



WESTONBIRT
SCHOOL

FINANCIAL CONTROLLER

- CANDIDATE PACK -



WESTONBIRT SCHOOL

Located in the heart of the Cotswolds, Westonbirt School is housed in a magnificent building, formerly the home of the Holford family. It has extensive grounds, including a nine-hole golf course and is set in an area of outstanding natural beauty, situated opposite the world famous Westonbirt Arboretum with whom we have a good relationship.

The Senior School is an independent boarding and day school for pupils aged 11-18. The School also benefits from sharing the grounds with Westonbirt Prep, a growing Prep School and Nursery. The School campus includes a Sports Centre and Swimming Pool and a 9-hole Golf Course.

The School consistently achieves excellent academic results and provides the pupils with a broad range of extra curricula activities to give depth to the learning. All pupils are inspired to achieve their very best potential and leave School with confidence and an ambition for lifelong learning.

For more information on Westonbirt School, please visit: www.westonbirt.org

WISHFORD SCHOOLS

In May 2018, Westonbirt Schools joined the Wishford Schools group. Founded in 2011, the group currently comprises nine independent schools in Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Kent. The group aims to provide an excellent education to all pupils, giving every child the opportunity to shine. Standards and expectations are high, and staff and pupils are challenged and supported to give their best.

Schools work closely with the group's senior leaders to define the school's strategy and then enjoy the autonomy to run their schools, while benefiting from the support that membership of the group brings. In addition to strategic input and the sharing of best practice, the group provides expertise in property, legal, HR, finance, compliance and marketing matters leaving heads with time to focus on the children within their care.

For more information on the Wishford Schools group, please visit: www.wishford.co.uk



THE OPPORTUNITY

The position of Financial Controller is a crucial role within the Finance Team. Reporting to the Finance Director, who works across the Wishford Group, the Financial Controller is responsible for budgetary control, monitoring and managing all aspects of expenditure as well as being accountable for the accounting records and reporting for Westonbirt School Ltd. The Financial Controller will head up the Finance Team and will be expected to form a close working relationship with the Heads, Director of Estates and Services and all budget holders across the business providing support and assistance as and when required. The Financial Controller will be required to provide timely and accurate information as required by the Wishford Group Head of Reporting.

This role requires a finalist or qualified accountant. We will consider all backgrounds and experience. Due to the size of the business this is a hands-on role and requires leading and supporting a team of 4, with Finance Manager as direct report, at a very exciting time of growth and capital investment.

This is a full-time role and occasional evening and weekend support may be required.

Full job descriptions and person specification can be found in this pack.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applicants should complete the school's application form and submit by email hr@wishford.co.uk

The application form may be accompanied by a covering letter of no more than one page.

Interviews will be held as applications are received.

REMUNERATION & TERMS

Role is full time and year-round.

The salary for this position is between £50,000 - £60,000 depending on experience.

Hybrid working is available. Free parking and lunch are provided on site.

Potential for means tested fee remission.

Westonbirt Schools are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers, reference and medical checks and the Disclosure and Barring Service.



JOB DESCRIPTION

Overview

Reporting to the Finance Director, who works across the Wishford Group, the Financial Controller is responsible for budgetary control, monitoring and managing all aspects of expenditure as well as being accountable for the accounting records and reporting for Westonbirt School Ltd. The Financial Controller will head up the Finance Team and will be expected to form a close working relationship with the Heads, Director of Estates and Services and all budget holders across the business providing support and assistance as and when required. The Financial Controller will be required to provide timely and accurate information as required by the Wishford Group Head of Reporting.

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Responsibilities / Tasks

- Review and enhance the management accounts, the P&L produced by the Finance Manager, adding Balance Sheet, Cashflow, Capex and narrative.
- Provide detail required for monthly capital project reporting to Group Reporting Manager.
- Proactively manage the expenditure budget, reviewing and approving purchases and ensuring the school operates within approved expenditure parameters.
- Review quarterly VAT returns prior to submission to HMRC.
- Manage the company cashflow, ensuring accurate recording of spend, to monitor against budget and forecasts and provide forecasts for input to the group.
- Responsibility for ensuring credit control process is followed, escalating as required and liaising with external solicitors where necessary.

- Review balance sheet control account reconciliations on a monthly basis.
- Support the Finance Director to maintain an accurate and up to date staffing cost forecast and provide analysis as required for KPI reporting.
- Oversee termly billing of fees and reconciliation of the ledgers.
- Produce the annual budget in the format and to the timeframe set out by the Group Reporting Manager.
- Oversee the development of the recently implemented accounting system, identifying opportunities for improvement and to ensure the system is used to find efficiencies whilst maintaining a control framework.
- Ensure that the process and policies regarding all other finance related systems are robust and adhered to.
- Take responsibility for year-end management accounts and related audit files/information and year-end audit.
- Develop and deliver department budget reporting on a termly basis.
- Responsibility for the internal financial management of scholarships and bursaries. Providing a rolling forecast of discount %. Managing the bursary application process including presentation of applications to the panel and responding to applicants in line with the published timetable. Liaising with external trusts and charities to meet deadlines for applications and invoicing.
- Ensure that accounting records are completed to enable maximum tax recovery and relief as available, providing additional analysis to support returns and as requested by external advisors.
- The Financial Controller may also from time to time be required to perform other duties not directly mentioned or referred to in this job description, as requested by the Finance Director and Group Financial Reporting Manager.





Person Specification

The successful candidate will have the following skills, experience and qualities:

- Lead by example with honesty, integrity and discretion
- Proactive, accurate and extremely organised and effective in detailed accounting functions
- A keen eye for detail and the ability to work to deadlines
- A flexible and proactive approach to their work and to that of the school accounts in general
- Ability to work in a busy office as part of a team, and interface with others without being distracted
- Good written & oral communication skills

Essential experience:

- Qualified Accountant CIMA, ACA or ACCA. Finalist would be considered.
- Leading a team
- Working with financial systems and managing all ledgers
- Using reporting tools in a finance system
- Excellent IT skills, in particular Advanced excel skills

Desirable experience:

- Working in a school environment
- Knowledge of VAT partial exemptions
- Accounting for large capital projects
- Understanding of capital allowances