



Quality First
Education Trust

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Candidate Pack

Welcome

Dear applicant,

I am delighted that you are considering the opportunity to become the next CEO of the Quality First Education Trust (Q1E). This is a pivotal moment for our ambitious and forward-thinking Trust, which oversees five vibrant London primary schools — each having made significant progress since joining our family. As CEO, you will be at the helm of an organisation where educational excellence is not just a value but a daily reality, driven by our commitment to outstanding teaching and continuous improvement.

At Q1E, we firmly believe that "the quality of a school cannot exceed the quality of its teachers" (McKinsey). We put teaching first, ensuring a broad and balanced provision for every child. Our Trust is renowned for nurturing talent: from a paid three-week pre-induction for new teachers, to robust professional development, mentoring, and bespoke leadership programmes for senior staff. As CEO, you will have the opportunity to influence and enhance these initiatives, shaping the future of education for our staff and pupils alike.

Our financial stability and strong reserves mean you will lead a Trust where resources match ambition. We have invested in state-of-the-art facilities and a trust-wide curriculum, featuring high-quality lessons and thoughtfully sequenced units, enabling you to focus on innovation and strategic growth rather than crisis management.

Q1E strives to be the Trust that parents choose with confidence and that educators aspire to join. We are driven by a mission to deliver a quality first education for all children, all of the time, in every class, in every subject, with places available for every family who seeks them. We go above and beyond — doing 'whatever it takes' to help all children reach their full potential. As CEO, you will champion this ethos, making a tangible difference to lives across our communities.

Our schools, while diverse, are united by collaborative staff teams, a shared curriculum, and the support of a highly skilled central Trust team. You will inherit strong foundations and have the autonomy to build upon them, fostering unity while celebrating individuality.

Beyond our schools, Q1E has a proven record as an outward-facing, innovative organisation. Belleville Primary, our founding school, has achieved national recognition as a National Support School, National Teaching School, and now a thriving Maths Hub. Our ethos is rooted in schools helping each other, learning from evidence, and adopting best practices from across the UK and beyond. As CEO, you will drive this collaborative and evidence-informed approach, positioning Q1E at the forefront of educational leadership.

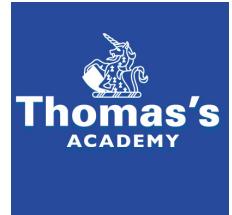
This is an exceptional opportunity for an experienced leader who is ambitious not only for our schools and children, but for their own professional journey. You will have the scope to shape strategy, cultivate talent, and build lasting partnerships—all within a supportive, well-resourced, and high-performing Trust. If you share our vision for continuous improvement, excellence, and equality, I warmly encourage you to apply and take the next transformative step in your career with us.

Yours sincerely,

Brian Ledbetter
Chair of Trustees
Quality First Education Trust

Our Aims & Mantra

The Quality First Education Trust (Q1E) was established in 2017 and currently has five London primary schools:



The Trust was founded by Belleville Primary in spring 2017. Belleville Wix, Churchfields and The Alton joined later that year. Our newest school, Thomas's Academy, joined in 2025.

Our schools are linked together by a continual drive for improvement, excellence and equality.

Our vision is of an excellent education for all.



Aims

Our aim is that all children and adults:

- Are safe
- Are excellent learners
- Have excellent social and emotional skills
- Fulfil their potential

Mantra

For all children and adults:

- Know where we are going
- Recruit, retain and develop excellent people
- Ensure we know what to do
- Ensure we know why we are doing the task
- Ensure we have excellent skills to do the task
- Ensure we have excellent resources to do the task
- Ensure we do the task with excellence
- Monitor, evaluate and improve

Quality first education means excellent provision in every lesson, every class, every day, for the 2,200 children we serve. We take pride in having a broad, balanced, high quality curriculum.

Great teaching is underpinned by clear well-sequenced units and lesson plans, provided for all year groups in all core and foundation subjects, enriched by engaging experiences, inspirational visitors and exciting trips. Each of our schools employs specialist teachers for specific subject areas such as PE, art, music and languages.

About Q1E

*“An **ambitious curriculum**... carefully designed to ensure that pupils build on their prior learning. Staff **deliver the curriculum with expertise**, selecting effective strategies to support pupils’ learning.” (Ofsted, 2025)*

We do ‘Whatever it Takes’ to make sure children receive the support they need to achieve and thrive. Across the trust, pupil voice is important, and children are encouraged to take on leadership roles.

*“Leaders are committed to doing ‘**whatever it takes**’ to secure excellent outcomes. Leaders place the interests of **pupils at the heart** of every decision they make.” (Ofsted, 2025)*

One of our core principles is the belief that “the quality of an education system (or school) cannot exceed the quality of its teachers” (McKinsey 2007). This lies at the centre of what we do and how we operate. The recruitment, retention and development of excellent teachers is our highest priority. We aspire to be an ‘employer of choice,’ providing all those who join us with excellent working conditions and career prospects. In each primary year group, we have 11 or 12 teachers across our five schools who review and discuss their plans together every week, adapting them where necessary to meet the needs of their class. Teachers also assess and moderate together. Staff survey outcomes are strong, and improving year on year.

*“Staff benefit from **high-quality training and support** from the many experts across the trust. Staff appreciate that processes have been designed intentionally to support their workload.” (Ofsted, 2025)*

Being part of a larger organisation gives our schools many advantages. We share knowledge, best practice and resources. We have excellent pedagogical directors who support the development of teaching and learning strategies, curricula, subject knowledge and SEND support across the Q1E Trust. We utilise experienced consultants to further support school improvement and provide professional coaching to our staff.

Our schools are also well supported by central capacity for finance, HR, operations and compliance, communications and design, admissions and administration. Strong financial management has ensured our schools are well resourced and our premises are in good order.

We are proudly outward facing, and our networks are important to us. We believe in primary schools improving primary schools, through approaches based on research and evidence. We have a strong history of school to-school support and improvement, including an excellent peer review programme, and we have links with outstanding schools locally, nationally and internationally. We have a keen interest in learning from the best, so staff have numerous opportunities to watch and learn from excellent teaching, visit other settings, engage with outstanding visitors, and participate in research projects.

We are proud of what we have achieved as a Trust and we are excited about the next phase of our journey, led by a new CEO.

*“Leaders, trustees and governors share an **unwavering vision** for every pupil to thrive” (Ofsted 2025)*

Job Description

Job Title:	Chief Executive Officer
Salary:	£154,241 - £181,075 (dependant upon experience)
This is a non teaching post and not entitled to the teachers pension	

The Chief Executive Officer will be an outstanding strategic leader, who is able to develop and articulate the vision, values and ethos for the Quality First Education Multi Academy Trust and who will inspire and empower others to share in achieving it. The CEO will be accountable and take responsibility for the performance of all academies and schools within the Trust: a driven leader who will be committed to creating the optimum educational opportunities for all students across the Trust.



Job Description

Strategic

- Develop and facilitate the Trust in accordance with the Trust Board's stated aims, objectives and values
- Develop and implement an effective corporate environment that allows the Trust and its constituent academies to achieve excellence
- Take responsibility for the annual business plan and key documents such as the Trust's long term strategic plan, self-evaluation and improvement plans of the Academies; and in particular lead the growth and development of the Trust
- Together with the Trust Board ensure robust and appropriate proactive risk mitigation and management for the Trust and that the risk strategy is aligned to local academy risk strategies
- Create a culture of constant improvement and be an inspirational leader, committed to the highest achievement in all areas of the Trust's work
- Develop and maintain effective relationships with the Regional School Commissioner (RSC) and Department for Education (DFE), Education Funding Agency (EFA), local authority, Trustees, Head teachers and Local Governing Bodies in order to ensure the success of the Trust and its schools and academies
- Maintain an outward facing role with the local community on behalf of the Trust to further its external

relationships, future growth and development and also in support of the individual academies and schools within the Quality First Education Trust.

Leadership and Management

- Be proactive and drive the strategic priorities ensuring that the Trust strategic plan is fully aligned and in tune with the local academy plans
- Lead & manage all operations through the agreed organisation structure and accountability matrix, and through the development, implementation and review of Trust level policies to achieve the Board's stated objectives
- Ensure the effective capture of all data to meet statutory and legislative standards
- Provide motivational and inspirational leadership at all levels of the organisation
- Ensure the Trust's management and organisational structures are fit for purpose and facilitate continuous improvement
- Support the Chair of the Trustees in his/her strategic role of leading and supporting the local governing body Chairs
- Ensure that there are clear quality assurances systems embedded across the Trust that drive consistency and improvement in performance
- Achieve effective communication, both internally and externally to the Trust, including liaising with all stakeholders.



Job Description

Resources / Change Management

- Develop and effectively and efficiently manage the learning environment, resources (people / assets / finances) and facilities of each academy within the Trust; with particular emphasis on the planning and development required to development and to encourage growth over the next 5 years
- Accountable for large scale asset management across the estate including the oversight of major capital projects
- Ensure the Trust effectively manages its talent through strategic and local CPD and succession planning
- Responsible for meeting the demands of changing legislation, new initiatives and changing practice
- Lead, oversee and advise on the allocation of resources across the Trust
- In line with the agreed Trust models of delegation - to select, train, develop, empower and motivate the senior staff of the Trust; to appoint associate consultants as appropriate; and to support academy principals in local academy recruitment and staff cpd.

Teaching & Learning / School Improvement

- Accountable for all aspects of Teaching and Learning and Standards across the Trust, set high professional standards and ensure the education vision is understood and embraced
- Responsible for developing and leading the process for improvement across the Trust, providing quality assurance and accountability; this will be achieved through a rigorous and robust system of target setting which will be reviewed regularly by the CEO, who will report progress to the Trust Board
- Provide dynamic and strategic direction and leadership for Teaching and Learning across the academies
- Lead a Trust-wide improvement function that will ensure that the requirements in each academy's performance are identified and analysed, appropriately costed and prioritised solutions are developed and secured. This includes the commissioning of internal resources through academy-to-academy support and/ or external support from a range of providers or individuals who meet strict and agreed criteria for quality, including evidence of effectiveness and impact.



Job Description

Finance and Procurement

- The CEO will be the Accounting Officer for the Trust ensuring that it works to the standards set out in the Academies Financial Handbook
- Ensure the long term financial sustainability, by confirming that proper financial systems are established and effectively monitored, that appropriate action is recommended to address problems identified and to ensure that the Trustees are presented with accurate and timely financial reports
- Develop and maintain a strong and effective relationship with the DfE, EFA and relevant funding bodies to ensure the funding streams are secured that support the forecast growth
- Review and approve annual budgets of each of the academies in the Trust. To ensure that all budgetary targets are met by individual academies and efficiencies are maximised
- Through the most appropriate agreed roles within the Trust structure, to negotiate and agree optimum prices with various service providers in order to achieve economies of scale, and to adopt the appropriate procurement process
- Develop and implement strategies for the generation of additional revenue and resources for the Trust.

Compliance

- Ensure that Trust meets all legislative and statutory requirements, including Health and Safety, Safeguarding and those required by Companies House, and the Charity Commissioners, Data protection, the Master and Supplementary Funding agreements.
- Partnerships
 - Develop and lead a partnership strategy that ensures the Trust and its academies participate in local, national and international education networks
 - Identify key agencies, individuals and groups that could enhance the delivery of the Trust's strategy and build relationships locally, nationally and internationally to secure their support in partnership with the relevant personnel from the academies
 - to share skills expertise and capacity across the Trust and its academies and embed system leadership practice
 - Build and maintain strong relationships with parents/carers, students, staff, trustees, members, directors and governors across the Trust.

This job description will be reviewed annually to reflect the plans, growth and aspirations of the trust.



Person Specification

Requirement	
Qualifications	<p>Degree or equivalent and recognised professional qualification relevant to the role</p> <p>Evidence of recent and relevant continuing professional development</p>
Experience / Knowledge	<p>Substantial track record of leadership experience with evidence of strong influencing skills</p> <p>Experience of leading, managing and motivating teams of people, building effective relationships at all levels within an organisation</p> <p>Proven track record of strategic and successful business planning and financial management</p> <p>A thorough understanding of the changing educational landscape and the financial pressures facing schools</p> <p>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)</p> <p>Experience of working with all stakeholders, including Members, Trustees, Board Committees, Local Authorities, Regional Director, Department for Education</p> <p>Proven track record of managing change within an organisation</p> <p>Detailed and successful experience and proven track record of school improvement planning, implementation and evaluation</p> <p>Proven track record of community engagement to enhance the quality of provision in local schools, and ensure all pupils thrive</p> <p>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</p> <p>An understanding of the differing requirements of schools, with particular reference to the unique ethos, vision and operational requirements and challenges of London schools</p>
Personal qualities	<p>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</p> <p>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</p>



Person Specification

Requirement	
Personal qualities	<p>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</p> <p>An effective collaborative leader who builds confidence, trust, loyalty and engagement of others through facilitating interaction, sharing of ideas and the involvement of all</p> <p>A commitment to uphold the Trust's ethos</p> <p>An effective ambassador for the Trust with strong presentation skills and the ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of audiences and environments</p> <p>Excellent oral and written communication skills with the ability to adapt skills to address needs of various stakeholders</p> <p>An ability to actively listen and respond positively to feedback</p> <p>A high level of energy, resilience and flexibility</p>
Interpersonal relationships	<p>A highly effective networker who can demonstrate a variety of leadership styles and management approaches</p> <p>An ability to establish and sustain positive and productive working relationships with a wide range of stakeholders at all levels, including Trustees, Members and the Regional Director</p> <p>An effective leader who can build a positive organisational culture, delegate responsibly and encourage reflection</p> <p>An ability to build effective teams providing direction and support to individuals in developing and achieving personal, professional and Trust objectives</p> <p>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</p> <p>An ethical leader who inspires school leaders and builds confidence in abilities at all levels</p> <p>Approachable and professional at all times</p> <p>An ability to model the effective management of workload, and support/value personal wellbeing, and to support this in others</p>
General	<p>Able to work flexibly, and as necessary to achieve Trust objectives</p> <p>Required to travel to various locations – must hold a valid driving licence</p> <p>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</p> <p>Applicants must not be disqualified by law from holding such a position and must undergo an enhanced DBS check</p>



How to Apply

If you wish to discover more about this exciting opportunity, need any further information or would like to have an informal discussion, please contact Will Bridge at Academicis, our recruitment partner, on wbridge@academicis.co.uk or by phone on **07825 346535 / 01223 907979**

CLOSING DATE:

Monday 19th January 2026

SHORTLISTING:

Wednesday 21st January 2026

INTERVIEWS:

Tuesday 27th & Wednesday
28th January 2026



Quality First Education Trust

Belleville Primary School | Belleville Road | Battersea | London | SW11 6PR