

Cheshire Academies Trust

Be part of our Tribe



Trust SENCO Support Lead

Recruitment Pack

April 2026



Cheshire Academies Trust
Inspiring hearts and minds

Be around the light bringers,
the magic makers, the world shifters.
They challenge you, break you open
uplift and expand you.
They don't let you play small with your life.
These heartbeats are your people.
These people are your
tribe.

Be part of our Tribe.



Welcome from the CEO

On behalf of Cheshire Academies Trust, I am delighted to extend a warm welcome to you as you consider the role of Trust SENCO Support Lead.

Cheshire Academies Trust currently comprises of twelve primary academies and one special school. Our Trust will likely continue to grow beyond that. Our schools are exceptionally strong with experienced leaders spearheading a continued drive to push the boundaries of excellence within our current primary and special settings. Our vision has been built to inspire the hearts and minds of all our staff so that our pupils can contribute to a better world. Our lens for disadvantaged and SEND allow us to see a truth about the effectiveness of our provision. It is through these that we will judge our impact, our capability, our capacity to make a difference, beyond that which may be attributed to advantage or need.

Our trust is supported by a dedicated team of educational professionals and leaders who are truly passionate about our schools. This team includes not only educational experts but also strategic and operational leaders who together foster a nurturing and ambitious environment for both our staff and pupils.

This is a one-year fixed-term role at 0.6 FTE (three days per week). In your role as Trust SENCO Support Lead, you will work closely with the SEND Director to further our vision of building a unique primary/special Trust and your contribution will be pivotal in supporting our mainstream schools to strengthen SENCO practice, build leadership confidence and enhance the quality of provision for pupils with SEND.

We are seeking an experienced and compassionate SEND leader who embodies our culture and builds strong, credible relationships with staff at every level. You should bring a proven track record as a successful SENCO, secure knowledge of the graduated approach and statutory SEND processes, and the ability to coach and build the confidence of SENCOs and wider school leaders. Warmth, professional humility, and the self-drive to work flexibly across multiple schools will be essential to your success in this role.

Thank you for considering this post with Cheshire Academies Trust. This is a wonderful place to learn and work and we look forward to the possibility of you bringing your expertise and enthusiasm to our team.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Ellis".

Steve Ellis
CEO



Cheshire Academies Trust
Inspiring hearts and minds

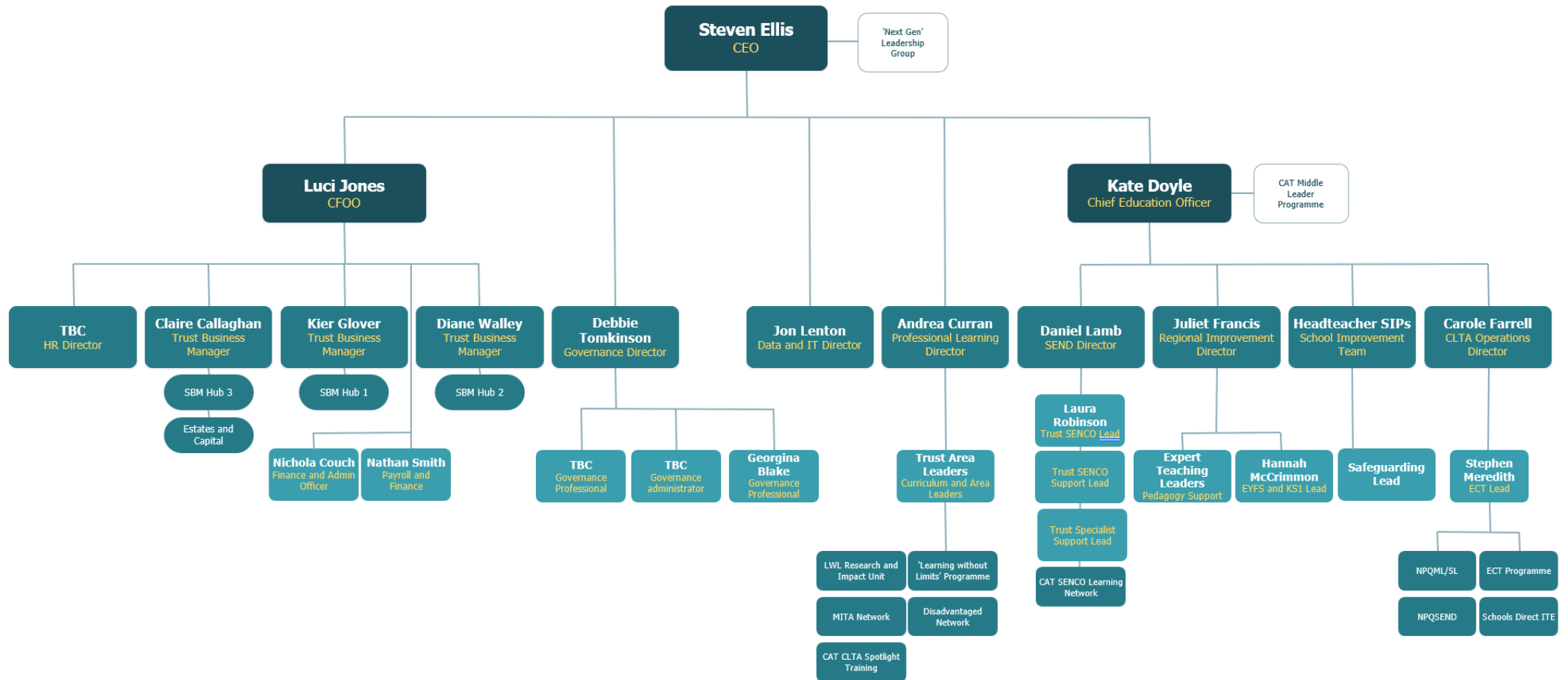


Our Schools and Teaching School (CLTA):



Our Central Team (September 2026)

Organisational Structure





Trust SENCO Support Lead Vacancy

Cheshire Academies Trust is seeking to appoint an experienced and compassionate Trust SENCO Support Lead. This is a pivotal Trust-wide role working under the direction of the SEND Director, with a primary focus on supporting, developing and strengthening SENCO practice across our mainstream schools. The successful candidate will play a critical role in building capacity, confidence and consistency in SEND leadership, helping schools to meet the day-to-day demands of the SENCO role while improving outcomes for pupils with SEND and their families. This position involves working closely with the SEND Director, school leaders and SENCOs to develop aligned approaches across the Trust's schools and four local authorities, while ensuring that provision remains inclusive, responsive and rooted in strong practice.

Key Responsibilities:

- **Trust-wide SENCO support and development:** Support, coach and mentor SENCOs across the Trust's mainstream schools, strengthening leadership confidence, professional judgement and day-to-day practice.
- **Graduated Approach:** Promote strong, consistent use of the graduated approach across schools, with a clear focus on identifying need early, planning effective provision, reviewing impact and working positively with families.
- **Systems and consistency:** Work with the SEND Director to develop consistent approaches, paperwork and expectations for SEND practice across schools, while recognising the requirements of four different local authorities.
- **Quality assurance and improvement:** Help review SEND practice across schools, identify strengths and next steps, and support SENCOs and leaders to improve provision, record-keeping and outcomes for pupils with SEND.
- **Culture and values:** Embodiment and promotion of the Trust's ethos to 'inspire hearts and minds', championing inclusion, collaboration and high aspirations for pupils with SEND across Cheshire Academies Trust.

The Ideal Candidate Will Possess:

- A secure and credible track record as a successful SENCO, with the ability to support other SENCOs in managing the operational and strategic demands of the role.
- Strong knowledge and practical experience of the graduated approach, with a proven record of supporting pupils and families effectively.
- An excellent understanding of SEND systems, statutory processes, paperwork and provision planning within mainstream schools.
- The ability to engage, influence, support and professionally challenge SENCOs, leaders and wider school teams.
- A commitment to inclusive education with a keen ability to improve outcomes for vulnerable pupils and those with SEND.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to build trust, work collaboratively and handle sensitive situations with professionalism and compassion.
- The self-drive, organisation and initiative needed to work across multiple schools, manage competing priorities and follow through on agreed actions.
- A clear understanding of how to develop greater consistency of SEND practice across schools working within different local authority systems.

We Offer:

- The opportunity to build an overall educational experience for pupils which is world-leading
- A supportive, committed Trust community
- An opportunity to work alongside the SEND Director and wider central team on a Trust-wide priority
- A culture that values and nurtures leadership, professional growth and career opportunity
- A one-year fixed-term contract at 0.6 FTE (three days per week), subject to a successful 3-month probationary period
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- Membership of the Teacher Pension Scheme
- An annual flu vaccination
- Access to our 'green schemes' including cycle to work, electric cars and white goods

Job Description

Job Purpose

Post:

Trust SENCO
Support Lead

Salary:

To be
confirmed
Dependent on
experience
(pro rata for
0.6 FTE)

Location:

Hybrid: Trust
schools/
Home working/
Central Trust
locations

Reports to:

SEND Director

- Work under the strategic direction of the SEND Director to strengthen SEND provision, practice and consistency across Cheshire Academies Trust mainstream schools;
- Provide practical support, coaching and mentoring for SENCOs, helping them manage the day-to-day demands of the role;
- Support SENCOs to embed the graduated approach, including assess-plan-do-review, provision mapping, evidence gathering and reviewing impact;
- Work with the SEND Director to develop consistency of SEND systems, paperwork, approaches and expectations across schools and four local authorities;
- Support schools to strengthen early identification, inclusive provision, reasonable adjustments and targeted support for pupils with SEND and their families;
- Develop SENCO confidence in statutory and school-based SEND paperwork, including SEND Support, EHCP processes, annual reviews and local authority requirements;
- Analyse SEND information, provision and outcomes with the SEND Director to identify strengths, gaps, priorities and targeted support needs;
- Contribute to Trust-wide SEND training, networks, resources and professional learning for SENCOs and wider school teams;
- Build strong relationships with SENCOs, Headteachers, school staff, families and external professionals, modelling high expectations and solution-focused practice;
- Contribute to Trust SEND strategy, policy development and quality assurance activity as directed by the SEND Director;
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of SEND legislation, statutory guidance, local authority processes and evidence-informed inclusive practice.



Person Specification

No.	Categories	Essential or Desirable	App Form	Interview or Task
Qualifications				
1.	Degree educated or equivalent relevant professional experience;	E	✓	
2.	Qualified Teacher Status;	E	✓	
3.	Required SENCO qualification: NASENCO, NPQ for SENCO or recognised equivalent;	E	✓	✓
4.	Qualified to teach and work in the UK;	E	✓	
Experience				
5.	Minimum of two years' successful experience working as a SENCO;	E	✓	✓
6.	Strong track record of supporting pupils and families through the graduated approach;	E	✓	✓
7.	Experience of coaching, supporting or mentoring colleagues to improve SEND practice;	E	✓	✓
8.	Experience of managing SENCO paperwork and statutory SEND processes, including EHCP and annual review evidence;	E	✓	✓
9.	Experience of working across schools, Trusts, local authority areas or with external agencies;	D	✓	✓
Abilities, Skills and Knowledge				
10.	Self-driven, organised and proactive, while working under the direction of the SEND Director;	E	✓	✓
11.	Builds trust with SENCOs, Headteachers, staff, families and external professionals;	E	✓	✓
12.	Excellent knowledge of the SEND Code of Practice, Equality Act, graduated approach and EHCP processes;	E	✓	✓
13.	Knowledge of inclusive practice, reasonable adjustments, ordinarily available provision and SEND intervention;	E	✓	✓
14.	Able to interpret SEND information, provision maps, pupil outcomes and QA evidence to identify priorities;	E	✓	✓
15.	Able to develop practical templates, guidance and processes for consistency across four local authorities;	E	✓	✓
16.	Able to ask supportive but challenging questions that help SENCOs reflect, prioritise and improve;	E	✓	✓
17.	Strong professional accountability and ability to follow through agreed actions;	E	✓	✓
18.	Works accurately with attention to detail when reviewing documentation and statutory paperwork;	E	✓	✓
19.	Builds strong working relationships with the SEND Director, central team, Headteachers and SENCOs;	E	✓	✓
20.	Prioritises effectively, works accurately under pressure and uses own initiative;	E	✓	✓
21.	Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people;	E	✓	✓

Person Specification

Categories		Essential or Desirable	Assessed by:	
			App Form	Interview or Task
Personal Qualities				
22.	Commitment to inclusive schools where pupils with SEND are well understood, well supported and able to thrive;	E	✓	✓
23.	Adaptive and responsive to change across different school and local authority systems;	E	✓	✓
24.	Holds and articulates the Trust guiding principles, leading with moral purpose and integrity;	E	✓	✓
25.	Flexible; thrives on change, works at pace and responds to changing SENCO and school priorities;	E	✓	✓
26.	Integrity, confidentiality and professional judgement, aligned with the Nolan principles of public office;	E	✓	✓
27.	Resilient, persistent and optimistic, with a positive mindset and strong work ethic;	E	✓	✓
28.	Willingness to travel to Trust schools and work flexibly to meet deadlines;	E	✓	✓
29.	Have compassion and care above all things.	E	✓	✓

Application Process:

Interested candidates are invited to speak to the SEND Director and/or arrange a school visit ahead of submitting an application on MyNewTerm.

Join us in shaping an ethical, courageous and innovative future at Cheshire Academies Trust.

Cheshire Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Appointments will be subject to an enhanced DBS check and satisfactory references.

Candidates will be expected to outline their suitability for the role, aligned to both the job description and person specification via their letter of application. The interview process will be designed to offer candidates further opportunities to share and expand on their skills and experience. Shortlisted candidates will be required to provide evidence of their qualifications at interview and any offer of employment will be on receipt of acceptable references. The school may choose to make social media checks on shortlisted candidates, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 (KCSiE 23) guidance.

How to apply

If you believe you are the ideal candidate for our Trust SENCO Support Lead position and would like more information or to have an informal discussion with the SEND Director, please email Carole Farrell at carolefarrell@cheshireta.co.uk.

To apply, kindly complete the application form via the MyNewTerm website and submit it highlighting your skills, qualifications, and experience relevant to the job description and person specification. All applications will be dealt with via the online applicant tracking system.

Note that we do not accept CVs and applications that include a CV will not be considered.

Cheshire Academies Trust is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff, volunteers, and third parties to share this commitment. The recruitment process will involve safer recruitment practices, pre-employment background checks, and is subject to the receipt of satisfactory references prior to interview. Shortlisted candidates must provide proof of qualifications at the interview. An enhanced DBS check is also required and will be conducted before final confirmation of appointment.

We welcome applications from all suitably qualified candidates. Please be advised that we are unable to provide feedback on the shortlisting process. If you have not heard from us within four weeks of the closing date, please consider your application unsuccessful on this occasion.

Post Start Date:

1st September 2026. One-year fixed-term contract, 0.6 FTE (three days per week).

Informal discussions and school visits can be arranged by request.

This post might be suitable for those interested in a seconded / or additional role to their current employment.

Closing Date: 5pm 14th May 2026

Shortlisting: 15th May 2026

School based task: 18th May 2026

Interviews: 20th May 2026

We reserve the right to close advertisements early.