



# **Senior Finance Officer**

## **Information for Applicants**

Compass Learning Centre  
307A Chickerell Road, Weymouth, DT4 0QS  
Tel: 01305 – 206530

Email: [office@compass.dorset.sch.uk](mailto:office@compass.dorset.sch.uk)

[www.compass.dorset.sch.uk](http://www.compass.dorset.sch.uk)

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the post of Senior Finance Officer at Compass Learning Centre.

We are looking to appoint a highly motivated and energetic Senior Finance Officer to work with the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team to ensure proper control and planning of the school's finances.

This is an exciting opportunity for a finance management professional who is looking for a new challenge and a career in education finance.

The successful candidate will be responsible for the efficient operation and development of all finance services within the school. Working with the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team you will oversee and manage the day-to-day finances of the school, prepare and submit financial records for examination by the Governing Body and external bodies (eg Local Authority, Ofsted etc), and prepare bids / reports to access external funding streams.

While prior experience in school finance is beneficial, it is not essential as training and support on our financial software will be provided. The ideal candidate should possess a willingness to learn, confidence in Microsoft Word and Excel, excellent organisational skills, a proactive attitude, keen attention to detail, and high self-motivation. Joining our welcoming and supportive team environment, the successful applicant will play a pivotal role in our school community.

We are looking for candidates who:

- Are confident and work well as part of a team;
- Are highly organised and have the ability to work under pressure in order to meet deadlines;
- Are able to present data and information on the school budget and finances to Governors and senior staff;
- Have experience of strategic financial management / planning.
- Can contribute at Governor and leadership meetings
- Are able to work on their own initiative with excellent literacy, numeracy and IT skills, and willingness to work flexibly

The young people we educate have struggled to maintain a place in mainstream school and come to us with a variety of additional needs. Our challenge is to help them build the confidence, knowledge and skills to unlock their potential. If you are a good team player, who is motivated, patient, resilient, understanding and this may be the job for you. You will be joining an outstanding, hardworking and friendly team of staff.

If you think this post could be for you then come and visit us – see what we're about and how we work, or give us a call to discuss the post further.

Please contact Michelle Nokes, Heads PA in the first instance –

Tel: 01305 – 206530

email: [m.nokes@compass.dorset.sch.uk](mailto:m.nokes@compass.dorset.sch.uk).

**NB: The school closes for the half term holiday on Friday 24 May.**

The closing date for receipt of applications is **Midnight on Sunday 2 June 2024.**

**Alison Glazier**

**Headteacher**

**Compass Learning Centre**

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## **Information About Compass Learning Centre:**

Compass Learning Centre is a 'good school' (Ofsted May 2019) and a successful Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), part of the Alternative Provision (AP) in education. It is fully supported by a committed Management Committee who work closely with the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team. The Pupil Admission Number (PAN) is currently 67. The number of students on roll varies throughout the year dependent on the number of referrals from schools within the Weymouth and Portland area and from Dorset Council.

Students who attend Compass Learning Centre predominantly experience difficulties engaging in a mainstream school and come to us with a variety of additional needs. The centre caters for students who have been permanently excluded from a mainstream school, individuals with medical conditions that prevent attendance at mainstream schools and a few students without access to regular education. A number of students are admitted with an Education Health Care Plan, a few are in the care of the local authority and others attend for a fixed period of time on a Dual Registration basis. We serve the wider West Dorset community, however the majority of students who attend Compass come from the Weymouth and Portland area.

Some students follow short-term, work-related social development or resilience building courses at Rylands Farm, Max Events, A-Z and Weymouth Sailing Academy. All students are offered full-time programmes. However, the time spent in school is tailored to meet individual students' needs.

## **Safeguarding:**

Compass Learning Centre is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people; this is a commitment which we expect all staff and volunteers to share. The successful candidate will be required to have a Disclosure & Barring Service check in line with the Governments safer recruitment guidelines. We value the diversity of our workforce and welcome applications from all sectors of the community.

Please ensure that your application is completed in full, listing all qualifications from secondary school up to the most recent qualifications gained and a full employment history is stated from school until present day.

Compass Learning Centre will conduct online searches of shortlisted candidates. This check will be part of a safeguarding check, and the search will purely be based on whether an individual is suitable to work with children. As care must be taken to avoid unconscious bias and any risk of discrimination a person who will not be on the appointment panel will conduct the search and will only share information if and when findings are relevant and of concern.

## About the Local Area:

Compass Learning Centre is situated in the coastal town of Weymouth in the heart of the Jurassic Coast. The town has long been a popular holiday destination – holidaymakers have been flocking to this corner of Dorset since King George III was a regular visitor more than 200 years ago. Weymouth's central position also makes it a great base from which to visit the Jurassic Coast, with much of the coastline in both directions easily accessible.

There is plenty to keep everyone in the family busy. Nearby Portland Harbour is home to the Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy, which was host to the sailing events of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, with water borne activities plentiful. The town has a football, rugby and cricket club, together with sports and leisure centres and a choice of golf clubs in the surrounding areas. There are plenty of opportunities to explore the great outdoors whether it's walking, hiking, cycling or just a gentle stroll along the Georgian Esplanade which forms the backdrop to Weymouth Beach.

There are plenty of restaurants, bars and entertainment venues within the town including the Weymouth Pavillions theatre. The town hosts many events throughout the year including the popular 'Seafest - Dorset Sea Food Festival'. If you want to travel a little further afield, the rolling hills of Exmoor and the market towns of Bridport, Axminster and Honiton are to the west, with Swanage, Bournemouth and Poole to the East.



## What We Can Offer You:

Compass Learning Centre is a very special place to work and our staff have very special qualities. They are kind, caring and genuinely want our students to achieve their very best.

As a small school, our staff work very closely together and we set great store on positive professional relationships. Our staffing levels vary between 28 and 35 full and part-time members of both teaching and support staff dependent on our student numbers. Class numbers are small with each class having a dedicated Teaching Assistant.

We are committed to your professional development and there are opportunities to work in partnership with colleagues locally across the Weymouth and Portland area and with other Learning Centres in Dorset. To assist with the understanding of our students we offer specialist behaviour and classroom management CPD within a supportive environment with experienced professionals to guide practice.

In addition, Compass Learning Centre takes the wellbeing of its staff seriously and operates in a culture of mutual respect, trust and compassion that recognises the importance of a work-life balance.

By joining Compass Learning Centre, you become part of a school which recognises the uniqueness of each and every learner and ensures they have access to opportunities that will offer a high quality, flexible alternative provision route, which leads to achievement and accreditation enabling them to successfully take their next steps in life.



### **Equality and Diversity:**

Compass Learning Centre recognises that by valuing and promoting equal opportunities in employment for all employees and job applicants and avoiding unlawful discrimination in employment and delivery of services, we will be able to deliver first class education.

We aim to create a working environment in which all individuals are able to make best use of their skills, free from discrimination or harassment, and in which all decisions are based on merit. We also value diversity and recognise the varied contributions that a diverse workforce brings to an organisation; we are committed to drawing on different perspectives and experiences of individuals, which will add value to what we do.

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## Compass Learning Centre

### Senior Finance Officer Job Description

<b>Dorset Council Job Reference:</b>	XS 5.1
<b>Salary Grade:</b>	Grade 8 – points 12 - 20: £26,421- £30,296 PA (Full Time Equivalent – Pay Award Pending)
<b>Reports to:</b>	Headteacher / Senior Leadership Team or other nominated person

#### Main job purpose:

To work with the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to ensure proper control and planning of the school's finance as a whole and the individual budget heads. To operate within the terms of Dorset Council's scheme of financial delegation to schools and Dorset Council's standing orders and regulations.

#### Main responsibilities and duties:

- Advising the Headteacher and SLT on the short and medium term financial status of the school and its component services on a regular basis.
- Developing and maintaining financial and other systems to ensure the quality and accuracy of financial information to supplement that provided by Dorset Council's Financial Management System.
- With the Headteacher and SLT (and chairperson of the Governor's Finance Committee), develop appropriate financial plans as required for submission to and approval by Governors / Chair of Finance / budget heads.
- Managing a small finance team and determining their work.
- Ensuring orders and payments are made in compliance with Dorset Council's financial standing orders.
- Ensuring compliance with Dorset Council's Scheme of Delegation to schools.
- Managing the funds, grants and other income additional to Dorset Council delegated funds.
- Prepare the financial records of the school for examination by external bodies (eg: Ofsted, Auditors etc).
- Together with the Headteacher and SLT, preparation and submissions of detailed bids / reports to access external funding streams and thereafter to repeat separately to Governors / External Bodies as necessary.
- Liaising with Officers of the Education and Resources Directorates.
- Promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection policy.

#### Knowledge and skills:

- The postholder must have experience of effective financial management and accountancy.
- Possession of a recognised accountancy qualification would be an advantage, as would knowledge and experience of education funding arrangements.

### **Supervision and management:**

- The postholder may be required to supervise between 1-5 finance based staff.
- The postholder will often be required to work without direct supervision.

### **Problem solving and creativity:**

- To deal with changing and conflicting deadlines and frequent interruptions to work, supervision of staff and allocation of work.
- Frequently deal with non-routine queries and forwarding matter to appropriate staff where necessary.

### **Contacts and relationships:**

- Daily contact by telephone / face-to-face with Headteacher / SLT / staff.
- Regular contact with Senior Governors (Chair and Committee Chairs) / Dorset Council officers.
- Other contact with DFE and other central Government officials, locally elected council members, examinations bodies and charities may form an additional feature of the work of the postholder. Occasional contact with students / parents and carers.

### **Decision making:**

- Work to deadlines; to prioritise own workload and allocation of duties to other team members.

### **Resources:**

Office PC, scanner, printer and other computer related peripherals.

### **Working environment:**

Busy office environment.

### **Approved by:**

**Chris Matthews,  
Dorset Council Pay & Reward Manager  
January 2005**



Due to the nature of our establishment, there may be occasions where you will need to travel other schools / venues for meetings etc, therefore access to a vehicle and the associated business use insurance is desirable.

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*Please note that this list of duties is illustrative of the general nature and level of responsibility of the role. It is not a comprehensive list of all tasks that the Senior Finance Officer will carry out. The postholder may be required to do other duties appropriate to the level of the role, as directed by the Headteacher.*





## Compass Learning Centre

### Senior Finance Officer Person Specification

CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	ASSESSMENT / EVIDENCED (APPLICATION, REFERENCES, DOCUMENTS (ORIGINALS) SELECTION TASK, INTERVIEW)
<b>Qualifications and training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum 5 GCSE's (or equivalent) including Maths &amp; English at Grade 4 / C or above (or equivalent)</li> <li>• Recognised accountancy or professional qualification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant degree and / or professional qualification at Level 4 or above</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application</li> <li>• Documents</li> <li>• Interview</li> </ul>
<b>Experience Skills and knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to relate well to others.</li> <li>• Knowledge of financial management, financial regulations and good financial practice and planning</li> <li>• The ability to make a strategic contribution to the school leadership team</li> <li>• Strong analytical skills to interpret a range of legislation and regulations and experience of developing innovative solutions to complex issues</li> <li>• Ability to drive forward change and motivate staff.</li> <li>• Ability to effectively present complex written and verbal information to a variety of audiences (internal and external)</li> <li>• The capacity for sound judgement in complex situations.</li> <li>• Ability to work under pressure and to tight deadlines.</li> <li>• The flexibility to adapt to changing workloads, demands and new school challenges</li> <li>• Excellent communication, negotiation and persuasion skills, with internal and external audiences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of working in a school environment.</li> <li>• Experience of working for an organization with large financial responsibilities, along with successful experience of a range of income generation activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application</li> <li>• Interview</li> </ul>

<b>Personal qualities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to promoting the ethos and values of the school and getting the best outcomes for all students</li> <li>• Commitment to acting with integrity, honesty, loyalty and fairness to safeguard the assets, financial probity and reputation of the school</li> <li>• Ability to work under pressure and prioritise effectively</li> <li>• Commitment to maintaining confidentiality at all times</li> <li>• Commitment to safeguarding and equality</li> <li>• Embraces change well</li> <li>• Deals with difficult situations calmly and effectively</li> <li>• Understands the demands of school life; flexibility or working patters and out of hours activities</li> <li>• Adhere to the Nolan Principles of Public life –</li> <li>• (Selflessness, Integrity Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application</li> <li>• Interview</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Driving licence, use of a vehicle and associated business use insurance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application</li> <li>• Documents</li> </ul>

May 2024