



'Achieving Extraordinary Things'

The NPAT vision is *'to achieve educational excellence, create opportunities and enrich lives'*.

In order to achieve this, our mission is to *'develop a school trust of highly effective and sustainable schools'*.

About Northampton Primary Academy Trust

The Northampton Primary Academy Trust (NPAT) is a collaboration of eleven primary schools in the Northampton area which aim to provide excellent educational provision and act as a benchmark for quality in the area. Our schools are:

Abington Vale Primary School

Rectory Farm Primary School

Blackthorn Primary School

Simon de Senlis Primary School

East Hunsbury Primary School

Thorplands Primary School

Ecton Brook Primary School

Upton Meadows Primary School

Headlands Primary School

Weston Favell Primary School

Lings Primary School

With responsibility for approximately 4500 children across Northampton, NPAT is driven by a vision of innovation, high aspiration and achievement, and a commitment to sport and the arts. This approach is encapsulated in our motto:

'Achieving Extraordinary Things'

NPAT schools all share our common vision and are committed to agreed principles and educational strategies whilst retaining the agency to develop their own identity and character. The partnership is built on the principle of synergy; that a collaboration of vibrant and successful schools can collectively achieve more than a single school could achieve alone.

We aspire to ensure that our children make excellent educational progress so that they can leave our schools at least in line with their peers nationally, with the expectation that they can go on to secondary school in a position to keep up with the learning there and go on to achieve at least nationally expected outcomes at GCSE and beyond.

NPAT Chief Finance Officer

Northampton Primary Academy Trust Partnership is a growing multi-academy trust responsible for 11 schools across Northamptonshire. The schools are united by their commitment to the principles of the Trust and a common belief in the benefits of working collaboratively. We have a strong focus on 'achieving extraordinary things' and are committed to the development of every individual that works within our Trust.

We are entering an exciting phase in our development as a trust, and part of our growth plan involves the development and evolution of the operational and financial aspects of the Trust. The role of Chief Finance Officer (CFO) will be crucial to the Trust's evolution and offers considerable scope for the post holder to play a key role in developing and delivering the Trust's strategy, driving performance improvement and contributing to the successful implementation of our planned growth.

The opportunity

The Board is seeking to recruit a full time Chief Finance Officer who will provide the strategic leadership and operational management on all financial aspects of the group's operations.

The CFO will lead the group's financial planning; developing a scalable and sustainable financial strategy and ensuring an on-going focus on delivering robust and effective financial operations across the Trust. The CFO will report directly to the Chief Executive Officer and be a member of the Trust executive leadership team.

The CFO will lead on all matters relating to finance at all levels, working with those in the central team, and existing and future schools to deliver successful outcomes. The CFO will work closely with the CEO and Head of Operations & Compliance (HOC) to support the NPAT growth ambitions and support schools to achieve the NPAT mission to become a school trust of highly effective and sustainable schools.

Role Summary

Key responsibilities and accountabilities

- Ensure robust forward financial planning, financial sustainability developments, business planning, policy development and implementation, financial forecasting and strategic decision making.
- To develop and embed sustainable and effective financial strategy for all Trust activities, and to establish and implement NPAT financial principles for the Trust.
- To provide high quality strategic financial planning to ensure the MAT makes best possible use of its resources and is able to provide the best outcomes for its pupils.
- To work closely with the Financial Controller to provide support, guidance and challenge.
- To work with the Financial Controller to ensure that all financial policies and procedures are fully compliant with Academies Trust Handbook 2021, ESFA guidance and expectations.
- To lead opportunities for generating income including trading company requirements, investments and reserves optimisation and leading bid and grant applications.
- To lead opportunities to reduce expenditure including review and consolidation of Trust contracts in collaboration with the HOC.
- To lead on financial fraud risks and ensure that policies and procedures mitigate where possible.

Strategic Role

- To provide strategic vision, direction and leadership across all financial functions of the Trust, working in collaboration with the Financial Controller, executive team and schools.
- Undertaking the role of Chief Financial Officer for NPAT.
- Lead on financial aspects of any strategic projects.
- To develop a Trust Finance strategy and development Plan.
- Contribute to the overall marketing strategy for the trust.
- Leading on the development and implementation of Trust Finance Policies and Procedures ensuring compliance with all relevant statutory requirements.
- Ensuring compliance with all relevant employment law.
- Providing appropriate advice and guidance to allow the Trust to understand and enter into contracts for services that are compliant with all requirements.
- Overseeing all financial contracts for the Trust.
- Advising the Trust Trustees on financial requirements, and produce such response and information as required.
- To ensure all statutory reporting on behalf of the Trust is accurate and timely.
- To ensure the Trust complies with wider statutory requirements such as Safeguarding, Data Protection and the Freedom of Information Act.
- To identify potential sources of income and maximise income through reserves and investment optimisation, trading company development etc.
- Attendance at all Trust Members, Board & relevant committee meetings.

Finance Role

- To develop and oversee all financial policies and procedures to ensure compliance with the Academies Trust Handbook and Statement of Recommended Practices (SORP) of the Charities Commission.
- To ensure land and buildings valuations are accurate, up to date and reviewed appropriately.
- To work closely with the HOC, Trust Financial Controller, Headteachers, School Business Managers within NPAT to ensure all finance policies and procedures are followed effectively.
- To ensure appropriate internal scrutiny and external audit processes are carried out for the Trust and all schools within it. To ensure implementation of recommendations from Internal Scrutiny or External Audit Reports.
- To ensure any tax obligations are discharged correctly and effectively.
- To ensure that all schools are fully prepared to meet OFSTED financial criteria.
- To oversee the financial resources, including budgeting, budget modelling and maintenance of financial probity.
- To ensure that 'Best Value' principles are applied to all appropriate purchasing decisions.
- To ensure the trust complies with all financial standards, regulation and procedures, liaising with stakeholders as required. To prepare and present all financial and development plans for the trust to the Board of Trustees.
- To be responsible for the accurate preparation and on time submission of financial returns to the EFSA and other regulatory bodies.
- To be responsible for financial benchmarking against similar trusts and make recommendations for improvement.
- To lead the work of the finance and administration staff so that an administrative and financial service is provided for the Trust.
- To ensure that there is scrupulous financial probity, and that audit recommendations and the financial requirements of the EFSA's delegation of powers are implemented.
- Lead on income generation for the Trust, including identifying opportunities for the trust to bid for funds and grants, contributing to and leading bids as appropriate.

General

To action as Company Secretary and ensure sound governance across the Trust

- To work in collaboration and consultation with the NPAT Trustees, CEO, HOC, Financial Controller, Head Teachers and, where appropriate, School Business Managers.
- To develop effective relationships with all relevant stakeholders.
- Any other duties required that are commensurate with the grading of the post.
- Promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young persons you may come into contact with.
- Be aware of and comply with policies and procedures relating to child protection, health, safety and security, confidentiality and data protection, reporting all concerns to an appropriate person.
- Be aware of, support and ensure equal opportunities for all.
- Contribute to the overall ethos/work/aims of the Trust.
- Appreciate and support the role of other professionals.
- Attend and participate in relevant meetings as required.
- Participate in training and other learning activities and performance development as required.

Safeguarding

Northampton Primary Academy Trust Partnership is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and preventing extremism. In order to meet this responsibility, our schools follow a rigorous selection process to discourage and screen out unsuitable applicants.

Disclosure: NPAT requires all employees to undertake an enhanced DBS check. You are required, before appointment, to disclose any unspent conviction, cautions, reprimands or warnings under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. Non-disclosure may lead to termination of employment. However, disclosure of a criminal background will not necessarily debar you from employment - this will depend upon the nature of the offence(s) and when they occurred.

Shortlisting: Only those candidates meeting the right criteria will be taken forward from application.

Reference checking: As appropriate, references from your previous and current employer will be taken up prior to appointment. Where necessary other previous employers may be contacted to gather further information.

Probation: All new staff will be subject to a probation period of up to six months (which may, in certain circumstances, be extended by up to 10 weeks). The probation period is a trial period, to enable the assessment of an employee's suitability for the job for which they have been employed. It provides the Trust with the opportunity to monitor and review the performance of new staff in relation to various areas, but also in terms of their commitment to safeguarding and relationships with pupils.

Encouraging Diversity

NPAT is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our employees. Our aim is that our workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society and that each employee feels respected and able to give their best.

To that end we are committed to provide equality and fairness for all in our recruitment and employment practices and not to discriminate on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

The content of this job description will be reviewed with the post holder on an annual basis in line with the Trust's performance and development review policy. Any significant change in level of accountability that could result in a change to the grade must be discussed with the post holder and the relevant trade union before submitting for re-evaluation.

Terms of appointment

The role will be based at the NPAT Head Office at Headlands Primary School in Northampton.

The Chief Financial Officer will report to the Chief Executive Officer and have significant interaction with the Business and Finance Committee to the Board of Trustees.

How to apply

Please enclose with your application:

- the NPAT application form and equal opportunities monitoring sheet. Applications from all groups are warmly welcomed;
- a full CV;
- a covering note of not more than 2 pages (total) summarising your proven ability related to the person and job specifications.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Professional competencies

You will be/have:

- Commercially astute and have exceptional analytical and problem-solving skills with the ability to make decisions based on accurate and appropriate analysis
- Flexible in managing, planning and executing daily, weekly, monthly workloads in a busy environment
- Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to influence and build relationships at all levels
- Committed to providing the best possible service to the staff and Trustees
- Able to maintain confidentiality
- Able to balance strategy with operations

Qualifications and previous experience

- A qualified accountant with significant post-qualification experience.
- Knowledge of and competence in all finance and accounting processes and in running a finance and accounting function.
- Experience of leading strategic and business planning processes including the ability to establish and apply performance measurement and tracking systems.
- Evidence of wide-ranging professional relationship management skills both internally of an organisation and externally with suppliers and regulatory agencies.
Experience of managing a computerised data system and handling large amounts of complex finance data (preferably Aspect)

Well-developed people management skills with the ability to lead, motivate and inspire a team, preferably across multi-site organisations, during a time of organisational change.

Evidence of being able to contribute at a strategic level beyond the finance function.

Detailed knowledge of public finances, procedures, practice and regulations (preferably ESFA and sector requirements) is desirable but not essential.

Values

- An exceptional professional with ambition and drive, who shares the Trust's values and passion for improving the lives and opportunities of children and young people

- A commitment to inclusion and enhancing the life chances of children, whatever their starting points
- A non-negotiable approach to safeguarding the wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults
- Strong leadership qualities and skills appropriate to a senior management position including the
- management, development and motivation of both teams and individuals to inspire and secure
- high performance.
- Strongly self-motivated bringing gravitas, credibility, energy, resilience, and commitment.
- High level communication skills both oral and written with and ability to act as a representative of
- the Trust in a wide range of situations, both internally and externally
- High level negotiation, influencing and enabling skills to ensure priorities are met.
- Ability to work positively with stakeholders to achieve outcomes and deliver change through
- people.
- A strong team player with a positive 'can do' attitude and the ability to work at pace and follow direction from the Trustees