

Juniper

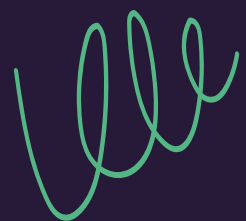


Hornchurch
ACADEMY TRUST



Case study

**Hornchurch
Academy Trust**



Case study



Hornchurch Academy Trust

Overcoming Education Finance Challenges

About the Academy Trust

Hornchurch Academy Trust, situated in Essex, was established in September 2017 and comprises six primary schools and a nursery. Committed to enhancing educational outcomes, personal development, and life chances, the Trust emphasises true collaboration to share excellence and promote best practices for increased effectiveness across all schools.

Facilitating a seamless finance transition

The Academy Trust was transitioning from its existing accounting system to PS Financials and was looking for a new financial services supplier to facilitate this change smoothly. The emphasis was on minimising disruption, ensuring that the shift from their current provider was seamless and did not adversely affect the Academy Trust's financial operations.

Jo Sladden, Chief Finance and Operations Officer at Hornchurch Academy Trust, commented:

“Transitioning our accounting system was a crucial step for our growing Academy Trust to maintain operational efficiency. We sought a new supplier who not only understood the nuances of the education sector but also had the expertise to meet our needs during this period of change.”



The solution that equalled success

Jo first encountered Juniper's finance services at an event, where she had the opportunity to meet several finance team members. After building an instant rapport, Jo was motivated to delve deeper into Juniper's offerings.

After thorough initial consultations to identify the Academy Trust's challenges, Juniper's expert education finance team provided an effective solution to address all their financial management issues. The comprehensive approach involved a fully remote finance support and training service, incorporating the utilisation of Juniper's finance software, helpdesk and 1-2-1 remote assistance from a dedicated consultant. Key accomplishments include unravelling auditors' information for the PS Year-end accounts, addressing discrepancies in payroll final accounts, and streamlining the process for new schools brought into the Trust.



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The team also conducted training on handling historical balances, ensuring a smooth operation going forward.

Following the Trust's desire to explore an alternative auditing solution, Juniper recommended a new company. Following this recommendation, the Academy Trust opted for a change in finance auditors, a decision that significantly impacted their operations, as noted by Jo.

"I can't thank my consultant enough for the recommendation as the auditors have been great. They have answered any questions immediately and everything has been straightforward."

As part of the Academy Trust's subscription to Juniper's services, they have the opportunity to participate in regular Finance Information Networking Sessions (FINS). These unique sessions allow customers to gain insights and updates on financial matters in education through shared knowledge. Jo, in particular, finds great value in attending these sessions.

"The FINS meetings that Juniper organises are great. I already know some of the information being presented, but I don't know some of it, so I find them highly valuable. It's also great to see my consultant in person. We've spent hours and hours together online, and although I know her so well through a screen, it's nice to be sitting in the same room."



Outstanding outcomes that fit the bill

The Academy Trust experiences accurate and smooth financial operations. Thanks to the training provided by Juniper, Jo and her team can rely less on Juniper's services.

Consequently, since the start of the partnership, the Trust has purchased fewer hours of consultancy, resulting in significant time and cost savings.

Jo expressed her satisfaction with Juniper's training services, highlighting:

"Because Juniper has trained me, I've managed to reduce my consultancy hours as I don't need as many anymore. I don't need as much technical support because I have learned what to do. I would definitely advocate the service; what I have received so far has been brilliant."



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Overcoming Education Finance Challenges

Jo reflects on the ongoing partnership and wholeheartedly recommends Juniper to other schools and Trusts considering a third-party finance service provider.

“I love that I have been able to build a relationship with my finance consultant. I cannot do my job properly without Juniper’s support, knowledge, and expertise. Juniper really gets academies and Trusts. I am not an accountant; I run the finance team, so it’s invaluable to be able to bounce ideas off someone and have that expertise; the information I get is always right. Juniper has been fantastic. Many other academies and Trusts are going to be in a similar boat. I would recommend Juniper’s finance services without a shadow of a doubt.”





**Need help?
Talk to a finance
expert.**

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