

@Discovery_trust

Discoverytrust.org



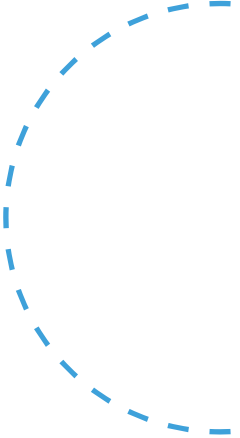
Recruitment Pack

Chief People Officer





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Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chief People Officer at Discovery Trust.

This is a pivotal executive appointment at an important point in our Trust's journey. We are seeking a people leader who will shape and deliver a compelling, values-led people strategy—ensuring that every colleague feels they belong, is supported to thrive, and is empowered to deliver the very best outcomes for our pupils.

As **Chief People Officer**, you will be a key member of our Executive Leadership Team and a trusted advisor to leaders and trustees across the Trust. You will lead and develop our People team, strengthen our culture, and build the systems, insight and capability that enable our schools and central services to do their best work.

Discovery Trust is a values-led, all-through, all-phase Trust serving a diverse range of communities. We are committed to inclusive excellence and innovation, and we invest in our people so that every school and team can deliver for children and young people.

Our Trust vision is to be a beacon of inclusive excellence and innovation, fostering a community where all individuals are empowered, valued and have a true sense of belonging.

Our Trust mission is to nurture belonging, champion equity, and ignite ambition, so that all learners can unlock their true potential and flourish.

What you can expect

- A values-driven organisation with a clear commitment to belonging, ambition and equity.
- The opportunity to shape culture, capability and colleague experience at Trust scale.
- A collaborative executive team and governance structure, with high ambition for pupils and colleagues.
- A Trust in a period of development and growth, offering meaningful organisational change leadership.



Our Trust

Discovery Trust is a dynamic and inclusive Multi Academy Trust comprising of 20 schools; fifteen primary schools, four specialist provisions and one secondary school. We are committed to transforming education and unlocking potential for every pupil, every colleague and every community we serve.

Founded in 2012, Discovery began as a collaboration between Kibworth CofE and Parkland Primary School. The name "Discovery" originated from Kibworth's strapline, "Place of Discovery and Friendship." This word has held significant meaning for us, as the creation of our Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) was a novel concept, and we were collectively discovering its potential and implications.

At the heart of Discovery are our values of Belonging, Ambition, and Equity. We believe every pupil and colleague should feel seen, supported, and celebrated. These values shape our culture and guide our decisions, ensuring that everyone in our Trust community has the opportunity to thrive.

We've built a strong infrastructure of support tailored to the needs of our schools. This includes our Outstanding SCITT (School-Centred Initial Teacher Training) for both primary and secondary trainees, along with In-TACT, our multidisciplinary service supporting inclusion and wellbeing across our schools.

At Discovery Trust, we believe in the power of collaboration, innovation, and care. We are proud of our journey so far, and excited about the future we are building together.

To ensure our schools are well-supported and able to focus on delivering high-quality education, the Trust provides a comprehensive range of central services and specialist expertise. These teams work collaboratively across our settings to offer strategic leadership, operational support, and targeted interventions where needed. Our current structure includes::

- **Director of Mainstream Education**
- **Director of Specialist Provision**
- **Chief Finance and Operations Officer and Group Finance Team**
- **Chief Technical Officer and IT Team**
- **Director of Operations and Office Manager Network**
- **Director of Professional Development**
- **People Team and Administration**
- **Director of Governance and Compliance and Clerk to Advisory Boards**
- **Estates Team and Health & Safety Leader**
- **Head of Safeguarding**
- **Extended Service Manager and Team**
- **Pre School Operations and Quality Lead**
- **3 Educational Psychologists**



We lead our own SCITT Find out more by scanning the QR code



Our Values



Belonging

We foster an environment where everyone feels welcomed, valued, and a sense of connection within our Trust, emphasising the inherent humanity and shared experience that unites all individuals.



Ambition

We nurture high expectations and empower both pupils and colleagues to set bold goals for themselves and the community; enabling each individual to challenge limits and turn aspirations into achievements.



Equity

Equity is the foundation for a culture where every individual regardless of background or circumstance can belong, grow, and succeed.





Working Together

Discovery prides itself on being an inclusive partnership of schools and services that work closely together. We offer a comprehensive range of services designed to empower and support our schools, colleagues, pupils, and communities.

Central Services

Our **Central Services** team are dedicated to delivering excellence in People (HR), Finance, IT Support, and Corporate Services to ensure our people and financial resources are managed efficiently and effectively. Giving our schools, colleagues, pupils, and communities support in all areas. We provide strategic guidance and operational support to help navigate the complexities of education.

Our **Estates and Facilities** team ensures that all our school environments are safe, well-maintained, and conducive to learning.

Through these comprehensive services, Discovery Trust is committed to fostering an inclusive, supportive, and innovative educational community.

Our **Extended Services** team are committed to providing high-quality, inclusive, and engaging Extended Services that are accessible year-round to all Discovery learners in Discovery Schools. These services include Wraparound care, Holiday Camps, and Preschools, which cater to our children, their families and the broader community.

In-TACT is Discovery Trust's multidisciplinary service supporting inclusion and wellbeing across our schools. It stands for Inclusion, Therapies, Assessment, Consultation & Training, and offers expert support in educational psychology, counselling, and—soon—speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, play therapy, and music therapy.

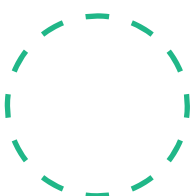
About the Role

The Chief People Officer is a pivotal executive role, responsible for leading and evolving Discovery Trust's people strategy to ensure an exceptional colleague experience that enables schools and teams to deliver outstanding outcomes for pupils. As a key member of the Executive Leadership Team, the postholder provides strategic leadership across all aspects of people, culture and organisational development, embedding the Trust's values of Belonging, Ambition and Equity into everyday practice.

The role acts as a trusted adviser to the Executive and Senior Leadership teams, offering expert counsel on people practice, organisational design, leadership development and change. The Chief People Officer leads and inspires a People Team, driving continuous improvement, innovation and effective systems that support Trust growth. With a strong focus on wellbeing, talent, engagement and employer brand, the role plays a critical part in shaping a supportive, inclusive culture where colleagues thrive and pupils succeed.

Why Choose Discovery Trust?

- **Supportive Culture:** We live our values through teamwork, empathy, and respect for individual needs.
- **Clear Career Pathways:** See your future mapped out, with every opportunity to advance and grow.
- **Continuous Learning:** Access a range of Professional Development tools and programmes, designed for you.
- **Long-Term Sustainability:** We invest in you for the long haul—building a loyal, skilled workforce ready for tomorrow.
- **Inclusive Opportunities:** Every colleague is supported, heard, and empowered to thrive.





Employees Rewards & Benefits

At Discovery Trust, we value our colleague and are committed to recognising their contributions through a comprehensive range of employee rewards and benefits designed to support wellbeing, professional growth, and work-life balance.

- Attractive Pension Schemes: Teachers Pension and Local Government Pension Scheme
- Full support of school/Discovery leaders towards professional development
- Schools working collaboratively to develop joint practice development projects
- Succession Planning Initiatives that support structured career progression
- Innovative appraisal procedures
- Access to Wellbeing Service and free and confidential counselling support
- Salary Sacrifice Schemes: including KiddiVouchers
- Retail Discount Platform – discount vouchers for high street shops and businesses
- Reduced gym memberships
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Car parking at all schools and most schools have good transport links
- Free Eye tests and contribution to eyeglasses
- Flu jab reimbursement
- Free tea/coffee in colleguerooms



Job Description

Job Title: Chief People Officer

Grade: 18

Responsible For: The Trust People team

Key Purpose: To shape and lead the Trust's people and organisation strategy so that our workforce consistently delivers excellent outcomes for pupils, a sustainable financial position and successful Trust growth. As a core member of the Executive Leadership Team, the Chief People Officer creates the conditions for high performance across the Trust (decision making, leadership capability, role design, culture, performance and accountability) and partners with the CEO and Trust Board.

To lead and evolve our people agenda and initiatives to provide an employee experience that allows all colleagues to thrive and deliver the best outcomes for our pupils.

Key Responsibilities:

- Own and deliver an integrated people and organisation strategy that measurably improves workforce performance and, in turn, pupil outcomes, financial sustainability and Trust growth.
- Alongside the Executive team, create and sustain a culture that supports our values of Belonging, Ambition and Equity.
- Act as a peer on the Executive Leadership Team, providing constructive challenge and leadership, and ensuring people, culture and capability are embedded in Trust wide decisions.
- Partner with CEO and Chair to strengthen the performance, development and effectiveness of the Trust, including succession planning, capability building and evaluation of collective effectiveness.
- Lead and develop an innovative People team to deliver high quality initiatives, policies, processes and systems across the Trust that make it easy to work and manage here ; holding the team to account and continuously improving their positive impact across the Trust.
- Create feedback systems that drive transparent two-way conversation, continuous improvement and innovation that drives evidence-led interventions.
- Ensure that our strong employer brand shines through in all our external and community activity
- Champion wellbeing and design wellbeing into people practices.
- Accountable for the design, performance and continuous improvement of the Trust's people and organisational systems (not just HR processes): how information flows, how accountability is set, how roles and teams are designed, and how performance is surfaced, supported and addressed.



Job Description

Key Responsibilities:

- Embrace HR transformation initiatives to deliver a forward-thinking, agile and effective function that adapts to change and supports Trust growth.
- Create a culture of belonging, ambition and equity, where expectations are clear, performance is visible and addressed early, and colleagues are enabled to do their best work for pupils.
- Deliver leadership capability at every level, including executive, headteacher and middle leadership development, coaching and talent pipelines aligned to the Trust's future needs.
- Set and deliver a Trust-wide approach to talent attraction, selection, onboarding, development, progression and retention, ensuring we can recruit and keep exceptional colleagues in every school and central service.
- Lead organisation design and change programmes to support growth and operating model evolution, ensure structures, span of control and ways of working enable effective delivery.
- Establish clear people metrics and insights (e.g. capability, retention, absence, workload, performance, leadership bench strength) and use them to drive decisions, prioritisation and continuous improvement.
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- Develop strong internal and external relationships to: build on our strong links with trade unions, connect with our leaders and colleagues across the Trust, ensure that our key external partners understand our Trust and its needs.
- Hold accountability for excellent people governance, risk management and compliance, including ER strategy, safeguarding requirements (DBS), pay and reward principles, and constructive relationships with trade unions and external partners.
- Lead and develop a high performing People team and operating model that combines strategic partnering with high quality delivery, simplifying ways of working and raising standards across the Trust.



Person Specification

Job Title: Chief People Officer **Grade:** Competitive Salary, depending on experience

App = Application Form

Test = Test

Int = Interview

Pre = Presentation

Med = Medical Questionnaire

Doc = Documentary Evidence (E.g., Certificates)

	Essential	Desirable	How Assessed
Qualifications, experience and knowledge			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant people/organisation leadership qualification (e.g. CIPD Level 7 or higher) or equivalent senior level experience leading complex workforce and organisational change. 	✓		App
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A degree and/or evidence of further/higher level education is desirable. 		✓	App
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior people/organisation leadership experience as a strategic partner to CEO's and executive teams (and ideally Chairs/oards), within a multi-site environment (education sector experience is beneficial but not essential). 	✓		App/Int
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience leading across critical people disciplines including talent attraction, development and performance management, reward and recognition, wellbeing and engagement, operational HR and business partnering. 	✓		App/Int
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proven experience building and improving the systems that drive performance: decision making, accountability, role and team design, leadership capability, performance management, talent pipelines, reward principles, wellbeing and employee relations. 	✓		App/Int
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience leading deep diagnostic work and delivering organisation design, development and change at pace, including addressing complex legacy issues and shifting culture and ways of working. 	✓		App/Int
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience leading through periods of change, including organisation design and development. 	✓		App/Int

	Essential	Desirable	How Assessed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience delivering HR transformation and functional efficiencies through technology adoption. • Experience delivering transformation that improves workforce effectiveness and efficiency (e.g. operating model, ways of working, simplifying processes and enabling technology), with an emphasis on outcomes rather than HR systems alone. • Has an appreciation of the financial, legal, social and environmental context in which the trust operates. 	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>		<p>Int</p> <p>App/Int</p> <p>Int</p>
Skills/Attributes			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to influence positively and strategically across structure, process and culture. • Data-focused and confident translating insight into practical actions. • Has a collaborative and unifying approach to relationship building with peers, teams and other internal and external stakeholders • Confident making proposals and constructively challenging decisions. • Thrives on developing and inspiring teams and individuals. • Comfortable with the need to be both a strategic thinker and able to implement hands-on delivery where needed. • Passion for education and supporting teams to improve the lives of young people. • Embraces learning opportunities for self and others. 	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>		<p>Int/Pres</p> <p>Int</p> <p>Int</p> <p>Int/Pres</p> <p>Int</p> <p>Int</p> <p>Int/Pres</p> <p>Int</p>
Values			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A commitment to the Trust's vision and values. • Demonstrates a positive attitude and principles, upholding high standards of professional conduct. 	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>		<p>App/Int</p> <p>App/Int</p>
Factors not already covered			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of regular attendance at work • An understanding of, and commitment to, Equal Opportunities, and the ability to apply this in day-to-day situations. • Willingness to undertake training 			<p>Ref</p> <p>App/Int</p> <p>App/Int</p>

How to Apply

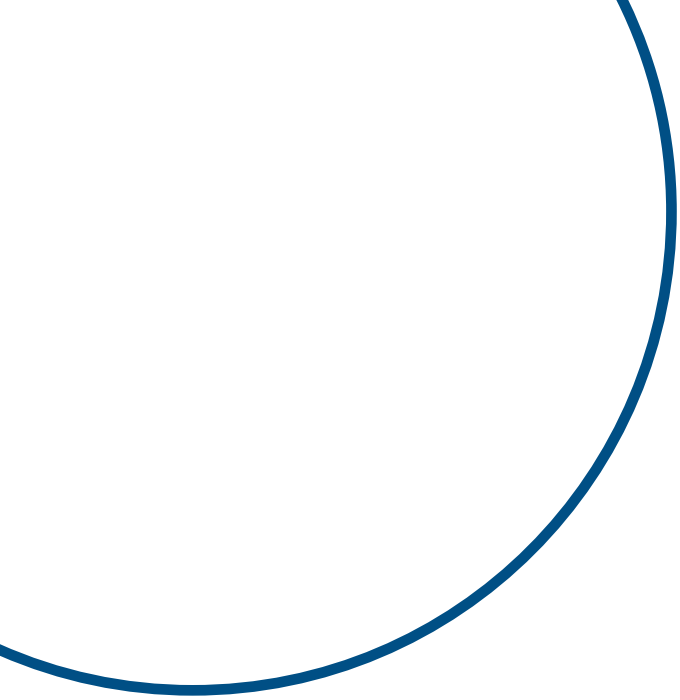
Deadline For Applications: 10th June 2026

Interviews: 23rd June 2026

Start Date: September 2026

To find out more about the role and the application process, we recommend that you contact our recruitment partners Propelo on 01273 222877

Email discovery@propelo.co.uk or visit <https://discovery.our-careers.co.uk>.





Discovery Trust

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