



GREAT SCHOOLS
TRUST

Recruitment Guide

Director of Capital, Estates & Facilities

Contract: Permanent, full-time (37-Hours), All-Year round.

Location: Hybrid with weekly site visits to all trust academies.

Salary: Competitive senior package, commensurate with experience

Start: Negotiable

  @GSTSchools





WELCOME TO THE GREAT SCHOOLS TRUST

“Excellence is not a destination – it is who we are, every day.”

Welcome to Great Schools Trust, where belief in every child's potential meets the daily habits that make success inevitable. In our schools, excellence is not left to chance. It is embedded through clear routines, ambitious teaching, compassionate leadership and a culture where character matters.



Our Mission:

To develop in every student the academic skills, intellectual habits, qualities of character, and leadership traits necessary to become a successful, healthy citizen in the global community.



Our Vision:

To build a family of outstanding academies where all students, irrespective of their starting points, flourish, are happy and achieve their full potential.



Our Values – ASPIRE

- Aspiration
- Self-awareness
- Professionalism
- Integrity
- Respect
- Endeavour

Our Pillars of Excellence:



People & Leadership –

Growing exceptional leaders who inspire, empower and deliver.



Character & Leadership –

Building resilience, integrity and aspiration through values-led education.



Educational Transformation –

Relentlessly improving teaching and learning for every child.



AI & Future Learning –

Harnessing innovation and technology to personalise and future-proof learning.



System Leadership –

Driving improvement across schools with trust-wide accountability and collaboration.



Educational Partnerships –

Working with families, communities and global partners to extend opportunity.

National Recognition:

- National Behaviour Hub Lead MAT
- Edurio Top 10 for Staff Satisfaction (2024)
- Most Improved MAT in the Northwest for Progress 8 (2023–24)
- Home to the IPCL: The Institute of People, Character & Leadership

WELCOME FROM THE CEO

Shane Ierston
Chief Executive Officer



Thank you for your interest in the position of Director of Capital, Estates and Facilities. This is an important moment for our Trust, and I am pleased that you are considering joining us in a role that is central to our operational excellence and future development.

Our estate is one of our most valuable assets. It is the foundation upon which our staff and students work, learn and grow. As we continue to strengthen our infrastructure, enhance the quality of our environments and plan for future investment, we require a leader who brings both strategic insight and hands-on expertise. We are looking for someone who can provide strong leadership, promote the highest standards of safety and compliance,

build effective partnerships with colleagues and external partners, and bring a proactive, solutions-focused approach. This permanent appointment offers the opportunity to make an immediate and meaningful impact, influencing not only the efficiency of our operations but also the daily experience of the communities we serve.

You will be joining a committed and collaborative organisation where people genuinely care about the environments we create. We will support you to succeed and welcome your ideas, initiative and professional judgement, recognising the value of strong professional leadership in this area.

If you share our commitment to excellence in estates and facilities management, we would be delighted to receive your application. Thank you once again for your interest, and I wish you every success in the recruitment process.

Shane Ierston





About the Role

Contract: Permanent, full-time (37-Hours), All-Year round

Location: Hybrid/Office-based with weekly site visits to all trust academies

Salary: Competitive senior package, commensurate with experience

Reports to: Chief Operating & Strategic Officer

Start Date: Negotiable

Great Schools Trust is seeking an exceptional estates leader to move the Trust from capable delivery to sector-leading strategic estate management. It is a strategic leadership appointment with visible influence over safety, capital investment, growth, sustainability, compliance and educational quality.

The successful candidate will sit at the centre of executive and board decision-making, shaping how the Trust invests public money, manages risk, develops its sites, integrates digital infrastructure and creates environments where pupils, staff and communities can thrive.

What GST needs from its next Director

- A strategic thinker who can turn estate evidence into trust-wide priorities and persuasive investment cases.
- A disciplined capital leader who understands condition, compliance, procurement, project gateways and value for money.
- A visible executive partner who can work effectively with the Chief Operating & Strategic Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Executive Officer, Finance, Risk and Audit Committee (FRAC), Trustees, Principals and the Director of ICT.
- A modern estates professional who is comfortable leading sustainability, accessibility, resilience and digital estate data reform.
- A people leader who can build consistency, professionalism and confidence across central and academy-based teams.

Strategic and Estate Context

GST's estates work is driven by a clear trust-wide mission: to create safe, sustainable, inclusive and inspirational learning environments, and to use the estate as a platform for trust growth, community value and operational excellence.

Estates Strategic Mission: The Four Pillars

Safety & Compliance



Sustainability



Inclusive Spaces



Inspirational Learning Environments

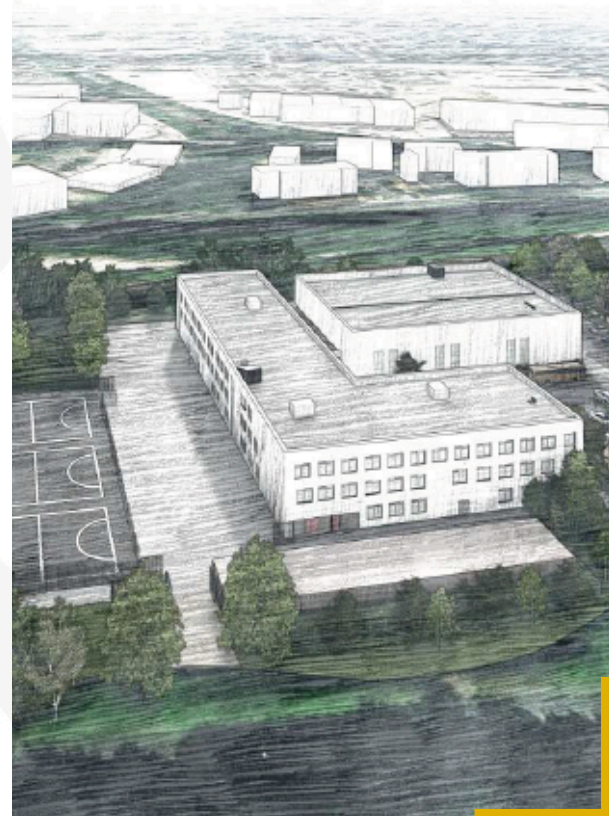


Theme	Detail
Strategic mission	Deliver safe, sustainable, inclusive and inspiring learning environments while helping GST become the school, trust and community of choice.
Trust priorities	Safety and compliance; sustainability and environmental responsibility; accessibility and inclusion; growth and community integration; disciplined capital planning and value for money.
Operating context	A diverse, evolving estate across the North West, including new-build schools, legacy buildings, a PFI-managed site at Kings Leadership Academy Liverpool, and a growing digital infrastructure agenda.
Capital agenda	Move from opportunistic spending to disciplined, multi-year SCA / DFC / grant planning; sustain project gateway controls; and maximise external funding where possible.
Immediate priorities	Wavertree's future permanent build, Liverpool post-PFI exposure, and digital infrastructure upgrades across multiple sites.

Strategic priorities for the first 12–18 months

The first phase of this role should be judged not simply by project delivery, but by whether GST becomes more foresighted, more data-rich and more confident in how it governs its estate.

1. Lead the annual refresh of the Trust's Estates Strategy and Integrated Asset Management Plan, ensuring a clear, costed and board-ready investment narrative.
2. Strengthen estate data, registers, dashboards and reporting so that GST is fully prepared for annual standards returns, scrutiny by FRAC and the DfE's digital estate expectations.
3. Deliver the agreed 2026/27 & 2027/28 condition and infrastructure pipeline with strong gateway discipline, procurement rigour and audit-ready evidence.
4. Secure KLA Wavertree's Phase 2 to 4 temporary buildings whilst working closely with DfE Capital colleagues and the appointed contractor to secure the academy's permanent building from 2028/29.
5. Shape the Trust's medium-term SCA strategy, including planned earmarks for known future liabilities such as Kings Leadership Academy Liverpool post-PFI transition from 2031.
6. Drive a more proactive maintenance culture, reducing avoidable reactive spend and improving programme certainty, building performance and service quality.
7. Work in lockstep with the Director of ICT so that physical and digital infrastructure planning are integrated, compliant and lifecycle-based.
8. Lead due diligence and estate readiness for trust growth, new academies, expansions and future site developments.
9. Deepen board and executive confidence through precise reporting on compliance, risk, value for money, sustainability and estate performance.



Job Description

1) Strategic Leadership & Governance

- Provide executive-level leadership for capital, estates, facilities and place strategy across GST.
- Translate the Trust's educational priorities, growth plans and community mission into a clear estates roadmap.
- Advise the Chief Operating & Strategic Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Executive Officer, FRAC and Trustees on risk, investment, estate performance and long-term strategic choices.
- Ensure the estate strategy, AMP and related policies remain current, evidence-led and board-ready.
- Lead the project gateway discipline for capital decisions, from early option appraisal through to post-project review.

2) Asset Management, Condition & Capital Planning

- Own the Trust's rolling 3–5 year capital investment plan and the annual prioritisation of SCA, DFC and other capital resources.
- Oversee condition, suitability, sufficiency and lifecycle planning across all sites, using robust data and clear prioritisation criteria.
- Lead major refurbishment, remodelling, expansion and new-build projects, ensuring quality, affordability, compliance and programme control.
- Develop long-term strategies for major known liabilities, including Liverpool post-PFI planning and major lifecycle renewal at older sites.
- Support due diligence and estate planning for academies joining or expanding within the Trust.

3) Compliance, Health, Safety & Risk

- Ensure that every academy is maintained in a safe working condition and that statutory duties are met in full.
- Lead trust-wide assurance on fire safety, asbestos, legionella, water hygiene, emergency lighting, lifting equipment, premises compliance, catering compliance and contractor controls.
- Embed a strong culture of risk management, business continuity and incident readiness across the estate function.
- Maintain high-quality assurance records, testing schedules, management plans and escalation routes for executive and board scrutiny.

4) Maintenance, Facilities & Service Delivery

- Lead a consistent, trust-wide maintenance and facilities model that balances service quality, cost control and educational continuity, including oversight of the trust's catering facilities.
- Critically review maintenance strategies, planned works, reactive performance, grounds and FM contracts to improve value for money and responsiveness.
- Set standards for contractor management, mobilisation, snagging, defects, documentation, handover and post-occupancy review.
- Work with principals and academy estates leads so that local site management is aligned with trust strategy and standards.

5) Sustainability, Accessibility & Resilience

- Drive the Trust's climate, decarbonisation and energy agenda across capital projects and operations.
- Prioritise schemes that improve energy performance, climate resilience, carbon reduction and whole-life value.
- Ensure accessibility, inclusion and reasonable adjustment are built into planning, prioritisation and project delivery.
- Support the use of estates as community assets where this strengthens educational benefit, social value and trust growth.

6) Data, Digital & Performance Management

- Oversee accurate and current asset registers, condition records, legal information, survey data and project information.
- Implement dashboards and performance measures covering compliance, condition, maintenance, energy, cost and project delivery.
- Prepare GST for stronger national expectations around digital estate records, common data structures and annual estate standards returns.
- Integrate estate planning with ICT infrastructure planning, safeguarding systems and digital business continuity arrangements.

Job Description Cont.

7) Procurement, Commercial & Stakeholder Leadership

- Lead procurement strategy for estates and capital works in line with public procurement rules, trust controls and value-for-money principles.
- Secure the right specialist advice, consultants and delivery partners for complex projects and transactions.
- Build confident relationships with principals, trustees, contractors, consultants, local authorities, the DfE, diocesan or landlord interests where relevant, and community partners.
- Represent GST externally as a credible and ambitious leader in educational estate management.

8) Leadership of People & Culture

- Lead, develop and inspire the central estates function and academy-based site leadership, building capability, consistency and accountability.
- Create a culture that values professionalism, service, evidence, safeguarding, collaboration and continuous improvement.
- Use the ISBL, IWFM and DfE competency frameworks to shape succession planning, training and professional development across the estates workforce.

Other Responsibilities

The postholder will:

- Promote the Trust's vision and the mission of its academies.
- Champion the Trust's ASPIRE values and contribute to Trust-wide initiatives and community life.
- Undertake additional duties reasonably required by the Trust.
- Ensure that all records created or used as part of the role are managed appropriately and in accordance with Trust policies and procedures.

Safeguarding Children & Young People

- Share responsibility for safeguarding and be aware of confidentiality requirements.
- Comply with policies and procedures on child protection and report concerns appropriately.
- Act in accordance with the Code of Conduct and all key Trust policies.
- Engage in continuous professional development and support the Trust's People Leadership Strategy.
- Attend Trust and academy events as required and contribute positively to the wider community.



Person Specification

Category	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications & professional standing	Degree or equivalent professional qualification in a relevant discipline such as surveying, construction, engineering, estate management, facilities management or property. OR substantial senior experience with clear evidence of strategic estates leadership in a complex multi-site setting.	Chartered or working towards chartered status with a relevant body such as RICS, CIOB, IWFM, CIBSE, IEMA or equivalent. Project / programme qualification (e.g. PRINCE2, APM).
Strategic estates & capital experience	A substantial record of leading estates, capital and facilities strategy across a multi-site portfolio. Demonstrable success in capital planning, condition-led prioritisation, major project delivery and long-term asset management. Experience of turning estate data into board-quality recommendations and investment cases.	Significant experience within the academy, school, college or wider public sector environment. Experience of PFI transition planning, free school or expansion delivery, and academy growth due diligence.
Compliance, governance & risk	Deep understanding of statutory compliance, health and safety, contractor control and premises assurance. Strong experience of risk management, business continuity and governance reporting. Ability to create an audit-ready environment with robust records, evidence and controls.	Experience of internal scrutiny, FRAC reporting, CDC / estate returns, and DfE capital compliance requirements.
Commercial & procurement capability	Strong commercial judgement with experience of tendering, contract management, consultant appointment, value engineering and whole-life cost assessment. Able to balance quality, affordability, delivery certainty and public accountability.	Experience of using frameworks, structured procurements, land transactions, leases or Section 106 style negotiations.
Data, digital & performance leadership	Confident in the use of asset registers, condition information, KPI reporting and digital tools to drive performance and prioritisation. Able to lead a more proactive, data-rich estate model rather than a reactive one.	Experience of integrating estates and ICT infrastructure planning, digital dashboards, or trust-wide estate / FM systems.
Leadership & behaviours	Executive presence with the credibility to influence trustees, executives, principals and external partners. A collaborative, decisive and resourceful leader who can build trust, challenge constructively and hold high standards. Strong written and oral communication, with the ability to explain technical matters clearly to non-specialist audiences.	Experience of leading organisational change, building central functions, coaching site teams and embedding a culture of continuous improvement.
Values & personal qualities	Unquestionable integrity, strong judgement and a commitment to public value. Commitment to safeguarding, inclusion, accessibility and the creation of environments in which pupils and staff can thrive. Resilient, organised and calm under pressure, with a strong service ethic.	Visible commitment to sector engagement, benchmarking, professional learning and external collaboration.



What We Offer

A Trust That Prioritises Staff Wellbeing

- A culture where staff wellbeing is central to decision-making
- Strong pastoral support and leadership that genuinely listens
- A collaborative, family-like environment across all academies

Professional Benefits & Career Development

- Highly competitive salaries that reward excellence
- 30 days of annual leave for support staff plus bank holidays
- Access to CredimusAI, saving hundreds of hours each year and reducing workload
- A personal device provided to all teaching staff to enhance professional practice
- Weekly leadership link meetings to support your growth and leadership development
- Career progression opportunities, with rapid promotion for the right candidates
- Trust-wide collaboration, sharing expertise and supporting other schools
- Strategic input into our brand-new building, shaping facilities for future generations

Health, Wellbeing & Personal Support

Benenden Health membership (optional £15.50 per month), including day 1 access to:

- 24/7 GP and Mental Health Helplines
- Specialist advice lines for adult care, neurodiversity and disability
- Fast access to diagnostics, physiotherapy, mental health support and cancer advice
- Help for Tuberculosis and selected surgical procedures (subject to eligibility)
- No medical checks, excess fees or age-related pricing
- Option to add family members at additional cost

BUPA Employee Assistance Programme (Trust-funded), offering:

- Counselling and emotional well-being support
- Legal, financial and family care advice
- 24/7 confidential assistance

Good occupational sick pay, maternity/paternity schemes and family-friendly policies supporting life's key moments

Financial, Lifestyle & Community Benefits

- Cycle to Work salary sacrifice scheme
- Membership of either the Teachers' Pension Scheme or Local Government Pension Scheme
- Opportunities to work with the local community on fundraising and charity projects
- The chance to contribute to trust-wide culture, innovation and school improvement



How To Apply

Submit your application via [MyNewTerm](#)

For an informal conversation about the role or to arrange a tour of one of our academies, please contact: h.fenlon@greatschoolstrust.com

Appointment, Compliance & Safeguarding

Appointment, Terms & Compliance

The Job Description forms part of the contract of employment and may be reviewed as the role or organisational needs change, following consultation. The Trust will make reasonable adjustments to support applicants and employees with disabilities. The Trust is a licensed Skilled Worker Visa sponsor and may offer sponsorship subject to eligibility and the requirements of the role.

Safeguarding & Pre-employment Checks

Great Schools Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All staff must share this commitment. As part of safer recruitment, interviews will explore motivation to work with children, ability to maintain professional boundaries, emotional resilience and attitudes to authority and behaviour management.

Pre-Employment Checks

Any offer of employment is conditional upon the successful completion of the following:

- Proof of identity, address and right to work in the UK
- Two satisfactory references, including the most recent employer
- Verification of relevant qualifications
- Enhanced DBS check with barred list check
- Prohibition from teaching check
- Section 128 check (for management roles)
- Overseas police checks (where applicable)
- Occupational health clearance
- Satisfactory completion of the probationary period

Ongoing Compliance

The postholder must comply with Trust policies, including the Staff Code of Conduct, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, and Staff Communication and Social Media Policy. Responsibilities may be reviewed periodically in line with Trust and academy priorities.



GREAT SCHOOLS TRUST

