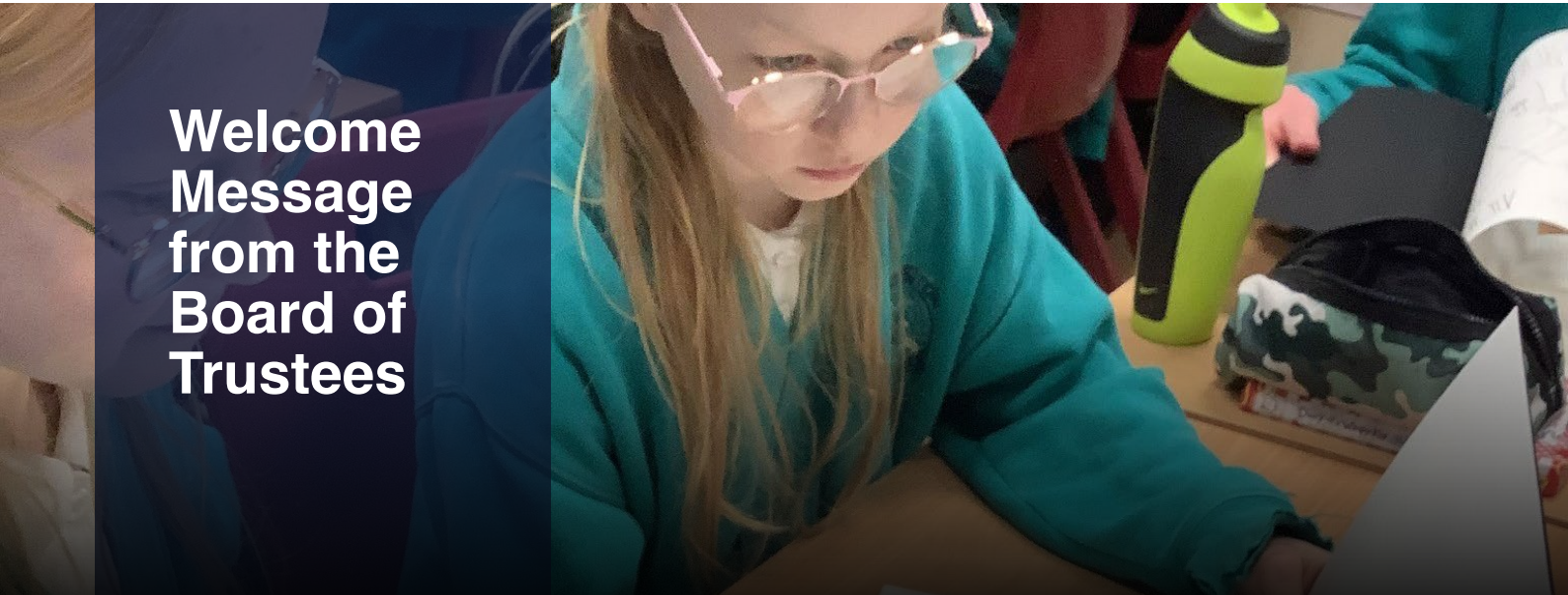




CEO Candidate Pack



Welcome Message from the Board of Trustees

Dear Candidate

Thank you for your interest in the position of Chief Executive Officer for the Link Academy Trust.

Following the retirement of our founding CEO, the Trust seeks to appoint an outstanding candidate to play a leading role in the exciting and challenging work to take the Trust on to its next stage of development.

The Trust was established in April 2016 and is currently made up of twenty-three small primary schools, encompassing both community and church schools, situated mainly within rural villages across South, East and Mid Devon. Our overarching philosophy of valuing individuality and human flourishing permeates our shared vision and links our academies across the Trust. Our academies are vibrant and exciting places to work and our small size enables us to know every child and build strong relationships with each family. Our academies are at the heart of their communities. They have strong reputations and children benefit from an exciting curriculum that makes the most of the rich and varied opportunities offered both locally and regionally, including a wide range of outdoor activities. Our rural locations though mean we constantly have to think creatively to secure the resources we need to provide our pupils with those opportunities to be able to develop as individuals.

We are looking for an effective and ethical leader who inspires others and builds confidence in abilities at all levels. You will be passionate about the Trust's unique ethos and able to articulate the shared vision across all communities. You will recognise the importance that academic rigour and a systematic improvement programme plays in raising standards and providing pupils with the tools they need to succeed. At the same time, you will demonstrate the strong management skills and experience necessary to lead a growing diverse business operating in a difficult financial environment.

We strive for the best for our pupils and staff. If your values and behaviours align with those of ours and you are excited about the opportunity of taking the Trust on the next stage in its journey, we welcome your application.

Yours sincerely

The Board of Trustees

About Us

The Link Academy Trust was established in April 2016 and currently comprises the twenty-three primary schools of Bearnese, Branscombe C of E, Broadhembury C of E, Broadhempston, Cheriton Bishop, Diptford C of E, Drake's C of E, Farway C of E, Harbertonford C of E, Hennock, Ilsington C of E, Landscope C of E, Littleham C of E, Morchard Bishop C of E, Moretonhampstead, Otterton C of E, Sparkwell All Saints, Stoke Gabriel, Tedburn St Mary, Widecombe-in-the-Moor, Wolborough C of E, Woodbury Salterton C of E and Yeoford.

Five of the schools are situated in rural villages around the town of Totnes, set within the beautiful South Hams region of Devon, with Sparkwell primary near Plympton. Hennock, Ilsington, Moretonhampstead and Widecombe are on Dartmoor near Bovey Tracey. Bearnese and Wolborough are set within the heart of Newton Abbot. Cheriton Bishop, Tedburn St Mary, Yeoford and Morchard Bishop are in the area just to the north east of Dartmoor near Crediton, and Branscombe, Broadhembury, Drake's, Farway, Littleham, Otterton and Woodbury Salterton are all situated in East Devon.

As a multi academy Trust encompassing community and church primary schools, we are proud of our intentionally individual and wonderfully unique character. Our overarching philosophy of valuing individuality and human flourishing permeates our shared vision and links our academies across the Trust.

Our vision of Flourishing schools for all at the heart of our communities is lived out through our core values of Belonging, Curiosity and Collaboration which guide how we behave as an organisation. We believe that they are inclusive and invitational and we are proud of how our values across the Trust unite our academies.

Our academies are vibrant and exciting places to work. Our small size enables us to know every child and to build strong relationships with each family. Our academies have good reputations and children benefit from an exciting curriculum that makes the most of the rich and varied opportunities both locally and regionally. We offer a caring, nurturing environment, with dedicated staff who strive to meet the needs of every child and a culture of high expectations.



About Us

Working together, our academies can achieve more for our children than by working alone. We learn together, support each other, share our expertise and ensure we are always current, ready to offer the very highest standards of teaching and provide exceptional learning opportunities for all our children. We can deliver specialist approaches and opportunities which small primary schools would struggle to deliver as individual schools. Thus, collaboration enables all our academies to achieve high quality provision and collectively we are always looking for ways to improve so that we meet the challenges of preparing children for the future.

Our Central Business Team provides services that ensure our Academy Heads and staff can focus on providing the best education for all our pupils.

Whilst our academies share expertise by working closely together, each academy has its own particular character. Each hub of schools, Totnes, Moorland, East Devon and Mid Devon, has its own local board of governors ("Local Advisory Committees"). The governors learn, support and challenge the practices in each academy through a programme of focused visits.

If you are interested in learning more about the Link Academy Trust, or would like to visit us, we would be very happy to show you around any of our academies so that you can meet the children and staff.



- INTEGRITY
- CURIOSITY
- AMBITION
- COLLABORATION

About the Role

Post:	Chief Executive Officer and Accounting Officer
Base:	Landscope, Ashburton, but will be required to work at any academy where Link Academy Trust business is conducted that is within reasonable distance of the Trust base
Reporting to:	Chair of Trustees/Board of Trustees
Job term:	Permanent
Hours:	Full time
Salary:	Excellent
Direct responsibility:	Deputy Chief Executive Officer (DCEO) Director of Education (DoE)



Job Description

Job purpose

The Link Academy Trust's CEO is responsible for the education of all the young people in our academies. They lead the Executive Team of the Trust, ensuring the Trust and all our academies are successful over time in a sustainable way. They provide high level strategic leadership and management across all aspects of the Trust's activities. They ensure that the Trust provides high quality education for all its pupils through the effective and efficient use of resources and people. As a Trust with Majority Church Articles, the CEO takes responsibility for preserving the religious character and promoting the Christian distinctiveness of the Church Schools. The CEO represents our Trust with a wide range of stakeholders and partners and enables the Trust to fulfil its civic responsibilities. They are the Accounting Officer for the Trust, responsible for ensuring the Trust meets its statutory and legal requirements.

The CEO operates under the oversight and direction of our Board of Trustees and works closely with the Trust Board, particularly the Chair. The CEO recognises that the Trust Board is ultimately responsible for approving and monitoring certain aspects of our Trust's work including the Trust's vision and strategy. Trustees are accountable to the Members of the Trust who act as gate-keepers and can step in as necessary.

Ethics and Professional Conduct

As leader of our Trust, the CEO is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of principled and professional conduct. They should always uphold and demonstrate The Principles of Public Life (The Nolan Principles). The CEO is responsible for upholding public trust in Trust, civic and system leadership, and should maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour. As leader of the Trust, representing our academies communities and the profession, the CEO should serve in the best interests of the Trust's pupils, conducting themselves in a manner compatible with their influential position in society.





Core Responsibilities

As the executive leader of our Trust, the CEO has specific core responsibilities across six interlinked areas. These are:

- Strategic leadership - Trust values, culture and strategy
- Quality of Education
- Finance, sustainability and compliance
- People strategy
- Governance and accountability
- System leadership and civic responsibility
- Accounting Officer: accountable to the Regional Director/Department for Education

Strategic leadership – Trust values, culture, and strategy

- Establish and sustain the Trust's values, culture, and strategic direction in partnership with the Trust Board
- Provide leadership that enables the Trust to achieve its strategic objectives and secure its future sustainability
- Create a safe, inclusive and positive culture across the Trust and our academies
- Develop operational objectives that are appropriate, deliverable and aligned to securing a sustainable future through the Trust's strategic direction
- Enable the Trust's organisational design and operational systems to meet its current and future requirements and manage change effectively

Quality of Education

- Tackle educational inequality, upholding and securing ambitious educational and behavioural standards for all pupils
- Ensure the highest quality provision and outcomes for the most disadvantaged and those with additional and special educational needs and disabilities within a safe and secure environment
- Enable the Trust to establish and sustain a broad, rich and coherent curriculum entitlement for all pupils, supported by effective curricular leadership and delivered through high quality teaching in all its schools
- Ensure the Trust has high quality, expert teaching in all the Trust's schools, built on an evidence-informed understanding of effective teaching and how pupils learn
- Ensure that priority areas for improvement are effectively and efficiently identified and addressed
- Enable the Trust and its schools to engage with appropriate evidence-based strategies for improvement and ensure their effective implementation



Finance, sustainability and compliance

- Ensure that sound financial management systems are in place
- Prioritise and allocate financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and probity in the use of public funds
- Ensure rigorous approaches to identifying, managing and mitigating risk
- Ensure the long-term sustainability of the Trust and its schools through effective financial and estates management
- Direct the Trust's activities to achieve the most efficient, effective and sustainable provision of education to the highest quality, prioritising and making the most effective use of the resources available.
- Ensure the organisation complies with all statutory and legal requirements including safeguarding and health and safety

People strategy

- Lead and effectively manage the activities and performance of the Trust's executive team
- Enable a people strategy that identifies talent, supports and develops all staff and sustains a culture of staff well-being and high staff professionalism
- Ensure the Trust has high quality employment practices that promote equality, diversity and inclusion, including ethical practices of recruitment and retention of staff
- Ensure staff have access to high quality professional development, aligned to balance organisational and individual needs
- Ensure the Trust has strong talent management and succession planning programmes across all areas of our work

Accountability and Governance

- Promote a culture of accountability that is recognised and accepted as an essential element of improvement at all levels and across all aspects of the Trust's work
- Understand the role of relevant regulatory bodies and ensure the Trust and our academies respond to their requirements
- Understand and welcome the role of effective Trust governance, upholding the obligation to give account and recognising that the Trust Board is ultimately responsible and accountable for the Trust's work
- Develop and maintain effective relationships with the Trust Board recognising their key role in holding the CEO and executive team to account
- Ensure the Trust Board receives quality and timely information in the level of detail needed to make informed decisions and fulfil its functions and legal obligations
- Ensure positive communications that promote the Trust and its work, and present the Trust effectively when dealing with the media and other relevant outside parties

System leadership and civic responsibility

- Promote and enable ways in which the Trust's academies and their local advisory committees engage meaningfully with their communities and are responsive and accountable to them
- In line with the Trust's civic role, work pro-actively with civic partners and stakeholders in the local area, region and/or nationally to contribute to the Public Good, ensuring the value of the child and coherent public service for children and families
- Foster and engage in the collective leadership of the sector building strong local systems to address disadvantage and improve the quality of education for all pupils
- Exert external influence on behalf of the Trust by active engagement with sector
- organisations, regulators, policy makers, local and national government, industry and other partners
- Give public assurance of high standards of probity



Accounting Officer Responsibilities

The Accounting Officer responsibilities, as designated in the Academies Trust Handbook sections 1.37 – 1.44, are

- Give assurance (to Parliament and the public) of high standards of probity in the management of public funds, particularly regularity, propriety and value for money
- Adhering to the Seven Principles of Public Life
- Having oversight of financial transactions (under Trustees' control, measures to prevent losses or misuse, multi-person operation of accounts and records, accurate accounting records)
- Completing annual statement on regularity, propriety and compliance
- Taking personal responsibility for assuring compliance to the Board
- Advising on Board intent or action if incompatible with the articles, funding agreement or handbook
- Notify the Department for Education if they consider the Board is in breach of the articles, funding agreement or handbook

Other

Safeguarding

As a Trust, we are committed to safeguarding and the welfare of all our children and staff. Safeguarding is the responsibility of all our staff. The CEO must supervise and motivate all our staff to ensure safeguarding best practice is being implemented across our Trust and ensure that there is compliance with the Trust's policies and procedures on safeguarding and child protection at all levels within the Trust.

Inclusivity

The Trust believes that everyone has the right to be treated equally and that the diversity of individuals and groups should be embraced, valued and respected.

The duties and responsibilities set out above describe the post as it is at present and will be reviewed annually to reflect plans, growth and the development of the Trust. The post holder is expected to accept any reasonable alterations that may from time to time be necessary.

CEO Person Specification

Qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree or equivalent and recognised professional qualification relevant to the role • Evidence of recent and relevant continuing professional development
Experience/ knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven track record of strategic and successful business planning and financial management • Proven track record of managing change within an organisation • Substantial track record of leadership experience with evidence of strong influencing skills • Experience of leading, managing and motivating teams of people, building effective relationships at all levels within an organisation • A thorough understanding of the changing educational landscape and the financial pressures facing schools • A thorough understanding of the operational challenges and procedures within the academy sector, including governance, procurement, income generation, funding, financial management and estate management, with particular reference to sustaining the long term future of high quality education in rural communities • An understanding of the differing requirements of schools, with particular reference to the unique ethos, vision and operational requirements and challenges of small rural primary schools • A strong understanding of the Church of England vision for education and the distinctive nature of Church school education, both at Trust and at school level • Detailed and successful experience and proven track record of school improvement planning, implementation and evaluation • In depth understanding and experience of statutory accountabilities for schools, including those from the Department for Education, Regional Director, as well as pupil assessment and external inspections (Ofsted/SIAMS) • Experience of working with all stakeholders, including Members, Trustees, Board Committees, Local Authorities, Regional Director, Department for Education, the Diocese • Proven track record of community engagement to enhance the quality of provision in local schools, and ensure all pupils thrive
Personal qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strategic thinker who can analyse and process complex information and data quickly and react rigorously in order to make effective decisions supported by the whole team • An effective collaborative leader who builds confidence, trust, loyalty and engagement of others through facilitating interaction, sharing of ideas and the involvement of all • A strong visionary leader with significant experience of leading organisational change and a successful growth strategy, known to listen, consider and understand full information before formulating/considering solutions, as well as having confidence to make authoritative decisions where needed • The ability to develop, articulate and execute a long term vision for the Trust with a focus on raising educational outcomes, improving financial sustainability and stakeholder engagement • A commitment to uphold the Trust's ethos and Christian distinctiveness • An effective ambassador for the Trust with strong presentation skills and the ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of audiences and environments • A high level of energy, resilience and flexibility • Excellent oral and written communication skills with the ability to adapt skills to address needs of various stakeholders • An ability to actively listen and respond positively to feedback

CEO Person Specification - *continued*

Interpersonal relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A highly effective networker who can demonstrate a variety of leadership styles and management approaches • An ability to establish and sustain positive and productive working relationships with a wide range of stakeholders at all levels, including Trustees, Members, the Diocese and the Regional Director • An effective leader who can build a positive organisational culture, delegate responsibly and encourage reflection • An ability to build effective teams providing direction and support to individuals in developing and achieving personal, professional and Trust objectives • An ability to inspire the respect of others, deal confidently with challenge, question views and actions of others as appropriate to achieve the best results and offer suggestions backed up by decisive action • An ethical leader who inspires school leaders and builds confidence in abilities at all levels • Approachable and professional at all times • An ability to model the effective management of workload, and support/value personal wellbeing, and to support this in others
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to work flexibly, and as necessary to achieve Trust objectives • Required to travel to various locations – must hold a valid driving licence • Must demonstrate a firm commitment to the concept of multi-academy trusts and a desire to see the Trust flourish and grow in a sustainable manner • Applicants must not be disqualified by law from holding such a position and must undergo an enhanced DBS check



How to Apply

If you would like to discover more about this exciting opportunity, need any further information or have an informal discussion, please contact our retained consultant at Academicis, Ross Laird:

rlaird@academicis.co.uk or
01223 907979 / 07901 585959

Please email your application to, Ross Laird:
rlaird@academicis.co.uk

Timeline

Closing date: 16th April 2025

Shortlisting: 17th April 2025

Interview dates: 23rd & 24th April 2025



Landscope School House
Landscope C of E Primary School
Landscope
Nr Ashburton
Devon TQ13 7LY