**Financial Accountant**

**Finance Department**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Hours: 40 hours per week**

**Location: Tiverton, Devon (with frequent travel to service locations)**

**Overall purpose of the job**

The Phoenix Learning & Care Group is a diverse organisation offering residential and educational services to young people and young adults. The young people and students we support are generally classified as either having Social, Emotional and Mental Health (‘SEMH’) needs, autism or a learning difficulty or disability. With c600 staff, the Group continues to grow and enhance its reach and ability to support even more individuals.

Our services range from small children’s homes to large specialist further education colleges and includes schools and adult care homes. Our services continue to grow and develop and the Group is currently on a strategic expansion plan out of the South West into Wales, up the M5/4 corridors and towards London.

The Project Accountant will play a pivotal role in the Finance Team and be responsible for the provision of an expert financial management service to a portfolio of services, in a way that is meaningful and engaging for service managers from a non-financial background, and working with them to drive improvement.

**Line Manager**

The Financial Accountant will report to the Head of Finance.

**Duties and responsibilities to include:**

**General**

* Lead and support the Head of Finance with the Group’s FPA and forecasting activities and finance projects

* Support the Head of Finance in the Group reporting activities and management of external stakeholder requirements including covenant reporting, shareholder reports and business case and investment analysis
* To assist in the month end financial reporting process and creation of Group to departmental management accounts in a timely and accurate fashion with a focus on the education division of the Group
* To interpret relevant service level accounts with a view to understanding the monthly and year to date performance, and identifying key areas of performance improvement.
* To investigate areas of note regarding operational costs and overheads, and building an understanding of what is driving these cost areas.
* To work with the operational service units and support teams to benchmark their services from financial and non-financial perspectives and to develop reporting mechanisms to monitor and assess relative performance
* To build relationships with the relevant managers, both to help them to improve their understanding of both financial and non-financial measures and also to ensure the Finance Team keep an up to date knowledge of the services and their current situations.
* To lead on the development and assessment of Group wide cost improvement programmes, working with managers and staff to carry out financial and activity modelling
* Develop and produce monthly reports that are tailored to provide best insight to end users.
* Support with the month end balance sheet reconciliations and supporting schedules to ensure accuracy of monthly reporting.
* To support in the provision of a high quality financial management reporting service with a focus on identifying trends, risks and opportunities, communicating these to the Head of Finance, CFO and service management teams in such a way that its use informs management decision making
* To be key lead and support alongside the Head of Finance in managing the annual audit process including liaising with external auditors, managing internal information and delivery of information
* To assist in the provision and application of an internal audit function to review service management of financial controls, processes and procedures
* Support the Head of Finance and CFO with adhoc projects as needed.

**Person Specification**

**Experience and qualities required for the post**

* Qualified accountant (ACA, CIMA, ACCA)
* Sleeves rolled up, hands on mentality
* Proven track record of similar finance roles
* Excellent knowledge and understanding of financial systems, processes and standards
* Experience of implementing, maintaining and improving relevant systems and procedures
* Strong financial and commercial analysis skills and experience
* Have a keen eye for process improvement and a curiosity for exploring ways of streamlining and implementing cost saving changes
* Well organised with strong time management skills
* Excellent interpersonal/communication skills
* Good IT skills: working knowledge of Microsoft Office programmes, including Word, Powerpoint and Excel.
* Be positive, diplomatic and approachable with a dynamic and creative edge
* A can do attitude who is not afraid of implementing change within an organisation

**Ideally:**

* Experience or knowledge of Care and/or an academic environment
* A working understanding of school funding models and local authority funding needs
* Respect for diversity and sensitivity with regards to the young people/students we work with

**Package**

*Salary*: £50k-£55k DoE + car allowance/benefit

*Benefits*: Company Pension Scheme, refer a friend scheme, other benefits to be confirmed

*Holidays*: 33 days including bank holidays (+1 extra birthday holiday)