



Chessbrook

Education Support Centre

Courage | Pride | Resilience

Candidate Brief

**School Business
Manager**

Chessbrook ESC

Tolpits Lane

Watford

Hertfordshire

WD18 6LJ

Telephone: 01923 212025

www.chessbrook.herts.sch.uk

Chessbrook ESC is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and visitors to share this commitment. All post holders are subject to a satisfactory full enhanced, with list checks, Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS).

As an equal opportunities employer, Chessbrook ESC is committed to the equal treatment of all current and prospective employees and does not condone discrimination on the basis of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, gender identity, or marriage and civil partnership.

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Welcome from the Executive Headteacher



Dear Applicant,

Welcome to Chessbrook ESC: Empowering Schools and Families in South West Hertfordshire. I am delighted you have chosen to apply for the post of **School Business Manager**, this is an exciting time to be joining our school.

At Chessbrook we are dedicated to fostering success and providing exceptional support to our network of schools and families across South West Hertfordshire. Each year we proudly serve around 1,400 children and young people by working together with their families, guiding them all towards brighter futures.

Our core values - Courage, Pride and Resilience (CPR) - are the foundation of everything we do. Many students join us with negative educational experiences, feelings of rejection, and a disconnection from learning. Through our CPR values students build confidence, capability and perseverance, reigniting their passion for education.

In March 2022 the government's green paper on Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) an Alternative Provision recognised Chessbrook's outstanding contributions to students, families and schools. Our role in developing the Alternative Provision Toolkit highlighted our exceptional practices, showcasing us as a notable case study.

Following this we were invited to Westminster to share our insights on reducing permanent exclusions through early intervention. The CEO of a leading Alternative Provision Multi Academy Trust expressed his intention to adopt the 'Chessbrook Model' across his schools, underscoring the excellence of our approach.

Chessbrook offers timely, tailored support enabling most students to continue their education in mainstream schools. For those with more complex needs, we provide an ambitious and personalised curriculum at our centre.

Our high level of pastoral care includes assigning each student a dedicated Personal Learning Mentor to support them throughout their time at Chessbrook. We maintain exceptionally high standards and expectations, and are committed to educating, challenging and inspiring our young people to achieve their aspirations.

Courage | Pride | Resilience

Our motivated and expertly trained staff work diligently to identify and address gaps in students' development and learning, ensuring every student receives the support they need from the moment they arrive. Families immediately experience the warmth and robust support network we offer. Our goal is for all students to attain the qualification and experiences necessary to progress to the next stage of their educational journey and into adulthood.

To explore more about what we have to offer please browse our website:

www.chessbrook.herts.sch.uk

If you would like to arrange an informal visit or have any questions about the role please contact Suzanne Briscall on the main school telephone number 01923 212025.

With best wishes

Steve McShannon
Executive Headteacher



Our Values & Ethos



Courage	Pride	Resilience
<p>Chessbrook students exemplify courage and a willingness to explore new lessons, engage in various activities, and establish connections with both fellow students and staff.</p> <p>Within our broad curriculum, we extend opportunities for our Key Stage 3 (KS3) students to cultivate courage. This curriculum combines practical and academic elements, nurturing a genuine passion for learning from an early stage. Simultaneously, within our Key Stage 4 (KS4) programme, students actively participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award, which pushes them out of their comfort zones to embrace novel challenges. This award not only encourages our KS4 students to try new things but also complements their leadership development, fostering the confidence to communicate effectively with their younger peers and staff.</p>	<p>Recognising and taking pride in students' achievements holds significant importance and at Chessbrook, we keenly observe the distinctive skills, talents, and attributes of our students, even those they might not always recognise in themselves. Within our lessons, we actively work to nurture and enhance these talents. As students gather the courage to share their unique experiences, our dedicated staff create opportunities to further develop and celebrate them.</p> <p>Chessbrook is committed to valuing and acknowledging the diverse accomplishments of every individual in various forms. Our annual awards evening serves as a platform to highlight and celebrate these achievements, fostering a strong sense of pride within our community.</p>	<p>Navigating life as a young person can be quite demanding, and at our school, we place a strong emphasis on the importance of resilience in every aspect of our approach. Our curriculum is designed to be both exciting and challenging and we support students to be resilient in order to achieve success. We have exceptionally high standards because we firmly believe that they are the key to long-term success.</p> <p>In addition to our aspirational environment, we incorporate inspiring stories into our circle time sessions. These stories come from our own staff or guest speakers, who share their experiences of how they've had to embrace the value of resilience in their own lives. These narratives serve as powerful sources of motivation, allowing our students to learn from real-life examples and gain insights into the practical application of resilience.</p>

Working at Chessbrook

Locality

Chessbrook is situated 1.8 miles from Watford town centre. Transport links are good, with access to public transport, major roads and the M25 is only a few miles away. Watford town centre offers many sports, leisure and arts facilities, an extensive shopping centre and a good range of accommodation, including flats and houses to rent.



Development

Chessbrook has an excellent, well-qualified team of staff who are dedicated to their own professional development and the development of others. We actively encourage staff to undertake CPD and have a programme of weekly sessions through the academic year. All staff have access to The National College and can request to undertake external CPD.



Wellbeing

Chessbrook has an established wellbeing programme for staff with an active committee who deliver a variety of events throughout the academic year. We have signed up to the Education Staff Wellbeing Charter and are fully committed to supporting our staff.



About the role

This is a unique and exciting opportunity to join our exceptional school. We are looking for a part-time or full-time School Business Manager who thrives working in a dynamic, fast-paced environment. The successful candidate will join our outstanding team to support the growing demands of our extended services and the alternative provision offer within South West Herts.

We are looking for somebody who:

- Is an experienced School Business Manager
- Is motivated by supporting the positive wellbeing of others
- Enjoys the challenge of supporting and developing children and young people
- Builds strong positive relationships with students, staff and outside professionals
- Enjoys partnering with colleagues across the school community and externally
- Has exceptional communication and interpersonal skills and a 'can-do' attitude
- Is willing to undertake CPD and training relevant to the post and the development of the organisation

We can offer:

- An inspiring and happy school environment, with a highly skilled and supportive team of staff
- A commitment to personal and professional development, with a vast range of CPD opportunities
- Opportunities to develop professionally as part of our Associates Programme
- A rewarding post with the opportunity to be part of an exceptional team
- Opportunities to expand your professional networks through our collaborative approach
- A supportive Management Committee who work in partnership with the school community
- A package of support for your health and wellbeing (EAP and Occupational Health)
- Free use of our onsite gym
- A free annual flu vaccination
- Free onsite parking
- Access to professional 1:1 coaching
- Membership to the Teacher Pension Scheme / Local Government Pension Scheme
- HCC Cycle to Work scheme
- Active Staff Wellbeing Committee

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Job Description

Job Title	School Business Manager
Department	Business and Operations
Reports to	Executive Headteacher
Salary Grade / Range	HCC-H8 - H9 (depending on experience and qualifications)
Contract type	Permanent

Job Outline

The School Business Manager holds a key post of responsibility within the school. Reporting directly to the Executive Headteacher, they are responsible for ensuring all business & finance aspects of the school run efficiently and effectively.

This will include:

- The promotion of the school aims and ethos
- Assisting in the monitoring and evaluation of performance and process
- Ensuring specific day-to-day functions of the school run smoothly
- Establishing good working relationships with all stakeholder and external agencies
- Planning, developing and delivery of the support function for the school
- Management of the school finances and budget

Duties and Responsibilities

Strategic leadership and management:

- To lead with the Executive Headteacher on finance, ICT, premises management, whole-school administration and marketing
- Produce timely and fully costed proposals for school improvement and development, ensuring they are sustainable through long-term financial plans
- Ensure an effective link between the school budget plan and the school development plan to achieve sustainable school improvement
- Ensure the school makes the best possible use of resources through effective planning, considering all financial and other resource implications
- Understand the implications of government policies an educational trends and developments
- Plan for and implement new initiatives as appropriate for the school
- Provide strategic support to the Executive Headteacher and Management Committee (Governors) on all aspects of school business & finance management
- Lead in the training and development of financial, administrative and premises staff
- Ensure staff work effectively together
- Take an active role in coordinating and managing the relationship of the interested parties and agencies involved in delivering effective extended school services. These include

students, parents/carers, school staff, the Local Authority, voluntary sector and national or regional organisations such as the police and health service

Responsibilities in relation to financial resource management, working with the Finance Assistant:

- Prepare the annual estimates of income and expenditure for approval by the Executive Headteacher and Management Committee
- Obtain agreement of budgets and monitor them against accounts
- Prepare regular management accounts for budget holders and report on the financial state of the school to the Management Committee
- Advise the Executive Headteacher and Management Committee on investment and financial policy, preparing appraisals for particular projects and developing a long-term business plan or financial strategy for the future development of the school
- Work with the Senior Leadership Team and the Management Committee to ensure that correct and robust financial controls and procedures are in place and the school complies with all the regulations and procedures within the LEA Finance for Schools procedures and meets requirements of School Financial Values Standard (SFVS)
- Use financial management information to analyse trends and identify opportunities for greater efficiency
- Manage the school accounting function effectively to agreed procedures, and maintain those procedures by conducting at least an annual review
- Monitor all accounting procedures and resolve any problems, including:
 - Ordering, processing and payment for all goods and services provided to the school
 - Operation of all bank accounts, ensuring that a full reconciliation to trial balance is undertaken at least once per month
 - Maintaining an assets register, preparation of invoices and collection of fees
- Prepare quarterly returns and year end accounts
- Provide detailed management accounts for the Management Committee and Executive Headteacher according to agreed schedule, reporting immediately any exceptional variances
- Prepare all financial returns for any authorised external agencies
- Liaise with the LEA, bank, auditors, Management Committee members and financial advisers
- Attend relevant Management Committee meetings and present appropriate reports
- Use financial management information, especially benchmarking tools to identify areas of relative spend, assess trends and compare spending with similar schools. Advise the Senior Leadership Team and Management Committee accordingly
- Liaise with and provide all information required by the internal auditor and implement any recommendations
- Oversee the preparation and audit of the final account for the school fund

Bids, contracts and funding streams:

- To lead the development of income generation within the ethos of the school and ensure best value principles are adopted. Seek grants, write bids and develop trading services to fund school projects, including building improvements
- Apply for LEA funding as appropriate such as high needs funding
- Negotiate, manage and monitor contracts, tenders and agreements for the provision of support services, including Service Level Agreements (SLA)
- Seek professional advice on insurance and advise the Executive Headteacher and Management Committee on the appropriate insurances for the school. Implement the approved insurances and handle any claims that arise

Health and Safety, facility and premises management:

- To be responsible to the Executive Headteacher and Management Committee for the maintenance and upkeep of the school buildings and grounds to ensure a high-quality environment
- To take the lead on compiling and implementing a Premises Development plan, including energy conservation and accessibility
- Plan, implement and project manage new capital projects, including all financial requirements
- Formulate, monitor and implement the school's health and safety policy and all site policies and risk assessments. Ensure compliance with the requirements of all relevant legislation concerning health and safety at work (including fire, asbestos and legionella) and how they relate to students, staff, visitors, contractors and other users of the school premises and facilities
- Establish and follow sound practices in managing the premises to ensure the upkeep of the school grounds
- Ensure ancillary services, such as cleaning are monitored and managed effectively and high standards are achieved
- Have oversight of the maintenance and cleaning of the site (grounds and building) to ensure the efficient operation of all facilities on the property, and that all statutory health and safety checks are undertaken and recorded
- Take responsibility for ensuring all regulations concerning fire practices and the reporting and recording of accidents are followed and the testing of all alarms, fire equipment and security alarms meets statutory requirements
- Have oversight of the security of the school site, and the day-to-day running of the building
- Oversee the procurement, repair and maintenance of all furniture, fixtures and fittings
- Oversee the school asset register and disposal of good no longer fit for purpose
- Contribute to be a central point of contact for the school's emergency plan (critical incident plan) and recovery plan, and to operate the elements linked to resource management responsibility
- Negotiate, manage and monitor contracts, tenders and agreements as appropriate
- Be responsible for the quality of work by contractors, site and cleaning staff, reporting to the Executive Headteacher and Management Committee as appropriate
- Manage the letting of the school premises to outside organisations and for the development of all school facilities for out-of-hours use
- Know the elements of fire safety and the associated risks to the school through the process of risk assessment
- Act as the school's Health and Safety Leader and be responsible for management of health and safety within the school

Personnel:

The HR and Payroll functions at Chessbrook rest with the HR Lead. The School Business Manager will:

- Reconcile monthly payroll with the school budget
- Ensure the budget accurately reflects staff grades and salaries

Responsibilities in relation to whole school administration:

The Administrative functions at Chessbrook rest with the Office Manager. The School Business Manager will:

- Develop a medium and long term strategic IT plan for classroom, administration and financial infrastructure and provision, identifying and assessing new technologies
- Within the school admin team deliver a Public Relations service to the school both externally and internally, including development of external links and opportunities for marketing
- Lead the design and marketing of the school alongside the Executive Headteacher

- Line manage the Office Manager to ensure the effective delivery of administrative systems
- Act as a liaison with the DfE and LEA and be responsible for the records and returns required
- Ensure effective liaison with other schools and all interested parties and agencies
- To be responsible for data protection and compliance with relevant regulations

All Posts: Duties and Responsibilities

- To attend relevant meetings, and keep up to date with the day-to-day work of the school
- To ensure that the safety and welfare of others is continuously considered, including appropriately recording and reporting any concerns relating to abuse and child sexual exploitation. To be familiar with the Chessbrook ESC safeguarding procedures and to read and understand associated documentation (*Current Keeping Children Safe in Education, Chessbrook ESC, Child Protection Policy, Guidance for safe working practice for adults who work with children and young people in educational settings, Chessbrook ESC Staff Handbook*) and comply with their requirements to safeguard, protect and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults
- To read and understand the responsibilities and expectations outlined in the Code of Conduct
- To take reasonable care for the health and safety of yourself and others in undertaking your work; cooperate with the employer on all matters relating to health and safety; not to intentionally interfere with or misuse any equipment or fittings provided in the interests of health and safety welfare; report immediately to the school office any serious or immediate danger; report immediately to the line manager and school office any shortcomings in the arrangements for health and safety; ensure that you only use equipment or machinery that you are competent to use or have been trained to use
- To be aware of the Whistleblowing Policy and report any genuine concerns in relation to the conduct of others in the school which are in the public interest, such as fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by employees or members of the Management Committee of Chessbrook ESC. Where concerns are about safeguarding children or young people, the Designated Senior Person/Lead (DSP/DSL) should be notified
- To update their personal data and safeguarding declaration when required or at least annually as a minimum
- To be aware of responsibilities under the Prevent Strategy and FGM Pathway
- Any other duties directed by the Executive Headteacher that are consistent with the post and the need for staff to work flexibly

Personal and Professional Conduct:

- Demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct:
 - Uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school
 - Treat students with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to your professional position
 - Safeguard the wellbeing of students in accordance with statutory provisions
 - Show tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
 - Not undermine fundamental British Values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
 - Ensure that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit students' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality
- To work together showing respect, courtesy and helpfulness

- To be aware of responsibilities and expectations outlined in the Code of Conduct Policy
- To declare relationships with students outside of work by completing the relevant school documentation

Additional Information:

The post holder is required to contribute to, and support the overall aims and ethos of Chessbrook ESC. All staff are required to participate in training and other learning activities, and in performance management and development as required by Chessbrook ESC's policies and practices.

Whilst every effort has been made to explain the main duties and responsibilities of the post, each individual task undertaken may not be identified.

This job description is current at the date shown, but following consultation with you may be changed by the Leadership Team to reflect or anticipate changes in the job which are commensurate with the salary and post.

Knowledge, experience and training E = Essential D = Desirable	Professional Ethos, Commitment and Personal Qualities (Essential)
English and Mathematics to Grade C / 4 or above (or equivalent) (E)	Good written and oral communication skills
Relevant Business/Finance Manager Qualification or equivalent (D)	Positive attitude and a sense of pride
Awareness of keeping children safe (E)/ Level 1 Safeguarding (D)	Ability to work as part of a team and be a positive role model
Experience of working within a school, Alternative Provision setting or further education environment (E)	Ability to plan time and organise work effectively
Ability to work with a wide range of stakeholders (E)	Ability to use your own initiative, be proactive and able to identify appropriate solutions to problems. Self evaluate and adaptable to changing circumstances and new ideas
Good IT skills, particularly in relation to accurate record keeping and report writing (E) / Experience of working with School Systems (SIMS/CPOMS) and Google/Google Drive (D)	Ability to establish sound professional relationships with children, young people, colleagues and parents. Ability to listen and empathise with children and young people
Well developed interpersonal skills including a diplomatic and tactful approach (E)	Confidentiality and sensitivity
Good understanding of Data Protection / GDPR (E)	High expectations for self and others and a strong commitment to the school's strategic purpose, commitment and intent
Experience of undertaking the DPO role (D)	Commitment to promote home-school partnerships

Understanding of the school's ethos, values and policies, and be willing and able to work within these (E)	Willingness to attend training as required; contribute to whole school development and be involved in the wider life of the school
First Aid Qualification (D)	Commitment to acting with integrity, honesty, loyalty and fairness to safeguard the assets, financial probity and reputation of the school
	Demonstrate a commitment to celebrating diversity and promoting community cohesion in a multicultural setting
All necessary training will be given	

How to Apply

Application Information

You can apply for this role by:

- Completing and submitting the application form on Teach in Herts www.teachinherts.com

Key dates for the recruitment process

Closing date for applications: 10.00am, Friday 5th September 2025

Shortlisting: All candidates will be contacted by email, both those shortlisted and those not successful by Friday 12th September 2025

Interview date: to be confirmed

Estimated Start Date: Autumn term 2025

Additional information

Chessbrook ESC reserves the right to make an appointment before the closing date, so early applications are encouraged.

A visit to the school is encouraged.

Please be aware that applications via CV only will not be considered. We may contact you to fully complete application forms in order for you to be considered. You will be asked to sign applications submitted online. Unless candidates request otherwise, references will be sought in advance.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a Criminal Records Self Declaration Form prior to interview.

Chessbrook ESC conducts Online searches on shortlisted candidates in accordance with our Safer Recruitment Policy and guidelines in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

As part of our Safer Recruitment, Chessbrook ESC will conduct online searches of shortlisted candidates. This check does not form part of the shortlisting process itself and candidates will have a chance to address any issues of concern that arise during this search at interview.

We aspire to have a diverse and inclusive workplace and strongly encourage suitably qualified applicants from a wide range of backgrounds to apply and join Chessbrook ESC. We operate an anonymised shortlisting process.

This post is classed as having a high degree of contact with children or vulnerable adults and is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. An enhanced disclosure will be sought through the Disclosure & Barring service as part of the school's and Hertfordshire County Council's pre-employment checks. All those required to have a DBS check are required to inform the school at the earliest opportunity of any conviction, caution or bind-over that they have received or any police

investigation which may lead to one of these. Failure to do so, without legitimate cause, would be a serious breach of school discipline.

