

Recruitment Pack
School Business Manager
Ponteland High School

Job Advert

Band 8 (SCP 29 - 33): £38,626 - £42,708 (pay award pending) Full time, all year round, To start as soon as possible
--

We're looking for someone brilliant.

Someone who gets things done. Someone with the ability to build trust and confidence across teams and who leads with clarity and calm.

This is a key appointment for Pele Trust. We're recruiting a School Business Manager to join our central team, deployed to Ponteland High School in a role that is both practical and strategic.

You'll be fully embedded in the life of the school, working closely with the Headteacher and senior leadership team, while also being part of a wider network of professionals across our central trust team. The role carries a dotted line to the Chief Operating Officer and comes with the backing and support of our wider Trust team.

Your remit will be wide and varied encompassing school-level finance, resources management, HR, estates, compliance and more. It's a role for someone who enjoys the challenge of juggling priorities, solving problems and making things work better for everyone.

We are looking for a strong operational leader - someone who knows how to bring people with them, who understands that good systems and great people are what make schools work.

We don't expect perfection, but we do want to work with someone who is agile, collaborative, emotionally intelligent, decisive and always learning. If that sounds like you, then we'd love to hear from you.

To apply

Please send a completed application form, which you can find [here](#), and a covering letter of no more than two sides of A4 outlining your suitability for the role to c.leightley@peletrust.org.uk by 12 noon on Tuesday 5 August.

Prospective candidates are welcome to visit the school to get a feel for the role in context. Visits can be arranged for Thursday 17 July or on request during the summer holiday; to book please contact us directly at the email above. Interviews will take place week commencing 11 August 2025.

The successful applicant will be subject to full enhanced disclosure checks. References for shortlisted candidates will be sought in advance of interview so please ensure that your referees are aware of possible requests. Pre-appointment checks, in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education, will be undertaken in advance of interview.

Welcome from the Chief Operating Officer

Dear Applicant

Thank you for taking an interest in this opportunity. I know job packs often say roles are "key appointments" but this one really is. Our School Business Managers are the people who keep our schools running smoothly, and our Headteacher's rely on their support every single day.

We are looking for someone who has that rare combination of a broad range of sharp operational skills and the emotional intelligence to lead, support and influence others. You'll be the point of contact in school on HR, compliance, estates, absence management and cover arrangements and recruitment as well as have oversight of a significant school budget - generally speaking you'll be the person people turn to when they want to figure out how to make something work.

School Business Managers work directly with Headteachers but also have a dotted line accountability into the central team, which means regular support, shared practice, and access to a professional network across our fourteen schools.

What makes this role so unique is the sheer variety of it. You'll be juggling multiple demands, shifting priorities, and solving problems you didn't see coming. Some of them are serious and complex as you'd expect in a large, high-performing organisation but others are wonderfully unpredictable: I'd challenge you to find another role where one minute you might be dealing with a complex staffing matter and the next considering whether its safe to allow the Drama department to suspend a student from the lighting rig during a performance of Peter Pan.

The point is you need to be calm, capable, and have the judgement to know what needs your attention now, and what can wait. That's why we're looking for someone with broad experience, ideally in a school, but not necessarily. What matters more is your ability to lead, adapt and deliver.

We don't expect you to be an expert in everything, but we do expect a level of professional pride in doing things well. And in return, we'll give you a supportive and ambitious environment where you can thrive.

If this sounds like the right role, at the right time then we can't wait to read your application.

Kind regards
Claire Leightley
Chief Operating Officer



Welcome from the Headteacher

Thank you for taking the time to explore this opportunity to join our school community.

At Ponteland High School, our overriding aim is simple: we want all of our students to be happy, feel safe and achieve exceptionally well. Everything we do from the way we teach to the way we run the school day-to-day is designed to support that goal.

I am proud of our school and the calm, purposeful atmosphere that pervades all areas. Since becoming an 11–18 school in 2019 and moving into our state-of-the-art building in 2020, we've continued to grow and develop.

The School Business Manager is a key post within our leadership and operational team. While this is a strategic role, it is also closely tied to the everyday reality of school life. From oversight of the school estate, to supporting HR, compliance and wider operations, the School Business Manager plays a vital role in ensuring our school continues to run smoothly and successfully.

I am looking for someone who is experienced, level-headed and confident in managing competing priorities. Someone who can bring clarity and calm, lead and support teams effectively, and help us plan ahead in a fast-moving environment.

Ponteland High is a fantastic place to work. Our students are ambitious, curious and full of character, and our staff are deeply committed to their work and to each other. If you share our values and want to make a real difference, we'd be delighted to hear from you.

With best wishes,
Stefan McElwee
Headteacher, Ponteland High School

Job Description

Job Purpose:

To contribute to continuously improving the effectiveness and performance of the school by:

- Ensuring the effective oversight and delivery of the school budget and associated project budgets.
- Establishing, developing and implementing mechanisms for the promotion of partnership and communication mechanisms with all stakeholders.
- Developing information sources and systems relevant to the work of the school.
- Developing, co-ordinating, implementing and monitoring policy and performance management.
- To promote the highest standards of business ethos within the administrative function of the school and strategically ensure the most effective use of resources in support of the school's learning objectives.
- To be responsible for the Financial Resource Management/Administration Management/Facility & Property Management/ Health & Safety Management of the school as directed by the Headteacher or Chief Operating Officer.

Duties and key result areas:

Budget Management

1. To be responsible for the effective day to day oversight and operation of the school budget and separate project budgets.
2. To monitor the delivery and progress of projects, in terms of financial performance and outputs, taking responsibility for remedial action, if necessary, in agreement with Headteacher/Chief Operating Officer, deliveries and funding partners.
3. To evaluate and advise on best value with relation to service level agreements and all contracts.
4. To be responsible for identifying efficiencies, income generation, external funding opportunities and ensuring the overall smooth running of all business.
5. To ensure that secure financial procedures are in place and meet the requirements for internal and external assessment

Marketing & Communication

6. To represent school on external bodies and partnerships.
7. To manage all communication activity to support the effective and efficient governance and delivery of the school's core business.
8. To support the school in achieving its strategic aims, through a range of media and events, including the production of other publicity and information.

9. To continually develop and promote the profile of the school through social media, websites, newsletters and other stakeholder communications.
10. To ensure effective running of the school's website and associated micro-sites, ensuring all partners realise its value in terms of information provision and promotion of the School, Partnerships, business, programmes and projects across the activity spectrum.

Information Management

11. To determine the research and information needs of the school and continuously develop a range of information sources and databases relevant to the core business e.g. management information systems, government websites, local authority databases and single central record
12. To establish, develop and implement an effective, efficient and user-friendly information management system, to record baseline information regarding school provision, activities and quality standards.

Performance Management

13. To lead performance management activity for accountable teams, supporting the effective and efficient governance and delivery of school core business as directed by the Headteacher.
14. To contribute to the performance management systems and to play a leading role, with the other members of the Leadership Team in proactively preparing for external inspections
15. To contribute to the development and implementation of service standards and continuous improvement.

Facility and Property Management/Health & Safety

16. Manage the maintenance of the school site through line management of the site team.
17. Ensure the continuing availability of utilities, site services and equipment.
18. Follow sound practices in estate management and grounds maintenance whilst monitoring and accessing the contractual obligations for outsourced school services.
19. Manage the letting of school premises to external organisations, for the development of the extended services and local community requirements.
20. Ensure systems are in place for effective monitoring, measuring and reporting of health and safety issues to the Headteacher, Trust, Academy Committee and where appropriate the Health and Safety Executive

General

21. To support the Headteacher in developing school events and to look at the future progress of the school, paying particular attention to the demographic of the school catchment area and planning for the peaks and troughs.
22. To support the Headteacher in delivering robust and personalised people management systems, in accordance with Trust policies and practice.
23. To support and engage in any regional/nationally relevant and work related event or activity.
24. To prepare reports for Trust and stakeholders, as requested by the Headteacher or COO.
25. Conduct staff appraisals, allocate individual work objectives to reflect the service plan, identify training and development needs and prepare skills and workforce plans.
26. To oversee staff absence management and manage cover for the school.
27. To oversee the recruitment process for staff.
28. To be an outward-facing member of the senior leadership team at school events.
29. Other duties appropriate to the nature, level and grade of the post.

The duties and responsibilities highlighted in this Job Description are indicative and may vary over time. Post holders are expected to undertake other duties and responsibilities relevant to the nature, level and extent of the post and the grade has been established on this basis.

Work Arrangements

Transport requirements: Travel to work sites, area offices, meetings or other venues as required on occasion

Working patterns: Usually Monday to Friday during term time, an 8 hour day between 0800 and 1700. Some evenings to support parents evening or governance meetings.

Working conditions: Mainly office based but some travel required.
Mainly indoors. Occasional exposure to working outdoors.

Please note that successful applicants will be required to comply with all trust policies.

Person Specification

<p>Post Title: School Business Manager</p>	<p>SG67</p>
<p>Essential</p>	<p>Desirable</p>
<p>Be educated to Degree Level or equivalent level of experience in a large organisation.</p> <p>Relevant Professional Qualification</p>	<p>Post Graduate qualification in Management or related areas.</p>
<p>Have substantial experience in a service operation, financial, human resources, or information management role.</p> <p>Manage systems for measuring performance, assuring quality linked to customer needs/organisational targets.</p> <p>Preparation of clear and concise reports, including recommendations. Devising and delivering on action plans.</p> <p>Experience of managing staff, budgets and physical resources.</p>	<p>Successful application of quality assurance models. Development of communications strategies within a multi-agency/partnership environment.</p> <p>Experience of working with local media.</p> <p>Development of web based applications of performance management systems.</p> <p>Working in partnership with a range of organisations on multi-agency projects.</p>
<p>Have excellent communication and interpersonal skills.</p> <p>Have excellent organisational skills and knowledge of systems which facilitate achievement of performance and quality goals.</p> <p>Good IT skills.</p> <p>Be able to work collaboratively with partners. Customer focused approach.</p>	

<p>Be methodical/accurate/thorough, but with the ability to be innovative and creative, in order to inspire team members/partners.</p> <p>Adept at planning and prioritising resources, including own time Able to listen, consult with others and communicate clearly.</p> <p>Be skilled in writing clear and logical reports.</p>	
<p>Manage pressures from conflicting deadlines and frequent interruptions.</p> <p>Be emotionally resilient</p>	
<p>Customer led.</p> <p>Committed to continuous improvement.</p> <p>Able to work alone with minimum supervision.</p> <p>Team player.</p>	
<p>Ability to develop and deliver clear work programmes and targets.</p>	<p>Assertive - able to communicate effectively at all levels</p>

Why Work for Pele Trust

Introduction

Pele Trust is a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) formed in February 2019. Currently a group of fourteen schools in Northumberland and North Tyneside, eleven primary and three secondary schools serving pupils aged 3 - 18, we came together through a mutual desire to provide the best educational experience for the pupils in our Trust.

Our mission

To build a learning community, brought together by choice, that enables our schools to support and challenge each other to provide consistently outstanding education whilst offering a more certain and stable pathway for students, parents and staff.

To have an influential voice contributing to the development and enrichment of education in the north-east of England.

Our vision

To be a learning community where everyone ...

- is happy to be
- learns and improves
- is known well and valued for who they are
- has a place
- is fulfilled
- consistently experiences a rich, stimulating and challenging learning environment
- strives for excellence in all they do
- treats others with respect, dignity and courtesy at all times
- contributes positively to the improvement of all of our schools
- recognises the important partnership between parents and school

Our Values

Pele Trust is founded upon values at both Trust and School level

1. Our schools are each driven by a set of explicit values that guide and shape the culture and ethos
2. We are committed to pursuing excellence in a manner that we can be proud of and that values every child equally
3. We are committed to acting with integrity and honesty in all of our decision making
4. We are committed to operating with openness and transparency and welcome the benefits of peer review and external scrutiny

5. We are committed to making a positive contribution to the development of the Trust and recognise that we will receive support and challenge in return
6. We believe that all individuals should be treated with compassion and kindness
7. We are optimistic in our outlook and see a positive future for our schools and pupils as we work together to meet the challenges ahead
8. We believe that leaders at all levels should demonstrate humility and a sense of service to others
9. We will seek to uphold and model the Nolan principles of public life, namely: selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; and leadership

Structure and Governance

The structure of Pele Trust comprises three levels:

- Board of Directors
- Academy Committees
- Executive Leadership Team.

The aim of the management structure is to devolve responsibility and encourage involvement in decision making at all levels.

Further information about Pele Trust, including Director profiles, statutory reports and links to individual school websites can be found on the Pele Trust website

<https://www.peletrust.org.uk/governance/>

Directors

The Directors are responsible for setting general policy, adopting an annual development plan, setting the annual budget, trust wide budget monitoring and making major decisions about the direction of the MAT, capital expenditure and senior staff appointments.

Academy Committees

The management of individual school's is delegated by the Directors to the Academy Committee (AC) whose role is to:

- Maintain an overview and keep the Directors properly informed of the conduct and progress of the Academy
- Act as a critical friend to the Headteacher and staff of the Academy
- Be accountable to the Directors, parents and the wider community for the AC's actions and the Academy's overall performance

Executive Leadership Team

Comprising the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, two Deputy Chief Executive Officers, School Improvement Lead and all Headteachers, the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) operates at an executive level implementing the policies defined by the Directors and managing operational school business.

Each school has its own senior and middle leadership teams which may include Deputy Headteachers, Assistant Headteachers, Heads of Department/Faculty, Phase Leaders and Pastoral Leaders. These managers support Headteachers in the day to day operation of the schools, in particular organising the teaching staff, facilities and students.

Central Services

The Central Services team provides financial, administrative and business management support to all schools in the Trust.

Terms and conditions

Pele Trust adopts NJC terms and conditions which includes 26 days annual leave per year, rising to 31 days after 5 years service and nationally agreed paycales. Pele Trust people policies are employee and family centric and Professional Support Staff have access to the Local Government Pension Scheme with highly attractive employer contribution rates.