



Sheldon School

BE KIND | BE BRAVE | BE THE BEST YOU



Chief Operating Officer Candidate Pack

Welcome

from the Headteacher



Dear Prospective Candidate,

We are pleased to invite you to apply for the position of Chief Operating Officer at Sheldon School. At Sheldon, we pride ourselves on being a family where strong relationships are central to our community. Our inclusive ethos ensures that every student feels safe and supported, enabling them to thrive regardless of their social background, academic ability, or special educational need. If this resonates with you, we encourage you to explore this opportunity further.

Sheldon School is a standalone academy with approximately 1,650 students, making it one of the largest secondary schools in Wiltshire. As a co-educational secondary school and sixth form for students aged 11 to 18, we have been an Academy since April 2011. Our recent Ofsted inspection in March 2024 recognised us as "Good" in all areas.

Since joining as Headteacher last year, I have been both proud and excited by the progress we have made. We are committed to continuous improvement and have established a foundation for meaningful change, focusing on enhancing teaching and learning while fostering a culture of collaboration and high expectations.

Our new Chief Operating Officer will join a school that has buckets of ambition and strong foundations upon which to build. Alongside our positive Ofsted inspection outcome, 2024 saw both improved academic outcomes across a range of metrics and a strong financial performance strengthening our reserves. The role of Chief Operating Officer is a strategic one, and will work closely with myself and the Governors in driving the school forward.

Day to day you will lead on the non-academic operations and services of the school, ensuring that the School's resources are deployed to meet the School's Development Plan in a financially and environmentally sustainable manner. Executing the responsibilities of a CFO, you will ensure robust financial planning, management and reporting in line with the Department for Education's Academy Trust handbook.

We sincerely hope you will consider this important role and join us on our journey of improvement. If you would like to discuss the position further or visit the school, I would be delighted to meet with you personally.


We look forward to receiving your application.



Mr Peter Lynch
Headteacher



Our Vision

A young girl with her hair in small buns, wearing a dark blue school uniform, is looking through a microscope. She is smiling slightly. Other students are visible in the background, also looking at the microscope. The scene is set in a classroom or laboratory.

To provide high-quality education, enrichment and pastoral care that improves the life chances of all students.

- Sheldon school is a family, where high quality relationships are at the heart of everything we do. We ensure that all students feel safe and cared for.
- We aim to ensure that every student can thrive regardless of social background, academic ability or special educational need.
- We recognise that education is more than what happens in the classroom and are rightly proud of the experiences students will receive through our extra-curricular offer, trips and visits.
- We pride ourselves on having the highest expectations of all students and staff.
- We are passionate about working together with parents and our wider community to ensure success for all our pupils.
- We are kind, brave and try our best at all times.

Our Values

BE KIND

We are thoughtful and considerate about how we treat ourselves and others. We always have good manners and we show gratitude towards others.

BE BRAVE

We are confident and resilient learners who contribute in lessons. We don't make excuses and we accept that we make mistakes, but we learn from them.

BE THE BEST YOU

We give 100% each and every day to be the best we can be. We believe that success comes through hard work.



Job Description

Chief Operating Officer

Postholder:	COO (with responsibilities of CFO)
Responsible to:	Headteacher
Salary/Scale of Post:	L18-L23 (£75,675-£85,529)
Hours of Work:	<p>37 hours per week, 52 weeks per year. As this is a key post, hours worked should be flexible to meet the demands of the position, including attendance at evening Governors' meetings and representing the school at key events.</p> <p>Note: Whilst the role will permit an element of working from home, given the nature of the role, the post-holder should expect to be in school for the majority of their time during the school term</p>
Responsible for:	Finance Manager, Facilities Manager, Office Manager, HR Lead, Lettings Lead, First Aid, Governance Professional. Contracted out Services (Catering & Cleaning) through Contract Managers

Post Purpose

The COO will:

- Lead on the non-academic operations and services of the School, ensuring that the School's resources are deployed to meet the School's Development Plan in a financially and environmentally sustainable manner
- Execute the responsibilities of a CFO, ensure robust financial planning, management and reporting in line with the Department for Education's Academy Trust handbook
- Lead, mentor and develop the teams reporting to the COO, fostering a culture of high performance and continuous improvement

Strategic Leadership and School Development

The COO will be accountable for providing strategic vision and leadership across non-educational trust functions, and for supporting the delivery of the school's vision and values. The COO will:

- Contribute to, and support the delivery of, the school's strategic aims
- Contribute to the school's strategic planning, taking ownership of aspects of key documents such as the operations strategy and underlying business plans
- Develop the school's non-academic operations to meet requirements of the school's development plan and support continuous improvement
- Lead on ensuring that the school develops in a sustainable manner, both financially and environmentally



Finance and Procurement

The COO will act as the School's Chief Financial Officer, accountable for the health and sustainability of the school's finances. The COO will:

- Develop, implement and monitor the school's business plan and budget, using effective financial and budget modelling and benchmarking to support strong decision-making
- Establish and monitor the school's financial policies and procedures, taking appropriate action to address financial risks, problems and irregularities
- Present the board and relevant committees with accurate and timely financial reports
- Develop and oversee the school's income generation strategies, including lettings, grant applications and other fundraising, and supporting individual departments with their fundraising efforts
- Prepare and monitor the school's budgets in line with the school's development plan and strategic objectives
- Prepare and submit the school's financial returns and reports, including monthly management accounts
- Manage the internal and external audit procedures for the school and follow up on any recommendations resulting from audits
- Establish and monitor effective procurement procedures in order to achieve financial efficiencies, including overseeing the tendering process
- Ensure the school complies with financial regulations and standards, working with the Headteacher in their capacity as accounting officer
- Oversee the school's commercial contracts, ensuring they represent value for money

Risk, Compliance, Regulatory and Legal Affairs

The COO will be accountable for overseeing the school's regulatory and legal affairs, ensuring that the school remains compliant in all relevant legal and statutory responsibilities, and that the school has in place appropriate. The COO will:

- Ensure the school meets requirements set out by Companies House, the Charity Commission, the Department for Education and the Education and Skills Funding Agency
- Lead on GDPR within the school, liaising with the school's appointed DPO as requirement
- Lead on health and safety within the school, ensuring that the school has in place assurance mechanisms for meeting its health and safety obligations
- Embed in school-wide awareness of statutory and legal obligations and a compliance culture
- Ensure that effective risk monitoring and management arrangements are in place, advising the Headteacher and Trustees in relation to the school's management of strategic risk
- Identify, monitor and mitigate operational risks through working in collaboration with other school leaders
- Ensure that the school seeks legal advice as appropriate, supporting the Headteacher and Trustees in managing the school's legal affairs
- Oversee the school's insurance arrangements
- Oversee the maintenance of business and related parties interest registers, conflict of interest register, hospitality and gift registers



Resource and Services Management

The COO will be accountable for the development, delivery and quality of the school's non-educational functions and services, including finance, human resources, premises and facilities, lettings and catering. The COO will:

- Develop, implement and monitor strategies and operational models for non-academic services that are fit for purpose, high quality and facilitate continuous improvement
- Ensure, through strong business planning, that the school has the human, material and financial resources it needs to operate effectively and meet its aims
- Provide line management for leads of the functions reporting to the role, and be responsible for their professional development
- Oversee and review contracts for services, ensuring that these are fit for purpose and provide value for money
- Be the strategic lead for HR in the school, working with the Headteacher and the HR lead in managing personnel matters related to all staff
- In collaboration with the HR lead and the Designated Safeguarding Lead, ensure safe recruitment procedures are adhered to
- Support the Finance Manager in overseeing the school's payroll, ensuring payroll information is correct, returns are completed by required deadlines, and that payroll is reconciled monthly
- Oversee the management of the schools buildings and premises, including regular maintenance and investment in capital improvements
- Oversee capital works projects, ensuring that they support the school's aims and deliver value for money
- Develop, implement and monitor the school's policy regarding the letting of its premises ensuring that this meets the school's community engagement goals and generates appropriate returns
- The COO will be accountable for supporting the efficient, effective and compliant management of the trust and its academies, and for providing motivational leadership at all levels of the school's organisation

Leadership and Governance

The COO will:

- Develop effective relationships with the school's stakeholders in order to support the school's development and growth
- Develop, implement and monitor school policies within their remit
- Provide appropriate and timely reports to the governors, committees and other school leaders to support effective leadership and governance
- Ensure that the school has the appropriate management systems and structures to carry out its work effectively, identifying opportunities to improve overall effectiveness and implementing appropriate strategies to achieve improvements
- Act as a representative of the school in external networks and forums, raising the profile of the school, engaging with the wider sector, and ensuring that the school is alert to information, changes or opportunities that could impact on its work
- Line manage the governance professional, advise and support the Chair of Governors, Headteacher and Committee Chairs to ensure effective governance arrangements are in place for the school
- If required by the Governors, act as the Company Secretary for the school and be a director of any Sheldon School trading subsidiary
- Service the Governors' Strategy and Audit Committee and Resources Committee, attend meetings of the Board of Governors, and attend other governance meetings as required

Person Specification

Chief Operating Officer

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional qualification in Finance, Business Administration or Business Management Strong track record of continuous professional development An understanding of HR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Business Manager specific qualification i.e. DSBM, CSBM, ADSBM or MSc School Business Management Professional accounting qualification (e.g., ACA, ACCA, CIMA)
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant experience in a senior financial leadership role A successful track record of business management in any or all of the educational, public, private, or voluntary sectors Experience of managing and developing high performing teams Experience of managing and maximising operational benefits from business/accounting software/systems Experience of budget management and reporting at a senior level Experience of change management and process improvement Experience of efficient and effective budget, financial, risk and resource management Experience of business planning and development of financial strategies Successful experience of securing efficiency savings and/or income generation Experience of working collaboratively within a senior leadership team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proven track record of implementing strong financial processes Experience of working effectively with a Board in an equivalent setting Experience of academy finance, funding and working in schools Experience and knowledge of the safeguarding agenda and its application in the educational setting Experience of developing funding bids and identifying sources of funding Experience of working with internal and external auditors Experience of managing commercial contracts with 3rd party service providers Experience of leading services and functions that fall under the role remit
Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to translate strategy and vision into day-to-day action while leading diverse teams to encourage collaborative working Dedicated to applying principles of high-quality customer care approaches in dealing with service users Can skilfully manage, engage with and maintain highly effective working relationships with stakeholders Effective communication with a variety of audiences as an ambassador of the school Strong IT skills, including proficiency Excel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to stay calm under pressure Ability to assimilate detailed and complex data and concepts and communicate key elements succinctly to different audiences A willingness and ability to quickly assimilate information on new areas of work and projects A self-motivated, self-disciplined and enthusiastic individual with a commitment to personal and professional development Skilled in producing data analysis and board level reports

How to Apply

Applications should be submitted directly via MyNewTerm, you can access our careers page using the following link.

<https://mynewterm.com/school/Sheldon-School/136632>

Please note: CVs will not be accepted. You must complete the application in full giving details of all employment, training, and gaps in employment since leaving school. Please ensure the closing date for applications is met, we cannot be held responsible for lost or late applications. Due to the large number of applications it is not always possible to respond to each application but we aim to respond within two weeks of the vacancy closing date.

Safeguarding Statement

Sheldon School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We particularly welcome applications from underrepresented groups including ethnicity, gender, transgender, age, disability, sexual orientation, or religion.

Please note: Any position that involves working with children requires declaration of ALL convictions/cautions regardless of whether these are deemed as spent and a DBS check will be carried out before any employment commences.

In line with KCSIE 2024 and safer recruitment practices, the school will conduct an online search for all shortlisted candidates. The online search is part of our safeguarding checks and will seek publicly available information on candidates' suitability to work with children. Shortlisted candidates will be provided with further guidance and will be asked to clarify their online presence.

References will be obtained before interview at shortlisting stage and may be used in the interview process. If previous employment has included working with children, then at least one referee must be from this employment regardless of whether this is the current or most recent employment. Any gaps in employment must be detailed and an explanation provided in the relevant section.



Sheldon School

BE KIND | BE BRAVE | BE THE BEST YOU