

Chief Operating Officer (CFO) JOB DESCRIPTION

The Ebor Academy Trust is a multi-academy trust; the central business centre is based in York.

We are seeking a proven operationally focused leader, committed to the educational vision and values of the Ebor Academy Trust to oversee the development of corporate functions and services with particular strengths in finance and estates. The COO will work in collaboration with the Trust's CEO to sustain, develop and grow the Trust. The COO will report to the CEO and deputise for him/her as required.

MAIN PURPOSE OF JOB

The COO will take responsibility for all non-academic aspects including: Finance, HR, Estates and Facilities, ICT, Marketing and leading on projects including the expansion of the Trust.

The position will incorporate the role of Company Secretary and Chief Financial Officer (CFO) for the Trust, taking responsibility for ensuring financial compliance with statutory and legal requirements; as well as being responsible for financial management and reporting across the schools and Trust.

The Chief Operating Officer will be responsible for leading and managing all of the non-academic aspects of the Trust, with the primary purpose of supporting the achievement of outstanding educational outcomes for the Trust's students.

The primary performance criterion for the role is to secure, through providing effective and efficient operational support, the best possible educational provision in every one of the Trust's schools.

The Ebor Academy Trust currently consists of 22 (soon to be 24) schools (circa 5000 pupils), with an existing central services team. This is a diverse trust with 22 Primary schools, 1 secondary and 1 special school, including both Church of England and community schools.

Job Purpose:

- Develop optimum budgets for each Academy and combine these into an optimum budget for the Trust, including developing a strategic forward financial plan.
- Oversee financial management and reporting, ensuring the Trust makes the best possible use of available resources including income generation.
- Leadership of effective systems and processes.
- Leadership of an effective IT infrastructure for the Trust.
- Overall line management of Trust Central Services support staff.
- Responsible for ensuring effective risk management and Health and Safety compliance exists across the Trust.
- Oversight of the Human Resources and payroll functions.
- Oversight of property/premises management, maintenance and enhancement.



Chief Operating Officer/ Deputy Chief Executive PERSON SPECIFICATION

KNOWLEDGE AND QUALIFICATIONS

Essential, i.e. the postholder must have:

- Qualified Accountant (ACA, ACCA, CIMA or an MBA with a finance major).

Desirable, i.e. the postholder would ideally have:

- A first degree and business management qualification, or an advanced School Business Management qualification.

EXPERIENCE

- Experience of working at a strategic level as part of a senior management team implementing service improvement.
- Have an understanding of DfE and ESFA financial governance and statutory requirements, procedures, compliance and regulatory frameworks relating to academies (available on DfE website).
- Proven track record of effective financial management and short to medium term planning.
- A high level of commercial acumen.
- Experience of contract management and procurement activities.
- An understanding of Health and Safety legislation and its practical application in the workplace.
- Experience of leading and supporting teams through processes of cultural change and continuous improvement.
- Experience of managing projects and risks.
- Experience of leading a diverse and multi-disciplined team of professionals.

SKILLS AND PERSONAL QUALITIES

- Outstanding financial and business management expertise.
- A proven operationally focussed leader.
- Excellent communication, influencing and negotiating skills across a range of internal and external stakeholders at all levels.
- Exerts a proactive and positive approach to problem solving.
- Is confident in making and substantiating difficult or complex decisions based on clear analysis of options.
- Demonstrates the ability to think strategically to analyse complex situations, formulating and implementing plans of actions and creative solutions.
- Good analysis and risk management skills.
- Excellent leadership skills which motivate, engage, inspire and challenge colleagues.
- Has the capacity and resilience to work effectively under pressure.
- Shows confidence in presenting complex financial information to a range of audiences to inform decision making within the Trust.
- Demonstrates a clear commitment to developing knowledge and understanding of the educational context.
- Is confident in developing policies within the business areas to underpin sustainable long term financial health and demonstrate robust assurance.
- Is aware of organisational and external factors affecting funding and bid applications for the Trust.
- Commitment to team and own personal and professional development.

Key Responsibilities:

1. Contribute to the strategic direction of the Trust and the development and implementation of the Trust's development plans.
2. Identify and develop strategies and options in all non-teaching aspects that will contribute to the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the Trust, such as exploring internal synergies and opportunities for partnership working.
3. Responsible for leading and motivating the central services team and establishing robust and motivational performance management.
4. Ensure systems, processes and procedures are robust and meet the needs of the changing educational environment.
5. Develop a robust and reliable three year financial plan, taking into account DfE and relevant government guidelines and other sources of information about budget trends and local pupil demographics.
6. Continuously challenge all aspects of operational functions to adopt best practice processes secured from DofE benchmarking exercises, attendance at conferences and peer trust reviews.
7. Ensure that Trust processes and procedures are compliant with statutory and regulatory requirements.
8. Ensure that robust financial due diligence takes place on any school joining the Trust.
9. Establish a service culture within the central services team, to ensure schools both understand and receive the services they have contracted for.
10. Maximise income generation and optimise the benefit to the Trust of funding from grants and other sources, ensuring that funding is appropriately used and compliant with DfE statutory guidelines.
11. Ensure the Trust complies with the Academies Financial Handbook.
12. Prioritise, control and routinely report on the £1m+ of capital funding that the Trust receives on an annual basis.
13. Manage the assets of the Trust, ensuring that it has an appropriate asset replacement plan that is being adhered to, including buildings and IT.
14. Develop an Estates Strategy for the Trust and a 3 year Premises Maintenance and Improvement Plan including coping with any significant changes in local pupil demographics.
15. Review IT infrastructure performance and develop a 3-year IT plan.

16. Introduce central purchasing through a review of all commercial contracts for the Trust to ensure economies of scale are maximised.
17. Establish clear accountability for health and safety management across the Trust, including risk reporting to Trustees.
18. Oversee the HR function, ensuring that the HR strategy for the Trust is aligned to the Trust's strategic plans and the execution of HR management is in line with legal requirements and best practice.
19. Oversee the marketing and operations functions of the Trust, ensuring that both provide best value.
20. Represent the Trust at external meetings as required.