

## ERSKINE STEWART'S MELVILLE SCHOOLS



### FINANCE ACCOUNTANT

Erskine Stewart's Melville Schools seek to appoint a qualified accountant with strong technical skills and a demonstrable focus on customer service to join the Finance team to maintain and develop the financial accounting structure and reporting. This vacancy is part of a restructure of the Schools' finance team and represents an opportunity to join a forward-looking team working within one of Scotland's leading independent schools.

The successful candidate will be CCAB qualified, have detailed knowledge of accounting standards and experience of the charity statement of recommended practice (SORP). They will be able to develop strong working relationships within the department and across the Schools, as well as working as a primary point of contact for the Schools Governors. The role will focus on preparation of the Schools monthly and annual accounts, the audit process, and managing the supporting journals and financial systems.

The starting salary for this role will be on the ESMS K Scale for Support Staff (£39,504 - £42,627), with a range of additional benefits.

**The closing date for applications is 12pm on Friday 4 December.**

### THE POST

**Basic Function** The Finance Accountant will manage the preparation and audit of the Schools' statutory annual accounts, monthly accounting, reporting for internal usage and reporting to Governors. They will assist in building a culture of continuous service delivery and improvement, ensuring key processes are regularly analysed, maintained and improved.

**Accountability** The Finance Accountant reports to the Finance Manager.

**Relationships** This role has no formal line management responsibility, but the post holder is expected to coach, support and develop technical skills in all colleagues in the Finance department. The Finance Accountant will work closely with the Bursar and may receive direction in tasks. They will also be required to support the Governors serving on relevant finance Committees, and work with key stakeholders, internal and external to ESMS.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

#### 1. Annual accounts (30%)

- To take overall responsibility for the preparation of the annual accounts, from preparation to conclusion, in liaison with key stakeholders.

- Managing the roll-forward of the Main Accounting System into the new financial year, ensuring all opening balances are correct and agreed to audit figures. Includes the design, testing and implementation of a process to ensure that departmental balances are correct as well as nominal balances.

## 2. Audit management and response (10%)

- Liaising at least daily with auditors, responding to queries, and ensuring that any amendments are agreed and understood.
- Providing draft management responses to any audit reporting points made.
- Liaising with the Finance Manager and Bursar to ensure that any necessary changes to the Schools' processes and procedures as a result of audits and similar activities are designed and implemented promptly and effectively.

## 3. Monthly accounts (35%)

- Overseeing month-end tasks from Finance colleagues and key stakeholders to ensure that information is provided timeously for the monthly accounting process. Continuous analysis, maintenance and improvement of monthly accounting procedures.

## 4. Reporting (15%)

- Summarising the annual accounts position.
- Preparing all papers relating to monthly and annual accounts for Senior Management Team, Finance Committee and Audit and Risk Committee.
- Preparing data for surveys (e.g. SCIS) and benchmarking exercises (e.g. Office of National Statistics).
- Preparing and delivering feedback on the annual accounts and audit process to the Finance team and other colleagues.
- Supporting the Finance Manager in maintaining and updating the Chart of Accounts and other financial data within the main accounting system.

## 5. Procedure notes and policies (5%)

- Develop processes and procedures for all financial accounting functions (e.g. audit, accounts payable and receivable, audit).
- If necessary, support the Finance Manager in the preparation and updating of the Schools' finance policies and standing financial instructions.
- To develop the processes and procedures around year-end timetabling and distribution of audit tasks to colleagues.

## 6. Other (5%)

- Work with key stakeholders in preparation for the implementation of a new main accounting system.
- Support the Schools' response to the exceptional events surrounding Covid-19 and capturing the financial implications of this.
- Other tasks as required to support the delivery of the finance function.

## **PERSON SPECIFICATIONS**

- Excellent communication and analytical skills with a commitment to delivering excellent customer service.

- Independent, self-motivated and organised; with an ability and willingness to work as part of a team.
- Detail oriented, results driven and consistently strive to achieve targets.
- Willingness to be involved in the broader life of the schools.
- Commitment to continuous professional development and service improvement.

## **EXPERIENCE, QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS**

### **Experience**

#### Essential

- Extensive financial accounting experience within the last three years.
- Previous experience of preparing complex organisational accounts.
- Previous experience of working with auditors and managing successful audit processes.
- Previous experience of data analysis for business reporting.

#### Desirable

- Experience of working in an education environment.
- Experience of using the PASS system.
- Experience of developing team members and providing informal coaching.

### **Qualifications and Skills**

#### Essential

- CCAB qualification in good standing (ICAS, CIPFA, ICAEW, ACCA, CIMA or international equivalent).
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Highly computer literate, particularly in use of MS Office and advanced Excel.
- Experienced user and manager of advanced accounting software.

## **REMUNERATION AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

<b>Hours of Work</b>	8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday, with 45 minutes (unpaid) for lunch, a paid working week of 36.25 hours. There is entitlement to a free school lunch during term time.
<b>Location</b>	The post holder will be based in Ravelston House at The Mary Erskine School. Flexible working arrangements, including home working, will be possible during the period of Covid-19 restrictions.
<b>Credit Checking</b>	The post holder will be required to undertake a credit check in addition to other pre-employment checks prior to employment. Credit checks will be conducted on a 2-yearly cycle throughout employment.
<b>Holidays</b>	Entitlement is to 30 days annual holiday leave plus 10 days statutory holiday at Christmas and Easter, when the Schools are closed. The Schools' holiday year runs from January to December.
<b>Salary</b>	The successful candidate will be appointed on the Schools' K scale for support staff (£39,504 to £42,627). All salaries are reviewed on 1 <sup>st</sup> April annually.

**Pension**

The successful candidate will be enrolled automatically into the Merchant Company Stakeholder Pension Scheme.

**Staff Benefits**

Staff are offered a range of benefits including: free school lunch during term time, use of the schools' swimming pool and fitness room outside school hours and membership of the ESMS Discount and Benefits Scheme, including a range of discounts at 130,000 retail and entertainment locations. Staff with children at the Erskine Stewart's Melville Schools are entitled to a tuition fee discount of 50% from Nursery to Sixth Form.

Please note that the school operates a No Smoking Policy and smoking is not permitted on the school campus at any time.

**APPOINTMENT PROCEDURE**

A full CV and letter of application addressed to Andrew Dawson, Finance Manager, should be sent to [recruitment@esms.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@esms.org.uk). Please ensure you include details of two referees.

Any enquiries about this position should be directed to Jenny Mallinson, HR Advisor, at [recruitment@esms.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@esms.org.uk).

**The closing date for applications is 12pm on Friday 4 December.**