

Finance & Data Assistant - Assisted Travel

Part time: 25.9 hours per week – Permanent

Salary: £22,929.14 per annum (0.7 FTE), pro-rata from £32,755.91 (1 FTE) Cognus Band 2, SCP 32

Location: Cognus Office, First Floor, Cantium House, Wallington, SM6 0DZ

Cognus Limited is a Local Authority Traded Company, which is commissioned by the London Borough of Sutton to provide education services to early years providers, mainstream schools and specialist education settings in Sutton. Wholly owned by the local authority, we deliver a wide range of high-quality services to deliver excellent practice that improve the lives of children, young people, and families in Sutton and beyond.

Cognus are seeking to appoint a Finance & Data Assistant to work closely within the Assisted Travel Team to support financial processing and data reporting needs, with a particular focus on the SEND Assisted Travel Budget for the London Borough of Sutton.

Cognus is at a very exciting moment in its evolution and growth. We are looking for a professional and experienced individual who is passionate about the inclusion of children and young people in education and society. An individual that enjoys a varied workload, is organised, has great communication skills and has a good understanding of duties in relation to the areas of responsibility detailed in the job description and is committed to delivering with excellence.

You will give us great commitment and in return we offer an excellent package including:

- i) Salary at £22,929.14 per annum (Cognus Band 2)
- ii) Workplace pension scheme 4% to 8% matched contributions
- iii) 28 days annual leave (plus Bank Holidays)
- iv) Regular manager support and supervision
- v) Hybrid and flexible working
- vi) Staff benefits package, currently including Employee Assistance Programme, Perkbox and (upon completion of probation) Sovereign Healthcare Cashback plans
- vii) Staff EDI group and Mental Health First Aiders to support wellbeing and inclusion
- viii) Cognus Coaching Programmes
- ix) An ambitious culture with friendly and supportive colleagues

If you are interested and would like to be considered for this role, please apply to recruitment@cognus.org.uk with the completed [application form](https://www.cognus.org.uk/work-with-us/current-vacancies/cognus-application-form/), downloaded from <https://www.cognus.org.uk/work-with-us/current-vacancies/cognus-application-form/>. Please include a covering letter outlining your suitability (no more than one sides of A4, minimum font size 11). CV's alone will not be accepted. The deadline for receipt is on **Friday**





14th February 2025. Candidates are requested to be available for interview in the week of 24th February 2025.

For an informal conversation about the role, please contact Helen Cullip, Assisted Travel Manager, at helen.cullip@cognus.org.uk or Steve Broughton, Strategic SEND Financial Planning & Analysis Analyst, at steven.broughton@cognus.org.uk.

All offers of employment are subject to successful completion of recruitment formalities which includes an enhanced DBS check. These checks must have been completed before the commencement of employment. We expect our staff to have due regard for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and to follow the child protection procedures adopted by the Company and Sutton's Local Safeguarding Partnership.



JOB DESCRIPTION

POSITION:	Data & Finance Assistant – Assisted Travel
TEAM:	Assisted Travel Team
REPORTS TO:	Assisted Travel Manager
RESPONSIBLE FOR:	Data and Finance monitoring
FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES:	Monitoring of home to school travel assistance data. Out of borough invoice preparation. Processing personal budgets and monitoring payment requirements. Journalling of costs to correct budget codes.
CONTACTS:	Parents and carers, schools and other professionals, contractors, other teams within Cognus, London Borough of Sutton colleagues and other Local Authorities.
SALARY	£22,929.14 per annum (0.7 FTE), pro-rata from £32,755.91 (1 FTE) Cognus Band 2, SCP 32

JOB SUMMARY

- Data Collection and Analysis.
- Financial Tracking and Budgeting.
- Process Improvement.
- Compliance and Regulations.
- Parental contribution billing process.
- Preparation of external customer invoicing.
- Invoice payment journalling to correct account codes.
- Ongoing data QA and improvement.
- DfE data gathering
- Attendance data monitoring
- Finance software maintenance and data reporting



PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Assist in tracking financial transactions and expenditures related to SEND home to school Assisted Travel service.
- Prepare reports and presentations to communicate findings to stakeholders.
- Collect, organise, and analyse data related to home to school transport services for students with SEND.
- Identify trends, patterns, and discrepancies in the data to provide insights for decision-making.
- Work closely with the finance team to monitor budgets, identify variances, and ensure financial compliance.
- Support in preparing financial reports and forecasts for the department.
- Identify opportunities for process improvement and efficiency in data collection, analysis, and financial tracking.
- Collaborate with team members to implement best practices and streamline workflows.
- Suggest and implement technological solutions to enhance data management and reporting processes.
- Ensure adherence to local authority policies, regulations, and guidelines in data management and financial tracking.
- Maintain clean data on industry-specific software PAX.
- Stay updated on relevant legislation and requirements affecting SEND home to school transport services.
- Process and monitor Parental Mileage and Personal Travel Budget payments and demographic data for post-16 charging.
- Monitor out-of-borough charging information and prepare monthly/termly invoicing information to the finance department.
- Compile monthly invoicing journals to assign invoiced charges to correct account codes.
- Collect data for DfE annual returns.



- Monitor attendance data for Personal Budgets, Mileage and Post-16 charging.

GENERIC OBJECTIVES:

Contribute to Cognus Limited's business objectives at the appropriate level by ensuring every child matters and has access to education and learning opportunities, including:

- a) Health and safety
- b) Safeguarding and protection of children
- c) Equal opportunities and management of diversity
- d) Data protection
- e) Outstanding Customer care

GENERAL:

SAFER RECRUITMENT:

Cognus is committed to safeguarding and protecting the children and young people that it works with. An offer of employment is subject to safer recruitment practices which include an enhanced DBS check, two professional references acceptable to Cognus Limited, proof of qualifications, proof of right to work in the UK, proof of personal address and employment history covering 5 years and, fitness to work with children (occupational health assessment). These checks must have been completed prior to commencement of employment. We have a range of policies and procedures in place which promote safeguarding and safer working practices across the organisation.

PROCESSING OF DATA:

- a) You ("the employee") consent to the holding and processing of personal data provided by you to the Company ("the Company") for all purposes relating to your employment, but not limited to administering and maintaining personnel records, paying and reviewing salary and other remuneration and benefits, undertaking performance appraisals and reviews, the compulsory Disclosure and Baring Services check (DBS) details in line with its statutory responsibility to safeguard and protect children and vulnerable service users; maintaining sickness and other absence records and taking decisions as to your fitness for work.
- b) You hereby acknowledge and agree that the Company may, in the course of its general and statutory duties as an employer be required to disclose personal data relating to you



for legislative purposes during or after the end of your employment. This does not affect your statutory rights under the General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT:

- a) During the course of your employment, you will have access to and knowledge of Company confidential information and trade secrets.
- b) Disclosure of any of this confidential information and/or trade secrets could have serious financial consequences and/or create serious competitive disadvantages for the Company. There may be material damage, financial or otherwise, deliberate or otherwise, to the Company's legitimate business interest.
- c) Under the terms of this confidentiality agreement, you agree to keep secret and shall not at any time, either during employment or post-employment, use, communicate or reveal to any person any trade secret or confidential information relating to the Company or any Associated Company.
- d) You are aware of the Company's policies in relation to compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation and undertake to act in accordance with these at all times. Any breach of these policies will be dealt with under the Company's disciplinary procedure and action taken can include dismissal without notice.

This job description and person specification outlines the summary of key accountabilities and is not an exhaustive list of duties and, is subject to periodical review and changes in line with the business needs.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

No	Descriptions	Criteria
a)	Educated to at least GCSE level	E
b)	Experience of working with Excel (data manipulating, reporting and analysing)	E
c)	Experience of working in a financial or data environment, preferably in a Local Government setting	D
d)	Experience of compiling statistical and financial data to support financial systems and control of budgets	D
e)	Experience in maintaining and developing systems to manage financial and administrative processes	D
f)	Experience of Business World (Agresso)	D
g)	Ability to make full use of information technology systems including word processing, spreadsheets and database software	E
h)	Ability to work under pressure, organise own workload and forward plan to meet statutory deadlines	E
i)	Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing	E
j)	Ability to consult and communicate effectively and diplomatically with suppliers, customers, schools and members of the public	E
k)	Ability to maintain confidentiality	E
l)	Ability to work as a member of a team or independently	E
m)	Working knowledge of SEN (Special Educational Needs) Funding within a Local Authority or School setting	D
n)	Working knowledge of SEN Transport	D
o)	Ability to understand, implement and comply with the Cognus behavioural values	E
p)	Willingness to work flexibly in undertaking additional duties and further training as necessary	E

KEY:	D	Desirable	I	Evaluated at interview
E	S	Short listing criteria	T	Subject to test
		Essential		

