



# Head of School Candidate Pack

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# Welcome – From the Trust CEO



Dear Applicant,

We are delighted that you are considering joining the LIFE Education Trust. LIFE was established in 2016 with two schools and now comprises thirteen schools in Havering and Essex. We serve a student community of nearly 3000 pupils. LIFE has a small central team and numerous school-based colleagues, totalling almost 500 employees. The organisation as a whole works collaboratively to ensure that everything we do can positively impact the lives of our pupils and employees.

I became the CEO of LIFE in July 2016, having previously been Head Teacher of The Frances Bardsley Academy for Girls for 5 years, and before that, Deputy Head Teacher at Chelmsford County High for Girls. I chose to lead LIFE because I genuinely believe in our core purpose "to build great learning communities where children flourish". To accomplish our purpose, we use our 3 core beliefs: 'Courageous Optimism', 'Boundless Creativity' and 'Heartfelt Compassion'. As a Trust we believe in helping colleagues and pupils achieve their personal best and we are keen to recruit the very best talent we can.

We are looking for individuals who share our passion for providing excellent learning environments, making exceptional schools and having a positive impact in the community.

You will be joining an organisation that can offer you a huge range of opportunities to progress and make a real difference!

Yours sincerely,

Julian Dutnall

**CEO – LIFE Education Trust**



# Welcome – From the Executive Headteacher

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in Dr Walker's Primary School, a thriving, inclusive and highly successful primary school where pupils 'thrive and succeed' (SIAMS 2017).

We are an established voluntary controlled Church school, with a strong ethos and a good reputation and we are excited at the prospect of appointing a new Head of School as we move forward on our journey from good to even better.

Having been a part of LIFE Education Trust since 2025, we are committed to the LIFE mission to 'build great learning communities, where pupils flourish', working collaboratively with schools in Havering and Essex.

I became the Executive Headteacher at Dr Walker's in April 2026, as part of the Mid-Essex Hub, where I am the Executive Headteacher at Margaretting and Roxwell Schools and the Hub Leader at Ford End School. Prior to this, at Margaretting, I was the Deputy Head, Head of School and finally the Headteacher, before taking on the Executive Head role. There are excellent opportunities if you are an ambitious leader, with plenty of training and support offered to reach your career goals.

At Dr Walker's, we are committed to setting our pupils up to succeed in their future education as well as in life and we do this through our vision of 'Though your beginning was small, your future will flourish indeed' and our school values, which are at the heart of everything we do. We pride ourselves on ensuring that our pupils achieve well in all aspects of school life by offering a broad and balanced curriculum and a wealth of enrichment opportunities.

A calm and enriched environment is key to successful learning and we pride ourselves on providing this with our many extra-curricular activities and facilities, including our after-school clubs and extensive trips and visits programme. Our school is a rewarding and dynamic place to work and it is an exciting time to be part of the school and the Trust.

You can really make a difference to our pupils' futures.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Yours sincerely,

Melissa Taylor

**Executive Headteacher**



# About Us – Our Way of LIFE



## OUR PRIORITIES

### OUR PURPOSE

To build great learning communities where children flourish.

**Great People**

**Great Pupil Outcomes**

**Sustainable Systems**

## OUR BELIEFS



### Courageous Optimism

It takes courage to hope for a better future. We champion a 'can do' attitude and encourage our pupils and colleagues to tackle challenges with resilience and perseverance as they reach for ambitious targets.



### Boundless Creativity

Through captivating discoveries in the classroom and eye-opening adventures in the outside world, we give pupils freedom and promote varied learning experiences which stimulate innovation and develop adaptability.



### Heartfelt Compassion

We show love and respect to each member of our community as we nurture a powerful collective spirit. In humility we embrace difference and individuality, show forgiveness when necessary, and are united by compassion.

# About Us – Our Schools

We are a multi-academy trust currently consisting of 13 Academies and one independent school across Havering and Essex, grouped into 4 regional hubs.



## Havering Hub

1. Frances Bardsley Academy For Girls
2. The Bridge
3. Dame Tipping Primary School
4. Benhurst Primary School



## Mid-Essex Hub

5. Ford End Primary School
6. Roxwell Primary School
7. Margaretting Primary School
8. Dr Walker's Primary School



## Colchester Hub

9. Chappel Primary School
10. Fordham Primary School
11. Holy Trinity Primary School
12. Langenhoe Primary School



## Harwich Hub

13. Spring Meadows Primary School



# About Us – Our Mascot



## MEET ZOE BEAR

This is Zoe Bear, our Mascot.

The name 'Zoe' was chosen because it means 'life' in Greek.

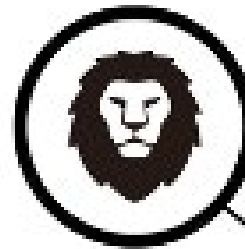
Zoe's rainbow colours match the LIFE logo and demonstrate the Trust's commitment to inclusivity.



As well as awards, Zoe can often be found attending events, school trips and dressing up for celebrations!

Pupils are encouraged to treat her with respect and as a friend. She is often tagged on X: @LIFEZoeBear

## WHY DO WE HAVE ZOE?



Zoe represents the Trust wherever she goes.



Zoe is designed to embody our beliefs and make them more tangible for pupils throughout the Trust to understand and engage with.

She is especially compassionate with younger children and is available for cuddles if they are upset.

Schools are encouraged to keep an 'Adventures of Zoe' book, where photos are put each term, labelled with how we are developing the children socially, morally, spiritual and culturally.



Every school has their own Zoe Bear and pupils can receive awards and certificates from Zoe for displaying the Trust's Beliefs of Boundless Creativity, Courageous Optimism and Heartfelt Compassion in their everyday school life

# Dr Walker's C of E Primary School

Dr Walker's C of E Primary School is a warm, nurturing and community-centred village school located in the heart of Fyfield, Essex. With just 46 pupils on roll, we are proud of our small size and the unique advantages it brings: strong relationships, personalised learning, and a genuine family atmosphere. As our brochure states, "the primary aim of our school is to provide a safe, welcoming and nurturing environment," and this ethos is evident in every aspect of school life.

Our Christian vision is rooted in the biblical text from Job 8:7: "Though your beginning was small, your future will flourish indeed." This belief shapes our ambition for every child and adult in our community. We live out our core values—Courage, Creativity, Compassion and Hope—through our curriculum, relationships and daily practice.

As part of the LIFE Education Trust, we benefit from a strong network of support, professional development and shared expertise. The Trust's commitment to ensuring that "everyone flourishes" aligns perfectly with our own aspirations for pupils and staff alike.

Our mixed-age classes create a collaborative learning culture where children support one another and teachers develop deep understanding of each pupil's needs. Staff work closely as a team, observing, supporting and learning from one another, with ongoing training guided by our School Development Plan. Teaching assistants and support staff are also offered meaningful opportunities to grow professionally.

We maintain strong links with St Nicholas Church and the wider Fyfield community, celebrating key festivals together and engaging in local projects. This sense of belonging is central to our identity as a village school.

Joining Dr Walker's means becoming part of a dedicated, caring and ambitious team. It is a place where staff can make a profound impact, where children are known as individuals, and where the future truly can "flourish indeed."



# Job Description

Dr Walker's C of E Primary School is part of the LIFE Education Trust, a family of schools who work together and have the same mission, to build great learning communities which unleash creativity and champion optimism, in a spirit of compassion.

We are looking for brilliant people to join the LIFE team who share and demonstrate our beliefs:

- Courageous Optimism
- Boundless Creativity
- Heartfelt Compassion

With the support of the Executive Headteacher, the Head of School will be expected to carry out all duties on the Headteacher Standards.

**Job Title:** Head of School

**Salary Range:** L8-L12

**Type:** Permanent

**Hours per week:** 32.5 = 19.5 (0.6 FTE) Head of School + 13 (0.4 FTE) Teaching

**Days per week:** Monday – Friday

**Weeks per year:** 52

**Reporting to:** Executive Headteacher

## Job Particulars

**Our Heads of School uphold public trust in school leadership and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour both within and outside school. They:**

- Build relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observe proper boundaries appropriate to their professional position
- Show tolerance of and respect for the rights of others, recognising differences and respecting cultural diversity within contemporary Britain
- Uphold fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Ensure that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit their position, pupils' vulnerability or might lead pupils to break the law.

We are looking for brilliant people who share and demonstrate our beliefs to join us



### **Heads of School in the LIFE Education Trust:**

- Support the Trust mission, beliefs and behaviours and model those at all times
- Participate fully in the life of the Trust including meetings, processes and procedures
- Ensure all school staff engage in the Trust activities and model Trust behaviours
- Support and promote the development of the Trust

### **As leaders of their school community and profession, Heads of School:**

- Serve in the best interests of the school's pupils
- Uphold and promote the Christian character and historic foundation of the School
- Conduct themselves in a manner compatible with their influential position in society by behaving ethically, fulfilling their professional responsibilities and modelling the behaviour of a good citizen
- Uphold their obligation to give account and accept responsibility. Know, understand, and act within the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities
- Take responsibility for their own continued professional development, engaging critically with educational research
- Make a positive contribution to the wider education system

### **School Culture**

- Establish and sustain the school's ethos and strategic direction in partnership with Executive Headteachers and those responsible for governance and through consultation with the school community
- Create a culture where pupils experience a positive and enriching school life
- Lead and participate in regular acts of collective worship that are broadly and predominantly Christian in character
- Uphold ambitious educational standards which prepare pupils from all backgrounds for their next phase of education and life
- Promote positive and respectful relationships across the school community and a safe, orderly and inclusive environment
- Ensure a culture of high staff professionalism



## Teaching

- Establish and sustain high-quality, expert teaching across all subjects and phases, built on an evidence-informed understanding of effective teaching and how pupils learn
- Ensure teaching is underpinned by high levels of subject expertise and approaches which respect the distinct nature of subject disciplines or specialist domains
- Ensure effective use is made of formative assessment

## Curriculum and Assessment

- Ensure a broad, structured and coherent curriculum entitlement which sets out the knowledge, skills and values that will be taught
- Establish effective curricular leadership, developing subject leaders with high levels of relevant expertise with access to professional networks and communities
- Ensure that all pupils are taught to read through the provision of evidence-informed approaches to reading, particularly the use of systematic synthetic phonics in schools that teach early reading
- Ensure valid, reliable and proportionate approaches are used when assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum
- Ensure that Religious Education is provided in accordance with the Church of England Statement of Entitlement

## Behaviour

- Establish and sustain high expectations of behaviour for all pupils, built upon relationships, rules and routines, which are understood clearly by all staff and pupils
- Ensure high standards of pupil behaviour and courteous conduct in accordance with the school's behaviour policy
- Implement consistent, fair and respectful approaches to managing behaviour
- Ensure that adults within the school model and teach the behaviour of a good citizen
- Lead by example, modelling Christian vision and values in everyday practice, inspiring pupils, staff, governors, and parents to create a shared culture and positive climate



### Additional and special educational needs and disabilities

- Ensure the school holds ambitious expectations for all pupils with additional and special educational needs and disabilities
- Establish and sustain culture and practices that enable pupils to access the curriculum and learn effectively
- Ensure the school works effectively in partnership with parents, carers and professionals, to identify the additional needs and special educational needs and disabilities of pupils, providing support and adaptation where appropriate
- Ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties with regard to the SEND code of practice

### Professional Development

- Ensure staff have access to high-quality, sustained professional development opportunities, aligned to balance the priorities of whole-school improvement, team and individual needs
- Prioritise the professional development of staff, ensuring effective planning, delivery and evaluation which is consistent with the approaches laid out in the standard for teachers' professional development
- Ensure that professional development opportunities draw on expert provision from beyond the school, as well as within it, including nationally recognised career and professional frameworks and programmes to build capacity and support succession planning

### Organisational Management

- Ensure the protection and safety of pupils and staff through effective approaches to safeguarding, as part of the duty of care
- Prioritise and allocate financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and probity in the use of public funds
- Ensure staff are deployed and managed well with due attention paid to workload
- Establish and oversee systems, processes and policies that enable the school to operate effectively and efficiently
- Ensure rigorous approaches to identifying, managing and mitigating risk



## Continuous School Improvement

- Make use of effective and proportional processes of evaluation to identify and analyse complex or persistent problems and barriers which limit school effectiveness, and identify priority areas for improvement
- Ensure careful and effective implementation of improvement strategies, which lead to sustained school improvement over time
- Develop appropriate evidence-informed strategies for improvement as part of well-targeted plans which are realistic, timely, appropriately sequenced and suited to the school's context

## Working in Partnership

- Forge constructive relationships beyond the school, working in partnership with parents, carers and the local community
- Promote and strengthen the school's role within the local Church, fostering a strong partnership between the parish, home, Life Education Trust, and the Diocese of Chelmsford
- Commit their school to work successfully with other schools and organisations in a climate of mutual challenge and support
- Establish and maintain working relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues across other public services to improve educational outcomes for all pupils

## Governance and Accountability

- Understand and welcome the role of effective governance, upholding their obligation to give account and accept responsibility
- Establish and sustain professional working relationship with those responsible for governance
- Ensure that staff know and understand their professional responsibilities and are held to account
- Ensure the school effectively and efficiently operates within the required regulatory frameworks and meets all statutory duties



## General

- 4 months' notice period to be given
- Undertake such other duties and responsibilities of an equivalent nature, as defined by line management from time-to-time, subject to the provision that normally any changes of a permanent nature shall be incorporated into the job description in specific terms
- Undertake any training commensurate with the post
- Take part in the Trust performance management system, taking personal responsibility for identification of learning, development and training opportunities in discussion with line manager and attend SDP/inset days.
- Comply with individual responsibilities, in accordance with the role, for health & safety in the workplace and to take appropriate action to identify, evaluate and minimise any risks to health, safety and security in the immediate working environment
- Work in accordance with the values, culture, ethos, equalities and inclusion policies of the Trust proactively promoting anti-racist, anti-sexist and anti-discriminatory behaviours in the day to day operation of the job
- Ensure that all duties and services provided are in accordance with the School's Equal Opportunities Policy
- The Local Governing Committee is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment.

The duties above are neither exclusive nor exhaustive and the postholder may be required by the Executive Head to carry out appropriate duties within the context of the job, skills and grade.



# Person Specification



We are looking for someone who has the following qualifications, experience and demonstrates the following behaviours to be truly successful in the role...

Key Criteria	Assessment Key: A: Application form and supporting statement I: Interview   R: References   Q: Certified evidence	Essential (E) Desirable (D)	Application (A) Interview (I) References (R) Qualifications (Q)
<b>Qualifications &amp; Experience</b>			
Qualified Teacher Status		E	A, Q
First degree or Certificate of Education		E	A, Q
Relevant recent further qualifications		E	A, Q
Relevant recent professional development		E	A, Q
Senior leadership experience		E	A, R
SLT Experience in a multi-academy Trust		D	A, R
<b>School Culture</b>			
Able to think strategically, and to build and communicate a coherent vision		E	A, I
Able to inspire, challenge, motivate and empower others to carry the vision forward		E	A, I
Committed to creating an inclusive environment which ensures everyone can achieve their full potential		E	A, I
Committed to setting and achieving ambitious, challenging goals and targets and thereby securing high standards		E	A, I
<b>Teaching</b>			
Able to access, analyse and interpret data to ensure all teachers target their teaching accordingly		E	I
Initiates and supports research and debate on effective learning		E	A, I
Committed to innovative and creative forms of teaching and learning to meet the personal learning needs of every child		E	A, I, R
<b>Curriculum &amp; Assessment</b>			
Has a clear understanding of how the primary curriculum, from EYFS to KS2, ensures coherent progression in pupils' knowledge, skills and values		E	A, I, R
Has worked with a range of subject leaders within the school and across other professional networks and communities		E	A, R
Committed to developing valid, reliable and proportionate approaches to assessment and feedback of pupils' knowledge and understanding		E	A, R

# Person Specification



**Assessment Key:** A: Application form and supporting statement | I: Interview | R: References | Q: Certified

Key Criteria	Essential (E) Desirable (D)	Application (A) Interview (I) References (R) Qualifications (Q)
<b>Behaviour</b>		
Creates and maintains high standards of pupil behaviour, built upon clear communication and mutual respect	E	A, R
Understands the importance of consistent behaviour management systems to a school environment and the ability to establish these	E	A, R
Acts as a role model in ensuring that all adults within the school model and teach the expected pupil behaviours	E	A, R
<b>Inclusion &amp; Diversity</b>		
Committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming school environment for all pupils, families and adults regardless of ability or background	E	A, I, R
Committed to establishing and supporting a learning environment which has ambitious expectations for all pupils, including those with SEND	E	A, I, R
Values working in partnership with parents, carers and professionals, to identify and meet the additional needs of all pupils	E	A, R
<b>Professional Development</b>		
Values the role of high-quality, professional development in developing staff and improving practice	E	A, R
Has shown a commitment their own personal professional development to stay abreast of key educational developments and self-improve	E	A, R, Q
<b>Organisational Management</b>		
Places a high value on the safeguarding of pupils and staff in all aspects of their work and the school environment	E	A, I, R
Has undergone recent safeguarding training	E	A, Q, R
Has held a Designated Safeguarding Lead role in school	D	A, Q, R
Feels confident and competent in all financial matters related to budgeting and the allocation of resources	E	A, I, R
Has experience of managing budgets	D	A, R
Recognises the importance of work-life balance in order to ensure the effective deployment and management of all staff	E	A, I, R

# Person Specification



**Assessment Key:** A: Application form and supporting statement | I: Interview | R: References | Q: Certified

Key Criteria	Essential (E) Desirable (D)	Application (A) Interview (I) References (R) Qualifications (Q)
<b>Continuous School Improvement</b>		
Has knowledge, understanding and experience of using a range of data sources, internal and public to set and achieve ambitious targets	E	A, I
Engages the school community in systematic and rigorous self-evaluation, combining this with external evaluations to develop the school	E	A, R
Proven ability in action planning which develop, manage and evaluate the impact of actions in a timely fashion, having engaged all stakeholders	E	A, R
<b>Working in Partnership</b>		
Committed to forging constructive relationships beyond the school, working in partnership with parents, carers and the local community	E	A, I, R
Committed to working with other schools and organisations in a climate of mutual challenge and support	E	A, I, R
Keen to work in a Multi Academy Trust in order to derive benefits for the school as well as working collaboratively for the benefit of all Trust schools	E	A, I
<b>Governance &amp; Accountability</b>		
Has knowledge, understanding and experience of using a range of data sources, internal and public to set and achieve ambitious targets	E	A, I
Engages the school community in systematic and rigorous self-evaluation, combining this with external evaluations to develop the school	E	A, R
Proven ability in action planning which develop, manage and evaluate the impact of actions in a timely fashion, having engaged all stakeholders	E	A, R



## How to Apply

The closing date for all applications is: **15th May 2026**

Shortlisting: **15th May 2026**

Interviews: **W/C 18th May**

If you wish to discover more about this exciting opportunity, need any further information or would like to have an informal discussion, please contact Neil Massie at Academicis, our recruitment partner, on [nmassie@academicis.co.uk](mailto:nmassie@academicis.co.uk) or by phone on 07818 875514 / 01223 907979



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### Appointment Process

- Suitable applications will be shortlisted for interview as quickly as possible. Unfortunately, we are unable to give feedback if you do not get shortlisted.
- If you are successful, you will receive either a phone call and/or email inviting you to attend for interview. If you require any assistance in attending for interview, please let us know the nature of that assistance in good time so that we may make appropriate arrangements.

### References and DBS Checks

All offers of appointment will be subject to receipt of satisfactory references. LIFE Education Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the DBS.

### Inclusion

As a Trust, we are committed to equality of opportunity and to a proactive and inclusive approach to equality, which supports and encourages all under-represented groups, promotes an inclusive culture, and values diversity. We will ensure that the selection process is fair and without discrimination for or against any candidate based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. The person specification sets out the criteria used to assess candidates through the selection process.

### Why Choose LIFE Education Trust

For more information on why to choose LIFE, head to the website [here](#).