



Chief Finance Officer Candidate Pack

Welcome Letter from Michael Cowland, Chief Executive Officer



Thank you for your interest in joining The Diocese of Coventry Multi Academy Trust, we are delighted to provide you with an application pack. It is hoped that the information provided will be of interest and will help you to begin your journey with us.

The Diocese of Coventry Multi Academy Trust was formed by the Diocese of Coventry in 2013, and is now one of 2,500 Multi Academy Trusts in England. Our children, volunteers and staff come from all faiths and none, and the Diocese remains a key partner in all that we do.

The Trust is now home to twenty-two academies spread across the Diocese of Coventry. This scale makes us one of the 100 largest Multi Academy Trusts in the country.

Our vision, “together, pursuing life in all its fullness”, is based on John 10:10 and reflects the Church of England’s vision for education. You will see this come to life in all of our academies every day. We offer a vision of human flourishing for all, one that embraces excellence and academic rigour, but sets them in a wider framework. We offer opportunities for children to realise their God given potential and flourish.

Our strategic plan focuses on five key stakeholder groups and recognises that these groups will flourish together, far better than they will flourish alone. We aim to:

- Support colleagues to flourish
- Support children to flourish
- Support those involved with governance to flourish
- Support families to flourish
- Support the wider church school family to flourish

To work with us, you must aspire to be an outstanding colleague, be prepared to go the extra mile and be comfortable with high levels of accountability for the progress of over 5,000 children. You must be willing to share and learn. You must be kind, and able to support and challenge others in order to help them flourish. Above all else, you must like young people and aspire to make them outstanding citizens.

In return, we offer excellent working conditions, first class professional development, genuine career development and opportunities for growth. We have conducted a staff wellbeing survey every year for the past four years, and every year, in every area of the survey, we have received higher positive feedback scores from our colleagues than the national benchmark.

In addition to flexible working, a generous leave allowance, a first class employee assistance programme, and excellent staff benefits scheme, all of our teachers are offered membership of the Teachers Pensions Scheme and all support staff are offered membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

In short, we believe our Trust has a bright future and are looking for bright people to help us get there.

Thank you once more for your interest in The Diocese of Coventry Multi Academy Trust and in the position available. I hope that this introductory letter has given you a clear sense of our vision and I hope that this pack gives you a feel for what we need. We look forward to hearing from you and exploring your future with us through our selection process.

Michael Cowland, Chief Executive Officer



The Diocesan Board of Education seeks to serve and equip the church school family in a variety of ways. The Diocesan Director of Education, Reverend April Gold, is supported by a team of highly qualified, experienced and well-regarded professionals who aim to:

- ‘be there’ for our church school family and act as a central reference point supporting pastorally and professionally;
- facilitate creative and flexible networking between schools;
- promote excellence and distinctiveness within the family of church schools/academies and beyond;
- share best practice collectively;
- provide professional development: for staff at all stages of their careers and for governors;
- facilitate collaborative school improvement partnerships through the growth of our six CofE majority MATs;
- support the process of academy conversion;
- promote the establishment of new church schools;
- represent church schools to the wider church, to diocesan groups, in the press, and in public and community debate;
- champion inclusion and equality including advising on admissions policies and managing appeals;
- protect the status of church schools
- and promote the importance and the continuance of the voluntary sector.

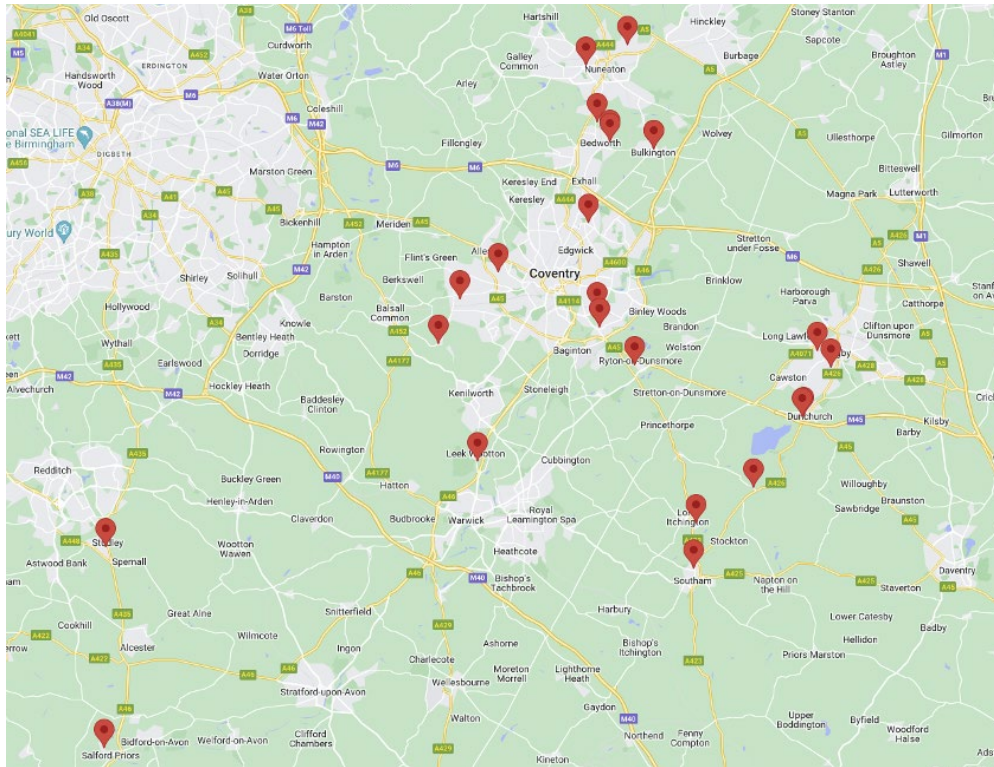
Reverend April Gold, Diocesan Director of Education



Our schools are a hugely significant part of the Church family of the Diocese. Seeking to build communities of care and understanding, they witness to God’s love for each and every person, and reflect God’s desire for the world to be a better place for us all to live in. I believe they are at the heart of the Church’s mission to the nation and play a very important role in the life of their own parishes and communities.

As a Diocese, our 76 Church of England schools serve 18,500 children, and their families. The 2000 members of staff and all the volunteers who support, as governors, directors, and other contributors, are seeking to offer both an excellent education and ensure that all our young people have the opportunity to live life to the full. We aim to do this by living, telling and sharing the values of Jesus Christ. Thank you for being willing to share in this journey with us!

Bishop Ruth Worsley, Acting Bishop of Coventry



St Laurence's CofE Primary School
Old Church Road
Coventry
CV6 7ED



St Bartholomew's CofE Academy
Bredon Avenue, Coventry
CV3 2LP



Queens CofE Academy
Bentley Road
Nuneaton
CV11 5LR



Stretton CofE Academy
Stretton Avenue
Coventry
CV3 3AE



St James CofE Academy
Barbridge Road
Bulkington, Bedworth
CV12 9PF



Harris CofE Academy
Harris Drive
Overslade Lane, Rugby
CV22 6EA



St Nicolas CofE Academy
Windemere Avenue
Nuneaton
CV11 6HJ



Studley St Mary's CofE Academy
New Road, Studley
B80 7ND



Central MAT Office
The Diocese of Coventry Multi Academy Trust
c/o St James CofE Academy
Barbridge Road
Bulkington, Bedworth
CV12 9PF



St John's CofE Academy
Winsford Avenue
Coventry
CV5 9HZ



All Saints Bedworth CofE Academy & Nursery
Off the Priors, Mitchell Road
Bedworth
CV12 9HP



Dunchurch Boughton CofE Junior Academy
Dew Close
Dunchurch
CV22 6NE



St Oswald's CofE Academy
Addison Road
Rugby
CV22 7DJ



St Michael's CofE Academy
Hazel Grove
Bedworth
CV12 9DA



Leamington Hastings CofE Academy
Birdingbury Road, Hill,
Leamington Hastings, Rugby
CV23 8EA



Leigh CofE Academy
Tile Hill Crescent
Coventry
CV4 9RQ



Salford Priors CofE Academy
School Road
Salford Priors, Evesham
WR11 8XD



All Saints CofE Academy LW
Warwick Road
Leek Wootton, Warwick
CV35 7QR



Burton Green CofE Academy
Hob Lane
Burton Green, Coventry
CV8 1QB



Long Itchington CofE Academy
Stockton Road
Long Itchington, Southam
CV47 9QP



Southam St James CofE Academy
Tollgate Road
Southam
CV47 1EE



Dunchurch Boughton CofE Infant Academy & Nursery
School Street
Dunchurch
CV22 6PA



Ryton-on-Dunsmore Provost Williams CofE Academy
Sodens Avenue
Ryton-on-Dunsmore
CV8 3FF



We recognise the critical importance of strong finances and accurate reporting. Without both, we are unable to make the decisions necessary to deliver the single object in our Articles of Association – to advance for the public benefit education in the United Kingdom.

The Chief Finance Officer (CFO) will play both a technical and leadership role and will take responsibility for the Trust's detailed financial procedures. As the Trust's CFO, the postholder will take a key place at the heart of our Trust Leadership Team (TLT) reporting directly to the Chief Executive Officer in a team that also includes 2x Head of Education, Head of People and Head of Operations and Compliance.

Recognising that our ideal candidate may already have existing commitments, and reflecting our genuine desire to promote flexible working, we are delighted to offer this post as four days per week.

Furthermore, the post is offered as fixed term until the end of August 2026. We believe this will enable our ideal candidate to implement improvements that have an immediate impact. However, if this doesn't suit you then please speak to Academicis. They will be happy to explore your options.

It is an extremely exciting time to join the Trust. We are on a journey towards greater centralisation and need to consider which business, funding and financial operation model will ensure we are best placed to maximise the proportion of our income that is spent directly on the children.

We feel that with a successful appointment to the position of Chief Finance Officer, our Trust will be in an even stronger position to make a positive impact on our children as together, we pursue life in all its fullness.

Chief Finance Officer Job Description



Responsible to: The Chief Executive Officer

Responsible for: Line Management of the Finance Team

Hours: 29 days (pro rata) plus bank holidays and closure between Christmas and New Year

Base: St James CofE Academy, Bulkington. Travel to other academies will be expected. *However, some home working is encouraged for a great candidate*

Salary: £82,000 - £87,000 (FTE) plus benefits

Pension: Local Government Pension Scheme

Job purpose

- Inspire, lead and drive the financial shape and direction of the Trust
- Prepare monthly financial performance and cash flow forecasts to ensure that any material deviations from the Trust budget are identified and action can be taken at the earliest opportunity
- Hold the designation of Chief Finance Officer as per the Academy Trust Handbook
- Be responsible for the Trust's detailed financial procedures
- Ensure financial transactions across the Trust are prompt, accurate and appropriate
- Make recommendations for improvements to the business and funding model and implement where approved
- Lead on financial oversight and management
- Ensure accurate and timely reporting at all levels
- Ensure compliance with regulations and management of risk, ensuring no deviations from the Academy Trust Handbook
- Promote and support the Trust's Christian Distinctiveness
- Develop, review, oversee and lead the finance processes, ensuring consistent implementation
- Submit all required financial returns to the ESFA in advance of deadlines
- Lead on the internal audit, external audit and development of the annual financial statements
- Work in collaboration with TLT to ensure financial efficiency and efficacy
- Be aware of the latest developments and best practice in order to introduce appropriate innovation
- Represent the Trust and CEO where required
- Report to the Board of Directors, the Business & Finance Committee and the Audit and Risk Committee on academy and Trustwide financial performance, through the use of appropriate key performance indicators and benchmarks
- Identify areas for efficiencies and procurement savings
- Prepare appropriate budgets and multi year projections, with alternative scenarios, which stimulate meaningful debate and ensure the financial sustainability of the Trust



Key responsibilities

Leadership

- Work alongside other Trust Leaders in the strategic leadership of the Trust
- Support other Trust Leaders in their strategic and operational priorities including providing financial information in a timely manner
- Provide strategic leadership of both central finance team and academy based staff with finance responsibilities
- Work with the Chief Executive, the Board of Directors, academy governance committees and staff to define and implement the Trust's vision and strategic direction so that it is understood and acted upon by all stakeholders
- Be an advocate for the Trust, its business model and its funding arrangements
- Report to the Board of Directors on academies' financial performance and development
- Maintain leading edge knowledge and understanding of effective financial management
- Proactively engage with all Academy headteachers to ensure that all Trust academies receive the highest financial advice
- Advise the directors on the allocation of resources to achieve the educational aims of the Trust
- Challenge and strengthen the academies' financial planning to ensure it aligns with improvement priorities

- To ensure the appropriate skills and qualifications are available across the finance team
- Use Integrated Curriculum Led Financial Planning metrics to recommend areas for improvement
- Support the Chief Executive Officer to fully discharge their responsibility as Accounting Officer for the Trust

Partnership working

- Develop partnerships with key stakeholders and organisations, as appropriate, in order to facilitate financial improvement and compliance
- Work proactively with the internal and external auditors to ensure audit recommendations are minimised and addressed
- Work alongside other specialist advisors (such as School Resource Management Advisors) brought into the Trust to develop and improve practice

Line Management

- Oversee the performance management processes for the finance team.
- Motivate the finance team to continually improve service delivery.
- Contribute to the management of academy based colleagues with financial responsibilities



Operational

- Provide oversight and scrutiny of the financial performance of the academies and Trust and make recommendations for intervention where performance issues are of concern
- Implement a deliverable process that ensures monthly checks are accurate and consistent across all areas of financial management
- Ensure reconciliation of salary and pay-related costs on a monthly basis and ensure compliance with audit requirements, including with external organisations e.g. auditors, pension schemes, HMRC etc
- In liaison with colleagues in the People Team, the payroll provider and relevant pension schemes, ensure completion of pension scheme annual returns
- Ensure that the Trust provides the highest quality finance support to its academies
- Ensure that gaps in financial performance are identified and analysed so that appropriate support and challenge is offered to achieve improvement
- Provide regular analysis of academies' and Trustwide performance to the CEO, the Board of Directors and relevant committees
- Provide summative reports on the Trust financial performance with reference to national data and trends

- Work alongside the academy improvement team to advise on efficient and affordable staffing structures
- Monitor and oversee the recruitment of finance staff
- Work with wider colleagues to develop capacity in the Trust through identifying, celebrating and sharing outstanding practice
- Submit all required financial returns to the ESFA in advance of the deadline
- The preparation of appropriate budgets and multi-year projections, with alternative scenarios
- Report on spend of capital grant to ensure that funding received is utilised on approved projects and remaining available funds are allocated to the highest priority projects

Governance

- Ensure appropriate financial management policies are in place and up to date to fulfil the aims and statutory responsibilities of the Trust
- Report to governance layers as appropriate

Other

- Undertake any other duties as the CEO or Board may reasonably request

Chief Finance Officer Person Specification



Qualifications and experience	E	D	A/I
A recognised accountancy qualification	x		A
Educated to degree level or equivalent		x	A
Substantial demonstrable experience in a similarly senior finance role	x		A/I
Experience of financial management in a Multi Academy Trust	x		A/I
Evidence of significant CPD		x	A/I
Higher level management qualification		x	A
Experience of centralisation in a Multi Academy Trust		x	A/I
Knowledge, skills and abilities			
Knowledge of academy funding	x		A/I
Proven ability to plan strategically	x		A/I
An excellent understanding of the ESFA and DfE	x		A/I
In-depth understanding of academy financial Key Performance indicators	x		A/I
The ability to lead, influence and manage change	x		A/I
The ability to communicate the Trust's vision to key stakeholders	x		A/I
In depth knowledge of academy budget planning	x		A/I
Through knowledge and understanding of academy financial returns	x		A/I
Knowledge of effective strategic, financial and resource management	x		A/I
The ability to perform a high-profile role with a strong visible presence and professional approach that earns the respect of key stakeholders	x		A/I
Knowledge of statutory and legal frameworks governing the financial operation of Multi Academy Trust	x		A/I
A demonstrable understanding of safeguarding in a church school		x	A/I
Ability to use personal skills and judgement to resolve conflict	x		A/I
Ability to mentor staff	x		A/I
Ability to identify and share best practice across the Trust	x		A/I
Ability to work in a Board and Committee structure		x	
A working knowledge and understanding of PS Financials		x	A/I
Personal qualities			
The capacity and willingness to contribute to the development of the Trust's strong Christian Ethos	x		A/I
A strong personal Christian Ethos		x	A/I
Ability to identify and keep confidential information confidential	x		A/I
Enthusiastic, tenacious, and resilient	x		A/I

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How to Apply

If you would like to discover more about this exciting opportunity, need any further information, have an informal discussion or arrange a visit then please

contact our retained consultant at Academicis, Neil Massie:

nmassie@academicis.co.uk or 01223 907979 / 07818 875514

Please email your application to:

Neil Massie: **nmassie@academicis.co.uk**

Closing date: 17th September 2024

Shortlisting date: 19th September 2024

Interviews: w/c 23rd September 2024



The Diocese of Coventry Multi Academy Trust
St James' Church of England Academy
Barbridge Road
Bulkington
Bedworth
CV12 9PF