



Trustee Recruitment Brochure



Think
Differently
Education Trust

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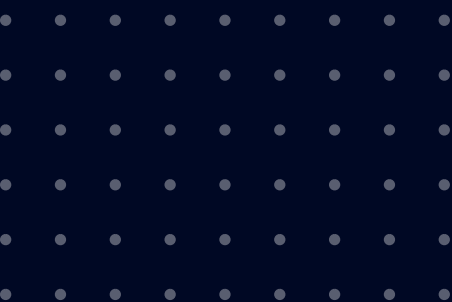
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Support from Central Team



Your expertise could change lives

The young people we support are in hospitals, specialist centres and mental health units across Birmingham. They have medical conditions, disabilities and emotional needs that put mainstream education out of reach. Behind every one of them is a team that refuses to give up. We need a **Trustee** who feel the same way.



‘Everyone deserves
the right to learn

– Chloe, STP Year 10

Chloe's Story

Chloe accesses education through our Short Term Provision, meaning a traditional classroom has never been an option for her. Most of her lessons take place at home or over a video call, delivered one to one.

After time with James Brindley Academy (Proudly part of TDET), she has been able to access some lessons in person and was even willing to be filmed on site for our RRSA video, something that would have been unimaginable when she first joined us. We have held the Gold Rights Respecting Schools Award for ten years and stories like Chloe's are exactly why. We need Trustees who share our passion for ensuring complex young people are never written off.

The Role

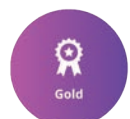
As a trustee of TDET, you are a charity trustee and a company director. This means you have legal duties under both charity law and company law, including:

- Acting in the best interests of the academy and its pupils at all times
- Managing the trust's resources responsibly and ensuring its financial health
- Ensuring the trust complies with its legal and regulatory obligations
- Filing statutory returns and acting with reasonable care and skill



Artsmark
Platinum Award
Awarded by Arts
Council England

think
differently



Interested in becoming a Trustee?

Trustees are the people ultimately responsible for governing a charity or academy trust. Trusteeship is a voluntary role and one of the most meaningful ways you can contribute to your community. You don't need a background in education what matters is your commitment, curiosity, and care for young people.

Three Core Functions

The governance of TDET is built around three key functions that every trustee contributes to:

Setting Direction

Agreeing the vision, values, and strategic priorities of the Trust

Holding to Account

Scrutinising performance data and asking the right questions of leadership

Ensuring Compliance

Making sure the trust meets its legal, financial, and regulatory duties

Time Commitment

Trustees are expected to attend 11 Full Board meetings each year, along with any additional meetings relating to local committees where applicable. Board papers are circulated approximately one week in advance, providing sufficient time to review documents and prepare any questions.

Trustees are also encouraged to undertake one school visit per term and participate in governance training opportunities, which are typically offered once each term to support ongoing development and effectiveness in the role.

WHAT WE OFFER



Ongoing CPD opportunities

A wide range of CPD opportunities is available to all staff



Governance training

All trustees have access to governance training and ongoing development opportunities.



Structured induction programme

Trustees are supported through an induction programme designed to build understanding of the role.

Welcome to Think Differently Education Trust



Our Recruitment Approach

The recruitment process includes application review, interviews, safer recruitment checks, and Board approval. The key stages are outlined below to provide clarity on what candidates can expect.



1) My New Term

To begin with, Complete and submit your application form, highlighting the skills, experience, and perspectives you would bring to the Board.

If you have any questions about the role or application process, please contact our Governance Officer, Carissa Tabberer, at tabbererc@jamesbrindley.org.uk.



Carissa Tabberer
Governance
Officer

Tips from our hiring team

- As you consider applying to be a Trustee, you can also learn more about our culture, including our mission, values and principles, which show up in how we do our work every day.

2) Informal Discussion with CEO

If your application aligns with the current needs of the Trust, you will be invited to an informal discussion with our CEO.

This conversation provides an opportunity to explore your background, discuss the role in more detail, and learn more about the Trust's vision and priorities.



Hardip Bissell
CEO

Tips from our hiring team

- Carefully review and familiarise yourself with the the role, think through your relevant experience and prepare to best showcase your strengths.



3) Panel Interview

Candidates will be invited to a panel interview focused on their skills, experience, values, and commitment to improving outcomes for children and young people

4) Safer Recruitment Checks

Following a successful interview, we will undertake the necessary safer recruitment checks, including references and an enhanced DBS check. These checks are a standard part of the appointment process for all trustees.

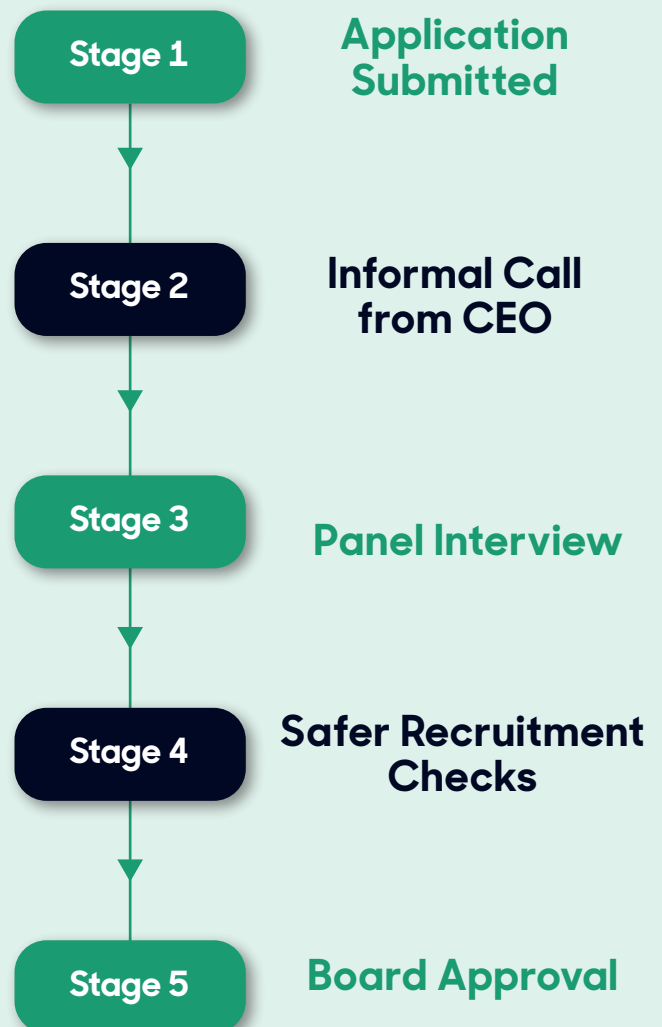


5) Board Approval and Onboarding

Once all checks have been completed satisfactorily, your appointment will be presented to the Board for formal approval.

Following appointment, you will receive a structured induction to help you understand the Trust, your responsibilities as a trustee, and how you can make an effective contribution from the outset.

Recruitment process visualised



Conflict of Interest Declaration

Trustees are required to declare any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest and comply with all governance and statutory requirements relating to transparency and accountability.

This must be declared during stage 1 of the application process.



Welcome to The Think Differently Education Trust. We operate across a range of specialist settings, including Special Schools, Alternative Provisions, Hospital Provisions, and Home Education. We support young people with SEND and medical needs to make strong progress despite complex challenges, placing equal value on high-quality education, care, and wellbeing. Young people sit at the heart of decision making, supported by a skilled and committed workforce. Our vision to think differently drives us to remove barriers, raise aspirations, and build futures through inclusive and specialist education.

- Hardip Bissell, CEO

Our Commitment

Across the Trust, we deliver inclusive, pupil centred education through high-quality teaching, care, and support. We create safe and nurturing environments with high expectations, where diversity is valued and every young person is supported to thrive. We prioritise ethical leadership, transparency, and wellbeing for pupils and staff alike, investing in training and development to meet evolving needs.

Safeguarding

TDET is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all Trustees to share this commitment.

Our Young People

As a Trustee, you will be responsible for overseeing safeguarding across all of TDET's settings. The Trust supports some of the most vulnerable children and young people in Birmingham, including those receiving education in hospitals, medium secure psychiatric units, specialist centres and home settings, because illness, disability, or Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs make mainstream school inaccessible to them.

Many of these young people face significant complexity in their lives, and the environments in which TDET operates carry particular safeguarding considerations that go beyond those of a typical school trust. Trustees are expected to provide active and informed oversight of safeguarding arrangements across all settings, and training and support will be provided to help you fulfil this responsibility.



Welcome to Think Differently Education Trust

Introduction

Think Differently Education Trust (TDET) is a collaborative, forward-thinking community of schools committed to delivering high-quality, inclusive education for all children and young people. The Trust places a particular focus on supporting children and young people with SEND and those facing complex life and learning challenges



Our Mission Statement

We provide inclusive, pupil-centred education for young people with SEND and medical needs by delivering high-quality teaching, care and support that breaks down barriers and builds futures.

Our Vision Statement

Think differently to lead inclusive, specialist education. We are committed to creating a future where every young person with SEND or medical needs can live a full and ambitious life.

Our Ethos

TDET rejects a *one size fits all* approach. Instead, we aim to combine shared values with tailored support so that each school's distinctive context, identity and community are respected.

Our Values

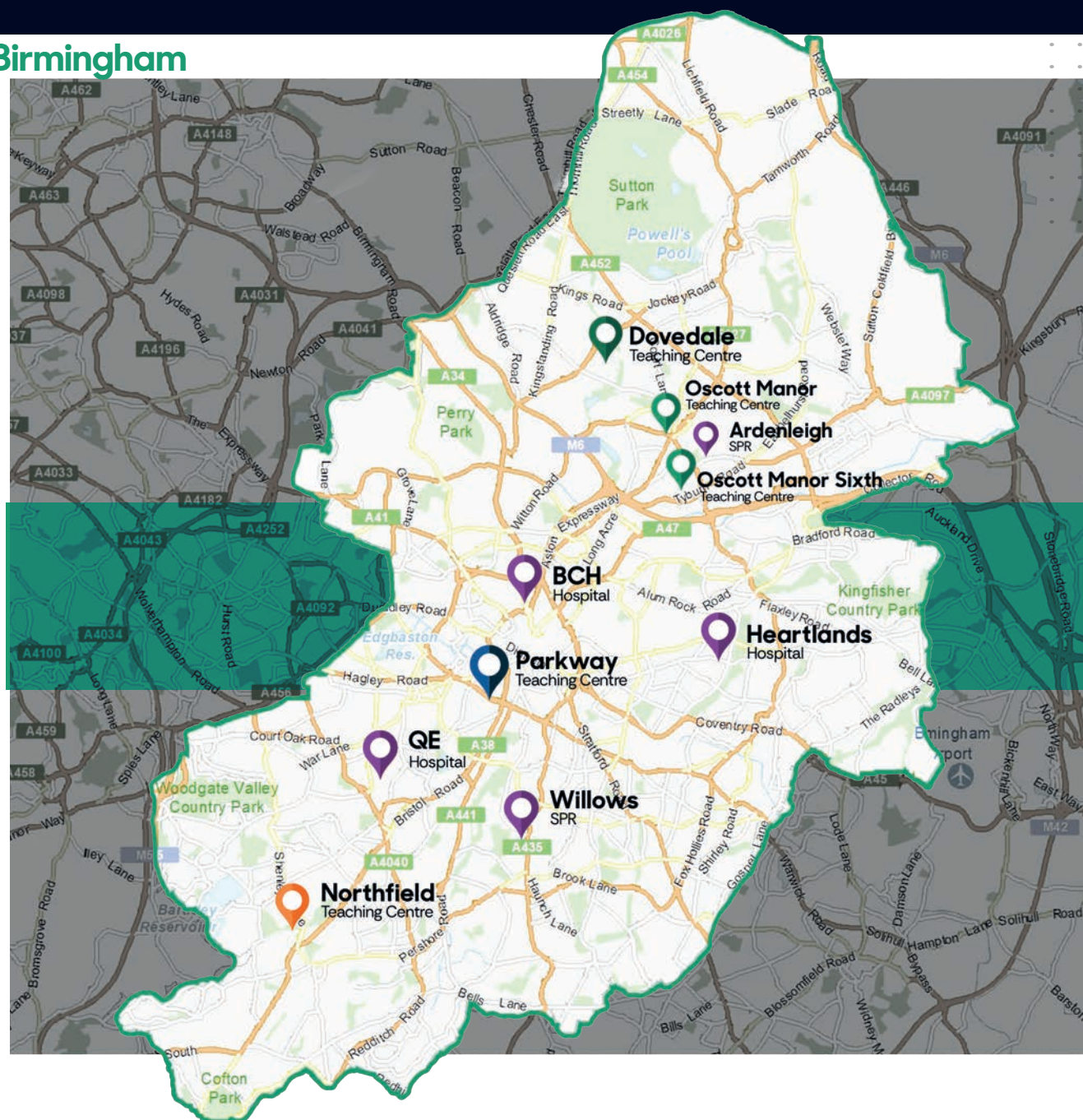
- T** **Thrive** – We create a positive environment where we thrive and succeed
- H** **High Aspirations** – We have high aspirations for our schools in their pursuit of excellence in providing a high-quality and inclusive educational experience for children and young people.
- I** **Inclusion** – We are inclusive in all we do and celebrate our differences.
- N** **Nurture** – We educate our children and young people and staff to nurture their emotional health and wellbeing.
- K** **Keep Safe** – We ensure that keeping safe and the safety of others is paramount



TDET Mapped

Here's a detailed map of Birmingham with all our provisions clearly marked, demonstrating our extensive presence across the city.

Birmingham



Parkway Centre
Bell Barn Road
Birmingham B15 2AF

Heartlands Hospital
Bordsley Green Road
Birmingham B9 5SS

Dovedale Centre
Perry Common Road
Birmingham B23 7AT

Oscott Manor Sixth Form
290 Reservoir Road
Erdington, B23 6DE

Short Term Provision
City Wide

Ardenleigh Centre
385 Kingsbury Road
Birmingham B24 9SA

B'ham Children's Hospital
Steelhouse Lane
Birmingham B4 6NH

Oscott Manor School
290 Reservoir Road
Erdington, B23 6DE

Northfield Centre
Bell Hill
Birmingham B31 1LD

Willows Centre
Queensbridge Road
Birmingham B13 8QB

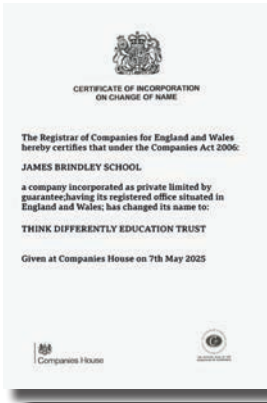
Q.E Hospital
Birmingham B15 2TH

Our Trusts Journey

TDET’s journey has been shaped by careful planning and a clear commitment to inclusive, high-quality education. Each stage has been designed to provide stability, strengthen governance, and create a Trust that supports schools to meet the needs of every learner.



Trustees confirm Trust formation
Trustees agree to form a trust



TDET is officially set up
JBA becomes TDETs founding school



TDET Launch day at Villa Park
Collaborate and Celebrate day.

Sep 2024	Dec 2024	Jul 2025	Oct 2025	Nov 2025
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DfE agree to form TDET
The DfE approves the Trust’s establishment.



Oscott Manor Join the Trust
OM becomes the second school to join



Our Trust’s Journey

TDET continues to grow with a clear long-term direction, robust governance, and a strong commitment to inclusive excellence. Every stage of our development has been designed to provide stability and expert support for the schools we serve. Partner schools join a Trust that is secure, future focused, and dedicated to improving outcomes for their learners.

Governance

TDET promotes high standards through a clear and transparent leadership structure. Every school benefits from consistent oversight, shared expertise and strong professional support.



Our structure is designed to be efficient and supportive. Schools gain direct access to experienced professionals who understand the demands of leading complex settings. It gives headteachers the space to lead their school with confidence while knowing they have a strong team behind them

Claire Marshall, Chair Of Trustees



Local Governance

Local governing bodies play a vital role in understanding the needs of their communities and ensuring that each school remains rooted in its local context.

They act as informed partners who monitor performance and uphold the Trust's values.

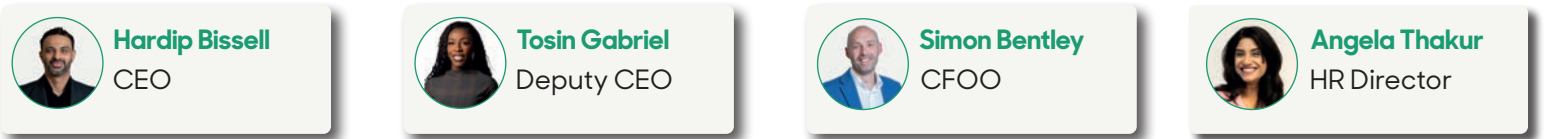
Their role includes:

- Providing local insight to support decision making and community engagement
- Monitoring pupil experience, safeguarding and the quality of provision
- Offering constructive challenge that strengthens leadership at school level

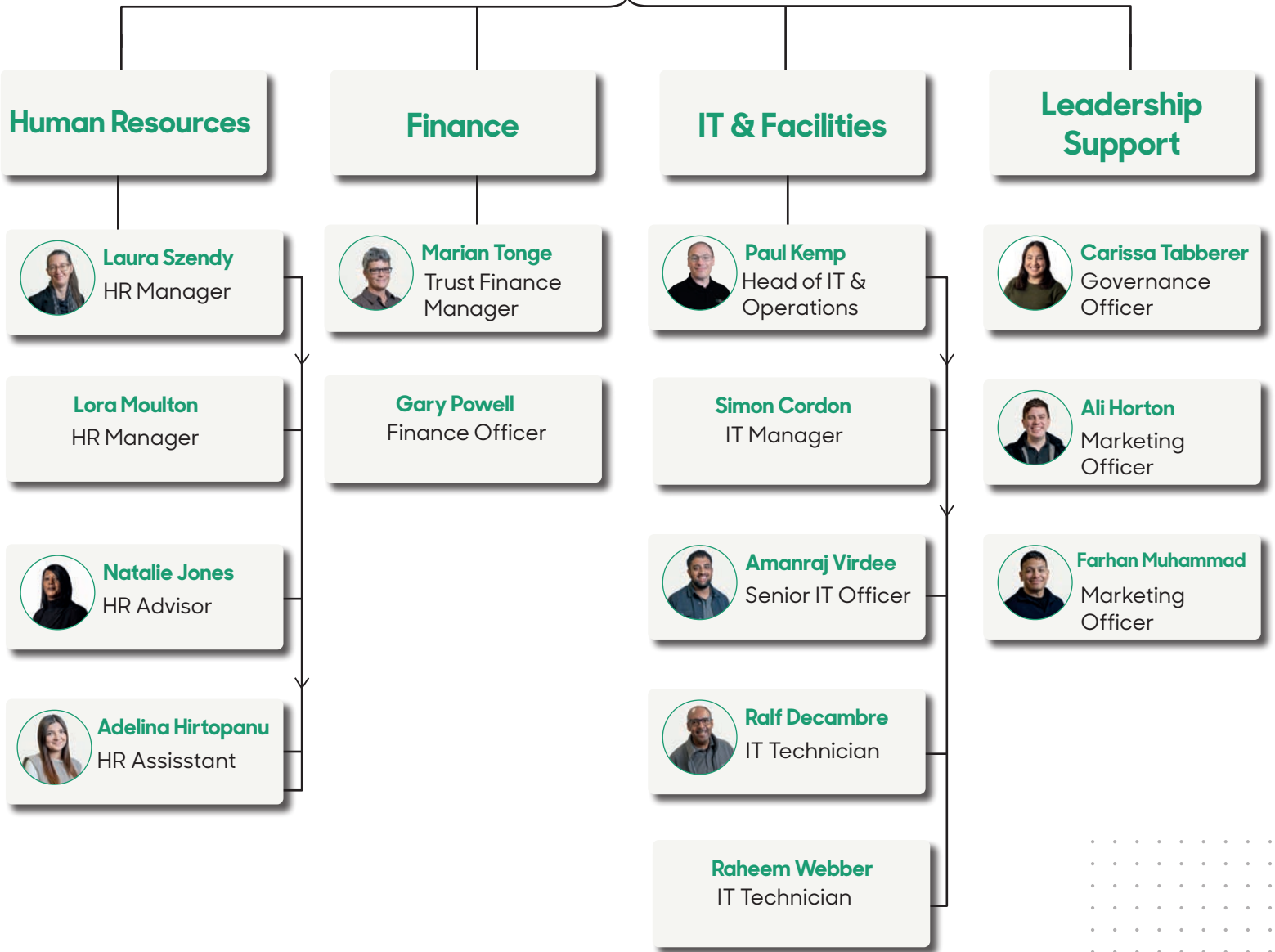
Core Team Structure

TDET promotes high standards through a clear and transparent leadership structure. Every school benefits from consistent oversight, shared expertise and strong professional support. This approach ensures that leaders at every level can focus on delivering excellent education for children and young people.

Executive Leadership Team



Core Team





**think
differently**