



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**Danes
Educational
Trust**

www.daneseducationaltrust.org.uk





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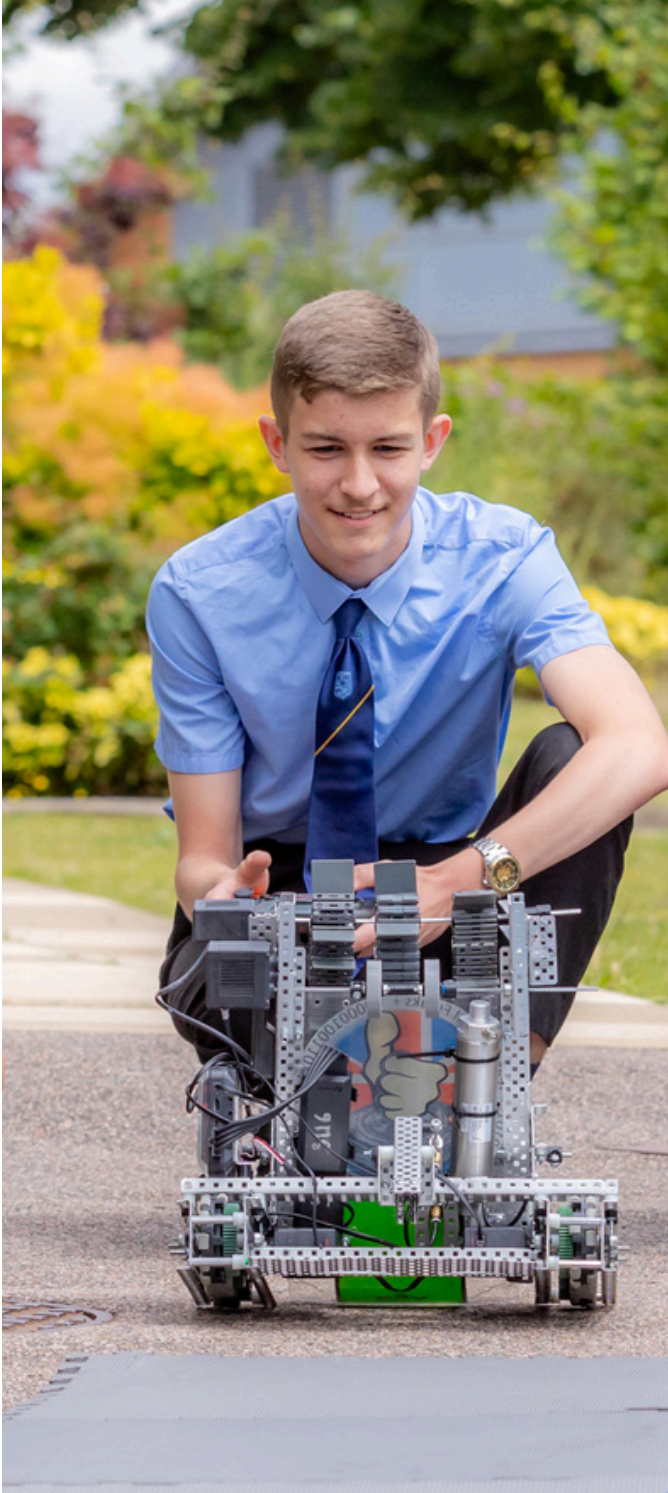
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Welcome

Dear prospective applicant

Thank you for expressing an interest in the role of Chief Executive Officer at Danes Educational Trust.

After ten years in the role, building our Trust from one to 13 schools, our founding Chief Executive Officer, Dr Josephine Valentine OBE has decided that it is time for her to move on and hand over the reins of this vital and rewarding role to her successor.

We are at an exciting point in our development at Danes Educational Trust and are looking for a Chief Executive Officer who will build on our achievements to date, value joy in working, teaching and learning together and continue to ensure that we develop, evolve and grow to provide exemplary education through creating a community of excellent schools.

We are a successful and well respected multi academy trust working across Hertfordshire and more recently Buckinghamshire, comprising six primary schools, six secondary schools and one university technical college, collectively supporting 9150 pupils and employing 1328 staff.

You will be joining us at a key stage in our development, leading on the successful implementation of our 2025 – 2028 Strategic Plan which focuses on:

- Developing educational excellence and equity
- Enabling our staff to flourish
- Providing support beyond our trust
- Sustaining high performing business functions

We need a Chief Executive Officer to provide inspirational, transformational leadership who shares our vision and values. They will collaborate with our teams to ensure all pupils enjoy learning and make great progress irrespective of their starting points.

We trust that our applicant pack provides a clear and comprehensive overview of the role. This is a unique opportunity for an outstanding candidate. If you feel that you have what we are looking for and share our drive to improve pupil outcomes and our commitment to ensure our pupils are prepared for their future we very much look forward to hearing from you.

Danes Educational Trust Board

About us

We are a multi-academy trust working to develop optimistic, resilient pupils and valued, empowered staff through local, national and global partnerships.

Established in June 2016, when St Clement Danes School, an outstanding school in Chorleywood, was asked to open a second school we have grown in size and reputation. The Trust now comprises 13 schools; a mix of primary, secondary and one UTC across Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire.



Our aim

The aim of the Trust is to provide an exemplary education, through creating a community of excellent schools. We aspire and are committed to a common set of aims:

- An insatiable drive to improve pupil outcomes
- A commitment to ensure our pupils are prepared for their future
- Excellence in leadership and learning, recruitment and retention
- Access to exceptional ongoing professional development
- Impact-focused autonomy and accountability
- A willingness to be adaptable and resourceful

Our vision

Our vision is to develop educational excellence that serves our local community. We equip our pupils with the skills they need to become curious, creative and courageous and ensure our school environments are places where their talents are nurtured, and our pupils are happy.

We are a family of schools and we make the difference together as one trust. Our ambition is for our Trust to:

- Ensure pupils enjoy learning and make great progress irrespective of their starting points
- Enable our schools to be authentic and vibrant institutions at the heart of their communities
- Be held in high esteem by parents, pupils and staff

Our core values

Our values articulate what is important to us and underpin all that we do and plan:

- We value joy in working, teaching and learning together
- We encourage everyone within our Trust to feel optimistic about the future and how they can shape it
- We support all individuals in developing resilience to enable them to change and grow as a result
- We value and support the wellbeing of all individuals who learn and work in our schools
- We provide equality of opportunity and experience for all
- We provide a safe and secure learning environment for all

Our schools and our approach



Proud to be a part of
DANES EDUCATIONAL TRUST



Each school is supported to improve the outcomes and provision for their pupils regardless of their starting points. Our belief is that you do not improve by 'standing still', we continually strive to be better. We aspire to deliver an exceptional education to each learner and this is supported by seeking out and sharing the best practices of each school and also looking beyond our trust through collaborative working with other schools, regional and national organisations.

Staff are supported with their professional development. This begins with our successful Initial Teacher Training programme, through the Early Career Framework and national professional qualifications as well as our own Danes Educational Trust bespoke CPD and leadership programmes. We are dedicated to spotting and nurturing talent across all our staff. We provide opportunities not only within our trust but also beyond to contribute to the regional and national education dialogue.

Outcomes

As a result of strategic planning by the Board, the academic outcomes for our schools are positive. Following the addition of two Primary Directors in September 2024, primary results at key stage 2 have significantly improved, positioning them above national average on every measure.

Secondary outcomes historically have been strong and remain above national averages. These positive outcomes are reflected in the **multi academy trust performance tables**.

Finances

The combination of strategic oversight by the Board and robust finance processes means that trust finances are well-managed, with the Trust and schools being in secure positions. The Trust has strong reserves which it uses strategically to support the strategic objectives of the Trust. **Read more about our finances on our website.**



Our team

Our central services team comprises highly experienced, seasoned and committed professionals who share their expertise Trust-wide bespoke to each school.

The Director of Education oversees the education team which comprises Primary Directors, Secondary Directors, Director of Inclusion, Trust Learning Leads and a central data team.

The Chief Operating Officer oversees the business functions of finance, HR, IT, data analysis, estates, governance and compliance, marketing and communications work with the relevant teams in schools.

In addition, the Chief Executive Officer is supported by a part-time Executive Assistant.

[Read more about our team on our website.](#)



The role

We are seeking an inspirational and ambitious Chief Executive Officer to lead Danes Educational Trust into the next stage of our development. Our next Chief Executive Officer will be a strategic leader who brings courage and clarity of vision to strengthen our reputation for educational excellence, ensuring every pupil, whatever their starting point, can thrive both within and beyond the classroom.

The successful applicant will be a leader who embodies our values, placing joy, optimism, and well-being at the heart of all activity, fostering a culture of safety, equality, and resilience. This requires an authentic, credible, and collaborative communicator who is skilled at motivating, developing, and taking colleagues with them. They will empower high performing teams within a strong accountability culture, balancing ambition with inclusivity, respect, and kindness.

They will be a respected educational leader with proven success at scale. The role demands business acumen and strategic insight, with a track record of delivering transformational change and the courage and expertise to lead rapid improvement in challenging contexts. Critically, they must demonstrate a deep understanding of the national operating environment, the educational accountability framework, and the responsibilities of the Accounting Officer role.

This is a unique opportunity to lead a values-driven trust with a relentless commitment to improving outcomes for all pupils.

The successful applicant will provide strategic leadership and overall accountability for the success and sustainability of Danes Educational Trust. You will work closely with the Board of Trustees to deliver the Trust's vision, of delivering educational excellence that serves our local communities.

In turn we offer them a strong, supportive and engaged Board, alongside a highly competent and experienced central executive team. We view this as a genuine partnership and as such we will also offer an individually tailored professional development plan and access to appropriate coaching and mentoring support.

Main activities and responsibilities

[View a copy of the full job description online](#)

Strategic leadership

- Shape and deliver a clear, values-led strategy for the Trust's next phase of development.
- Lead the Trust in fulfilling its vision, mission and values, ensuring that these are evident in every aspect of its work.
- Maintain a culture of continuous improvement, innovation and collaboration across all schools.
- Build and maintain a strong partnership with the Chair and supportive board of trustees, ensuring effective governance and transparent decision making.
- Anticipate external opportunities and challenges, positioning the Trust effectively within the wider educational landscape.

Educational excellence

- Secure the highest standards of teaching, learning and pupil outcomes across all phases of education, with a view to securing long term, sustained excellence in our work.
- Lead the Trust's approach to school improvement, ensuring that each school benefits from collective expertise and effective support and the nuances of the local contexts of each school are considered.
- Empower and develop headteachers and senior leaders, fostering a culture of accountability, professional growth and shared responsibility.
- Champion inclusion and ensure that every pupil, regardless of background or starting point, is supported to achieve and thrive.

People and culture

- Inspire and motivate staff at all levels, building a strong and cohesive leadership team.
- Ensure the Trust attracts, retains and develops outstanding talent through clear succession planning and professional learning.
- Lead by example in creating a collaborative, open, respectful and empowering culture.
- Champion equality, diversity and inclusion across all aspects of the Trust's work, modelling behaviours that reflect the Trust's values and ensuring that our policies are not only followed but embedded in practice.

Governance, finance and operations

- Serve as the Accounting Officer, ensuring financial sustainability, probity and compliance with all statutory and regulatory requirements.
- Oversee sound financial management, ensuring that resources are deployed effectively and deliver maximum impact for pupils.
- Ensure appropriate systems and processes are embedded so all schools in the Trust comply with the funding agreement, articles, relevant law and regulation and have appropriate service level agreements in place.
- Ensure that risk is well managed and that the Trust remains compliant with all legal, safeguarding and health and safety obligations.
- Ensure central services provide effective, efficient and high-quality support to schools, enabling educational priorities to be delivered.

Growth, partnerships and profile

- Lead the Trust's sustainable growth strategy, including the integration of new schools where appropriate.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with regional and national partners, including the Department for Education, Ofsted and local authorities.
- Act as an ambassador for the Trust, representing its values and interests with confidence and credibility.
- Strengthen the Trust's reputation for educational excellence, community engagement and collaboration across the sector.

The person

[View a copy of the full person specification online](#)

Strategic leadership and vision

- An inspirational, authentic, and visible system leader who can set a clear vision, lead complex change, and foster high performance across multiple and diverse school contexts.
- Proven success in senior executive leadership with a strong track record of driving continuous improvement aligned with the Trust's ethos and values.
- Experience of leading with resilience, optimism, and integrity.

School improvement and educational expertise

- Deep understanding of pedagogy (curriculum design, inclusive practice) with proven impact on raising standards and outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged learners.
- Experience of cross-phase leadership (early years to post-16), ensuring alignment of standards and practice.
- Strong data fluency, able to evaluate performance, set priorities, and measure impact.
- Demonstrable success in developing leadership capacity at all levels, embedding accountability, succession planning, and shaping talent pipelines across a group of schools.

Sector engagement and influence

- A credible and empathetic role model who gains respect through integrity, high standards, and clear values.
- Strong ability to influence, negotiate, and build strategic partnerships with key external stakeholders (Department for Education, Ofsted, local authorities, regional networks, and other multi academy trusts).
- Evidence of contributing to sector development, regional, or national initiatives, influencing policy and best practice.

Organisational leadership and governance

- Experience of leading complex organisations and building effective senior teams.
- In-depth knowledge of statutory responsibilities, governance, and the regulatory environment for multi academy trusts.
- Successful experience of working with and reporting to Boards/Trustees, ensuring robust governance and transparent accountability.
- Expertise in strategic financial planning and oversight of multi-million pound budgets, ensuring value for money, risk management, and compliance.
- Experience of leading major organisational projects with long-term measurable impact.

Qualification and personal qualities

- Exceptional communication and interpersonal skills, able to inspire confidence and build strong professional relationships.
- High levels of professional optimism and joy, fostering a culture where staff and pupils thrive.
- Commitment to the values of equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Desirable: Postgraduate qualification (e.g., NPQEL, MBA, MA in Educational Leadership) and evidence of thought leadership or published contributions to the sector.



Staff benefits

Growth and wellbeing

We prioritise the wellbeing of our staff and foster a culture of joy and optimism. We champion equality and provide a supportive environment where staff are encouraged to develop resilience.

Our commitment to exceptional ongoing professional development is extensive, and includes:

- Access to individualised executive coaching
- An internal leadership development programme
- Access to the National College CPD portal
- Funded professional courses (up to Level 7)
- A range of internal CPD opportunities

Benefits package

We offer a competitive package designed to support your professional and personal life:

- A competitive salary package
- Membership to the Local Government Pension Scheme
- Wellbeing support via access to Education Support, offering counselling, resources, coaching and advice for professional and personal wellbeing
- Generous holiday entitlement of 32 days per annum plus bank holidays
- Support with relocation costs where applicable



How to apply

Location: Danes Educational Trust based at St Clement Danes School, Chorleywood, Hertfordshire.

Visit our [website](#) for the full job description and [My New Term](#) to apply.

Informal discussions: Danes Educational Trust would be happy to arrange an informal conversation with members of the central team ahead of the application deadline. To arrange this, please contact Susan Poole Director of Operations, via [email](#) or call 07986 650086.

Closing date: Monday 21 September 2026 at 9.00 am

Visits to trust schools: For shortlisted applicants Monday 28 September and Tuesday 29 September

Interviews: Wednesday 30 September and Thursday 1 October

Start date: January 2027

Due diligence

Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts.

Safeguarding statement

Danes Educational Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all staff and volunteers to share and demonstrate this commitment. The successful applicant will have to meet the requirements of the person specification and will be subject to an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list check and all other relevant pre-employment checks as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025).

Equality and inclusion statement

Danes Educational Trust is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes all applications.

**The equal opportunities monitoring form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application.*



DANES EDUCATIONAL TRUST

Making the difference together

c/o St Clement Danes School
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