

School Finance Administrator and Bookkeeper

To start as soon as possible

Sands School is looking for an experienced Finance Administrator and Bookkeeper to join the School's Administration Team. The Administration team are responsible for managing all aspects of day to day running of the school except Teaching and Learning. The new Finance Administrator would be primarily responsible for Financial Management whilst also taking on some further other areas of responsibility. Experience of financial management and accounting is essential, experience of school administration/management would also be advantageous. The role is expected to be part-time, 4 days per week, but with scope for flexibility.

About Sands School

Sands is a democratic community in which staff and students (usually with 65 to 75 on role) run the school as equal participants. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning, their own behaviour, each other and their environment. Staff are expected to relate to students and colleagues with this in mind. There is no 'senior leadership team' and no hierarchy within the staff. Decisions are made collectively by staff and students in the weekly School Meeting, unless delegated to sub-groups or members of staff.

For an introduction to the school and its philosophy please explore our website <http://www.sands-school.co.uk>

About the Administration Team at Sands

The administration of a very small school like ours combines a large number of roles which in a larger school would usually be held by several individuals specialising in each area such as Admissions, Marketing, Finance, Health and Safety, Human Resources and Exams. At Sands these are all pooled together and delivered by the admin team with the support of the School Secretary.

We are looking for a second individual to join the existing team to have specific responsibility for the school's financial management but also to share other areas of responsibility with the existing Administrator. As a collaborative rather than hierarchical team how these areas of responsibility are shared are decided by mutual agreement balancing the expertise and areas of interest within the team, whilst ensuring all areas of responsibility are covered.

All staff are accountable to the **School Meeting**. There is a standing delegation from the School Meeting for the administration team to manage the school's finances and the team gives regular financial reports to the School Governors who in turn have ultimate financial responsibility as Company Directors and Charity Trustees.

General purpose and responsibility

The admin team ensure the smooth running of the school and are responsible for all regulatory compliance other than that which is directly related to the quality of Teaching and Learning.

They have a particular role in informing the school's business strategy and, as equal individuals in a democratic school, are expected to make informed contributions to day-to-day collective decision making.

The admin team do not set the school's strategic direction and they do not have any hierarchical authority over other members of staff or over students. However their knowledge and experience means that they have a 'soft' leadership role in the school, helping the school to make timely and well-informed collective strategic decisions.

The running of any school needs a high level of competence and professionalism with the ability to manage a demanding load of regular tasks while being able to respond to day-to-day demands as they arise. At Sands this needs to be combined with the willingness to work with the whole school community in a way that supports collective decision-making and respects the voice of the School Meeting.

Responsibilities

Financial Management

You will be responsible for day-to-day bookkeeping and accounts management including:

- Managing the accounts using the school's finance management system (currently Sage)
- Managing parent accounts, fees, discounts, invoicing, payment schemes, credit control
- Paying invoices, managing budgets, recording purchases
- Managing utilities and other supplier contracts

As the primary member of staff with financial management responsibility you will be responsible for maintaining oversight of the school's finances and accounts, providing information, advice and recommendations to the staff team, School Meeting and School Governors on financial matters including:

- Preparing annual accounts
- Liaising with the school's accountants
- Preparing the school's annual budget, balancing the priorities as communicated by the school meeting with the long term financial security and strategy of the school
- Reporting on accounts and budgets to the School Meeting and School Governors
- Advising on fees and staff pay bands

- Monthly payroll
- Staff pensions

As school bursar you will also be responsible for reviewing new and existing bursary applications. Measuring a family's financial circumstances against the school's bursary policy and availability. This role involves particular sensitivity to the family's situation and strict confidentiality.

Further areas of responsibility

In addition to the financial management responsibilities, you will be expected to take on some further areas of general administration shared with the other Administrator.

These would include some (but not all) of the following:

- Human resources and staff recruitment including safer recruitment checks
- Regulatory compliance and reporting other than teaching / quality of education
- Risk management, Health & Safety, Fire, Insurance, First Aid
- Buildings, facilities and resources management
- IT infrastructure and software
- Exams administration

General administration

All members of the Administration team, supported by the School Secretary, will be expected to carry out general admin tasks to keep the school running including:

- Data management
- Handling enquiries
- Updating and filing pupil records
- Maintaining data security
- Communications (internal and external)
- Managing day-to-day organisation and supporting the teaching team
- Covering other areas of the administration team when needed

The above list is not exhaustive: running a small school encompasses a huge range of tasks, big and small, some planned and some as they arise. The role of the admin team is to make sure that everything that needs to be done is done!

Safeguarding responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of students within the

school, raising any concerns and following the school's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. New staff must familiarise themselves with the school's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and should have had or be willing to undertake Group 2 safeguarding training. They should know the name of the designated senior person with responsibility for child protection. They should understand their responsibilities in being alert to signs of abuse and referring any concerns through the appropriate channels.

Data protection

The post holder must carry out their duties and responsibilities of the job in accordance with the school's Data Protection and Sharing of Information policy and relevant Data Protection legislation. The post holder has a responsibility to familiarise themselves in sufficient detail with this policy to ensure they understand their obligations.

Person specification

General Education and Experience

1. Have a good general education probably to degree level, including a qualification in financial management or accounting.
2. Experience of financial management and bookkeeping.
3. Experience of using financial management systems, such as Sage.
4. Experience of more general business management would be advantageous.
5. Knowledge of school-specific administration and compliance is not essential but would be advantageous. Knowledge of other highly regulated environment could also be beneficial.

Key Competencies and Skills

Candidates will:

1. be positively motivated to work with children and young people. They will be able to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children. They will have the emotional resilience to work with challenging behaviour.
2. make themselves knowledgeable of the school's ethos; be prepared to accept the ethos; to take part in the system; to encourage young people to use their authority with responsibility; and implement the decisions of the School Meeting as required.
3. have the ability to develop a rapport with students and staff which reflects the democratic ethos of the school and have the 'soft skills' to work with and support students, parents and staff in a kind, patient and sensitive way and the ability to resolve difficulties
4. have exemplary written and spoken English
5. be highly proficient use of IT, including word processing, spreadsheet manipulation, and email
6. have excellent organisational and planning skills including the ability to maintain an effective balance between multiple and competing priorities

7. be a proactive and flexible team member able to work effectively with people regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity or religion
8. have problem-solving skills and the ability to think strategically
9. be able to manage their workload and time in order to carry out duties in a prompt and timely manner
10. have good attention to detail and accuracy
11. maintain confidentiality, integrity and adherence to ethical standards
12. bring good humour, energy and enthusiasm to working in this very special school

An enhanced DBS disclosure with list checks is required for this role.

Salary and Pension

Rate of pay for this role

This role is on the Sands teaching staff pay scale, which is currently £32,400 per annum, full time, (including an expected 6% pay increase in January 2023). For equivalence with teaching staff it is expected that this role will also involve 20% working time in addition to the term time (34 weeks) working days. It is expected that the majority of this will be in the form of working additional days outside of term time bringing the total weeks worked to 41. This will be organised such that outstanding administration is completed after the end of terms and preparatory work is completed prior to the start of new terms. Part-time would be pro-rata.

Sands does not offer pay progression based on time served or on experience. We are a non-hierarchical organisation so there is no element of 'seniority'. We endeavour to maintain salaries with increases in line with inflation but this is dependent on the school's financial position and is at the discretion of the governors, based on the advice of the finance team.

Pensions

Non-teaching staff will be automatically enrolled into NEST unless they have an applicable alternative pension arrangement. The current contribution rates are 3% from the employer and 4% from the employee.

Application Process

1. Interested candidates are welcome to call the school for more information / to discuss the post. This will most likely involve arranging a return phone call or Zoom.
2. Applications should be made by completing the Application Form. In the application please indicate how many days per week you would prefer to work, which of the additional areas of responsibility you see yourself taking on and when you are available to take up the post. Applications made by CV will not be accepted.

The closing date for applications is the 24th of October 2022

3. Short-listed candidates will be invited for interview with a panel including students the week beginning 7th November.