

**Finance Manager**

**Candidate Brief**

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the Finance Manager role at What Works for Children’s Social Care.

What Works for Children’s Social Care (WWCSC) is an exciting ‘social start-up’ and a fantastic opportunity to make a difference to the lives of children and their families in England. Every year over 700,000 children and young people, and their families, have contact with the children’s social care sector. Changes in how the sector supports these children and their families can have hugely significant effects that resonate throughout entire lifetimes.

The Government’s reform programme is increasingly giving control over how services should be run – along with accountability for the results – to the practitioners and practice leaders who are closest to children, young people and their families. Local authorities up-and-down the country, supported by a range of other organisations both statutory and third sector, are using that freedom to try different ways of designing and delivering children’s services, and up to £200m is being provided through the Department for Education’s Innovation Programme to support this work.

With so much innovation taking place – and so much potential for change – the sector needs an independent organisation to look across all of this work and systematically develop the evidence base on what works, for whom, under what circumstances, and how. This is the best encapsulation of WWCSC’s mission – to collect the best evidence on what we already know, work with the sector to prioritise the many questions that remain unanswered, fund research, and determine how best to make evidence relevant and accessible to decision makers. What Works Centres have been a great success in other policy areas – including in education, policing and healthcare – and we expect great things from What Works for Children’s Social Care.

Reporting to the Centre’s Director of Operations, the post holder will lead on all aspects of the organisation’s financial activities. Incorporating financial planning, monitoring and implementation as well as ensuring smooth day to day running of the Centre’s financial processes.

I look forward to hearing from you.

**Michael Sanders**

Executive Director, What Works Centre for Children’s Social Care

**The role**

* Oversee and monitor budgets in excess of £5 million.
* Support with the financial strategy to ensure long term success of the Centre.
* Lead on forecasting of budgets and support Heads of other teams with managing budgets.
* Oversee the processing of payments and invoices in accordance with defined procedures: opening, logging and circulating finance mail, posting of invoices into the finance system, liaising with internal teams to ensure a timely service, ensuring all purchase ledger files are up to date.
* Ensure consistent compliance with internal controls: new suppliers, authorisations, purchase orders, original receipts.
* Ensure smooth running of the payment process: mainly via Xero, direct debits, online payments and sending remittance advices.
* Ensure data input into the general ledger is timely and accurate, account coding and VAT correct.
* Monitor adherence to internal controls and procedures and report issues that arise.
* Answer supplier, grantee, staff and trustee payment queries in a timely manner, providing a high level of customer service, resolving any issues quickly and professionally.
* Regular supplier statement reconciliations and quarterly review of invoices for statutory reporting purposes.
* Monthly processing of company charge cards – processing expenses and ensuring appropriate receipts are provided and submitted within the given deadline, using our system.
* Maintain monthly prepayments schedule, and update general ledger for prepayments.
* Supporting the Director of Operations during the year-end process.
* Working closely with external auditors as required.
* Assisting with other tasks within the Finance capacity as necessary, including supporting the implementation of financial control systems and procedures.
* Such other duties as may be reasonably required.

**The Person**

* Successful track record of working in a senior finance role, leading and supporting financial and management accountants.
* Demonstrable track record and knowledge of processing payments and dealing with all of the ledgers that make up the accounting records.
* Recent experience with Xero would be highly advantageous.
* High level of computer literacy (especially Excel).
* Sound numerical skills with excellent attention to detail.
* Strong team member and ability to manage a range of stakeholders (internal teams, suppliers, etc).
* Good organisational and planning skills with an emphasis on detail, order and accuracy.
* Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines.
* Adaptable – flexible approach to work and an ability to adapt to change.
* Willingness to do what it takes to get the job done - as the only member of the finance team you will be required to work on a variety of tasks.
* Enjoy working in a fast-paced and growing organisation.
* Formal training/qualification in Finance, Accounts or equivalent experience.

**Initial Terms and Conditions of Appointment**

* **Remuneration**: Circa £40,000-50,000 plus excellent benefits
* **Time Commitment**: Full time role (37.5 hours per week).
* **Location:** Central London.
* **Term:** Permanent Contract

**Introduction to the Centre**

**About Us**

What Works for Children’s Social Care seeks better outcomes for children, young people and families by bringing the best available evidence to practitioners and other decision makers across the children’s social care sector. We generate, collate and make accessible the best evidence for practitioners, policy makers and practice leaders to improve children’s social care and the outcomes it generates for children and families.

Our research looks at the point of referral through to permanence, including adoption, care-leaver support and targeted early help. We focus on children’s social care practice in England and draw on and share learning at the international level.

We were commissioned by the Department for Education and work with a range of stakeholders. Engagement and co-design are central to our approach and we are working in close consultation with leaders, practitioners, children and young people, families and researchers across the sector to:

* Identify gaps in the evidence, and create new evidence through trials and evaluations
* Collate, synthesise and review existing evidence
* Develop, test and publish tools and services that support the greater use of evidence and inform the design of the future Centre
* Champion the application of robust standards of evidence in children’s social care research.

WWCSC collates, produces, and translates research about “What Works” in Children’s Social Care through a variety of different methodologies, both qualitative and quantitative, to conduct research that can be used by social workers, leaders in the sector and policymakers to support children and their families.

To do this, all of our research needs to adhere to our four principles:

* Research needs to focus on impact – how does a piece of practice work, how does it impact on social workers, and if we take one action rather than another, what happens as a result?
* We need to bear in mind the nuance of social care. The lives of children and families are complex and complicated, and there are many factors involved in successful social work. What works in one setting for one family might not work in a different circumstance. We need to design our research to take into account – and even celebrate – this complexity.
* Studies have to be useful – if we can’t identify who we think should be able to make use of a piece of research, it’s not for us. While there is certainly value in more exploratory research, this is not part of the Centre’s mission and objectives.
* Everything we do needs to help empower the profession. Our research needs to be conducted with the profession, and not done to them – it needs to provide recommendations, not prescriptions, and it needs to support existing and innovative practice to grow the evidence base.

**How to apply**

To apply, please send your CV and a supporting statement outlining clearly how you meet the above criteria to info@whatworks-csc.org.uk, citing “WWCSC Finance Manager” in the Subject of the email.

Deadline for applications: 12pm Wednesday 6th May 2020