

Finance Manager (Maternity Cover) Recruitment Pack



SOMERHILL
SOME SCHOOL

A LEADING INDEPENDENT PREP SCHOOL FOR GIRLS AND BOYS

Finance Manager Maternity Cover

Employment Status: Full time, fixed term

Required From: November 2024

Application Closing Date: 19th September 2024

Interview Date: 24th September 2024



A message from our Headmaster, Duncan Sinclair

Ours is a very special school with a unique structure in this part of the world. We have a co-educational pre-prep of over 200 boys and girls aged 3-7. At the end of year two, in the same way as for 'diamond model' schools, our girls join Derwent Lodge, (136 girls Year 3 to 6) and the boys join Yardley Court (250 boys Year 3 to 8). Our pupils are therefore taught in single sex classes from the age of seven but very much in a coeducational setting. More details can be found on our website: www.somerhill.org.

Somerhill is based in a stunning Jacobean mansion set in 150 acres of beautiful parkland. You will be hard-pressed to find a more glorious setting for a school! Somerhill is an estate just to the south of Tonbridge and is readily accessed by a slip road off the A21. We have excellent facilities including a multi-purpose sports hall, astroturf, indoor swimming pool complex and purpose-built music building.

Ours is a mixed ability school. We have very bright and capable pupils, some of whom will go on to win scholarships at academic schools such as Tonbridge and Sevenoaks at 11+/13+. We also find boys and girls who find aspects to their learning more challenging and currently approximately 60+ pupils receive some measure of additional support.

That said, many of our pupils will move on to independent secondary schools which, for the boys includes the likes of Tonbridge, Sevenoaks, Bedes, Sutton Valance and Eastbourne College. Derwent Lodge girls commonly move on to Sevenoaks, Kent College, Walthamstow Hall, Mayfield and Benenden.

Whilst Somerhill has some 600 pupils, the division into three separate sections means that each 'mini school' is able to tailor its teaching to best suit the children within it. Parents feel that they have the best of both worlds with small care and linked pupil/teacher ratios but with larger school facilities and social opportunities. They are very supportive of the idea behind a co-educational pre-prep leading to single sex prep schools, but within a mixed gender environment.



Our Aims at Somerhill

At Somerhill, we help each pupil achieve their best possible all-round development. Children discover themselves and develop their talents here, with the wholehearted support of our caring community.

Taking a holistic approach to education, we nurture academic, personal, spiritual, social, and moral growth, enabling our pupils to become confident, curious, resilient individuals going out into the world.

We encourage our pupils to work hard and take pride in their achievements, to think independently, to face up to challenges, to accept responsibility, to develop a broad range of skills and interests, and to show concern for others and the environment. To put it simply; we grow amazing people.

Somerhill Pre-Prep is our Section for 2 to 7-year-old girls and boys. *“High quality education in a happy environment. Teaching enables pupils of all abilities to make progress. It promotes exploration and independent learning and gives pupils confidence in their abilities.”* Independent Schools Inspectorate

Derwent Lodge is our preparatory section for 7 to 11-year-old girls. *“Excellent standards in lessons, in the scholarships and places gained at senior Schools. Girls work together exceptionally well and show considerable imagination, independence of thought and flair.”* Independent Schools Inspectorate

Yardley Court is our preparatory section for 7 to 13-year-old boys. *“Pupils thrive in the atmosphere of hard work, enjoyment and effort. Their attitude to their work is excellent and they take pride in their achievements and the success of others.”* Independent Schools Inspectorate

Finance Manger (Maternity Cover) Job Description

Purpose of the role

The Finance Manager reports to the Bursar and is responsible for the day-to-day management and running of the school's finance function. This includes key responsibility for the timely and accurate production of the payroll, school fee invoices and the rest of the sales ledger, purchase ledger including purchasing, preparation of management and annual statutory accounts, budgeting and forecasting and maintaining the school's financial controls.

We are looking for a dynamic and proactive candidate to lead this busy finance department and team of three staff members. This role is a fixed term contract maternity cover, starting ideally in November for a handover.

Main Duties

- Prepare the annual budget for the school, including supporting schedules and all elements of income and expenditure, including salaries
- Prepare termly management accounts, including variance analysis and full-year projections and other updates as agreed with the Bursar and Governors
- Maintain monthly finance dashboard
- Monitor all financial transactions and ensure best value and practice
- Identify and inform the Bursar of the causes of any significant variance and recommend prompt corrective action.
- Manage the annual closedown and preparation of outturn figures.
- Manage the audit process and prepare necessary working papers and audit file

- Review the draft statutory financial statements prepared by the external auditors prior to submission to the governors, to ensure accuracy and compliance
- Keep up to date with financial changes within the sector, attend network forums by agreement and advise the Bursar, Headmaster and governors as appropriate
- Review finance related school policies and the financial aspects of the School Risk Register as required and make recommendations for change where appropriate
- Manage the accounts team on a daily basis and ensure they are completing their work within SLAs and to acceptable timescales
- Review working practices and drive forward new technologies to streamline the functions of the department including financial access across the school
- Ensure skills within the team are up to date, recommending/providing appropriate training where necessary.

Day to Day Operations

Finance System

- Maintain the accounting systems on a daily basis and ensuring the accurate recording and reporting of transactions, including posting of relevant journals, including prepayments and accruals
- Oversee and cover for the general day-to-day tasks of the finance function including but not limited to, banking cheques, processing payments, reconciling debtors and creditors, maintaining petty cash, reconciling and inputting any bank transactions daily, paying staff expenses, credit card reconciliation etc.
- Analyse and reconcile control accounts monthly
- Produce termly management accounts for review by the Bursar and presentation to the governors.

Payroll and Pensions

- Monthly review and authorisation of payroll, including liaison with the Finance and Payroll Officer and Payroll Bureau
- Oversee the preparation and posting of the monthly payroll by the Finance and Payroll Administrator
- Maintain all payroll information on the budget with regular liaison with the Bursar and HR Manager
- Produce and collate annual salary letters to staff, working closely with HR
- Oversee reconciliation and payment of monthly pension and PAYE/NI contributions to HMRC, teachers pensions, and Aegon by due dates
- Lead on the school's pension provision and being the first point of contact for staff
- Prepare the teachers' pensions annual return for audit by external auditors
- Preparing the teachers pensions service record by individual teacher for submission annually.

Income

- Oversee and review the invoicing of fees, fee concessions, early years funding claims and all disbursements
- Complete a fee analysis schedule showing full breakdown of all fees and related fee concessions, agreeing to turnover figures
- Manage debtors, in conjunction with the finance officers, and pursue recovery of debts
- Oversee and review the invoicing of all external hire and lettings
- Manage fee concessions and oversee the pupil bursary process, acting as the first point of contact for the external provider and reporting back to the Bursar and Headmaster
- Assist parents with payments through direct debit collections, liaising with KCC for early years grants, with childcare voucher providers and by completing relevant paperwork to outside bodies

- Assist with the process of checking and recording any discounts offered including assisted place applications
- Work with the Bursar and Estates Manager to increase the potential income received through the hire of school facilities, increasing the site in line with the lettings policy.

Expenditure

- Oversee the purchase ordering system, ensuring that appropriate processes are followed and authorisations obtained
- Ensure that the school is getting value for money and that spending is controlled
- Oversee supplier management and ensure that payments are authorised and paid in a timely manner and any disputed items resolved
- Monitor service contracts and utility costs on a monthly basis in conjunction with the Bursary Administrator
- Report actual expenditure against educational budgets when appropriate and providing detail and support to budget holders on request
- Advise budget holders on planning and spending to ensure legitimate, cost effective and appropriate use of funds.

Assets

- Manage bank accounts with reference to maintaining an appropriate level of funds in the current account and transferring surplus funds to savings accounts, ensuring the school gets the best value return on its capital
- Liaise with the Bursar on the school's investment policy and make recommendations to governors
- Maintain a fixed asset register and depreciating assets
- Ensure necessary currency is available for educational trips abroad and the subsequent reconciliation with reference to the trip forms.

Other Responsibilities

- Produce monthly pupil numbers and pipeline figures for the Headmaster and governors
- Prepare cash flow forecasts as required
- Manage any term deposits held with the bank to maximise interest received
- Complete various surveys for the Office of National Statistics, Bains Cutler etc.
- Liaise with the insurers and assist with claims
- Complete tax forms, including P11Ds and PAYE settlement
- Manage statutory records, ensuring filing at both Companies House and the Charity Commission is up to date
- Ensure finance policies are reviewed on a systematic basis and updated where required.

Experience

The successful candidate must have a proven and successful background in finance. Experience of working in a school is desirable. The ideal candidate will have the following characteristics:

- Excellent organisation skills with the ability to understand and manage detailed information
- Be a dynamic, proactive individual able to work in a busy environment, satisfying conflicting requirements in an efficient way
- Previous payroll experience
- Track record of working successfully with a diverse range of stakeholders
- Experience of working with regulations
- Computer literate and a confident user of IT for communications, financial and management purposes.
- Working knowledge of iFinance and ISAMS would be an advantage
- An understanding of the importance of health and safety and willingness to embrace the positive health and safety ethos within the school.

Qualifications & Personal Attributes

- CIMA/ ACCA/ACA qualified
- A strong understanding of all financial and commercial matters
- A practical, systematic and pragmatic approach to work whilst being able to work calmly and efficiently under pressure
- Committed team player with a collegiate and collaborative approach together with an ability and willingness to create a working environment in which staff are empowered to take decisions
- A high degree of personal integrity; trustworthy and reliable, being able to deal with confidential information on a routine basis in a totally discrete manner
- Good sense of humour and the ability to create a working environment in which people work hard and enjoy being part of the team
- Personal strength of character through transparency, integrity and fairness
- Has a strong sense of personal accountability
- Ability to lead a small team
- Strong listening and communication skills, both written and oral
- Personal energy and enthusiasm, with a positive outlook and a customer service mentality
- A capacity for strategic thinking but also a strong grasp for detail.

The Package

- Salary will be competitive dependent on experience and qualifications
- The normal hours of work are 35 hours per week from 9am to 5pm with a 1-hour unpaid lunch break, all year round. At peak periods it may be required to work additional hours.
- 25 days of annual leave are available
- Membership of a contributory defined contribution pension scheme
- Lunch is provided free of charge in the school's dining hall during term time
- Free on-site parking

Conditions

Format of Applications

Formal applications will only be accepted via the official Somerhill Application Form which will be published alongside this pack. All completed applications should be sent to recruitment@somerhill.org. A tour will form part of the interview process but website provides a lot of information about us.

Child Protection

All staff have a responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children with whom they come into contact and are always required to adhere to and ensure compliance with the school's Safeguarding Policy Statement. If, in the course of carrying out their duties, a member of staff becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children in the school, they must immediately report their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

We are an equal opportunities employer and we welcome applicants from all backgrounds. We celebrate the diverse backgrounds that make up our community and consider it important that people from a diverse range of backgrounds are represented in our setting.

Offer Conditions

Somerhill is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be offered the role conditionally, subject to the satisfactory completion of a number of background checks including but not

limited to: an enhanced DBS check with Children's Barred list check, the taking up and verification of references, the verification of career history and medical fitness to undertake the role. The complete list of required checks will be provided to the successful candidate.

Note

This job description is not intended to be a comprehensive statement of procedures and responsibilities, but instead sets out the principal expectations of the school in relation to the post holder's professional responsibilities and duties. We are looking for an individual who is adaptable, flexible, and willing to carry out the wide range of duties that are likely to be required to make a success of this role. Please note we reserve the right to close prior to the application deadline or extend the deadline depending on the number of applications received. Early applications are encouraged.

Health and Safety

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and subsequent legislation, the school is obliged to provide you with a workplace and working conditions which so far as is reasonably practicable, are safe and without risk to health. You are required by health and safety legislation to take reasonable care for your own health and safety and for the health and safety and others.

Further Information

If you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact the Headmaster for a confidential conversation or for general queries, Jess May recruitment@somerhill.org.





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Somerhill, Tonbridge, Kent, TN11 ONJ | 01732 353124 | recruitment@somerhill.org | somerhill.org