

# CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK



**CITY OF LONDON  
ACADEMY  
Highbury Grove**

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**Director of Learning**

# CITY OF LONDON ACADEMY Highbury Grove

## CEO WELCOME

Dear Applicant,

I am delighted that you have chosen to apply for a post with the City of London Academies Trust.



COLAT is driven by the ambition to deliver exceptional educational outcomes for the young people we serve, combining the heritage and traditions of the City of London Corporation with a creative and effective approach to teaching and learning.

Our expectations are high for both our students and our staff and as such we work to three core values: integrity, professionalism and care. We demonstrate real care by insisting on the highest expectations of behaviour in every phase and setting. Our curriculum is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that every young person is afforded the knowledge and skills they need to be successful. We promote and support excellent classroom pedagogy as well as ensuring we have common approaches to assessment and intervention. This is how we care for our young people and ensure that they achieve the highest possible outcomes and are able to counter the many aspects of disadvantage they, their families and our wider communities experience.

Our 'Foundations of Excellence', which run through all Trust schools, have been the framework for our sector-leading success so far. These core principles led to the City of London and COLAT previously being recognised as the best performing academy chain for progress and attainment of disadvantaged children ('Chain Effects', The Sutton Trust). This fuels our determination to continue to develop the work we do, while remaining focused on the ambitions for our schools and making a significant difference to children's lives.

In striving for excellence in all aspects of our work, we are acutely aware that this will only be achieved through hard-working and motivated staff. Our care for staff means that we invest in our people, allowing them to grow and achieve their career goals within the Trust or beyond. We are committed to providing first-rate training and development opportunities to all our staff, in addition to excellent career advancement opportunities within our growing Trust.

In the classroom, and around school, we expect the kind of exemplary behaviour that allows our staff to generate exceptional learning outcomes for our children. Being sponsored by the City of London Corporation also means our staff benefit by having access to a huge range of resources, events and exciting learning opportunities that other Trusts are simply not able to offer.

We are always looking for like-minded individuals to join us on our journey. Making the choice to work for COLAT means making the choice to be part of an evolving, ambitious and supportive Trust where you are valued, encouraged and can develop your specific talents, whatever they may be. We look forward to receiving your application.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark Emmerson'.

Mark Emmerson  
Chief Executive Officer

## WHO WE ARE

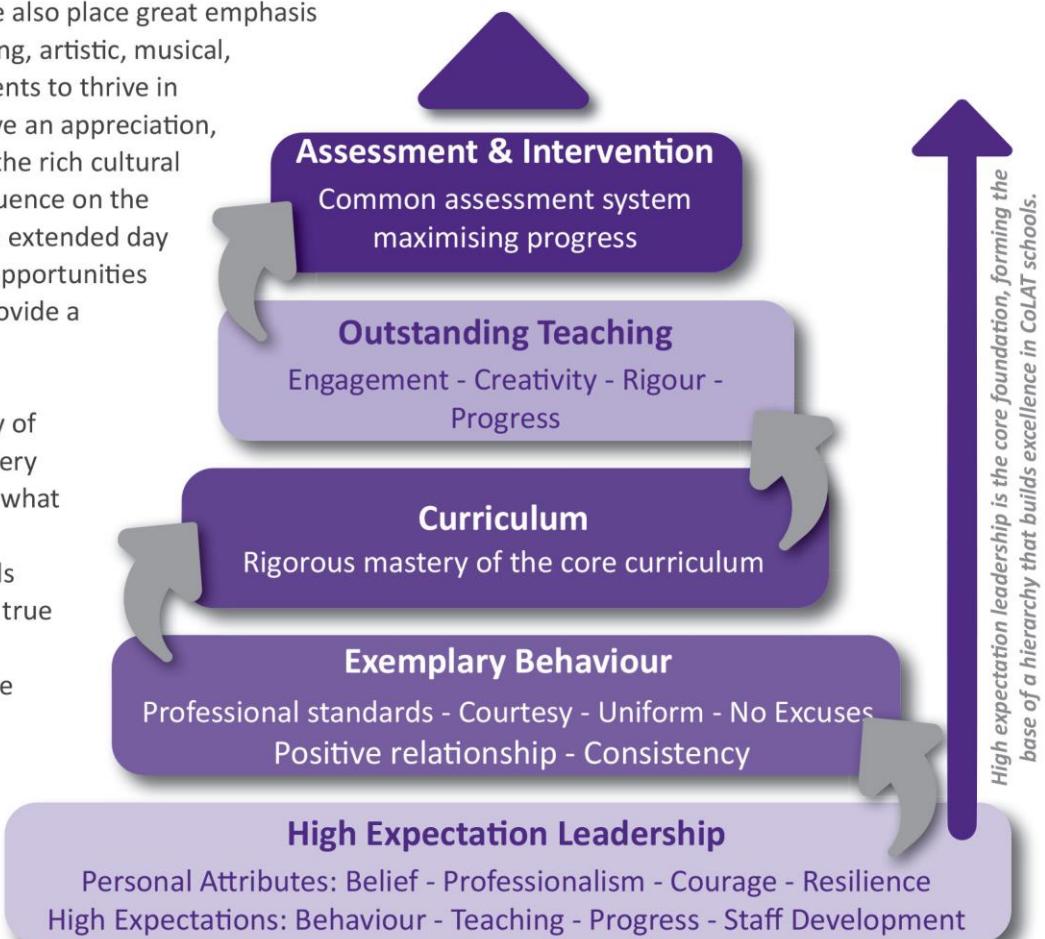
**City of London Academies Trust operates schools in areas of significant disadvantage and believes strongly in the transformational nature of education.**

We are unashamedly academic and unapologetically results driven because we recognise that strong SATs, GCSE and A level outcomes lead to increased life opportunities for our students. All our schools adopt a warm/strict approach, with every one of our School Leaders adhering to and aligning with our COLAT behaviour systems. Our simple, clear, and consistent routines, rituals and norms embed strong habits delivering exceptional student behaviour. In our schools, our teachers can teach, and students can learn, uninterrupted. We take great pride in curating an exceptionally positive learning environment and we obsessively guard against anything which may compromise our strong ethos and culture.

Our curriculum is knowledge rich. We believe in teaching 'powerful knowledge,' and educating our students on the 'best that's been thought and said' is crucial to giving them the best possible chance of success in life. More broadly, we find opportunities to elevate the curriculum to ensure our most able students can compete with their more privileged peers. Our curriculum is coherently and intelligently sequenced, with our Subject Improvement Leads working closely with Heads of Department to drive gains in learning and develop subject specific pedagogy. We are working on creating a standard curriculum in most of our subjects; this will help reduce teacher workload by taking away the production of high-quality resources and assessments, freeing up our expert teachers to grapple with the delivery of the content and focus on the learning.

Our teaching approach is influenced by the works of educationalists such as Doug Lemov. We are confident we know what works for schools in our specific context, and we have spent a long time codifying our approach, whilst also providing sufficient flexibility for our teachers to add their own unique personality and dynamism to their classrooms. Results are important to us, but we also place great emphasis on developing our students' sporting, artistic, musical, and linguistic talents. For our students to thrive in modern Britain, they must also have an appreciation, understanding and attachment to the rich cultural heritage of our country and its influence on the wider world. All our schools run an extended day to deliver an array of enrichment opportunities and super curricular sessions to provide a truly holistic education.

It is an exciting time to join the City of London Academies Trust, and we very much hope you will be inspired by what you learn about us. We are always excited to meet fellow professionals and there is no better way to get a true sense of a school's culture, values, and ethos than by visiting. We hope you take up this opportunity so you can see what life-changing opportunities our schools provide, and how integral our people are to this mission.



# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We are committed to providing **individualised and impactful** professional development for every member of our COLAT community, and we offer a menu of talent pathways to support you at every stage in your career.

These pathways are research-based, designed for COLAT schools and delivered by experts from across the Trust. They provide Trust-wide training and networking opportunities to support you to achieve your career goals.

The Talent Pathway menu includes:

- **Aspiring to Middle Leadership: Leading a Department**
- **Aspiring to Middle Leadership: Leading a Year Group**
- **Aspiring to Middle Leadership: Leading a Operational Department**
- **Aspiring to Senior Leadership: Curriculum, Teaching and Learning**
- **Aspiring to Senior Leadership: Personal Development, Welfare and Behaviour**
- **Aspiring to Senior Leadership: Personal Development, Welfare and Management**
- **Aspiring to SEND Leadership**
- **Aspiring to Operational Functions Leadership**

If you are interested in one of our Talent Pathways, please do ask for more details during your school visit or interview.

# EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

We invest in and support our staff by keeping their development a priority, and we are proud to have a range of benefits to ensure staff feel valued, including:

- Teachers' or local government pension scheme with a generous contribution from the Trust
- Occupational maternity and adoption pay following 26 weeks of continuous service
- Generous annual leave entitlement
- Sabbatical leave entitlement for up to one year (unpaid) after five years' continuous service
- Cycle to work scheme
- Corporate gym membership rates
- Travelcard loan scheme
- Annual training and development opportunities in addition to in-house staff development
- Access to City of London housing allocation scheme

# Headteachers Welcome

We know that only high calibre staff can rise to the challenge and contribute to the long-term objective, providing creative teaching, nurturing students' abilities, and showing ambition for their own career as well as the students'. In April 2021, Ofsted returned to Highbury Grove and the school was awarded a 'Good' rating, our report commenting that 'pupils feel happy and safe,' they 'look out for each other' and 'enjoy being part of a school community that is so diverse.' We continue to celebrate this diversity.

At Highbury Grove we are relentless in our pursuit of excellence because we know the difference it can make to the lives of our young people, their families and community. We believe that all students can thrive in their academic lives and become active contributors to their local, national and global communities, given the right environment.



We believe exceptional teachers create exceptional results; they transform lives and transform futures. They support every student to achieve their full potential and become a confident, resilient and compassionate individual who can make a positive contribution to society. We believe that exceptional teachers should be supported too, with all the opportunities needed to develop and achieve goals. Our most recent Ofsted report commented that 'staff are proud to work at the school. Leaders support them in their career development. They take account of staff workload and well-being.'

We're committed to providing first-rate training and development to all of our staff, as well as excellent career advancement opportunities within this evolving Trust. You'll find high expectations here too; we expect the kind of exemplary conduct from students that allows our teachers to do their jobs as effectively as they can.

This is an exciting time in the school's journey to re-establish itself as an excellent provider of high-quality education, and with the changes come opportunities. We have a clear and continued plan of improvement which requires staff who are energetic and have a desire to take on the challenge to ensure our school is the school of choice for our community. In joining our team you will play an instrumental role in school improvement as we strive to become 'outstanding' in every way.

City of London Academy Highbury Grove is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expect all staff to share this commitment. An enhanced DBS check and satisfactory references are required for this post. CVs will not be accepted in place of an application form.

For further information about safer recruitment and pre-appointment checks, please refer to the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance provided by the Department for Education.

# Director of Learning

**Working Pattern:** Full Time

**Contract type:** Permanent

**Start date:** September 2026

**Salary:** Inner London Pay Scale + TLR 1a £10,174 or equivalent allowance for support staff

**Location:** City of London Academy Highbury Grove

**Disclosure level:** Enhanced

## About Us

City of London Academies Trust believes strongly in the transformational nature of education operating schools in areas of significant disadvantage. We understand that strong outcomes lead to improved life chances for our students, so we are unashamedly academic and unapologetically results driven. Each of our schools adopt a 'warm/strict' approach, combining high expectations with care and support. Our level of care means we never compromise on standards or expectations, ensuring that no student's background becomes a reason for lowering the bar. Our schools maintain exemplary standards of behaviour, with systems, rituals and norms that instil strong habits. As a result, our schools provide an environment where our teachers can teach, and students can learn without disruption. We take great pride in fostering an exceptionally positive learning environment and we work meticulously to maintain our strong ethos and culture.

COLAT is driven by an unwavering ambition to be the best. We believe exceptional leaders and teachers create outstanding schools, transforming lives and shaping the future of every student. We have academies located in north, south and east London, and we combine the heritage and tradition of the Corporation of London with a genuinely innovative, enterprising, and entrepreneurial ethos. We are also committed to providing training and development to all our staff, plus excellent career advancement opportunities within our evolving Trust.

## About you

You will be fully aligned with our approach, understanding the critical role you play in shaping a behavioural and learning culture within our school. You will be adept at using direct instruction pedagogy and delivering a well sequenced, knowledge rich curriculum. Dynamic, inspiring and highly effective, you will strive to surpass what has been achieved. You will be committed to creating an environment that promotes academic, creative, sporting, linguistic and personal achievement.

This is an exciting time to be part of the City of London Academies Trust, and we very much hope that you will be inspired to want to join us. We are committed to investing in the next generation of COLAT people who will embody the Trust's culture, values and ethos.

## About the Role

The City of London Academy Highbury Grove is looking for an exceptional Director of Learning to be responsible for all aspects of student welfare and attainment within a Year group. The successful applicant will be committed to ensuring children enjoy learning and achieve to the best of their ability and as such will play a pivotal role in leading and driving Academy improvement.

This is a fantastic opportunity to be part of the team to bring the Academy forward to achieving its ambition to be an Outstanding Academy. We are committed to providing first-rate training and development to all of our staff, as well as excellent career advancement opportunities within this evolving Trust.

If you match our ambition and want to join our dedicated team of professionals, we would love to hear from you. Candidates must address the person specification in no more than 1,000 words. Applications must be submitted via the My New Term portal.

**Closing date for applications 9 am Friday 27 February 2026.**

**Interviews will take place shortly after the closing date.**

**Applications will be assessed upon receipt and we reserve the right to interview and appoint prior to the closing date. An early application is therefore strongly recommended.**

City of London Academies Trust supports Equal Opportunities Employment.

City of London 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 in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education, including enhanced DBS checks and a willingness to demonstrate commitment to the standards which flows from City of London Academies Trust vision and values.

Our school is based in the heart of an evolving community in Islington, and we value the diversity of our workforce. We welcome candidates from all backgrounds to join our team.

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.

City of London Academies Trust Company Registration No. 04504128.

# Director of Learning - Job Description

## Job Purpose

- To be responsible for all aspects of student welfare and attainment within a year group.

## Principal Accountabilities

- To provide professional leadership and management for Year groups to support high quality teaching, effective use of resources, and high standards of learning and achievement for all students.
- To assist the Principal and Vice Principals in the overall management and development of the academy.

## Main Activities and Responsibilities

*Main duties and responsibilities are indicated here. Other duties at an appropriate level and nature may also be required and will be negotiated.*

- Lead on implementation of behaviour management strategies and the evaluation of their impact.
- Work with Curriculum Leaders and Heads of Year, to drive forward the Academy target setting and support strategy.
- Support the Vice Principal Inclusion in all aspects of support for able students and those displaying a range of needs.
- Participate in the Academy Performance Management Scheme, agree an action plan and undertake the required training in order to update skills and meet the requirements of the Academy Strategic Plan.
- Supporting whole school and faculty Self-Evaluation strategies.
- Support extended day activities to enhance student learning experiences.
- Address underachievement through contributing to Academy strategy within a Year group as well as developing and implementing Year group strategies and approaches.
- To organise and manage a vertical house tutor group system.
- To lead tutors in the development and delivery of the pastoral care programme.
- To teach subjects and classes as required by the Principal.

## Other Responsibilities include

- Regularly monitoring student progress across a Year group and finding ways of improving their learning across subject areas.
- Analyse and interpret relevant national, local and academy data, plus research and inspect evidence, to inform policies, practices, expectations, targets and teaching methods.
- Use data effectively to identify students who are underachieving in the Year group and create and implement effective plans of action to support those students.
- Manage systems for target setting.
- Work with the Vice Principal Behaviour, Assistant Principal Inclusion and other staff with SEN expertise, to ensure that individual education plans are used to set subject-specific targets and match work well to student's needs.
- Monitor the setting and completing of homework for the Year group.
- Be responsible for maintaining high standard of behaviour within the Year group by enforcing the agreed academy expectations concerning dress, behaviour, attendance and discipline.
- Patrol corridors and visit lessons daily to ensure high standard of behaviour around the academy site.
- Work closely with students to create a distinctive Year group ethos, in which students are active participants.
- Work with Head of Year to organise and assist with Parents evenings.
- Liaise with outside agencies such as educational welfare officer, social services, police liaison officer, volunteers etc.
- Organise and take Year group assemblies according to the pattern established by the Senior Leadership Team.
- Prepare and lead Year group meetings.

### **Standards/ Quality Assurance and Additional Responsibilities**

- Support extended day activities to enhance students learning experiences.
- Adhere at all times to professional business standards of dress, courtesy and efficiency in line with the ethos and specialism of the Academy.
- Attend and participate in open evenings and student performances.
- Uphold the Academy's behaviour code and uniform regulations.
- Participate in staff training and development.
- Attend team and staff meetings.
- Develop links with neighbouring schools/ academies.

### **Key Organisational Objectives**

- The post holder will contribute to the academy's objectives in service delivery by:
- Following Health and Safety requirements and initiatives as directed.
- Sharing the academy's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.
- Ensuring compliance with Data Protection legislation.
- At all times operating within the school's Equalities policies, demonstrating commitment and contribution to improving standards of attainment.
- Ensuring customer care and quality assurance initiatives.
- Fulfilling the role of Student Personal Adviser and/or mentor if required.
- Contributing to the maintenance of a caring and stimulating environment for young people.

### **Associated Duties**

- The current School Teachers' Pay and Conditions document describes the duties which are required to be undertaken in the course of employment. In addition, certain particular duties are reasonably required and exercised and completed in a satisfactory manner. It is the contractual duty of the postholder to ensure that professional duties are discharged effectively.

### **Safeguarding Children**

COLAT 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.

The above responsibilities are subject to the general duties and responsibilities contained in the Statement of Conditions of Employment. The duties of this post may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or level of responsibility entailed.

The person undertaking this role is expected to work within the policies, ethos and aims of the Trust and to carry out such other duties as may reasonably be assigned. The post holder will be expected to have an agreed flexible working pattern to ensure that all relevant functions are fulfilled through direct dialogue with employees, contractors and community members.

### **English Duty**

This role is covered under part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016 and therefore the ability to speak fluent spoken English is an essential requirement for this role.

## Director of Learning – Person Specification

### Our Values and Vision

The City of London Academies Trust, sponsored by the City of London Corporation, aims to provide high-quality education for students and pioneer educational innovation. We are driven by the ambition to provide world-class experiences and deliver exceptional educational outcomes for the young people we serve.

All City of London academies draw upon the traditions, institutions, heritage and historical successes of London to furnish each of their diverse communities with life-transforming learning experiences. In doing so, we believe that the young people we serve develop into successful, compassionate young adults, who make a positive contribution to their local, national and global communities.

Our schools are characterised by a common understanding of what makes outstanding schools, based on five key principles which are known as our 'Foundations of Excellence'.

### Our Staff

Our staff have high expectations, are consistent and driven to provide the best teaching and opportunities for our students. Teachers work in a well-disciplined environment where they are able to teach creative and engaging lessons, and all staff are given exciting opportunities to develop and learn from exceptional practitioners.

### Equal Opportunities

The postholder will be expected to carry out all duties in the context of and in compliance with the COLAT Equalities policies.

	Essential	Desirable
<b>Qualifications</b>		
Educated to degree level or equivalent	✓	
Qualified teacher status		✓
Evidence of continuing professional development		✓
<b>Experience and skills</b>		
Demonstrable experience of improving student outcomes	✓	
Experience of having made a significant contribution to the success of an academy through its student outcomes and ethos		✓
Understanding of innovative approaches to teaching and learning	✓	
Understanding of the National Curriculum and OFSTED Framework	✓	
Demonstrable experience of high quality teaching and learning		✓
Experience as a form tutor and/or pastoral work		✓
Positive effective strategies for behaviour management	✓	
Experience of optimising the attainment and progress of students	✓	
Ability to use data and ICT effectively to assess performance and raise achievement	✓	
Experience of working with children with significant barriers to learning	✓	
Experience of organising subject-based activities		✓
Knowledge and understanding of schools' statutory responsibilities regarding safeguarding and the needs of students with SEND		✓

# CITY OF LONDON ACADEMY Highbury Grove

Well-developed interpersonal and organisational skills and the ability to work collaboratively, leading to the achievement of department aims	✓	
<b>Teaching and Learning</b>		
Outstanding learning secured for students through outstanding teaching and a calm, orderly environment	✓	✓
Effective, rigorous and sensitive relationships with students that secure positive emotional health and excellent behaviour and attitudes	✓	
<b>Vision and values</b>		
Vision and values aligned with the academy's high aspirations and high expectations for children, staff and families	✓	
Willingness to engage with parents in order to encourage their close involvement in the education of their children	✓	
Clear understanding of the ethos and strategies to establish high standards of outcomes and attitudes and behaviour in an area of socioeconomic challenge, and commitment to relentlessly securing those standards		✓
Knowledge of the Academy Strategic Plan and KPIs and the role to be played by the drama department		✓
Resilience and motivation to support the academy through day-to-day challenges while maintaining positivity and professionalism	✓	
Ability to lead and inspire all students with a sense of the intrinsic joy of learning and their own ability to succeed	✓	
Rigorous use of data to inform and shape teaching and learning in order to secure outstanding outcomes for all students	✓	
Strong organisational skills	✓	
A deep commitment to the safeguarding and wellbeing of all students	✓	
<b>Relationships with Stakeholders</b>		
Commitment to working with others to secure the best outcomes for children	✓	
Skilful management and understanding of how to secure strong relationships with other academy staff, families and other external relationships		✓
<b>Work-Related Personal Qualities</b>		
Demonstrate personal enthusiasm and commitment aimed at making a positive difference to children and young people and raising standards	✓	
Demonstrate personal and professional integrity, including modelling values and vision	✓	
Commitment to support the aims of the Trust	✓	
Flexible and able to manage workload and competing deadlines, prioritising appropriately, using initiative and maintaining good humour	✓	
Evidence of commitment to and understanding of collective responsibility	✓	

# CITY OF LONDON ACADEMY Highbury Grove

# HOW TO COMPLETE THE APPLICATION

**Vacancy Title: Director of Learning**

**Vacancy Description: Permanent**

**Vacancy Location COLA Highbury Grove**

**Vacancy Closing Date: TBC**

**Submission Applications must be submitted via My New Term portal**

It is essential that a fully completed application form is submitted. City of London Academies Trust cannot accept CVs alone. It is recommended that you retain a copy of your application form, so you can refer to it if you are invited for interview.

The main sections of the application form ask for various information relating to your work, educational and personal history. This information allows your application to be fully assessed against the criteria/competencies required for the job. When completing the application, you should provide your entire work history, including a description of any gaps in employment. In addition, outline your skills, qualifications and any notable awards. These can be selective, and you only need to provide those you consider relevant to the job you are applying for.

Your letter of application/supporting statements is the most significant element of the application form. Using no more than 1,000 words please provide an accompanying letter explaining why you are applying for this post and how your experience, skills, training and personal qualities match the requirements of the role as set out in the job description and person specification.

As part of your letter of application/supporting statement we are interested in knowing your impact so please provide relevant evidence. For instance, if you are seeking a pastoral role provide relevant data on the reduction of exclusions. If seeking a teacher role provide progress and attainment data of classes taught. If you do not meet all the essential criteria, it is unlikely that you will be shortlisted.

City of London Academies Trust asks that all potential employees highlight any relationships to school governors or employees to ensure all applicants are treated fairly.

For example, it may be inappropriate to offer someone a position within an organisation where they work for a family member or asking someone to take a position where they manage grants for voluntary services when their family works for a relevant voluntary organisation.

City of London 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 in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education, including enhanced DBS checks and a willingness to demonstrate commitment to the standards which flows from City of London Academies Trust vision and values.

Please provide details of two referees, one of whom should be your present/most recent employer. References will not be accepted from relatives or friends. References are requested for all shortlisted candidates unless you specifically request us not to do so. Open references will not be accepted.

This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. If you are appointed, you will be required to complete a DBS check. Any information received from the DBS will be treated in the strictest confidence. Having a criminal record will not exclude you from appointment, unless it is considered that the conviction renders you unsuitable to work with children.

Under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, it is a criminal offence if an individual who is disqualified from working with children knowingly applies for, offers to do, accepts or does any work with children.

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.



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