



RECRUITMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CHIEF ACCOUNTING OFFICER)

Information for Applicants

VALE ACADEMY TRUST

- EXCELLENT OUTCOMES FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE
- OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF
- AT THE HEART OF OUR COMMUNITY



*St Nicholas C of E Primary School
Larkmead School
and Charlton Primary School*

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE TRUST BOARD | 3 |
| WELCOME TO THE VALE ACADEMY TRUST | 4 |
| OUR VISION OF THE TRUST | 5 |
| ABOUT THE TRUST | 6 |
| GOVERNANCE WITHIN THE VALE ACADEMY TRUST | 8 |
| WORKING FOR THE TRUST | 9 |
| JOB DESCRIPTION | 11 |
| KEY RESPONSIBILITIES | 12 |
| PERSON SPECIFICATION | 14 |

A MESSAGE FROM JOE PILLMAN

CHAIR OF THE TRUST BOARD

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR INTEREST IN THE POST OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AT THE VALE ACADEMY TRUST.

We trust that the following pages of this document will provide you with a good flavour of the ethos and ambitions of our Trust, such that you will be keen to find out more about us and the role. In turn, we will be delighted to expand on anything contained within the pack that you would like to discuss with us.

We are passionate about the educational journey our children will experience whilst in the care of our academies. We seek to ensure excellent outcomes for all our young people, working within the heart of our community with staff that can benefit from the outstanding career development opportunities that the Trust is able to offer as a local leader of learning.

As you will see, the Vale Academy Trust is seeking to appoint a special person, someone ambitious and energetic, who will grasp our vision and run with it, working alongside the Leadership Teams of our schools and the MAT Board towards the common goal of co-creating excellence in local education.

For an informal, confidential discussion regarding any queries, please contact our advising consultant **Michael Watson** on michael.watson@tes.com or **020 3194 3473**.

We very much look forward to hearing from you.

Joe Pillman
Chair of the Trust Board



St James C of E Primary School



WELCOME TO

THE VALE ACADEMY TRUST

THE VALE ACADEMY TRUST (VAT) WAS FORMED ON 1ST OCTOBER 2013 WHEN THREE LOCAL SCHOOLS (KING ALFRED'S ACADEMY, CHARLTON PRIMARY SCHOOL AND WANTAGE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL) CAME TOGETHER TO WORK IN PARTNERSHIP.

There are now eight current member academies; the three founding schools, four other primary academies that have since joined the Trust, and another Secondary School (Larkmead School in Abingdon) which joined the Trust on 1st January 2017. It is expected that other local schools will seek to join the Trust over the coming years. The full list of Vale Academy Trust member schools can be seen below. Our Trust was the first to include

primary, secondary, non-faith and Church of England schools in a single multi academy trust. As such, the individual ethos or faith element of member schools is protected. Overall the VAT is performing well, and the Department for Education approved it as a Sponsoring Academy Trust in 2015. A video has been produced to explain more about the workings of the Trust – this is viewable on the Trust's website: www.vale-academy.org

Vale Academy Trust members (as at 1st January 2018) in alphabetical order:

Charlton Primary School, King Alfred's Academy, Larkmead School, Millbrook Primary School, St James C of E Primary School, St Nicholas C of E Primary School, Thameside Primary School, Wantage C of E Primary School.



Larkmead School

OUR VISION

AT THE TRUST

THE VISION OF THE TRUST IS VERY CLEAR.

It was formed by local Heads, governors, and other stakeholders to ensure high quality education for children within our local community during these very turbulent and changing times. We all believe that

no school should work alone and that by working together we can deliver higher standards, more opportunities for children and fantastic opportunities for staff development.





ABOUT

THE TRUST

AS IN ALL SCHOOLS, HEADTEACHERS HAVE OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF THEIR ACADEMIES, ALTHOUGH MANY OF THE ISSUES WHICH MAY HAVE PREVIOUSLY DISTRACTED THEM FROM TEACHING AND LEARNING AND SUPPORTING TEACHERS IN THE CLASSROOMS HAVE BEEN REMOVED.

We continue to centralise some key 'back office' services such as finance, premises and operations, HR and legal support, thus leaving the Headteachers and senior staff to focus on the important areas of Teaching and Learning, Progress and Attainment, Behaviour and Leadership. This has led to a number of key appointments across the Academy Trust, including;

- An Executive Headteacher working with our primary schools for two days per week (currently one of our serving primary Headteachers)
- A secondary School Improvement Leader working to support secondary Headteachers one day a week
- A full time Director of Learning for Primary and Transition stages
- An Assistant Head to oversee Inclusion/SEND across the Trust, working with SENCOs and staff across all the academies
- A primary Assistant Head responsible for focusing on Teaching and Learning and curriculum issues within primary academies, working with key groups and supporting staff. This person is supported by a number of staff from across the Trust's academies with key skills in English and Maths



Thameside Primary School

- A part time Music Specialist working across the primary academies supporting staff and leading inspirational music opportunities for all
- A full time Primary Specialist Physical Education leader supported by specialist PE staff from King Alfred's leading the delivery of high quality physical education and school sport across all our academies, including delivering excellent staff CPD
- A full time Finance Director, Operations Manager, Head of Governance and Policy, and HR Director also support the academies and the Trust.

The Board of Directors is made up of twelve individuals who are passionate about local education from ages 3 to 18. They include representatives of the academies, Directors appointed by the Diocese of Oxford and other appropriately skilled individuals from across Oxfordshire. The Board is responsible to the Department for Education in relation to key areas such as finance, staffing and pupil progress. The day-to-day local operation of each academy remains the responsibility of the Headteacher, their staff and the Local Governing Body. Both the Board and the Local Governing Bodies are supported by a number of Committees.



Wantage C of E Primary School



GOVERNANCE

WITHIN THE VALE ACADEMY TRUST

THE VALE ACADEMY TRUST (VAT) HAS A TWO-TIER CENTRAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE, CONSISTING OF MEMBERS (AKIN TO SHAREHOLDERS IN A PRIVATE COMPANY) AND TRUSTEES.

The Directors of the VAT that sit on its Board are also its Trustees.

All academies within the VAT are governed by the Board of Directors at a strategic level and the Board is responsible for setting overall policy. The Board is accountable to the Secretary of State for the performance of all academies in the Trust and for setting strategic direction.

The leadership of each academy is delegated to the Local Governing Body (LGB) by the Board of Directors; the LGB then delegates the operational leadership of the academy to the Headteacher as with any school. The LGB deals with the management, organisation and financial oversight of the academy, in line with any development plan for the Trust. It also sets the ethos and vision for the individual academy whilst monitoring and challenging the Headteacher on pupil performance. It will implement applicable policies set by the VAT and align its reporting structures and timetables (including meetings) to those of the Trust. Each LGB will do this whilst experiencing the fullest support, guidance and challenge of the Trust and the central team, including the Chief Executive.

Each LGB is comprised of a mix of parent and staff governors, the Headteacher (ex-officio) and director appointed governors. In the case of Church of England academies, foundation governors are appointed by the Diocese of Oxford.

The responsibilities of each LGB are defined in the Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation. These are reviewed on an annual basis but the Directors reserve the right to review and make amendments at any time.



King Alfred's Academy

WORKING

FOR THE TRUST

AS ALL THE SCHOOLS ACROSS THE VALE ACADEMY TRUST WORK COLLABORATIVELY TOGETHER AND SUPPORT EACH OTHER, MANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ARE OPENING UP.

Since October 2013 our Trust has grown significantly within the local area of Wantage and South Oxfordshire. The VAT currently works with eight schools to support the educational provision of more than 4000 children from 3-18. This includes King Alfred's Academy in Wantage and Larkmead School in Abingdon, who joined the Trust on 1st January 2017, meaning there are now two secondary schools within the Trust. There are also six excellent primary schools, as listed on page 3. The latest to join, Thameside Primary School in Abingdon, converted and joined the Trust on 1st August 2017. We are also developing excellent links with a number of pre-school settings linked to our academies.



St Nicholas C of E Primary School



King Alfred's Academy

The VAT is responsible for the education of 4250 children and young people, and almost 650 members of staff across our schools, making us the largest employer in the area.

Continuing professional development is at the heart of our Trust. We have a proven track record of developing our own leaders and this applies to all, from trainee teachers through to school Heads. The Trust works very closely with Oxfordshire Teaching Schools Alliance (OTSA) to identify, recruit, train and develop staff at every level within our academies.

Newly qualified teachers are supported not only within each academy; they are also able to access



developmental opportunities across our Trust and within OTSA. Young leaders are identified early and are offered a wide range of additional opportunities to sample leadership in a supportive way. Middle leaders have the chance to work with teachers in a similar role across our academies and we do all we can to promote from within the Trust.

For senior leaders, the Trust offers unrivalled opportunities to work with other leaders and Headteachers across the Trust. There is also scope for engaging with the OTSA Growing Future Leaders Programme with plenty of support for those that are aiming to prepare for headship.



Millbrook Primary School

including social events, staff weekends away and subsidised use of the swimming pool at the local Leisure Centre. The range of extra-curricular activities on offer involving taking young people all over the world is second to none.

Across our academies you will work with teams of dynamic, exciting and friendly staff who support each other and where those who want to progress rapidly will have every opportunity to do so. Headteachers leading our academies do so in a very collaborative and supportive way; they meet regularly, not only to discuss current educational strategy and policy, but also to support each other with regular 'peer visits' to each other's academies, reporting back on key areas. Our academies operate an 'open door' policy with regard to visitors from across the Trust - whether they be other Headteachers, members of staff from other academies or from the central team, who are 'in and out' of academies on a daily basis working with staff. Headteachers meet with key central staff regularly to review progress against their own development plans. During any form of external visit - such as an Ofsted inspection - the central team will support individual academies directly. Whilst all academies can expect support from everyone within the Trust, any academy requiring bespoke support for whatever reason will receive it from the central team.



St James C of E Primary School

For more information on the Oxfordshire Teaching Schools Alliance visit: www.otsa.org.uk

There is a growing central team linked to teaching and learning, and also other key services such as: finance, operations, human resources and IT. The aim is to support teaching staff in each academy with quality 'back office' services so that the main focus is always on first class teaching and learning.

The VAT also supports staff in many other ways. There are a range of options linked to staff wellbeing,

JOB DESCRIPTION

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

RESPONSIBLE TO: CHAIR OF THE TRUST BOARD

**MAIN LOCATION: VALE ACADEMY TRUST CENTRAL TEAM OFFICES,
ST MARY'S CONVENT, WANTAGE, OXFORDSHIRE**

SALARY: AS SPECIFIED IN THE RECRUITMENT ADVERTISEMENT

Reporting directly to the post holder will be:

- All Headteachers
- The Director of Learning, Chief Finance Officer, Operations Team, HR Director, Head of Governance and Policy/Company Secretary and Executive Assistant

Purpose: To provide strategic vision and leadership of the Academy Trust in support of the Academy Board's overarching aim, which is to deliver an outstanding education to all students while raising achievement across the Trust. The postholder will be responsible for the performance of all Academies within the Trust and able to articulate the vision, values, ethos and goals of the Academy Trust, inspiring and empowering others to share in them and achieve them.

Job Summary:

The Chief Executive is the senior employed officer of the Trust and reports directly to the Board. He/she will:

- Provide strategic leadership and direction to the Trust and its Academies within the vision and strategy agreed by the Trust Board
- Be directly accountable to the Trust Board for the performance of the Trust
- Lead the growth and development of the Trust
- Ensure the highest standards of governance are

met and that all legal and statutory obligations are fulfilled

- Promote an innovative, engaging vision of the organisation
- Develop strong, effective working partnerships with all stakeholders
- Enhance the Trust's capacity to deliver a high quality, cost effective education provision across the Trust
- Be visible and engaged, at both national and local level, with policy makers and education leaders
- Ensure that the Trust reflects a vibrant and inclusive ethos which promotes diversity, unity and community cohesion and actively challenges discrimination.





KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Strategy and Performance:

- Support the Board of Trustees in the formulation and development of the Trust's strategy
- Hold Local Governing Bodies and school leaders to account for delivering the strategic and financial aims of the Trust at an individual academy level, monitoring and challenging their progress in line with the vision and values of the Trust
- Drive a culture of continuous improvement to ensure sustained outstanding performance
- Evaluate and report to the board on all external and internal opportunities, risks or trends which could impact on the effectiveness or stability of the Trust
- Maintain a current awareness of education policy and strategies, particularly in relation to academies.

Representing the Trust and Stakeholder Relations:

- Act as an ambassador/advocate and role model for the Trust to effectively promote the ethos, values and aims to all stakeholders. To enhance external relationships and identify potential for any future growth.

Teaching and Learning/School Improvement:

- Be the lead education professional in the Trust, ensuring that children consistently achieve well and above expectations, and educational outcomes across all the Trust's schools improve year on year
- Be accountable for all aspects of teaching and learning across the Trust, setting high professional standards and ensuring the Trust's education vision is understood and embraced
- Ensure an effective strategy for building educational and leadership capacity in line with succession planning.



Leadership and Management:

- Lead the Trust's Leadership Team, working in partnership with the team to ensure that each specialism is accountable and there are clear quality assurances, communication and reporting systems embedded across the Trust
- Ensure timely and effective delivery of key objectives
- Lead an effective performance management culture and system to ensure delivery of all statutory duties, organisational objectives and address any under-performance in a timely and effective manner
- Ensure that the Trust's financial viability is secure, firmly based on accurate analysis, and is able to meet the Trust's short, medium and long term strategic plans
- Develop a proactive risk mitigation and management strategy for the Trust
- Ensure implementation and review of Trust-level policies
- Be accountable for large scale asset management, including overseeing major capital projects
- Hold overall responsibility for the safety, health and environmental performance of all sites within the Trust

- Work closely with the Trust Board, executive team and academy leadership team to drive efficiencies and collaborative working across the Trust.

Safeguarding:

- Ensure that the Trust and all schools within the Trust meet their safeguarding responsibilities in line with current legislation, so that the organisational culture is one where people are vigilant and encouraged to challenge to keep all children safe.

As Accounting Officer, the postholder is responsible for ensuring:

- Propriety and regularity in the management of public funds
- Robust systems are in place to ensure the funds available to the Trust are used appropriately, efficiently and effectively
- The day-to-day operation of the Trust is legally compliant with all statutory and regulatory requirements
- The formal delegation of budget allocations to Trust schools.





PERSON SPECIFICATION

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

| | Essential | Desirable | Application | Interview |
|--|-----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| Professional Qualifications | | | | |
| Honours degree or equivalent | • | | • | |
| Qualified teacher status | | • | • | |
| Relevant higher degree or equivalent | | • | • | |
| Evidence of continuous professional development | • | | • | |
| Experience | | | | |
| At least five years of successful headship experience or equivalent leadership experience in an education setting | • | | • | • |
| Experience as a successful CEO in a MAT or educational setting | | • | • | • |
| Clear and demonstrable understanding of the current educational landscape | • | | | • |
| Experience of leading on school improvement within a MAT | | • | | • |
| Demonstrable track record of success in achieving rapid and sustained school improvement for the school and its pupils | • | | | • |
| Previous working across a range of school types and sizes, including Church Schools | | • | • | • |
| Evidence of strategic planning, monitoring and review | • | | | • |
| Successful track record of Financial and Resource Management | • | | | • |
| Success in leading significant organisational change | | • | | • |

| Skills, Knowledge and Understanding | Essential | Desirable | Application | Interview |
|--|-----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| Ability to communicate and embed outstanding teaching and learning | ● | | | ● |
| Knowledge and understanding of the statutory educational framework, current education issues, relevant policies, legislation and codes of practice | ● | | | ● |
| Clear understanding and knowledge of the role of governance in a MAT | ● | | | ● |
| Proven experience of motivating teams and delivering projects in a multi-skilled environment and meeting project objectives | ● | | | ● |
| Evidence of demonstrating confidence in the strategic direction, and making decisive and difficult decisions as is necessary | ● | | | ● |
| Ability to set financial organisational priorities by identifying where resources are most needed and ensuring greater efficiencies | ● | | | ● |
| Ability and commitment to working flexibly and collaboratively as part of a team, whilst taking a leading role when required | ● | | | ● |
| Ability to establish effective relationships, influencing stakeholders, external partners and the wider education community | ● | | | ● |
| Understanding and knowledge of SIAMS framework | | ● | | ● |
| A minimum of three years' experience in directing and leading major projects | | ● | | ● |
| Ability to advise on funding, grant opportunities and income generation | | ● | | ● |
| Business/commercial awareness | | ● | | ● |
| Other | | | | |
| Committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children | ● | | | ● |
| Willingness to work flexible hours, including evenings, weekends and a proportion of the school holidays when necessary | ● | | | ● |
| Current driving licence and access to a vehicle | ● | | | ● |

| Professional Qualifications | Essential | Desirable | Application | Interview |
|---|-----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| Highly effective and credible leader, with strong leadership skills including influencing, negotiation and advocacy skills | ● | | | ● |
| Tenacity and resilience, to be able to demonstrate the ability to handle demands that may change and conflict | ● | | | ● |
| An open and approachable interpersonal style with excellent relationship management skills that inspire respect and support | ● | | | ● |
| Ability to build a positive organisational culture, encourage reflection, delegate responsibility, build teams, strive for continuous | ● | | | ● |
| Ability to develop a high profile and be a strong visible presence for the Trust | ● | | | ● |

