



PINEWOOD

Est. 1875

JOB DESCRIPTION

School Accountant

Reports to: The Bursar

Purpose of Role: The School Accountant oversees financial management, control and reporting for the School. The role of School Accountant is key to achieving improved performance and providing Governors, Headmaster and the Bursar with financial information to support good business decision-making.

Main Tasks

Financial Planning/Control and Management Reporting

- Ensure that the Finance function offers a high quality and accessible service which is prompt, courteous, accurate and complete.
- To provide the Bursar with appropriate financial information, advice and assistance to support the decision-making process.
- Maintain the School's accounting records, fees ledger, creditors ledger and nominal ledger accurately and in accordance with agreed timescales and procedures.
- In conjunction with the Bursar prepare annual budgets and termly forecasts, monitoring performance and reporting budget progress to budget holders.
- Prepare full year forecast and termly management accounts including variance reports.
- Attend termly Finance & General Purposes committee and other Governor meetings as required and deliver written reports.
- In conjunction with the Bursar, control the treasury management function in order to ensure the most efficient and secure deployment of the School's cash and minimise banking and interest charges.
- In conjunction with the Bursar, advise on current and future financial issues and projects including feasibility appraisals, preparation of business cases and funding options.

Pay Roll & Pension

- Arrange for the accurate preparation and payment of all salaries, wages and pension contributions and other deductions on time, including PAYE and NI contributions.
- Advise the Bursar on compliance with regulations for benefits in kind.

- Ensure that P60s and P11Ds are prepared and issued and that PAYE and NIC returns are complied with.
- Administer the pension schemes for all staff maintaining records and sending periodic returns as required.

School Fee Invoicing & Billing

- Produce termly fee invoices and respond to invoice queries.
- Receipt and reconciliation of fee payments.
- Credit control including 1st and 2nd reminder letters, all minor credit letters and management of late-payers spreadsheet.
- Raise leavers' cheques/BACS payments where appropriate.
- Raise cheques for shop second-hand sales for families no longer at the School.
- Process childcare voucher receipts and respond to parent queries.
- Prepare returns and arrange any payments to third parties collected through fees.

Operational

- Prepare payments by BACs and cheques and manage records.
- Line manage the Finance and Systems Administrator.
- Conduct and agree monthly bank and control account reconciliations and account for petty cash.
- Ensure the timely banking of cheques.
- Maintain the fixed asset register.
- Manage Gift Aid process.
- Ensure the School's relationship with third parties such as HMRC, the Bank, the accountants and auditors is responsive and professional.
- Advise and implement new financial initiatives as required.

Statutory Reporting, Returns & Audit

- Prepare the school accounts for audit, including statements of Financial Activity (SOFA) and Balance Sheets in accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP).
- Complete all returns as required by HMRC, pension providers etc.
- Manage the audit process ensuring that the auditors have the information in a timely and effective manner.

Technical Standards and Control

- Keep up to date with financial matters within the independent education and charity fields and specifically the reporting requirements for Charities (SORP).
- Keep the accounting and reporting systems under constant review, including the software, ensuring that they are effective and efficient.
- Monitor the operation of financial controls through internal audit and recommend to the Bursar further controls as appropriate to safeguard the School's funds and other assets.

Safeguarding of Children

- All staff are responsible for the safeguarding and wellbeing of children in line with the School's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy.

Qualifications, skills and experience

Essential competencies:

- Qualified Accountant (CIMA, ACCA or ACA) or part qualified with relevant experience.
- Proven experience in financial reporting and in the preparation of management accounts, forecasts and statutory accounts.
- Experience of practical accounting, bookkeeping and payroll in a similar role.
- Ability to understand, interpret and communicate financial data at all levels of an organisation.
- Sound knowledge of accounting standards.
- Excellent Microsoft skills – Excel, Word and Outlook essential.
- Confident in using Information Management Systems and able to learn new systems and processes quickly.
- Excellent time management, prioritisation and organisational skills.
- Excellent attention to detail.
- Maintain strict confidentiality where appropriate.
- Strong interpersonal skills with a clear focus on customer service.

Desirable competencies:

- Previous experience of working within School Finance, Charitable Sector or Not for Profit organisation.
- Understanding of the Independent School sector.
- Previous experience of WCBS PASS finance and / or Sage accounting packages.

Conditions of Service

- Hours of work: 37.5 hours per week excluding breaks which are unpaid, split across Monday to Friday within the core hours of 8am to 6pm. There is also flexibility to work this role on a part-time, reduced hours basis including working reduced hours / weeks during the school holidays.
- Salary up to £55,000 per annum for contracted hours depending upon qualifications and experience.
- Holiday entitlement of 25 days paid holiday plus bank holidays to be taken at a time agreed by the Bursar in light of the operational requirements.
- Membership of the School's Support Staff Contributory Pension Scheme.

Employee Benefits include:

- Free coffee, tea, fruit and snacks during the working day during term-time.
- Free lunch as provided to the children during term-time.
- Free car parking on site.
- Employee Assistance Programme providing free advice and support to all employees on a wide range of issues.
- Well-Being Programmes and Staff Events.