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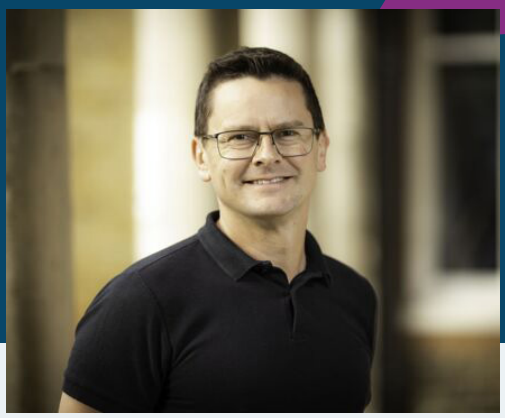
Parkwood Hall
CO OPERATIVE ACADEMY

Candidate Information Pack

Director of Finance & Operations

Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy

Letter of introduction



Dear Candidate

Thank you for your interest in the position of Director of Finance & Operations at Parkwood Hall Cooperative Academy.

It's an exciting time at Parkwood Hall and you would be joining at a transformational time for the academy. This is a pivotal appointment in the next steps of our development.

I joined the academy in September 2022 and have found the staff to be welcoming and passionate about their work. The pupils are an inspiration. There is much to be done as we move into the next phase of our development and this role will be key in the strategic direction we are about to take.

The business team within the academy are a vital part of the school and are highly valued members of the team. This role will lead the business team and ensure that the academy is run in a professional and robust way. This person will help to grow and develop the business team to ensure that the needs of our pupils, families and staff are all supported.

> All of our staff must be kind and that includes this role. There is interaction with parents who are passionate about the best possible life chances for their children. The person selected for this role must be both operational and strategic, as well as willing to work towards our vision of improving the quality of life for all our community.

If you have any queries or would like a confidential conversation about this opportunity, then in the first instance, please contact our advising consultants:

Mike Phillips
07830 313915
mike.phillips@pentir.com

You are welcome to visit the school as we believe it is important for you to see it in action and get a first-hand impression. Arrangements can be made by emailing Sara Buthlay at Pentir: **sara.buthlay@pentir.com**

Simon Collins, Principal
Parkwood Hall
Co-operative Academy

Welcome to Parkwood Hall

We are a specialist school for children and young people aged 8-19 who have moderate to severe learning difficulties and autism.

Many of our pupils have additional needs including ADHD, Downs Syndrome and language difficulties. All our pupils have Education, Health and Care Plans so all our referrals come via different local authorities across London and the South East, including Kent.

We are extremely fortunate in having an amazing site where the children can access our seventy-eight acres of green space and woodlands. We have two Forest Schools on site as well as purpose-built playground areas and sports areas. Our music and performing arts form an important part of our offer: we have a steel band as well as a Makaton Choir.

Our co-operative values are important to us especially honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others. They underpin the way we do things at Parkwood Hall. We are committed to providing a learning environment and learning pathway that enables all our pupils to achieve the best they can and help prepare them for adult life so they can live as independent a life as possible.

We have a highly skilled team of professionals including teachers, teaching assistants, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, a school nurse and residential staff.

We are a 'stand-alone' special academy which has formally adopted the values of the co-operative school movement. This means that we are not part of a multi-academy trust and that we have undertaken to treat all pupils, families and employees honestly, openly and equitably. All our teachers are qualified and we honour national agreements in respect of pay and conditions of service for all staff.

All the trustees of the school are directors of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy Trust Ltd and they are trustees of the charity which, among other things, owns and controls the land and buildings. We do not make a profit and there are no hidden 'back-office' operations.

Being an academy brings additional freedoms as well as responsibilities. We have the freedom to decide upon our own curriculum and we are able to be more flexible in meeting the needs of our pupils and their families.

We have created our own bespoke curriculum which is differentiated to each pupil's individual learning needs. We aim to make our curriculum engaging, relevant and exciting. The school is zoned in areas to accommodate Learning Pathway One which provides a pre-formal curriculum and Learning Pathway Two which provides a formal curriculum environment. The school also has a sixth form zone for post 16 pupils where the curriculum is about preparing for adult life with pupils focusing on core skills and independent living skills as well as work related learning.

Our philosophy is to try to provide a complete and joined-up service. From a broad range of evidence-based therapies which are available to all on the basis of need, to innovative curriculum developments such as Forest School, we listen to what families tell us they need and we try to ensure that their children's special, individual and complex needs are met.

Our values

Belief statement

We believe that every child at Parkwood Hall has the right to learning opportunities which mean they can become the best they can be.

We are a learning community together with our pupils, families, staff and local community partners where everyone can contribute and all are heard and valued equally.

Core values

At the core of what we do at Parkwood Hall is our mission statement:

"Growth through Personal and Social Development."

This does not just apply to the pupils with whom we work; we believe that we must constantly develop and grow as professionals, individually and collectively.

At the core of what we do are the co-operative values of:

SELF-HELP

Encouraging all at Parkwood Hall to help each other by working together to gain mutual benefits. Helping people to help themselves.

SELF-RESPONSIBILITY

To take responsibility for, and answer to, our actions.

DEMOCRACY

To give our stakeholders a say in the way we run our school.

EQUALITY

Equal rights and benefits according to their contribution.

EQUITY

Being fair and unbiased.

SOLIDARITY

Supporting each other and those in other co-operatives.

Our aim is for all our learners to be:

- Co-operative
- Creative
- Independent

To achieve this we are:

- **Optimistic** – we look for the best from ourselves and our pupils.
- **Nurturing** – meeting a person's physical and emotional needs so they can achieve their best.
- **Learner focused** – developing the skills and talents of all our learners.

We develop resilience and a can-do attitude across our learning community. Underpinning everything we do are the co-operative school's ethical values of:

- Openness
- Honesty
- Social responsibility
- Caring for others

Finance & Operations at Parkwood Hall

The operations team within the academy trust encompasses all non-teaching parts of the school, such as the front-facing administration staff, all financial and HR support, catering and the site team, who manage the spacious grounds and buildings. There are 15 to 20 members of the team within these various roles. The Director of Finance & Operations will lead on all of these areas, as well as manage the outsourced IT support.

Your leadership style will be that you will lead by example and create a workforce that is professional, cohesive and which supports the teachers and the pupils throughout the school. Whilst this role has a business focus, it is also an integral part of the school life and the successful candidate must have the desire to work within this exceptional school.

Each component part of the operations has a manager who is responsible for the day-to-day function of their department. They will be line managed by you. You must have experience in managing staff and creating a strong team.

There are many aspects of finance and operations that require redesign/introduction of processes and controls. So, a clear, strong vision of what a well structured department consists of is highly desirable.

The trust has revenue of over £7m and you will be responsible for managing the budget and being accountable to the Trustees in all aspects of the financial strategy for the school. The school is financed by the charging of fees to local authorities throughout London and Kent, so experience in fees management could be beneficial.

A secure knowledge of how an academy functions financially will be greatly beneficial, but not crucial as full support will be provided to candidates from non-educational backgrounds.

Job description

Our vision is "quality of life for all" underpinned by a belief that everyone can enjoy a transformative quality of life. A life that has meaning and opportunity – where any barriers to accessing education are removed and the support they receive is holistic.

REPORTS TO

Principal

RESPONSIBLE FOR

Line management of the team leaders for each of the departments, ensuring appropriate allocation of roles and responsibilities. Setting of objectives for the team leaders, supported by regular reviews.

JOB PURPOSE

To be responsible for Finance, HR, Administration, Estates, Health & Safety, Catering and ICT/Data management throughout the school. The role is also responsible for legal and regulatory compliance as well as strategic development within the school. To deputise to the Principal in non-teaching parts of the school, as required.

TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Financial responsibilities

- Lead and own non-teaching elements of the strategic plan.
- Directing financial planning and strategy.
- Analysing and reporting on financial performance.
- Preparing forecasts and comprehensive budgets, including the review of departmental budgets.
- Overseeing the external audit and internal scrutinies.
- Ensure that Value for Money is maintained and follow the relevant policies.
- Ensure that returns to external/government agencies are filed in a timely fashion.
- Have an authorised level of approval within the Scheme of Delegation.

Legal & regulatory compliance

- To be the policy 'owner' of all relevant policies ensuring compliance with legal & regulatory requirements.
- To oversee the framework of policy allocation and review, working with the Principal, SLT, Clerk to Trustees and Trustees.
- Manage and maintain adequate insurance for the school's property, personnel, Trustees and other potential liabilities.
- Maintain the risk register and manage any issues arising from it.
- Act as the school's health & safety co-ordinator and fire officer and maintain the Critical Incident Plan.
- Co-ordinate and chair the Health & Safety Committee and ensure that the H&S policy is implemented and reviewed regularly.
- Act as the school's DPO and oversee GDPR compliance and be aware of the school's responsibility under the Data Protection legislation.
- Oversee the statutory obligations to ensure they are being met for pupils with special educational needs, ensuring that financial and supporting agency services are adequate for their needs.

Human resources, estates, catering & administration

- Provide appropriate support to the department's managers, as required.
- Ensure that risk assessments in all areas are carried out.

ICT/data management

- Oversee the outsourced IT managed service and ensure that the needs of the school are being met at all times.

- Ensure the maximum level of IT security is maintained.
- Maintain that the school's IT strategy for using technology is aligned to the educational vision and plans for the school.
- Communicate the strategy and relevant policies for the use of technology across the school.
- Ensure contingency plans are in place in case of technology failure.

General responsibilities

- To maintain confidentiality in all aspects of Parkwood Hall. The nature of the working environment entrusts people with confidential information. Any breach of this confidentiality will constitute gross misconduct.
- To co-operate with all Parkwood Hall staff in maintaining good relationships with outside agencies and the general public in order to promote and uphold the school's image.
- To ensure the health and safety of self, colleagues, pupils and visitors and to report any such matters as appropriate.
- To perform any other duties as are within the scope, spirit and purpose of the position as requested by the Principal or Trustees.
- To keep professionally updated on all aspects of the role.
- Alert the Principal to any concerns in the operation of systems and procedures.

Other responsibilities

- This is a statutory role as required by the ESFA.
- Be the Company Secretary for the Trust.
- Work flexibly as the demands of the business support functions will vary over the academic year.
- Comply with all safeguarding arrangements and ensure that child safeguarding is paramount at all times.
- The duties of this post may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or level of responsibility entailed.
- Provide advice and support to the Principal, SLT and Trustees as required.
- Report to and present to the Board and other committees.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Equality of opportunity

- As a member school staff to take individual and collective professional responsibility for reinforcing and promoting a working environment free from discrimination, victimisation, harassment and bullying.
- Ensure the development and progression of equality within the sphere of responsibility of this post and the fair and equal treatment of all colleagues, children, parents and visitors.

Confidentiality and data protection

- To treat all information acquired through employment, both formally and informally, in strict confidence.
- To be aware of the school's responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 2018 for the security, accuracy and relevance of personal data held on such systems and ensure that all processes comply with this.
- To contribute as an effective and collaborative member of the school team.
- Any other duties as reasonably required by any SLT of the school.
- Participating in the ongoing development, implementation and monitoring of the school plans.
- Attend regular meetings as required and make a positive contribution during meetings.

Child protection

- Attend regular meetings as required and make a positive contribution during meetings.
- To be alert to issues of child protection ensuring that the welfare and safety of children attending Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy is promoted and safeguarded and to report any child protection concerns to the designated Safeguarding Lead using safeguarding policies, procedures and practice.
- Prevent, identify and minimise risk of interpersonal abuse or violence, safeguarding children and other vulnerable people, initiating the management of cases involving actual or potential abuse or violence where needed.
- Be aware of and update colleagues as appropriate to comply with current legislation and policies affecting practice, e.g. Children's Act, National Service Frameworks, Child Protection Procedures, Health and Safety and Data Protection.

Person specification

EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS & TRAINING

- Management/Business degree or professional qualifications and/or significant experience within education.
- Accounting (ACA, CIMA, ACCA, CIPFA or equivalent) or School Business Manager Qualifications or working towards one of these.
- Continued professional development in relevant professional areas and/or leadership.

EXPERIENCE

Essential

- Experience of working at a senior level within a multi-disciplinary team in a school/academy, educational establishment or service organisation.
- Experience of initiating forward planning and strategic proposals and then managing strategic plans and influencing decision making.
- Experience of budgeting, forecasting, procurement and management of fixed assets.
- A track record of using technology to improve financial processes and the use of systems.
- Experience of ensuring strong governance and effective risk in all matters.
- Experience of providing effective financial oversight for capital projects.
- A track record of effective leadership and line management.
- Experience of maximising external income sources e.g., lettings, securing grants and fundraising.

Desirable

- Experience of IRIS accounting package.

KNOWLEDGE & ABILITIES

- Up to date understanding of current issues in education and the implications of these for special schools.
- Ability to lead, develop and motivate staff and delegate duties as required.
- Working knowledge of law with regard to health & safety, legislation, contracts, freedom of information act, copyright and data protection.
- Excellent IT skills (MS Suite).
- Good organisational skills and ability to manage a range of competing demands.
- Ability to work efficiently and to deliver projects on time and to budget.
- Able to develop effective cross functional working relationships and willing to share knowledge with others as appropriate.
- The ability to work in a changing environment in a flexible way.
- Knowledge and understanding of local authority and Department of Education financial regulations.
- Knowledge of company and charity legislation, regulations and reporting requirements.
- Knowledge and understanding of educational enterprise issues.
- Awareness of principles and practice in relation to building services i.e. protection of personnel and buildings from fire, energy management and conservation.
- An understanding of employment law.
- An understanding of safeguarding and child protection.

PERSONAL QUALITIES

- Flexible and adaptable when necessary.
- A leader and a learner.
- Energetic and enthusiastic.
- Consultative and decisive as appropriate.
- Committed to empowering Trustees, staff, parents and pupils.
- High expectations of self, staff and pupils.
- Able to manage effectively when under pressure.
- Able to communicate with enthusiasm and humour.
- Able to challenge practice in a way that secures improvement.
- Able to be positive yet realistic at all times.
- Inner strength and resilience.
- Creative and imaginative.
- Sensitive and tactful.
- High level of accuracy and attention to detail.
- Commitment to the highest standards of child protection and safeguarding.
- Commitment to the values, aims and community of Parkwood Hall.

How to apply

TO APPLY

To apply, either submit a CV or complete the application form, together with the equal opportunities questionnaire. In addition, you should include a supporting statement outlining your motivation for applying and your suitability for the role.

Your supporting statement should outline how you satisfy the Qualifications and Experience elements of the Person Specification. Our expectation is that the supporting statement should be 2 to 3 pages of A4.

For candidates invited to interview, these responses will be explored further, together with the other elements of the Person Specification.

Please send your completed application by email to **apply@pentir.com**

All applications will be acknowledged.

THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

We will treat all enquiries, formal and informal, in confidence.

If candidates wish to visit the school, arrangements will be made by Pentir. Please contact Sara Buthlay:

sara.buthlay@pentir.com

CLOSING DATE

Closing date for applications:
Monday 14th October, 9am

FURTHER INFORMATION

Should you have any queries or would like a confidential conversation, then please contact our advising consultants at Pentir:

Mike Phillips
07830 313915
mike.phillips@pentir.com

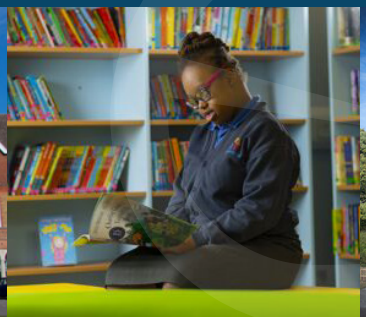
THANK YOU

Parkwood Hall
CO OPERATIVE ACADEMY

Parkwood Hall Cooperative Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Appointment to this post will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure via the Disclosure and Barring Scheme, confirmation of qualifications, experience checks and satisfactory references.

Parkwood Hall
Co-operative Academy

Beechenlea Lane
Swanley, BR8 8DR

www.parkwoodhall.co.uk

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