s: RWA1013 | Last review date: January 2019 |

Working for the Richmond/ Wandsworth Shared Staffing Arrangement

This role is employed under the Shared Staffing Arrangement between Richmond and Wandsworth 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 the development of its staff and ensure the opportunities for progression that only a large organisation can provide.

Job Purpose:

Responsible to the Assistant Director – Business and Recourse for the provision of school and special educational needs budgets, school financial systems, financial advice to schools and monitoring to ensure compliance with all Council and statutory requirements.

Provides the department, the Wandsworth Schools Forum, school headteachers and governors, with timely, relevant and reliable strategic and operational advice on all school and special educational needs financial related matters, ensuring that decisions can be made in the light of an appreciation of the needs of the local area and the statutory requirements. In particular, the role is responsible for school and special educational needs budgets, including the analysis and modelling of the financial implications of service, policy and legislative developments and changes.

Oversees the financial management of the financial cycle of school and special educational needs budget calculation, annual review and consultation on changes, in year allocations

and monitoring and the preparation of financial records for the formal closure of the accounts in relation to schools, in accordance with all relevant policies, procedures, professional standards and legislative requirements. Including the effective maintenance and updating of all school financial policies and procedures.

The individual will also be working closely with the central Financial Control Team, central Finance, internal and external audit as well as service managers.

Specific Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Responsible for managing the Wandsworth Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) within the funding envelope. This includes preparing for and managing the Local Authorities duties to the Wandsworth Schools Forum i.e. writing Schools Forum papers, presenting the papers and providing technical insight to Schools Forum.
2. Responsible for managing and delivering any recovery plans if any overspends occur within the Wandsworth DSG.
3. Maintain an up to date knowledge of legislation and current practice in the field of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding and advises the Directorate, Councillors, other Officers and Heads of educational establishments accordingly. Understands, interprets and responds to Department for Education (DFE) funding consultations.
4. To take a proactive approach to relevant changes in legislation, recommending revised procedures and practices and managing the implementation of those revisions.
5. To provide operational and motivational leadership of staff, providing a visible presence to the workforce and promoting a good working environment with the primary aim of delivering high quality services. Providing supervision, appraisal, training and development of all the posts within the Schools Finance Team.
6. Responsible as the Budget Holder for a number of central budgets such as Schools Contingency, recoupment income and expenditure, Education Funding Agency (EFA) and Dedicated Schools Grant Income and Schools Finance teams as appropriate.
7. Represents the Department with external agencies, school governors and headteachers and stakeholders on school and Special Educational Needs (SEN) financial matters, negotiates and liaises with Government departments (including the Department for Education (DfE) and EFA), other Local Authorities and external bodies. Meets individually with Chairs of Governors and Heads to discuss school budget planning issues.
8. Manages and oversees the Financial Advisory Service Trading Account for schools working to deliver a customer focused, value for money, innovative service that delivers on school and Council priorities while balancing its budget.

9. Responsible for the review, development and setting up of all school related financial information systems required by revised statutory requirements. Ensures the schools accounting systems provide adequate information to permit the timely and accurate inclusion of schools' expenditure in the Council's accounts, submission of school related grant claims.
10. Responsible for ensuring the Council's Scheme for Financing Schools reflects the Council's priorities and conforms to current legislation. Advises senior management and Councillors on the impact of such changes. Carries out consultation with the Schools Forum, Governors and Heads, on any proposed changes to the Council's Scheme for Financing Schools.
11. Is responsible for the calculation and notification of the annual school budgets. Produces the Statutory Section 251 schools block, Early Needs and High Needs budgets for consultation with the Schools Forum.
12. Manages the Fair Funding Allocation Formula (Local Funding Formula) for calculating schools' budgets, monitoring and reviewing all areas of the Formula annually. Undertakes the consultation process with the Schools Forum, headteachers and governors. Prepares related committee reports.
13. Responsible for ensuring schools conform with the Council requirements on monitoring their delegated budgets, including the production of budget plans and forecasts. Monitors schools budget forecasts and recommends action to address major under and overspends.
14. Responsible for the training of new Headteachers on financial management and their responsibilities.
15. Financial member of School Task Groups and Interim Executive Boards for Schools Causing Concern and those with limited or no Internal Audit assurance.
16. Consults with Schools Forum on statutory issues.
17. Is responsible for the monitoring and verifying of grant claims from Private, Voluntary and Independent Nurseries, authorising payments and ensuring that queries from parents and Nurseries are dealt with promptly.
18. Contributes to major cross-departmental and Council wide working parties and groups as required.
19. Responsible for ensuring adequate systems for checking recoupment claims and in particular for the Council obtaining its full entitlement to recoupment income.
20. Responds to internal and external audit reports where appropriate, ensuring the necessary responses and remedial action plans are in place and producing procedural and system reviews.

21. To ensure all Member queries about service delivery are dealt with promptly and effectively.
22. To advise and support senior managers on relevant service and operational matters, including financial modelling and options for service reviews and change programmes.
23. To effectively support departmental budget holders in the management of their budgets, including ensuring that all necessary processes, controls and procedures are carried out in a timely and effective way.
24. To assist with and as required lead change programmes within own service areas/teams.
25. To ensure that financial information and systems needed for service commissioning, market testing and contract management processes are in place and operating to all required standards.
26. To contribute towards the development of good working relations and collaborative arrangements with relevant organisations, including private, voluntary and other public organisations, to forge effective partnership working.
27. Responsible to Assistant Director – Business and Resources for providing comprehensive professional financial management services across within the Schools Finance remit, directly and through the management of the schools finance teams, and for maintaining, monitoring and reporting on the service budget accurately and to set deadlines.
28. Maintains a continuous programme of monitoring the financial performance of the schools and the schools finance service and areas of budget responsibility, proactively identifying and resolving issues and problems that arise and working using own knowledge and initiative to take appropriate corrective action, including supporting budget managers in their decision making.
29. Oversees preparation and effective completion of relevant monthly departmental forecast and budget plans, ensuring that individual forecasts are comprehensive, sound and consistent with accounting principles. Produces meaningful forecast reports, including detailed variance analysis reports each month.
30. Responsible for the High Needs data that drives High Needs funding to schools is maintained and schools are correctly funded for those pupils on roll with an Education, Health and Care Plan. This include reviewing the data within the SEN Placement Model / Database for accuracy.

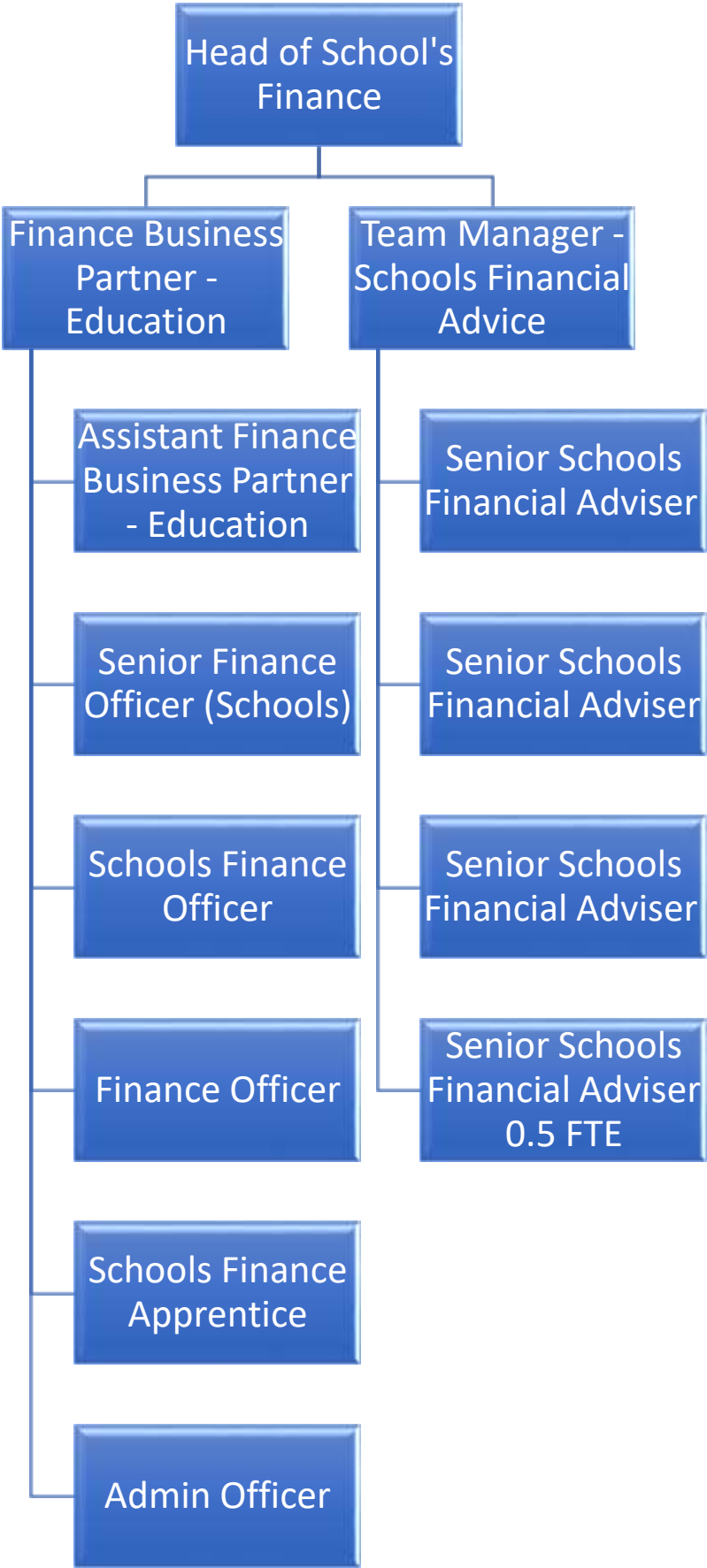
31. Responsible for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budgets in the accounting system match the expected funding that Wandsworth will receive in the year. Ensure required budget virements are completed where necessary.
32. Responsible for monitoring the income and expenditure within the DSG on a monthly basis. Ensuring that DSG payments and budget virements have been posted correctly and to the correct codes.
33. Responsible for year-end accounting procedures and processes, ensuring that all income and expenditure is accounted for in line with the relevant accounting regulations within the required deadlines, so ensuring accurate closing of the departmental accounts/budgets, and the production of detailed, accurate and timely working papers in preparation for the external audit.

Generic Duties and Responsibilities:

- 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.

Additional Information

Current Structure:



Person Specification

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Our Values and Behaviours¹

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:

- taking responsibility and being accountable for achieving the best possible outcomes across teams/services— a 'can do' attitude to work whilst able to positively manage own and staff behaviours/stress through effective decision making, communication, staff management, and work prioritisation
- continuously seeking better value for money and improved outcomes/more efficient processes across teams/services
- focussing on residents and service users, both external and internal, and ensuring they receive the highest standards of service provision
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| Person Specification Requirements | Assessed by A & I/ T/ C (see below for explanation) |
|--|--|
| Knowledge | |
| A school's funding technical expert with update knowledge of legislation and policy affecting local government finance and schools' finance. | A/ I |
| Experience | |
| Proven experience of successfully managing teams of staff during career to date, and presently managing teams, or within the last year having managed teams. | A/ I |
| Experience of delivering the Dedicated Schools Grant within the funding envelope or where applicable implementing a successful recovery plan. | A/ I |
| Recent experience of managing, undertaking and producing departmental and dedicated schools grant forecasts, including producing detailed forecast reports for budget holders and senior management. | A/ I |
| Experience of successfully generating reporting and advising to Schools Forum | A/ I |

¹ These values and behaviours will be developed further as the SSA becomes established

| Person Specification Requirements | | Assessed by A & I/ T/ C (see below for explanation) |
|--|--|--|
| Experience of sourcing, analysing and using complex data used for senior decision making | | A/ I |
| Experience of appropriately managing budgets and/ or staff resources | | A/ I |
| Skills | | |
| Ability to communicate to a high standard (excellent oral, written and presentation skills) to provide clear and concise messages in a variety of internal and external contexts | | A/ I |
| Ability to positively and effectively lead finance teams, including supporting, supervising, appraising, developing and proactively managing performance and disciplinary issues in confidence | | A/I |
| Ability to identify and resolve problems using own initiative and knowledge, working day to day with the need for minimal senior manager input | | A/I/T |
| Ability to simplify complex financial issues and present them in a manner that the recipient understands and in format required | | A/ I/T |
| Significant experience of using IT packages (MS Office) to report on and accurately analyse complex data, and ability and confidence to build and maintain complex spreadsheets using own knowledge and initiative | | A/ T |
| Ability to organise and prioritise own and team workloads, to work under pressure and meet deadlines | | A/ I |
| Qualifications | | |
| Fully qualified accountant or qualified by experience. | | C |

A – Application form**I – Interview****T – Test****C - Certificate**