

# HEARTS ACADEMY TRUST

## Chief Finance Officer (CFO)

Recruitment Pack



HEARTSACADEMYTRUST



**Contract Type:**

Full time, permanent (following completion of statutory induction period)

**Closing Date:**

Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> May 2026

**Interview Date:**

Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May, 2026

**Start Date:**

September, 2026



# WELCOME

Dear applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the position of **Chief Finance Officer (CFO)** at HEARTS Academy Trust. We hope the information in this pack supports you in your application to join the HEARTS family.

HEARTS Academy Trust was established in 2011 and is inspired by its values of happiness, equity, achievement, resilience, truth and spirituality, all of which are deliberately permeated throughout our schools, our relationships and organisation. These values are at the core of all our work, decision making, strategic direction, relationships and the curriculum that our pupils learn.

We highly recommend arranging an informal visit to explore our schools, provision and educational standards in greater depth.

Please contact Don Wry, CEO & Accounting Officer for HEARTS Academy Trust via the Recruitment Assistant, Michelle Hatch ([recruitment@heartsacademy.uk](mailto:recruitment@heartsacademy.uk)) in the first instance.

Alternatively, please telephone HEARTS Academy Trust at 01268 572672.

We look forward to hearing from you.



**Don Wry**  
CEO



**Vaughan Collier**  
Chair of HEARTS Academy Trust



# INTRODUCTION

The role of Chief Finance Officer (CFO) is a crucial strategic appointment, supporting HEARTS to provide and enhance the already excellent opportunities and learning for our pupils. The role, alongside all roles in HEARTS Academy Trust, is focused on pupils, their well-being, safety and education.

HEARTS Academy Trust is an innovative employer. You will be joining a highly supportive and ambitious organisation, working alongside over 200 like-minded professionals including an executive team comprised of the CEO, COO, Director of Curriculum, Learning and Assessment, Deputy Director and an Executive Headteacher & Deputy CEO. There are also seven Heads of School/provision, with complimentary teaching staff, business and support staff including experienced Cluster School Business Managers, catering and caretaking teams. The Local Advisory Boards (LABs) and Trustees oversee, lead and support our work with their expertise, time and experience. Further information about Trust governance can be found [here](#).

HEARTS Academy Trust is seeking an intelligent, resilient, skilled and strategic leader who communicates effectively, honestly and responsibly with all stakeholders. The successful candidate will firmly believe in, and uphold, our HEARTS values.



# HEARTS VALUES

HEARTS Academy Trust is committed to providing a happy, caring and safe learning environment for all within a values led context, where everyone feels valued and grows in confidence and independence.

The Trust has developed an ethos in which decisions are made on the values set out (right) and our commitment to the service of our pupils and their families. Pupils are at the heart of all that we do. It is an absolute priority that every pupil, irrespective of their starting point, succeeds and achieves. In order to do this, a high-quality educational experience will be an entitlement for every pupil, with pupils, staff, parents/carers, and the wider community working together to achieve these goals for young people.

Further information about our HEARTS values can be found on our website ([click here](#)).

***Redefining Possibilities***



## HAPPINESS

We promote **happiness** and good mental health & wellbeing by building relationships that have a strong, shared sense of purpose, where all are valued and belong. Our curriculum is rich in opportunities and experiences that ignite a love of learning.



## EQUITY

We are engines of social justice: we ensure everyone is treated with **equity** and help those who need it, overcoming barriers and battling against unfairness.



## ACHIEVEMENT

We facilitate and celebrate **achievement** within and beyond our schools, recognising the individuality of success, enabling all to fulfil their potential and prosper.



## RESILIENCE

We develop **resilience** through hard work and cultivating courage in the face of adversity. We foster independence of thought, a willingness to take risks, persevere and learn from mistakes, taking responsibility over our decisions.



## TRUTH

We model **truth**, integrity and authenticity: doing the right thing, because it is the right thing, even when it is difficult.



## SPIRITUALITY

We promote **spirituality** through empathy, reflection and appreciating diverse backgrounds and cultures. We endeavour to live life in all its fullness through a deepening sense of awe and curiosity, expanding connections with the wider world around us.

# PERSON SPECIFICATION

We are seeking to appoint a CFO who will help lead our schools and provisions with ambition, rigour and vision. The CFO is the Trust's financial strategic leader, responsible for upholding and articulating the vision, values and ethos of the Trust, empowering others to deliver the Trust's strategic aims. Resilient and calm under pressure, the successful candidate will be committed to high standards and aspirational school improvement while helping to deliver hugely positive life chances for our pupils.

*Please see attached the person and job specification related to this role.*





# OUR SCHOOLS

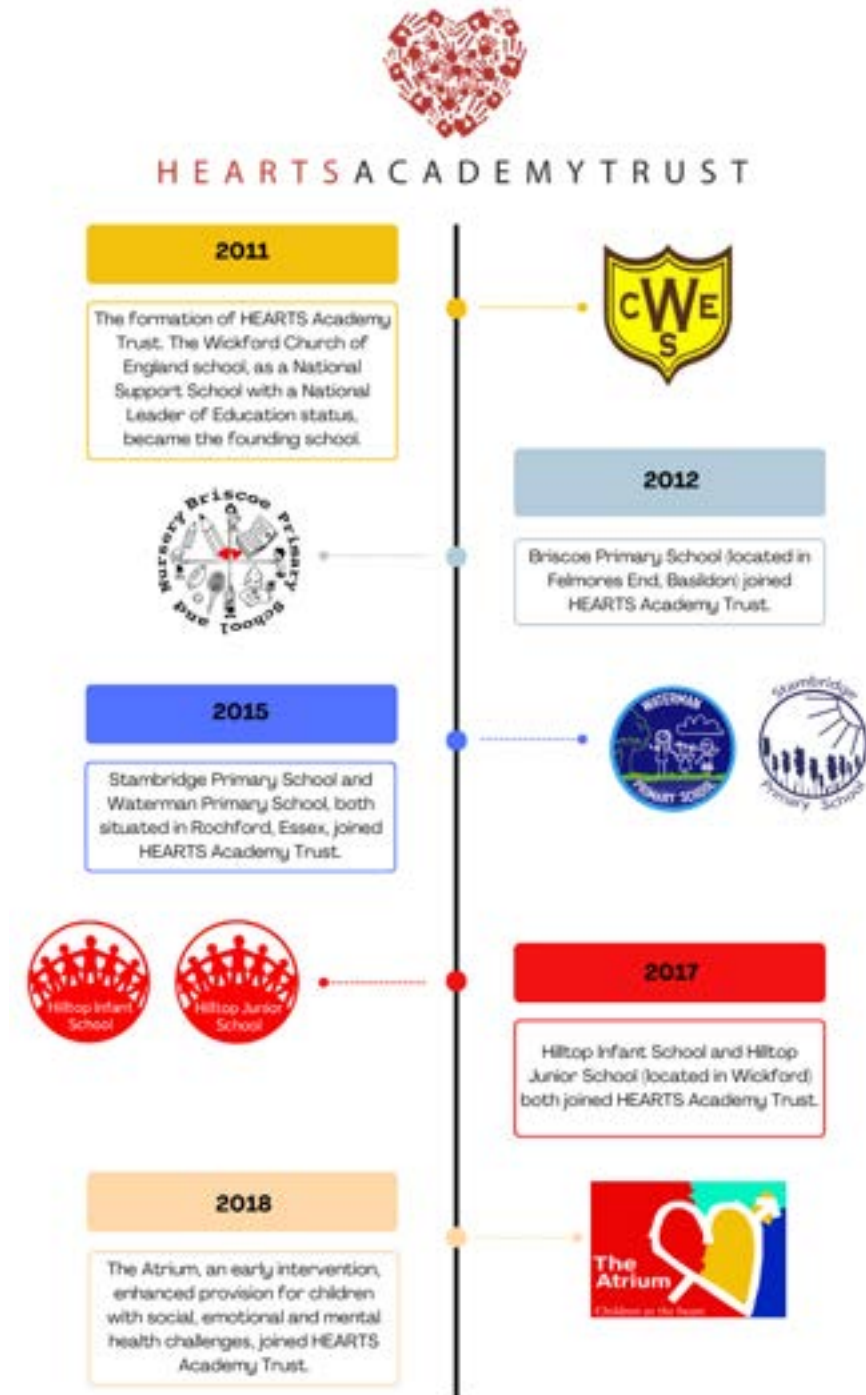
HEARTS Academy Trust is a family of six schools and one enhanced SEMH provision which educates pupils in and around South Essex. The schools are based in Rochford, Wickford and Basildon. Most of our schools / provisions are within one or two miles of each other. Schools are supported through regular meetings between school leaders and subject leader networks, with opportunities to share best practice.

The Trust was founded by [The Wickford Church of England school](#) - now three times Ofsted-rated 'outstanding' and twice rated SIAMS 'outstanding'.

The Trust is currently made up of:

- [Briscoe Primary School and Nursery](#)
- [Waterman Primary School](#)
- [Stambridge Primary School](#)
- [Hilltop Infant School](#)
- [Hilltop Junior School](#)
- [The Wickford Church of England School](#)
- [The Atrium SEMH enhanced provision.](#)

There is a programme of Trust wide CPD and investment in training for all staff. There is an emphasis on staff wellbeing, with elements of the 'core offer' including access to the HEARTS Mental Health Team led by the Senior Mental Health Practitioner and Trust-wide Counsellor. Our primary schools have a shared curriculum and all staff work in teams across the Trust. This includes the two HEARTS Academy Trust strategic Business Managers, the Finance Manager and the Finance Assistant.



# PERFORMANCE

HEARTS Academy Trust has a proven track record of school improvement and transforming schools. We are proud of many Ofsted-recognised achievements, including two currently graded 'outstanding' schools, as well as two of our schools recently being nominated for the TES School of the Year award within the last two academic years (2022 – Hilltop Junior School and 2024 – The Wickford Church of England School).

We provide exceptional, inclusive and diverse learning for all pupils. We have a strong history of effective collaboration across the locality, the region, and nationally/internationally. We are a determined Trust and consistently maintain a clear focus on each school, the provision we offer all pupils and families, and the whole curriculum. We are ambitious, hopeful and aspirational for our pupils, staff and communities.

Our pupils outperform other pupils nationally in reading, writing and maths; HEARTS Academy Trust is high-performing.

KS2





# THE LOCAL OFFER

We set and maintain an ambitious offer for pupils – please see further information about our strategic direction via our [strategic plan](#) as well as our [annual report](#). Our [School Improvement Framework](#) is also available to view on our website.

We work tirelessly to ensure that all pupils have access to life-enhancing experiences through exceptional personal and academic development including the [HEARTS Promise](#).



# CENTRAL SERVICES TEAM

The Central Services Team is a key part of the Trust's infrastructure. The Central Services Team support the smooth operating of the Trust and the individual schools with Finance, Estates and Facilities, HR, Recruitment, Governance and Occupational Health.

To support workload and wellbeing, the Trust has a centralised, expertly-planned curriculum, including some of the highest quality schemes of work on offer, meaning our teachers and support staff can focus on what matters most: spending time with pupils.

The Trust advocates SEMH and well-being support through an experienced Trust Counsellor, mental health first aid, a Trust Lead for SEND, SEMH and Safeguarding, Workload and Wellbeing committees, innovative flexible working policies along with additional employee perks and benefits.





# CONTINUED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

HEARTS is a supportive and ambitious organisation, led by a senior leadership team who are collaborative, highly performing, responsible professionals. Children are at the HEART of all we do, therefore all new colleagues will share a passion for delivering outstanding outcomes for pupils.

Leadership development, succession planning, and capacity building are major priorities for HEARTS; we have a robust CPD entitlement programme for all staff. The Trust further prioritises staff workload through its [workload and wellbeing charter](#) and its continued focus on social, emotional and mental health.

We have a broad yet robust [CPD offering for all colleagues](#). As incoming CFO, you will have the opportunity to be part of the HEARTS CPD journey.

Awarded NPOLT	🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆	6
Undertaking NPOLT	🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆	6
NPOSL	🏆🏆	2
NPOLL	🏆	1
NPOEL	🏆🏆	2
NPQEYL	🏆	1
Undertaking D-SBM	🏆	4
Thrive Licensed Practitioners	🏆🏆	2
NPOSEND	🏆	1
Staff Promotions	🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆	12

An ongoing and extensive range of CPD undertaken has enabled HEARTS colleagues to stay up to date with the most recent knowledge in their specialism and allowed the very best standard of education for our pupils, both inside and outside of the classroom.

*Some of the most recent CPD undertaken across academic year 2024-25 can be seen - right.*



# WHY WORK FOR HEARTS?

We offer:

- A supportive and inclusive culture
- A bespoke workload and well-being charter
- A four-day teaching week (80:20 model)
- A two-week October half-term break
- Flexible / hybrid working
- Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)
- Competitive salary
- Excellent training and a commitment to professional development
- HEARTS ethos, vision and values
- Cycle to work scheme
- Membership to the Confederation Schools Trust
- Internal and external networking opportunities

The Trust has a close-knit, family ethos. You will feel and gain a sense of belonging and a shared purpose, helping us transform and shape pupils and families lives.

More reasons to work for HEARTS can be [found here](#).



# Application and Interview Process

Visits to the Trust are strongly encouraged. If you would like an informal discussion about working for HEARTS, about this role or would like to arrange a visit, please contact Don Wry, CEO via Michelle Hatch, Recruitment Assistant: [recruitment@heartsacademy.uk](mailto:recruitment@heartsacademy.uk) in the first instance. Alternatively, please telephone HEARTS Academy Trust on 01268 572672.

Please submit your application via [MyNewTerm](#) (CVs are not accepted), the link for which can be found via [our website](#). Your supporting statement should address and evidence the selection criteria detailed in the person specification and job description.

Should you require any assistance with the recruitment process please contact: [recruitment@heartsacademy.uk](mailto:recruitment@heartsacademy.uk) / 01268 572672.

Our Recruitment and EDI policies can be viewed on our [HEARTS Academy Trust](#) website.



After the closing date, shortlisting will be conducted by a panel, who will take your application, supporting statement and experience to date into account. You will be selected for an interview entirely on the contents of your application form, so please read the recruitment pack carefully before you complete your application form. Occasionally, when we receive sufficient applications, the Trust may close the vacancy and shortlist prior to the published closing date.

Interviews will be conducted by a panel. The process will also include various in-tray tasks and a presentation (information of which will be shared with successful, shortlisted candidates).

# THANK YOU

## Why work for HEARTS?

Please click [here](#) for more details

about:

- HEARTS Central Offer
- When you go the extra mile
- HEARTS events
- Well-being
- Staff development



HEARTS ACADEMY TRUST

