

TRUST COUNSELLOR & SENIOR MENTAL HEALTH LEAD

Recruitment Pack



HEARTS ACADEMY TRUST



KEY INFORMATION

Contract Type:

Full time, permanent

Closing Date: 8th March 2026 at midnight

Start Date: April 2026, with flexibility to allow full handover

37 hours per week

Band 29-37 on HEARTS Pay Scale



WELCOME

Dear applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the position of **Trust Counsellor and Senior Mental Health Lead** at HEARTS Academy Trust. We hope the information in this pack supports you in your application for the post.

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 sector leading social, emotional and mental health support in greater depth. Please contact Nicola Rainford, our Trust's Executive Lead for SEND, SEMH & Safeguarding in the first instance (n.rainford@heartsacademy.uk). Alternatively, please telephone HEARTS Academy Trust at 01268 572672.

We look forward to hearing from you.



Don Wry
CEO



INTRODUCTION

The role of **Trust Counsellor and Senior Mental Health Lead** is a crucial strategic appointment, supporting HEARTS to continue and enhance the already excellent social, emotional mental health support for our pupils.

As the Trust Counsellor and Senior Mental Health Lead, you will play a vital role in shaping the strategic support across all our settings, ensuring our pupils, families and colleagues continue to thrive.

HEARTS Academy Trust is an innovative employer. You will be joining a highly supportive and ambitious organisation, working alongside over 180 like-minded professionals, including an executive team comprised of the CEO, CFO, COO, Director of Curriculum, Learning and Assessment, Deputy Director, Executive Lead for SEND, Safeguarding & SEMH and an Executive Headteacher & Deputy CEO.

There are 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](#).

Your expertise and experience will ensure that our pupils, staff and families get the best support available. The successful candidate will firmly believe in, and uphold, our HEARTS values.



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. 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](#)).

Additional information about our Trust via our [strategic plan](#) as well as our [annual report](#), can be viewed on our website.

Redefining Possibilities

Our HEARTS values form the foundation of our culture of care, inclusion, mutual respect, and service to our communities which empowers all to flourish and make a difference.



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

As the Trust Counsellor and Senior Mental Health Lead, you will be the strategic lead managing our social, emotional and mental health support systems across HEARTS Academy Trust.

You will work strategically as a member of the central team, reporting directly to the Executive Lead for Safeguarding, SEND & SEMH and liaising closely with all Trust schools via Heads of School.

Alongside this, you will lead a team of Trainee Counsellors, school based Senior Mental Health Leads and Mental Health First Aid Champions across all seven HEARTS settings.

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

Briscoe Primary School



OUR SCHOOLS

HEARTS Academy Trust is a family of six schools and one partnership 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 Partnership Provision.](#)

There is a comprehensive programme of [Trust wide CPD](#) and investment in training for all staff. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring positive workload and wellbeing at HEARTS. Our primary schools have a shared curriculum and all staff work in teams across the Trust; collaboration is a key strength.



HEARTS ACADEMY TRUST

2011

The formation of HEARTS Academy Trust. The Wickford Church of England school, as a National Support School with a National Leader of Education status, became the founding school.



2012

Briscoe Primary School (located in Felmores End, Basildon) joined HEARTS Academy Trust.



2015

Stambridge Primary School and Waterman Primary School, both situated in Rochford, Essex, joined HEARTS Academy Trust.



2017

Hilltop Infant School and Hilltop Junior School (located in Wickford) both joined HEARTS Academy Trust.

2018

The Atrium, an early intervention, enhanced provision for children with social, emotional and mental health challenges, joined HEARTS Academy Trust.



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 our new Trust Counsellor and Senior Mental Health Lead will share a passion for delivering outstanding outcomes for pupils, staff and families.

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 a HEARTS employee, you will have the opportunity to be part of our CPD journey.

CPD undertaken this year:

Awarded NPQLT	6
Undertaking NPQLT	6
NPQSL	2
NPOLL	1
NPQEL	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 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 & Forum Strategy
- Internal and external networking opportunities

And more!

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.



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 Nicola Rainford, the Trust's Executive Lead for SEND, SEMH & Safeguarding (n.rainford@heartsacademy.uk) in the first instance. Alternatively, please telephone HEARTS Academy Trust at 01268 572672.

To apply please complete your application via *MyNewTerm* by [clicking here](#) (CVs are not accepted). Your supporting statement should address and evidence the selection criteria detailed in the person specification and job description.



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 to do so, 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 an exercise with pupils, an in-tray task and a formal interview (information of which will be shared with successful, shortlisted candidates).

THANK YOU



HEARTS ACADEMY TRUST

