



Northern  
Lights

LEARNING TRUST

# APPLICATION PACK

# Northern Lights



We are a Multi-Academy Trust currently comprising seven primary and secondary schools and 3,093 children and young people from Stockton and Hartlepool in Teesside through to Sunderland and Washington.



We are a Teaching School Hub, one of 87 centres of excellence for teacher training and development, focused on some of the best schools and multi-academy trusts in the country.



We are an Early Years Stronger Practice Hub, set up by the DfE to provide advice, share good practice, and offer evidence-based professional development for early years practitioners.

## OUR SCHOOLS



### Hart Primary School

Hartlepool



### St. Peter's Elwick CE Primary School,

Hartlepool



### Benedict Biscop CE Academy

Sunderland



### St. Helen's Primary School

Hartlepool



### Holley Park Academy

Washington, Sunderland



### Ian Ramsey CE Academy

Stockton-on-Tees



### Venerable Bede CE Academy

Sunderland

Every Northern Lights school has its own values and its own vision and that's really important to us because all of our schools are there to serve our community but equally, our Trust is there to serve each other.

We do that with humility and with an openness because at Northern Lights it's not all about the academic - that is really important to us - but we know, as a Trust, we are successful if we have ensured that in an holistic way our children and young people have had every opportunity to experience, to flourish, to thrive, to understand the wonder and the joy of the world around them.

- Jo Heaton OBE, Chief Executive, Northern Lights Learning Trust



## Welcome from the CEO

Thank you for your interest in the position of Director of Finance within Northern Lights Learning Trust.

We are a growing Multi Academy Trust that is currently made up of 2 secondaries and 5 primaries across Wearside and Teesside, with our central offices based in Seaham. We educate over 3,000 pupils and employ over 400 members of staff and serve a diverse range of schools and communities.

Each of our schools have their own individual ethos, values and vision, which sit together as part of our Northern Lights vision of 'Shining Together and Stronger Together'. As a CofE MAT, our schools are a mixture of Church and non-Church schools that range in size and levels of disadvantage. We see this diversity as a real strength to learn from and work with each other.

As a Multi Academy Trust we are at the heart of the current educational landscape, as a designated DfE Centre of Excellence as a Teaching School Hub and DfE Early Years Hub, responsible for teacher development across all ages and phases of education, working with over 300 schools. We are collaborative in our approach and value professional development highly in all we do.

We seek to be an employer of choice, with 100% of staff satisfaction in our latest survey, '*I am proud to work for a forward-thinking Trust who put people development at the heart*'.

We are looking for someone whose values align with us as a Trust and has the drive and ambition to work collaboratively to provide the best opportunities and outcomes for our young people.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Yours sincerely

Jo Heaton

Mrs J. Heaton OBE  
Chief Executive Officer

## **DIRECTOR OF FINANCE**

1X Permanent position required November 2023

Based at Seaham offices, Spectrum Business Park, Building 2,  
Lighthouse View Seaham SR7 7PR

NJC SCP 31-36

£37,261- £42,503 (subject to pay award) per annum, starting salary  
within range can be negotiated subject to experience

NJC Pay and Conditions

37 hours per week all year round

An exciting opportunity has arisen and following our recent growth we are looking for a Director of Finance to join our central team. The successful candidate will have working experience in a finance management role taking a lead in monthly and annual financial reporting.

Do you want to further your career in finance, with a career path that you have helped shape for yourself?

Do you have a passion and enthusiasm for finance?

Do you thrive in a fast-paced environment?

Do you want to play a part in shaping education within the Northeast?

Do you have an eye for financial detail?

Do you want to work for an organisation that cares about all its employees?

**If so, we would really welcome your application**

### **In return you will receive:**

- A supportive working environment that puts people at the heart of the organisation.
- Excellent continuous professional development, including the opportunity to undertake related qualifications.
- National joint council Terms and Conditions of Employment.
- Local Government Pension Scheme.
- The opportunity to work as part of a growing Trust and be part of establishing a career path that is right for you

Details of the trust can be found on the website [www.northernlightslearningtrust.co.uk](http://www.northernlightslearningtrust.co.uk)

## **CLOSING DATE:**

**Applications must be received by: 26<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at 9am.**

**Short Listing will take place on: 27<sup>th</sup> October 2023.**

**Interviews will take place week commencing 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

## **HOW TO APPLY:**

Please complete the job application form which can be downloaded from our website, unfortunately due to safer recruitment practices applications cannot be considered in other formats. Completed application forms should be returned to recruitment, by email to [recruitment@nllt.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@nllt.co.uk) or by post to Spectrum Business Park, Building 2, Lighthouse View Seaham SR7 7PR by the closing date.

We welcome you to have an informal conversation about the role contact Hayley Swinhoe, Chief Finance Officer on 07483337135.

## JOB DESCRIPTION

POST: Director of Finance

RESPONSIBLE TO: Chief Finance Officer

RESPONSIBLE FOR: All trust finances

SALARY BAND: NJC SCP 31-36

START DATE: November 2023

### **Purpose:**

- The Director of Finance will support the CFO to lead and manage all financial operations of Northern Lights Learning Trust, together with any finance related aspects of other Trust wide operations. The postholder will provide high quality overview of the Trust's financial functions, which will support the preparation, implementation and review of the Trust's improvement and growth plans. They will provide operational leadership in all aspects of finance within the Trust's schools and Hubs and be responsible for the operation, maintenance and development of systems, processes and procedures relating to budget and finance {including budget planning and preparation}.

### **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:**

#### **The Director of Finance will:**

- Lead all aspects of Trust operational responsibilities with regards to finance
- Bring a business dimension to budget planning ensuring each Academy makes best use of resources available.

#### **General Duties – Leadership and Management**

- Support in preparation of reports for presentation at Trustee meetings.
- Lead and manage finance-related audits and internal assurance implementing recommendations across the trust.
- To deputise for the CEO where required

#### **Strategic Direction and**

#### **Development**

- Review Trust financial policies as required keeping up to date with national legislation and research.
- Ensure compliance with finance-related statutory information available on the Trust website and social media.
- Carry out specified actions required by the priorities of the Trust Strategic Plan and contribute to the annual programme of Trust self-evaluation.
- Support the due diligence process in relation to the Trust's finances, in respect of schools or academies potentially joining the MAT
- Develop a Trust Quality Assurance Programme - to ensure effective financial management across the trust

## **Finance and Business**

- Be responsible for ensuring that specific and appropriate financial information and reports are provided to the executive leadership team in a timely manner, ensuring they are comprehensive and accurate, to enable the Trust to plan and take appropriate management action.
- Provide support to schools with setting the budget annually ensuring fair delegation of monies and continually monitoring to support future projection, benchmarking and value for money
- Plan, monitor and support the academies delegated budgets, evaluating and producing timely reports which enable effective self-evaluation of value for money.
- Ensure all deadlines are met, both internal and external, working with ESFA, DFE, LA's etc.
- Manage financial administration procedures in line with Trust policy and practice, and DFE and ESFA guidelines.
- Seek and make use of specialist financial expertise, preparing for accountant and auditors.
- Determine and monitor contractual and service level agreements ensuring efficiency and value for money. Support the preparation of tender documents for renewal or change as appropriate.
- Ensure value for money across the Trust by procuring best value services.
- Develop and improve financial control and risk management systems ensuring that these are implemented effectively across the trust and are administered in line with the Trust's scheme of delegation.
- Ensure specific funding stream expenditure is in line with funding conditions across the trust e.g. Pupil premium and sports premium.
- To lead the management of the Trust's payroll including checking and reconciling.
- Manage the effective induction, monitoring performance management, training, mentoring, for finance staff.  
Liaise with outside agencies, suppliers and customers.
- Supporting Headteachers, Finance Team and Office Managers to direct finances to ensure that individual academy and school's budgetary needs are met.
- Support schools to complete census returns and other funding returns as required.

## **Leading and Managing Staff**

- Develop Office Managers, School Finance Teams and Central Finance Team, to create a high performing team which is responsible for, and anticipates the financial needs of the Trust, providing timely and effective support.
- Be the performance management team leader for Central finance staff and offer operational line management to the school finance teams.
- Liaise with the CFO to monitor and evaluate the strategic and effective management of finance staff identifying training as appropriate and within agreed budgets.
- Advise staff on finance related matters where required, including salaries and expenses.

### **Evaluation and Quality**

- Contribute to self-evaluation processes to promote continuous improvement in quality throughout the Trust.
- Play a positive role in marketing and promoting the Trust whilst managing the systematic review of published key documents.
- Participate in training/professional development as required.
- Monitor contractual agreements with outside agencies ensuring efficiency and value for money and support the preparation of any tender documents for renewal or change of contract.
- Ensure procurement is in line with the Academy Trust Handbook.
- Complete, by set deadlines all statutory documents and returns.

### **OTHER:**

- To ensure a high standard of customer services to users of the academies.
- To represent the Trust at meetings or other events.
- To carry out duties in accordance with full regard to the Trust policies and procedures.
- To undertake such other reasonable duties as may be required within the Trust.
- Actively model and promote the values and ethos of the Trust.

This job description will be the subject of an annual review, and any part of it may be amended as a result of such a review, or at any time after consultation with the post holder.



## PERSON SPECIFICATION DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

CATEGORY	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	METHOD OF ASSESSMENT
<b>APPLICATION FORM</b>	1. Well-presented and complete application form		Application
<b>QUALIFICATIONS</b>	2. Relevant qualification or significant work experience in a financial management position	3. Full clean driving license 4. Willing to work towards AAT Level 4 qualification	Application 2, 4 Certificates 2, 3,
<b>EXPERIENCE</b>	5. Managing staff/department 6. Working in a busy department managing conflicting priorities 7. Coaching/mentoring staff	8. Submitting school-based returns	Application 5, 8 Task 6 Interview 7
<b>SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE</b>	9. Double entry book keeping 10. Month end procedures 11. Budgeting and reporting to a range of stakeholders 12. Analytical skills	13. Working knowledge of PSF 14. School funding streams 15. School policies and putting legislation into practice	Task 9, 11, 12 Application 10, 13 Interview 13, 14, 15
<b>PERSONAL QUALITIES</b>	16. Using initiative working as a team and independently 17. Approachable		Interview 16, 17, 18

	18. Ability to provide professional challenge		
<b>OTHER</b>	19. Satisfactory references (which will be requested for all candidates progressed to interview under safer recruitment practices) 20. Enhanced DBS with barred list check		References Enhanced DBS certificate