



# Alpha

Academies Trust

## Recruitment Pack

### Finance Officer

Closing Date: Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at 9:00am

Interviews: W/C Monday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2022

**JOB REFERENCE NUMBER: 456753**

Alpha  
Academies Trust



THE DISCOVERY  
ACADEMY

The excel  
academy  
FOR CHALLENGE



Eaton Park  
ACADEMY



Sneyd Academy

[www.alphaacademiestrust.co.uk](http://www.alphaacademiestrust.co.uk)

Expect Excellence

## A Message from the Chief Executive Alpha Academies Trust

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for downloading this application pack and for your interest in becoming a Finance Officer for The Alpha Academies Trust in Stoke-on-Trent.

Our Trust currently consists of five academies:

The Discovery Academy - Age 11 -16

The Excel Academy - Age 11 -16

Eaton Park Academy-Age 3- 11

Maple Court Academy - Age 4 – 11

Sneyd Academy – Age 4 – 11

Alpha Academies Trust has a clear purpose to deliver a first-class education for every child and overcome inequality. We intend to achieve this purpose by investing heavily in staff development and developing a quality all through curriculum from birth to post 16. We are committed to work with other stakeholders and Trusts to create a joined-up momentum, that will bring about transformational change in stoke on Trent. We have a rigorous approach to evaluate impact through a research and development culture. This ensures we identify those approaches that have the greatest impact on children and supports the well-being and workload of our staff. We take seriously our responsibilities to the community and future agendas such as environmental sustainability and digital transformation are very much in our line of sight.

Parents and stakeholders are at the heart of our learning partnerships. Our Governors are challenging and supportive and all our staff are committed and dedicated to providing first class education for all children and young people in our academies.

We are looking for dedicated and enthusiastic professionals to join our highly skilled staff and help deliver outstanding educational experiences for the young people of Stoke-on-Trent.

I look forward to receiving your application and meeting you soon.

Yours faithfully,

Mr S French  
Chief Executive Officer

## The Context

## Expect Excellence

The City of Stoke-on-Trent is in the West Midlands and has a population, of 249,000, which is predominately white British but with a significant minority ethnic community. Ambitious plans are underway to transform and renew the City through major investment in health, housing, economic development, and education. The 'Potteries', as Stoke-on-Trent is affectionately called, is renowned for its world class ceramics industry and industrial heritage.

The City is benefitting from recent investment which is driving economic growth and renewed prosperity. It is well connected with transport links to the capital and is within one hour of travel to Birmingham or Manchester. The City is one of the fastest for economic growth in the country.

## Our Trust Purpose

“ Delivering a first class education that  
overcomes inequality ”

## Our Trust Strategy & Aims

- α Adding capacity: to eradicate inequalities by supporting the solutions that will unlock personal and academic potential for every child
- α High performing: to use Trust resources, ensuring we deliver first class education for every child
- α Collaborative: to grow more effective partnerships within and beyond the Trust, that impact on children and are mutually supportive
- α People: to attract, develop and retain excellent people who are valued, supported and encouraged to innovate
- α Finance and Infrastructure: to have strong and sustainable finances with a highly effective infrastructure
- α Leadership: to develop expert leaders and governors with a range of skills, that make a difference to children's life chances.

## In an Alpha Academy

## Expect Excellence

- Children and young people develop strong literacy, numeracy and employability skills
- Children and young people enjoy innovative learning experiences, including sport and the arts which lead to high levels of success
- Children and young people's progress is always tracked and monitored and no one falls behind
- Children and young people understand the pathways open to them. Through our Academies the gates to next steps and phases are opened
- Children and young people, parents and staff feel valued, safe, supported and have a voice
- Children and young people have the best staff and Academy leaders as their role models
- Children and young people enjoy inspirational learning environments which are safe, well maintained and constantly improved
- Children and young people enjoy the best catering and nutrition
- Staff have an entitlement to first class training, coaching and support
- Staff have opportunities to progress from the start of their career onwards
- Employer partners contribute to curriculum design
- Governance is strong, challenging and supportive
- Parents are partners in their children's education
- Children develop skills for the modern workplace
- Children receive extensive information, advice, and guidance to become well rounded adults, who contribute to society as highly employable responsible citizens.

**Our Academies**

Academy Name	Ofsted Rating	Number On Roll
<b>THE DISCOVERY ACADEMY</b> Expect Excellence	Ofsted: Good	1341
<b>The excel academy</b> STAKE-ON-TROE	Ofsted: Good	1114
<b>Eaton Park ACADEMY</b> Eaton Park (1975) A.S. 2017	Ofsted: Good	489
<b>MAPLE COURT ACADEMY</b>	Ofsted: Requires improvement	440
<b>Sneyd Academy</b> LEARN ACHIEVE BELIEVE	Ofsted: Good	550

**Supporting 4000 Children**

## Our Academies

### The Discovery Academy

The Discovery Academy is one of the most improved and fastest growing academies in the area, boasting a £21 million building, world class facilities and belonging to a forward looking Trust who have a number of successful local schools.

The Discovery Academy help students develop ASPIRE skills, values and behaviours. ASPIRE is central to our curriculum vision and our highly motivated staff see learning as a skill for life, opening the door to a world of opportunities and success.



### The Discovery Academy Purpose

“Achieve outstanding academic success for every child whilst developing skills, values and behaviours to lead fulfilling lives”



Comments from Ofsted Report of 2019 include;

*“Leaders know the school well. They identify weaknesses by carefully analysing the available evidence. Consequently, their strategies to address weaknesses are thoughtful, considered and effective.”*

*“All staff are very committed to seeing the school improve further. They form a united and hard-working team.”*

*“A strong culture of care and support exists throughout the school. Consequently, pupils feel safe and are safe in school.”*

## The Excel Academy

The Excel Academy has consistently been one of the highest performing academies in Stoke-on-Trent. Student numbers have increased rapidly due to the success of the Academy and it is now oversubscribed in all years. It is the school of choice in the north of the city and is housed in new build and refurbished buildings.

The Academy was inspected by Ofsted in November 2021 and maintained a 'Good' judgement and is now focused on becoming an outstanding provision.



### The Excel Academy Purpose

“To provide first class education to equip every one of our students regardless of background or circumstance, with the skills, knowledge and attributes to excel in all aspects of their lives.”



Comments from Ofsted Report of 2021 include;

*“Leaders, including governors and trustees, are ambitious for all pupils.... there is a strong sense of community within this school....Staff and pupils talk positively about the ‘Excel way’”*

*“Relationships between pupils and teachers are very strong and based on mutual respect.....Pupils are proud of their school.... They are happy and safe.... pupils behave in a calm and mature manner....they study a wide range of subjects and achieve well”*

## Eaton Park Academy

Eaton Park has consistently been one of the highest performing academies in Stoke-on-Trent for the last few years.

In 2018/19 Eaton Park were the highest performing primary school in Stoke on Trent and for the last two years Eaton Park have been in the top 3% of schools nationally for pupil progress. Student numbers are consistently increasing due to the successes of the Academy and its popularity locally. Eaton Park Academy has around 500 pupils and is one of the larger primaries in Stoke-on-Trent, offering places from Nursery through to Year 6.



The Academy was inspected by Ofsted in March 2019 and maintained a 'Good' judgement, it is now focused on becoming an outstanding provision.

### Eaton Park Academy Purpose

"Carving pathways to success for all regardless of social and academic background."



Comments from Ofsted Report of 2019 include;

*"The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and your team of committed senior leaders have created a motivating and inspiring learning environment in which pupils thrive."*

*"Pupils are proud to attend Eaton Park. They enjoy school and are enthusiastic about their learning. In lessons, pupils work hard and co-operate well with their peers."*

## Expect Excellence

### Maple Court Academy

Maple Court is a large primary academy with almost 500 pupils located in the Bentilee area of Stoke-on-Trent.

Every member of staff in the Academy is fully committed to ensuring that all children work hard, are well supported and make good progress across the curriculum. Ofsted visited the Academy in June 2021 and evaluated rapid progress and good leadership.

Maple Court offers enrichment opportunities through its extra-curricular programme and the many academy visits that it offers. Life skills and confidence continue to grow through its student character development, raising aspiration and ambition by opening up the world to its students.



### Maple Court Academy Purpose

“To develop motivated, inspired, independent children who have a love of learning and are curious to know more.”



Comments from Ofsted Report of 2021 include;

*“The quality of learning is on the up and standards are beginning to rise. Lessons are purposeful, classrooms are calm places in which to learn and staff treat pupils fairly”*

*“Ambitious leadership from trust and school leaders is making its mark. Since the previous inspection, leaders have made expectations clear and lifted everyone’s aspirations. They have injected new purpose to the school through a mix of challenge and support.”*

## Sneyd Academy

Housing almost 600 pupils, Sneyd Academy is one of the largest primary academies in Stoke-on-Trent. It is located in the centre of the city with good access to local facilities such as Central Forest Park and Festival Park. The Academy serves a diverse population from the Sneyd Green, Cobridge and Burslem areas and is very much a school at the heart of its community.



### Sneyd Academy Purpose

“Sneyd Academy is a happy, caring school where all successes are celebrated.”



Comments from Ofsted Report of 2015 include;

*“Governance is strong. Governors share the headteacher’s drive to ensure the best results for pupils.”*

*“The quality of teaching across the school is consistently good, with some that is outstanding.”*

*“Pupils show positive attitudes to learning and make good progress.”*

*“Pupils say that staff and fellow pupils are kind and considerate. As a result, they feel safe and well cared for.”*

**In total, over 4,000 students aged 3-16 years are currently on roll and supported in our Academies. In addition, we employ approximately 525 staff across the Trust.**

## Job Description

This post is subject to an Enhanced DBS Identity Check under the rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974).

Candidates called for interview will be required to provide photographic proof of identity, proof of address and original qualification documents.

## Purpose of the Post

### Main Purpose of the Post

To work flexibly with the Leadership Team and Finance Team, providing support in the administration of the financial arrangements within the Trust. To carry out a number of duties within the Alpha central finance team to ensure the smooth running of the department while always ensuring full adherence to financial policies and procedures.

Providing full support to the Alpha central finance team with purchase ordering, purchase invoicing, sales invoicing, supplier maintenance and month end procedures.

The post holder will be expected to work within established procedures and guidelines and to prioritise day-to-day work.

### Core Responsibilities, Tasks and Duties

#### I. Finance

- Processing purchase orders for goods and services as required by the central team, issuing purchase orders to suppliers in accordance with the Alpha Financial Procedures manual
- Monthly monitoring of outstanding commitments
- Processing invoices for payment to suppliers, ensure invoice are matched to orders and delivery was satisfactory, entering of invoice details onto the finance system.
- To keep up to date with developments amongst suppliers
- Processing of BACS payments to suppliers
- Dealing with general queries with internal and external contacts
- Ensure income received by the Trust is entered onto the finance system
- Processing and reconciling credit card transactions
- Having an overall awareness of the need to match spending to budget, ensuring that all records are kept up to date
- Assisting in the monitoring of expenditure against budget headings.
- Maintenance of finance records and spreadsheets
- Assisting the Head of Finance and Auditor each year in the Academy Finance Audit.
- Processing and reconciling bank transactions
- Prepare journals for minor month- end adjustments (e.g. departmental photocopying/ catering recharges)

II. General

- Retrieval of correspondence through the Trust's e-mail programme, responding to / forwarding emails as necessary.
- Contribute to financial tasks as required, for example collating and preparing financial data for inclusion in reports
- Contribute to the update of the Trusts asset and contracts register
- Provide cover for school-based staff from time to time e.g. to mitigate the impact of sickness absence
- To carry out general office duties as and when required.
- To work under supervision to the mandatory guidelines with the Academies Trust Handbook.

III. Any other duties to ensure the post objectives are met.

IV. Health and Safety

- Ensure a work environment that protects people's health and safety and that promotes welfare and which is in accordance with the Trust Health and Safety policy.

V. Professional Accountability

- The post holder is required to be aware of and comply with policies and procedures relating to child protection, health, safety and security, confidentiality and data protection, reporting all concerns to an appropriate person. In addition, they are to contribute to the achievement of the school's objectives.

VI. Safeguarding

- Promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young persons you are responsible for or come into contact with.

VII. Equalities

- Ensure that all work is completed with a commitment to equality and anti-discriminatory practice, as a minimum to standards required by legislation.

**Declaration**

**The Alpha Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Dated \_\_\_\_\_

Print name \_\_\_\_\_

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

**APPOINTMENT OF: FINANCE OFFICER**

**DEPARTMENT: FINANCE**

Minimum Requirements	Measured by: A) Application B) Test/Exercise C) Interview
<p><b>QUALIFICATIONS/TRAINING:</b></p> <p><b>It is essential that the post holder has:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant and up to date qualifications in keeping with both an office and Academy working context.</li> <li>• Educated to GCSE level, with good grades in Maths and English (C or better/or equivalent)</li> <li>• Evidence of continued, relevant professional development.</li> </ul>	<p><b>A</b></p>
<p><b>EXPERIENCE/KNOWLEDGE:</b></p> <p><b>It is essential that the post holder has:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant experience of providing support to managers</li> <li>• Experience in an Academy or education context is desirable but not essential</li> <li>• Experience of working in a challenging financial environment</li> <li>• Experience of prioritising and planning workloads</li> <li>• Experience of providing financial assistance</li> <li>• Experience of working with computerised finance systems including Word and Excel; PS Financials is an advantage although training can be provided</li> </ul>	<p><b>A &amp; C</b></p>
<p><b>SKILLS AND ABILITIES:</b></p> <p><b>It is essential that the post holder has/is:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to high standards and continuous improvement.</li> <li>• Ability to establish a positive ethos and sense of high achievement for all.</li> <li>• Highly developed interpersonal and communication skills including the effective use of ICT.</li> <li>• Strong negotiating and influencing skills.</li> <li>• High level of numerical and problem-solving skills</li> <li>• Good interpersonal skills with the ability to develop and foster effective working relationships.</li> </ul>	<p><b>A &amp; C</b></p>

## Expect Excellence

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Able to deal with conflicting priorities and work to policy and operation objectives and timescales</li><li>• Ability to meet challenges successfully.</li><li>• Openness to challenge, risk-taking and creative ideas.</li><li>• Can empathise with the needs of students, parents and staff in a firm, consistent manner.</li><li>• Excellent health and attendance record.</li><li>• Positive and optimistic.</li><li>• Pragmatic.</li><li>• Proactive.</li><li>• Resilient when working under pressure.</li><li>• Team player.</li></ul>	
<p><b>ADDITIONAL FACTORS:</b></p> <p><b>It is essential that the post holder is/has/can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A willingness to undertake appropriate training</li><li>• Awareness and sensitivity with regard to equal opportunities and race equality</li><li>• An ability to fulfil all spoken aspects of the role with confidence through the medium of English</li></ul>	<b>C</b>

## How to Apply

The Alpha Academies Trust requires an application form to be completed, please note CV's alone will not be accepted. Should you wish to apply, completed application forms should be sent to [apply@alphaacademiestrust.co.uk](mailto:apply@alphaacademiestrust.co.uk) quoting the job reference number detailed on the front page of this document. Your formal letter of application (supporting statement) should be no longer than 2 sides of A4 and should address:

- Why the post attracts you
- How your experiences and achievements match the job and person specification

**Closing Date for this Post: Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at 9.00am**

**Interview Date: W/C Monday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2022**

Please note, it is the policy of The Alpha Academies Trust to contact shortlisted candidates only.

### Job Description

This tells you the main responsibilities of the post and explains what we are looking for. It tells you about the personal and professional qualities you need for this post. These criteria will be used to make the appointment.

## Academy Location

Discovery Academy: Discovery Drive, Stoke-on-Trent, ST2 0GA

Excel Academy: Milton Road, Sneyd Green, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 6LG

Eaton Park Academy: Arbourfield Drive, Bucknall, Stoke on Trent ST2 9PF.

Maple Court: Beverley Drive, Bentilee, Stoke-on-Trent, ST2 0QD

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Sneyd Academy: Sneyd Street, Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 2NS

## Additional Information

Individuals undergoing Pre-Employment Screening are treated impartially and consistently irrespective of any disability they may have, or of their gender, marital status, age, ethnicity, religious affiliation or sexual orientation.

Please note it is an offence to apply for the role if you are barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children. All employees of the Alpha Academies Trust will be required to undertake an enhanced DBS disclosure check if successfully appointed (unless already registered with the DBS update service) and every 5 years following appointment.

The suitability for employment of a person with a positive DBS disclosure will vary, depending on the nature of the job and the details and circumstances of the cautions/convictions/bandovers. If a positive DBS is received then the Trust will decide whether the individual can be cleared for appointment or whether further investigations are needed.

Ofsted Reports: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Information about Stoke City council: [www.stoke.gov.uk](http://www.stoke.gov.uk)

A copy of the most recent inspection report and copies of the Safeguarding Policy can be found on the Academy website.