



Community
Academies Trust



Deputy CEO

(Finance and Operations)

Application Pack

Improving the talent and potential of all our young people

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Welcome from the Chair of Trustees

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I am pleased to introduce this important opportunity to join Community Academies Trust (CAT) as our Deputy CEO (Finance and Operations), following the retirement of our current postholder.

This is an exciting time for us as we prepare for the next chapter in our development as a thriving multi-academy trust. In this role, you will be pivotal in building on our strong foundations, shaping priorities, strengthening systems and ensuring our schools are supported with clarity, confidence and care.

CAT is a values-driven organisation with a clear mission: to ensure excellent 2–18 community education. We serve 17 schools across the Midlands. Our schools are deeply rooted in their communities, and we are proud of our commitment to preserving local identity and ethos while driving excellence across the Trust.

We believe in the power of education to transform lives and communities. Our academies are trusted by families and driven by a shared ambition to raise aspirations, unlock the potential of every child and create the conditions in which every adult can grow and every community can benefit.

As Deputy CEO (Finance and Operations), you will lead the Trust's financial and operational functions and support the CEO on key strategic matters. You will provide strategic leadership for finance, HR, operations, estates, IT, data protection, health and safety, compliance and risk, ensuring that our schools receive high-quality support and that trustees are assured through strong governance, probity and effective reporting.

This is a rare opportunity to help lead a Trust that is both stable and ambitious, rooted in community and committed to excellence. You will be someone who can bring clarity to complex matters, lead people and resources well, strengthen systems and champion the values of excellence, integrity, collaboration, inclusion and aspiration.

If this sounds like you, and you share our commitment to excellent community education, strong governance and high-quality support for schools, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Warm regards,



Simon Atkins
Chair of the Board of Trustees



Message from the CEO

Thank you for your interest in becoming our next Deputy CEO (Finance and Operations) at Community Academies Trust (CAT), following the retirement of our current postholder.

This is an exciting opportunity to join our executive team and play a central role in the strategic leadership, financial sustainability and operational effectiveness of the Trust. As CAT looks ahead to its next chapter, this role will offer the successful candidate real scope to shape priorities, strengthen systems and help ensure our schools are supported with clarity, confidence and care.

The Deputy CEO (Finance and Operations) will lead the Trust's financial and operational functions and support the CEO on strategic matters. The role includes responsibility for long-term financial planning, risk management, statutory reporting, compliance and the strategic leadership of central services, including finance, HR, operations, estates, IT, data protection and health and safety.

CAT is a values-driven multi-academy trust of 17 schools across Warwickshire, Staffordshire and Telford. Our vision is simple, ambitious and deeply human: every child thrives, every adult grows and every community benefits through exceptional, inclusive education. We are proud of our local school identities and of the strength that comes from working as one Trust, rooted in the values of excellence, integrity, collaboration, inclusion and aspiration.

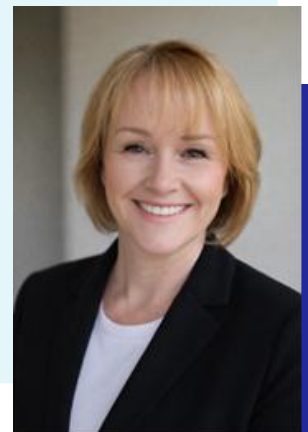
We are looking for a qualified accountant and values-led senior leader with strong technical expertise, excellent communication skills and a proven track record of leading people, resources and organisational change. You will be able to work strategically, explain complex matters clearly, build strong relationships and represent the Trust with confidence.

If you are ambitious, collaborative and committed to high-quality education, strong governance and effective support for schools, we would be delighted to hear from you. You will be joining a Trust that cares deeply about people, relationships and service to our schools, and where professional excellence is matched by warmth, respect and a shared commitment to doing what is right for children and communities.

Your sincerely,



Allyson Brown
Chief Executive Officer



About Us

The name Community Academies Trust (CAT) is derived from our focus and ambition for our organisation: excellent community education. We are committed to preserving local school identity and ethos, and adopt strategies for school improvement that build on and enhance local reputation, raise standards, and respond to the needs and aspirations of those we serve.

We work with primary and secondary academies that serve communities with high levels of disadvantage, and we do not let that stop us from having world-class achievement as our expectation.



“ Our community academies are driven by a desire to lead rather than follow, to be beacons of outstanding local provision which families believe in and can rely on. ”

We work in partnership with our schools, respecting their local contexts and providing equal measures of support and challenge to improve the talent and potential of all our young people.

Please visit our [website](#) for more information.



“ We are committed to preserving local school identity and ethos, while driving continuous improvement and raising educational standards. **”**

Vision, Aims and Values

Our Vision

Every child thrives, every adult grows and every community benefits through exceptional, inclusive education across our family of schools.

Our Purpose

Community Academies Trust exists to provide excellent education for every child, from 2 to 18, and to create a Trust where pupils and adults feel they belong, are valued and are enabled to thrive. We believe every child has talent, potential and the right to succeed, whatever their starting point, background or circumstance. Our schools are rooted in their local communities but strengthened by belonging to one Trust: sharing expertise, building capacity and working together with ambition, compassion and pride.

Our Aims

Our aims are to secure excellent outcomes, build inclusive communities and empower people. This means ensuring all pupils achieve the highest standards academically; creating safe, caring and aspirational schools where every child is known, supported and challenged; and developing a culture where pupils, staff, leaders, governors and trustees feel they belong, are valued for their contribution and continue to learn, collaborate, innovate and improve.



Our Values

Our Trust values shape the way we work: Excellence — we keep improving; Integrity — we do the right thing; Collaboration — we improve together; Inclusion — everyone belongs and thrives; and Aspiration — we aim high. These values guide how we make decisions, work together and support every child, adult and community to thrive.

Our Culture

Our culture is one of high expectations and high regard: we expect the very best for and from everyone, while treating people with care, dignity and respect.

Job Description

Job Title:	Deputy CEO – Finance and Operations
Location:	Telford, Tamworth, Warwickshire (hybrid working)
Salary:	110k -125k depending on experience
Reports to:	Chief Executive Officer

Job Purpose

Community Academies Trust (CAT) is looking for an exceptional, values-led senior finance and operations leader to become our Deputy CEO (Finance and Operations). This is a critical executive role, acting as the Trust's Chief Finance Officer and Company Secretary, responsible for leading the Trust's financial and operational functions, supporting the CEO on key strategic matters, and helping to ensure our schools are supported with clarity, confidence and care. The Trust is in robust financial health with an annual turnover of £58 million and a staff count of over 1,100.

Working at the apex of the Trust as part of the executive leadership team, the Deputy CEO (Finance and Operations) will be a qualified accountant with strong technical expertise, substantial senior leadership experience and a proven track record of leading people, resources, systems and organisational change. Acting as a senior figurehead for CAT, they will provide strategic leadership for finance, HR, operations, estates, IT, data protection, health and safety, compliance and risk. They will strengthen systems, support long-term financial planning, ensure effective statutory reporting and governance assurance, and represent the Trust with confidence. The successful candidate will be an outstanding communicator who can explain complex matters clearly, build strong relationships across the Trust and beyond, and model CAT's values of excellence, integrity, collaboration, inclusion and aspiration. They will be ambitious, collaborative and committed to high-quality education, strong governance and effective support for schools.

Key Responsibilities

1. Strategic Development

- Supporting the CEO and executive leadership team in shaping and implementing the Trust's strategic priorities and next phase of development.
- Providing strategic leadership for long-term financial planning, financial sustainability, risk management, compliance and statutory reporting.
- Aligning resources to strategy so that available income is used effectively to support excellent, inclusive education across the Trust's family of schools.
- Monitoring and reporting on financial and operational performance, identifying key risks and opportunities, and advising on corrective decisions where required.
- Maintaining a long-term financial strategy that underpins the Trust's viability, stability and ambition for every child, adult and community to thrive.

2. Leadership and Management

- Working effectively with trustees to provide assurance on governance, probity, financial efficiency, compliance, risk management and impact.

- Providing strategic leadership for the Trusts central support services, strengthening systems and creating a service culture that supports schools with clarity, confidence and care.
- Creating and maintaining effective arrangements to recruit, deploy, develop and motivate central team staff so that high standards are achieved across all support functions.
- Taking the lead in ensuring that Trust policies and strategies are reflected in all support services for which the postholder is responsible.
- Representing the Trust in the wider community and deputising for the CEO when needed.
- Providing leadership and management to direct reports.
- Fostering a service-oriented culture built on high expectations, high regard, warmth, respect and mutually supportive working relationships across the Trust.
- Fulfilling compliance responsibilities effectively and consistently, ensuring that statutory, regulatory and Trust requirements are met across all relevant functions.

3. Financial Management

- Financial management, including advising on school budgets, pensions management and associated liabilities.
- Ensuring that a robust system of financial planning and control operates across the Trust, within the framework of the Trust's strategy, plans, policies and standards.
- Understanding, anticipating, identifying and addressing financial opportunities and risks across the Trust.
- Improving business capability, service effectiveness and overall efficiency of central service areas.
- Ensuring that all financial reporting and statutory accounts are produced in a timely, accurate and comprehensive manner.
- Ensuring financial performance reporting is linked to related objectives and supports timely, evidence-informed decision-making.
- Delivery of proven value for money including procurement and contracts management.

4. Operations – Overseeing the following operational activities:

- HR support, workforce systems and people-related advice, including recruitment, development, employee relations and organisational change.
- Maintenance of school buildings, grounds and infrastructure projects.
- IT support including networks, wi-fi, hardware and software.
- Data Protection policy and procedures.
- Ensuring compliance with all regulations relating to health and safety, employment legislation, safeguarding-linked operational requirements, data protection and other regulatory requirements as they arise.

Person Specification

CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL (E)	
• Relevant Experience/Knowledge & Technical Competencies ESSENTIAL(E)		DESIRABLE (D)
	• A proven track record of leading people, finance, resources, systems and organisational change, with strong financial, analytical and communication skills. • High IT literacy. • Ability to interpret statistical data, manage budgets, assess risk and present and explain complex matters concisely and clearly, to the highest professional standards, to trustees, leaders, schools and external stakeholders. • Qualified accountant, with a recognised professional qualification such as CCAB or equivalent. • Substantial experience of managing systems and operations at the most senior level, with the credibility to act as one of the Trust's principal external representatives. • Experience of leading other areas of professional expertise, including HR, finance, compliance and operations.	• Executive MAT leadership experience. • Academy governance and regulatory expertise. • Company Secretary or board support experience. • Central service transformation leadership. • Commercial and procurement expertise. • Growth, merger and due diligence experience. • Digital, data and cyber security awareness. • Senior stakeholder management experience. • Additional relevant professional qualifications.
Personal Competencies/Skills:		
	• Strong project planning, process management and delivery skills, with the ability to remain calm under pressure, delegate effectively and work to tight deadlines. • Ability to work effectively and collaboratively as a member of a leadership team, with the vision and the ability to inspire others. • Able to demonstrate considerable communication, negotiation and relationship building skills at all	

CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL (E)
	levels, both within the Trust and with external stakeholder engagement. • Ability to command respect, quickly establish credibility and engage effectively with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders. • Able to take and live with difficult decisions, with a flexible and adaptable approach to managing change and ambiguity. • Adaptable and flexible, with the confidence to move between long-term strategic planning and hands-on operational leadership as required. • Ability to see through complex strategies from concept to conclusion, with ability to maintain a high work rate and to juggle a range of tasks and competing priorities. • Demonstrable commitment to, and modelling of, CAT's values of excellence, integrity, collaboration, inclusion and aspiration. • Affinity with the public sector and understanding of the education sector and the context within which MATs operate. • A clear commitment to high-quality education, strong governance and effective support for schools, with warmth, respect and a shared commitment to doing what is right for children and communities.

Terms of Appointment

Location: Dimpleby House, Head Office, Tamworth, Staffordshire

We can be flexible on location; however, the successful candidate should ideally be based within reasonable proximity to our schools and be visible across our school sites and head office.

This is a hybrid role, enabling you to work remotely, with reimbursement for required travel.

Salary: 110 – 125k depending on experience.



Benefits: Our schools are focused on ensuring excellent provision and are constantly reflecting on what is best for our working environment and for the young people in our care. All of us at our Trust want children to achieve socially, personally and academically, and leave school with a crucial sense of possibility, vital for success in life.



We are looking for colleagues to join a professional family that values partnership and collaboration. When you work with us, you will be supported in your professional development and growth, benefiting from a culture of continuous improvement and care.

Thrive with:

- EAP programme, including access to counselling and practical support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, for you and your household.
- Access to the Wisdom wellbeing app (via EAP), plus other health and wellbeing initiatives.
- Online resources to support with life's challenges.



- Flexible PPA arrangements, supporting effective planning time and staff wellbeing.
- Leave policy, including the ability to apply for specific leave requests.
- Family-friendly policies, including enhanced maternity and adoption benefits (an additional three and a half months' pay).
- Eye tests and, where lenses are required for DSE use, a contribution towards lenses.
- Funded annual flu vaccine.



“ We understand that we will achieve more together than we can alone. We value kindness and build trust. ”

Reward with:

- Access to the Local Government Pension Scheme.
- Annual leave: 32 days plus bank holidays and four Trust Days, which are additional leave days on set dates throughout the year.
- Access to on-site car parking.
- Free tea and coffee.
- Occupational sick pay.

Option to benefit from:

- Cycle to work scheme.
- Access to lifestyle savings, a health cash plan, and support for mental and financial wellbeing through our partner VIVUP.
- Access to a range of external discount platforms available to education staff (e.g. Discounts for Teachers, Blue Light Card, Company Shop and Teacher Perks), offering savings on everyday costs.
- Additional pay-as-you-go additions to the wellbeing portal.



How to Apply

We actively encourage candidates to have a conversation about the role before making a formal application. You can arrange this with Lois Gordon, current Deputy CEO (Finance & Operations), by emailing Rebecca Shakespeare at rshakespeare@catschools.uk

The full application pack and process are available via our careers page:
<https://mynewterm.com/jobs/2755/EDV-2026-CAT-68344>

Closing date for applications: Friday 25th September 2026 (12.00 pm)
Shortlisting of applications: Tuesday 29th September 2026
Interviews and assessment activities: Thursday 8th and Friday 9th October 2026 at Trust HQ, Dimbleby House, Tamworth.

Community Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff to share this commitment and to undergo appropriate checks, including enhanced DBS checks, online checks, and a willingness to demonstrate commitment to the standards which flow from the Community Academies Trust vision and values.

This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

The role is covered by Part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016 and therefore the ability to speak fluent spoken English is an essential requirement for this role.

For queries regarding the application process, please contact a member of the Community Academies Trust Human Resources team on 01827 702216.

Community Academies Trust supports equal opportunities employment.

Community Academies Trust Company Registration
No. 07472736

“ Education is for improving lives and
for leaving your community
and world better than you
found it. **”**

