

# GDST

GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

## APPOINTMENT OF HEAD OF FINANCE

### APPOINTMENT BRIEF

July 2019



## 01 AN INTRODUCTION

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The GDST is the UK's leading network of independent girls' schools. There are nearly 19,000 pupils in its 23 independent schools and two academies throughout England and Wales; all but two of these educate pupils from the age of three or four through to 18. The GDST has a long history of pioneering innovation in the education of girls and is the largest single educator of girls in the UK.

In 1872 a public meeting was called in the Royal Albert Hall by two sisters, Maria Grey and Emily Shirreff, supported by Mary Gurney and Lady Stanley of Alderley, as well as peers, MPs and other senior men and women in society and education. Soon afterwards the GDST was formally founded, under the patronage of HRH Princess Louise.

Maria and Emily were firm and early believers in the principles established by Friedrich Fröbel – especially, that children have unique needs and capabilities. The first school opened in Chelsea in January 1873 with 16 pupils. Between 1873 and 1895 over 20 more schools were established in London and other English cities.

The GDST has never wavered in our belief in the uniqueness of its individual pupils, nor in our commitment to equipping them to succeed.

### A FEW FACTS ABOUT THE GDST

- About 8% of all the girls in independent education in the UK are at GDST schools.
- GDST schools are non-denominational, and students have always been admitted irrespective of background or beliefs.
- Two GDST schools (Howell's, Llandaff, in Cardiff and Shrewsbury High School) are partly co-educational: Howell's in its Sixth Form College and Shrewsbury High in its Prep school.
- The Royal High School, Bath, offers the International Baccalaureate (IB) as well as A Levels, and is the only GDST school with boarding facilities.
- The GDST employs approximately 3,500 staff.

### AN EDUCATION WHERE GIRLS LEARN WITHOUT LIMITS

In GDST schools, nothing holds a girl back. Every opportunity is open. They are encouraged to take on every role and every subject. They step out into the world confident in their ability to take on any challenge they choose – whether the world is ready for them or not.

As leaders in educating girls, The GDST focuses on developing the skills and character necessary to prepare them for the future. GDST teachers are dedicated to inspiring every girl, and trained to unleash their potential.

The schools offer a broad range of subject options, supported by the GDST to ensure that their education is cutting-edge and forward-thinking. Bespoke GDST skills workshops support life beyond and after school: from understanding finance to preparing one's CV or asking for a pay rise.

GDST academic results speak for themselves: in 2018 the proportion of top GCSE grades achieved by GDST students was three-and-a-half times the national average.

## 02 THE HEAD OF FINANCE

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### PURPOSE OF POST

This is an exciting opportunity for a high-caliber finance professional to play a key role in the continued success of one of the UK's largest charities. The scale and complexity of the Trust means that it requires best-in-class financial reporting, controls, and processes, complemented by pro-active business partnering and strategic support.

The Head of Finance's role includes, but is not limited to, the following:

### KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Ongoing management and development of the financial status of GDST and the schools, with associated reporting and compliance;
- Work with the schools to ensure robust financial performance and controls are in place;
- Drive efficient financial planning and systems development to support the financial objectives of the GDST;
- Lead the Financial Accounting and Payroll teams, taking responsibility for the whole team's personal and professional development to ensure high performance.

### KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

#### Accounting, Financial Reporting and Processes

Lead the GDST accounting process across all entities and prepare the monthly Financial Update report for presentation to the Executive Board.

Oversee the work of the Payroll, Finance Business Partnering and Financial Accounting teams, including:

- the accounting for the Capital Investment Plan and ensure the correct treatment of the additions and disposals of properties across the Estate for management and statutory accounting purposes;
- Oversee the accounting for GDST's investments and investment properties with responsibility for GDST's cash flow and treasury management;
- Oversee the profit & loss accounts and balance sheets for GDST (Enterprises) Limited.

Overall management of the year-end process, audit and the production of statutory accounts for the Group and subsidiary entities, maintain key relationships with external auditors and compliance

Ensure that GDST's financial procedures and guidelines are kept up to date and any amendments are promptly communicated.

#### Budgeting and Forecasting

Own the annual budgeting and forecasting timetable and processes for schools and Trust Office.

Identify and deliver improvements and efficiencies to the annual financial reporting, procedures and processes.

Develop and review GDST's consolidated budget, periodic forecasts and longer-term plans with the CFO for presentation to the Executive Board and approval by Council.

**Support to the Chief Financial Officer, Trust Senior Management Team (SMT) and Schools**

Provide support to the CFO in the preparation and presentation of financial information to stakeholders and regular reports to SMT, Trustee Committees and Council.

Provide other financial support for ad-hoc projects/work as requested by the CFO.

To lead the finance business partnering relationship with the schools in helping them achieve their financial objectives, ensuring training is provided to school finance staff on relevant issues.

**GDST Academy Trust**

Develop good working relationships with the two Academies and liaise with them on all financial matters. Specifically, the Head of Finance is expected to:

- Provide help and assistance as required with the finance, operations and governance structures;
- Develop / improve the year-end process for the purpose of consolidating the results of GDST Academy Trust into GDST Group Accounts.

**Tax and Compliance**

Responsible for VAT compliance including approval and timely submission of all VAT returns as well as associated duties and ad-hoc support of individual schools on this matter.

In conjunction with the Payroll Manager monitor relevant legislation and guidance from HMRC. Lead on any changes required to ensure implementation and compliance.

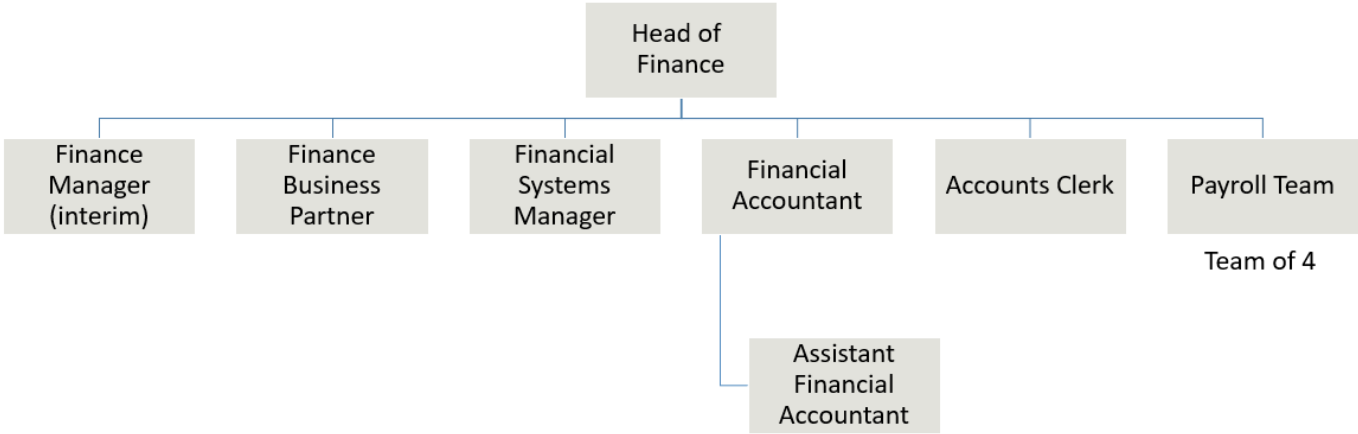
**Finance Business Systems**

Lead the development of the GDST’s financial & purchase ordering systems and the implementation of new systems as required, as well as overseeing access of GDST staff to financial systems in a secure manner as required.

**Financial Controls**

Responsible for financial controls at Trust Office and in schools, providing training to school finance staff and working with internal and external auditors to ensure that any identified control weaknesses are swiftly rectified.

**CURRENT STRUCTURE**





## 03 PERSON SPECIFICATION

This is a key role within the GDST's central function and as such demands a truly exceptional appointee. The successful applicant will bring high-quality experience of leading and managing a finance function, a detailed understanding of the core of financial accounting, and a proactive and energetic approach to their work.

The successful candidate will be a qualified accountant (ACA, CIMA or ACCA) and will bring:

- Experience of preparing financial and management accounts / reporting;
- Managing year-end accounts and audit to tight deadlines, working with external auditors and other professional advisors;
- Knowledge and understanding of VAT, PAYE/NIC, corporation tax and Gift Aid;
- Preparation and leading the process for budgets and forecasts;
- Strong analytical skills and the ability to present financial information clearly and concisely;
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills including the ability to relate well to people on all levels and build good relationships;
- A strong sense of initiative and a proactive approach to identifying and resolving issues;
- Delegation skills and the ability to manage a range of tasks and prioritise workload whilst working to tight deadlines;
- Commitment to high professional standards and providing an excellent service, a flexible working style with an approachable manner;
- Ability to motivate and engage others to create a high performing team;
- Personal integrity, honesty, enthusiasm and dedication.



## 04 TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

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### All staff are expected to:

- Work towards and support the Trust vision and current objectives outlined in the GDST Strategic Development Plan;
- Work within the Trust's health and safety policy to ensure a safe working environment for staff and visitors;
- Work within the GDST's Diversity Policy to promote equality of opportunity for all staff, both current and prospective;
- Maintain high professional standards of attendance, punctuality, appearance, conduct and positive, courteous relations with Trust Office colleagues, schools staff, external contacts and visitors;
- Engage actively in the performance review process, and training and development opportunities available;
- Adhere to policies as set out in the GDST Council Regulations, Notes of Guidance and GDST circulars;
- Undertake other reasonable duties related to the job purpose required from time to time.

The GDST is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students. The successful candidate must be willing to undergo child protection and other appropriate safeguarding checks including with the Disclosure and Barring Service.

As part of the GDST, the UK's leading network of independent girls' schools, we can offer a variety of benefits, such as:

- Competitive salaries and pay progression;
- Access to extensive professional development opportunities;
- Training grants for qualifications;
- Generous pension schemes;
- Free life assurance benefit;
- A discount of up to 50% on fees for children at GDST schools;
- Interest free loans for training, computer purchase loans and travel season ticket loans;
- A Cycle to Work scheme;
- Competitive terms and conditions of employment.



## HOW TO APPLY

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Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to the GDST on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at [www.saxbam.com/appointments](http://www.saxbam.com/appointments), using code FAGDZ.

Click on the '**apply**' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Wednesday August 7 2019**.

### GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please **do not** include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.