

Chief Executive Officer

Job Description



Reach Schools

CHOICE & OPPORTUNITY
FOR EVERY CHILD

Role Details

Role name: Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Employer: Reach Schools

Start date: Target date September 2026
(flexible based on candidate notice period)

Salary: c. £118,000 - £140,000

Contract: Full-time, permanent

Pension: TPS

Accountable to: The Board of Trustees

Based: Feltham, London (travel as required)

Reports to: Chair of Board of Trustees

Responsible for: Co-headteachers, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Director of Partnerships and Communications, Trust DSL

Role Summary

Reach Schools is a visionary trust based in west London. The CEO will be our principal executive leader, responsible for implementing the Board's vision, driving continuous improvement, sustaining strong performance, and stewarding the Trust's resources effectively and ethically in pursuit of our mission to ensure all children can enjoy a life of choice and opportunity.

The CEO oversees all aspects of the strategy and educational delivery alongside holding responsibility for finance and governance. The CEO also holds the role of the Accounting Officer for the Trust, working with the Chief Financial Officer and Chief Operations Officer and being accountable to the Trust Board for the financial health and probity of Reach Schools.

This is a role where the CEO will do whatever it takes to ensure that pupils are on a path to a life of choice and opportunity. You embody the Reach values, acting as a role model for pupils, their families and your colleagues at all times – and you act as an ambassador for Reach Schools in the local area and on a national level. A key aspect of the role is to scale the impact of the organisation both locally and nationally, working with the Board to identify the best routes to maximise the organisation's impact. In addition to all elements within this job description, you may, at any time, be asked to undertake other duties as the Board deems necessary.

Main Responsibilities

Strategic leadership

- You lead colleagues across the Trust through a dialogue of mutual respect and challenge in pursuit of the organisation's mission, driven by an optimistic vision of the future direction of the organisation;
- You develop and implement a strategic plan that realises the innovative culture of the Trust, drawing on great practice from within Reach Schools and the wider sector, and ensuring a collaborative approach to developing the strategy including with your senior leaders;
- You develop operational objectives that are appropriate, deliverable and aligned to securing a sustainable future through the Trust's strategic direction;
- You enable the Trust's organisational design and operational systems to meet its current and future requirements and manage change effectively;
- You ensure that our schools are rooted in Feltham, intentionally making a wider impact on children, families and the community in the local area;
- You encourage evidence informed practice and innovation across the Trust;
- You embody the Trust's ambition to scale and maximise its impact by working closely with the Trust Board to identify the best route to achieve this, and in partnership with the Reach Foundation as parent charity, for whom Reach Schools is a flagship in the national career-to-cradle network of schools.
- You provide strategic oversight of educational delivery including curriculum, assessment, behaviour, attendance, safeguarding and co-curricular activities, and ensure all those working in our schools have high ambitions for excellent educational outcomes for our young people;
- You champion inclusive practice and progress for all, especially pupils with Additional Educational Needs (AEN) and those from disadvantaged backgrounds, promoting the welfare of our children and young people;
- You encourage a model of vibrant collaboration, challenge and support between the schools in the Trust, Reach Academy Feltham and Reach Academy Hanworth Park, ensuring coherence and modelling Reach Schools' culture and impact in the local community.

Remarkable people

- You are accountable for the recruitment of key roles within the Trust and setting high standards for the outreach, interview, onboarding and professional development processes that are critical for sustaining a high-performing team;
- You take seriously the task of recruiting safely and ensure there are processes in place so that all checks are carried out;
- You promote diversity, equity and inclusion in all aspects of workforce planning and development;
- You celebrate staff successes and manage underperformance in a timely and sensitive manner, always holding the vision of the Trust in mind;
- You support the Co-headteachers to create a strong school culture by defining what this looks, feels and sounds like in all areas of school life, leveraging your experience through line management of the Trust's Co-headteachers;

Educational excellence

Main Responsibilities

- You lead the central team to ensure high-quality and thoughtful approaches to financial management (including use of pupil premium), operations, estates management, communications, human resources and corporate governance;
- You understand that excellent people determine excellent outcomes and you seek to retain and develop talent.

- You ensure that capital projects and plans are delivered on time and budget, holding key relationships with external companies and other bodies such as local authorities;
- You oversee estates and climate sustainability planning and management via a close relationship with the COO;
- You are resourceful and entrepreneurial in your approach to financial sustainability.

Finances, compliance, risk and sustainability

- You give assurance (to Parliament and the public) of high standards of probity in the management of public funds, particularly regularity, propriety and value for money, in particular through your role as Accounting Officer;
- You ensure sound financial processes, checks and balances are in place and have oversight of financial transactions (under Trustees' control) to prevent losses or misuse, multi-person operation of accounts and records, and accurate accounting records;
- You approve the annual report and return statement on regularity, propriety and compliance;
- You ensure that resources are deployed effectively and sustainably across the Trust and its schools, working closely with the CFO to hold overarching responsibility for budget-setting, reserves and cash management;
- You take personal responsibility for assuring compliance to the Board, ensuring compliance with the Articles of Association and Funding Agreement;
- You ensure that strategic and operational risks are identified, managed and mitigated;

Accountability and governance

- You promote a culture of accountability that is recognised and accepted as an essential element of improvement at all levels and across all aspects of the Trust's work;
- You understand and respect the role of relevant regulatory bodies and ensure the Trust and its schools respond to their requirements;
- You are present in engaging in compliance-related processes within the Trust in collaboration with the Co-Headteachers, including any complaints, exclusions, suspensions, data protection and HR processes that arise, to ensure alignment with Department for Education guidance, and responsiveness to the Trust's community and stakeholders, working closely with the COO;
- You understand and welcome the role of effective Trust governance, upholding the obligation to give account and recognising that Trust Boards are ultimately responsible and accountable for the Trust's work;

Main Responsibilities

- You develop and maintain effective relationships with the Trust Board, recognising their key role in holding you, as CEO, and executive team to account;
- You ensure the Trust Board receives quality information in the level of detail needed to make informed decisions and fulfil its functions and legal obligations.

System influence and collaboration

- You ensure positive communications that promote the Trust and its work, and present the Trust effectively when dealing with the media and engaging with the broader education community;
 - You oversee the work of supporting alumni and fostering collaboration with them;
 - You build a local and national network of colleagues who can support and challenge you and you represent the Trust in public forums to the very best of your ability.
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- You act as an ambassador and steward for both maintaining and brokering relationships with local authorities, partner schools, and wider partner organisations, with a particular focus on engagement with activities of the Reach Foundation as parent charity;
 - You engage with both existing, and potential new supporters and donors of Reach Schools, building the Trust's networks in a spirit of collaboration;
 - You build relationships with external stakeholders, including policymakers, enhancing the Trust's visibility and influence;



The personal qualities the CEO will possess:

- an unwavering belief, and relentless pursuit of, the vision of Reach Schools for every single child;
- a constant restless energy for improvement of yourself and others and an ability to drive results in a team-centric environment;
- high levels of organisation and attention to detail in all areas;
- resilient and reflective, able to navigate complexity, challenge and uncertainty while remaining purposeful and applying professional judgement and values;
- the ability to maintain composure and emotional regularity in all situations;
- a deep sense of personal integrity and commitment to high ethical standards;
- a strong sense of public service, with an unwavering commitment to equity, inclusion and social justice and ability to build trust quickly and sustain it over time;
- an understanding that dignity for all is critical;
- a love of people and an ability to build appropriate and nurturing relationships with all stakeholders.

The knowledge, skills and experience the CEO will have:

- qualified teacher status, and significant teaching and school senior leadership experience;
- significant senior leadership experience in education or a similar, mission-driven organisation, including experience of accountability to a board, or equivalent governing body;
- proven ability to articulate a compelling, innovative long-term strategic vision and translate it into coherent, deliverable plans;
- the experience of sustaining excellence and leading improvement across more than one school or phase;
- a track record of values-driven leadership in communities experiencing disadvantage or structural inequality;
- a strong understanding of high-quality education that aligns with the Reach vision, including curriculum design, pedagogy, assessment and inclusion;
- the experience of effective academy trust governance and Department for Education/Ofsted accountability frameworks, including the respective roles of Members, Trustees, Accounting Officer, executive leaders and local governance;
- the skills and credibility to engage in national conversations around education, including with politicians and other high-profile stakeholders;
- a deep understanding of safeguarding practices and other relevant laws which schools must adhere to;

- proven ability to build high-performing leadership teams through workforce planning, alongside leading, retaining and developing others through coaching, mentoring and high-quality professional learning;
- strong financial literacy and experience of overseeing significant budgets, risk and compliance frameworks;
- outstanding interpersonal and communication skills, with the ability to engage authentically with pupils, families, staff, trustees, funders and external partners with emotional intelligence, empathy and cultural awareness;
- the ability to build partnerships that enhance opportunities for pupils and strengthen system capacity and model the Trust's civic role, with a particular focus on the Feltham community guided by a vision of cradle-to-career support.

Person Specification

Ideal, but not essential:

- experience of teaching or leading across all phases of education from Early Years to Sixth Form;
- experience of developing and implementing trust-wide curriculum or improvement frameworks;
- previous experience as an Accounting Officer or equivalent statutory role;
- proven experience of establishing yourself in a senior role and managing that organisational change process;
- experience of strategic planning for sustainable growth in a multi-school context;
- confidence in commissioning, procurement and value-for-money decision making;
- experience of influencing beyond one's own organisation for public benefit;
- NPQH or equivalent qualification.