



David Ross Education Trust

Broadening Horizons

Strictly Private & Confidential

David Ross Education Trust

Appointment of a CEO

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

David Ross Education Trust (DRET) schools create rich and exciting learning environments, inspiring students to become their confident and successful best. We are committed to giving every child attending our 34 schools a world-class and well-rounded education, incorporating the best of what the independent sector can offer within the state system. Academic excellence is merged with our world class pastoral and enrichment provision.

We educate 13,000 students in 22 primaries, 11 secondaries and a special school and we have 1,900 teachers and staff. Each academy is part of a regional hub, a group of schools linked by age group, geography and ambition, which ensures that innovation is captured and best practice embraced.

We seek a dynamic and strategic Chief Executive to lead our MAT into the next exciting stage of its evolution. The appointee will passionately believe in our vision and will share our ambition for every school to become Outstanding and for DRET to be system-leading in all areas. S/he will harness the expertise of a strong central team, a highly engaged Chairman and a well-qualified Board, fostering an ethos of continuous improvement.

Our new Chief Executive will offer a record of successful strategic, operational and people leadership in complex, rapidly evolving organisations. S/he will possess exceptional interpersonal, ambassadorial and networking skills. The appointee will be confident and resilient, with the leadership skills to build these qualities in others and nurture leadership talent from within. The appointee will demonstrate a profound resonance with the transformative power of education.



The collective efforts of the Trust are having a transformational effect. We are proud that we have supported some of the most improved schools in England – academies that have gone from Special Measures to Outstanding in five terms or where exam results are amongst the most improved in the country. We were recently ranked top of the national league table for both Key Stage 2 progress and attainment for MATs with more than 20 primary schools.

“We pride ourselves on our academic rigour, driven by talented, dedicated and inspiring teachers who help our students to fulfil their true potential. We believe in opening our students’ eyes to the world around them. We do this through the only academy-wide enrichment programme of its kind within the state education sector. A programme that gives our students access to the kinds of life-changing experiences normally only available at fee-paying schools.”
David Ross, Founder.

THE DRET WAY

Our vision is for all our schools to be the schools of choice in our communities across Northamptonshire, Lincolnshire and the East Midlands. Working together with parents and national and local partners, the Trust is committed to providing unrivalled opportunities for every one of our students.

Our mission is to give every child attending one of our schools a world-class education. We achieve this through our Trust’s unique culture, where delivering academic excellence and embracing the value of enrichment and citizenship are at the heart of who we are, and what we do as an organisation.

The DRET way is to bring together the best that the independent sector offers and the state education sector provides. While our academies are very different in terms of their identities and communities, the aspirations and ambitions that unite the network are clearly defined and set. In addition, there are common features in all of our academies, built on our Sponsor’s vision and the traditional strengths of the independent system.

These common features include:

- academic excellence;
- a house structure to foster a culture of mutual respect and teamwork;
- an extensive co-curricular offering to broaden engagement, opportunity and experience for all students within their academy;
- an early and relentless focus on literacy;
- a uniform code to nurture a sense of identity and responsibility with a high expectation around personal appearance;
- a Governing Body and a Principal who exercise their local autonomy within this framework; and
- a commitment to excellence and a culture of no excuses.

THE NEXT CHAPTER

In addition to the recent outstanding performance of our primary schools we have transformed our financial performance during the 2018-2019 financial year. Our central team and wider team of regional leads is functioning well and we seek to build on these recent successes.

In the next chapter, we aim to:

- continue to raise the standards of educational attainment across the Trust, especially in our secondary schools, ensuring that all students excel across a range of performance measures;
- continue our progress to build a one-Trust way – the DRET way – across all stages and phases to achieve this, enhancing our curriculum, use of data and training and development opportunities for teachers;
- build further on the successes of our regional hub model to ensure a shared approach to system-led school improvement;
- continue to build outstanding infrastructure within the Trust to support the drive for universally Outstanding academies;
- continue to build our national reputation for excellence as a system-leading MAT;
- continue to seek out the best of what the independent sector offers its students and bring this to our schools, especially in the areas of performing arts, sport and enrichment opportunities;
- continue to demonstrate our Trust's commitment to delivering efficient and effective systems, finances, processes, people and governance that allow our schools to focus on delivering world-class educational outcomes;
- grow the Trust sustainably in a network model.



LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The Board of Trustees has oversight of the Trust and the Chief Executive reports to the Chair of Trustees and Founder of the Trust, David Ross. In addition to chairing the Board, David is a highly engaged founder and Chair, visiting the academies regularly to meet staff and students.

The new Chief Executive will lead a high performing Leadership Team that comprises:

- Mark Neild – Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Education - Secondary
- Simon Rose – Director of Education - Primary
- Jane Spencer – Chief Finance Officer
- Rachel Ridgill – Director of HR

OUR INSPIRATION FUND

Our Inspiration Fund creates life-changing experiences for over 13,000 young people in our schools. Our award-winning programme helps our students to develop their passions and discover their talents through access to the very best in sports, music, culture and outward-bound activities.

Our enrichment programme is at the heart of our organisation and encourages students to become confident, well-rounded young people who will be valued members of society. According to our students and their parents, the outstanding opportunities we are able to offer is one of the hallmarks of a Trust education.

We are proud to be able to say that ours is the only programme of its kind in the academy sector and gives our students access to the kinds of life-changing experiences normally only available at independent schools.



ROLE DESCRIPTION

The appointee will develop the Trust's overall strategy to ensure sustainability and growth across the Trust, uniting systems and people in an unwavering commitment to the highest achievement for all, regardless of background or ability. S/he will lead by example to embed a shared culture of outstanding performance and continuous improvement.

The appointee will develop and maintain the Trust's relationships with a range of stakeholders including David Ross and the Board, the Department for Education, the Education and Skills Funding Agency, the Regional Schools' Commissioners and OFSTED.

More specifically the responsibilities of our Chief Executive can be described as follows:

Strategic Leadership

- to shape and steward the strategic direction of the Trust, supporting and monitoring the successful implementation of agreed strategic goals across our 34 academies, with clear deliverables and effective accountability;
- to focus particularly on school improvement in our secondary academies, designing and embedding a culture of excellence, collaboration and continuous improvement across all DRET schools;
- to continue to develop The DRET Way with central team leaders and Academy Principals, and to continue to build on the successes of DRET's regional hub model;
- to lead the sustainable growth of our Trust, seeking suitable future schools and leading the successful conversions for any schools aspiring to join our Trust;
- to anticipate the political and policy context at both local and national level to the benefit of DRET, seizing the opportunities that the school reform agenda continues to present.

People Leadership

- to provide inspirational leadership to all stakeholders;
- to build strong and trusted relationships with Trustees, providing timely and accurate information to support them in discharging their duties, and working with them collaboratively in shaping the vision for the Trust;
- to build further capacity and capability in an already strong central team, ensuring that the right accountabilities and support structures are in place to enable all colleagues to achieve their highest potential;
- to recruit and retain the best school leaders and teachers, ensuring effective succession planning and career pathways;
- to ensure that mechanisms for identifying and bringing on leadership talent across the MAT are aligned to MAT strategy; working with central team leaders to devise innovative pay and reward structures, and training opportunities for all staff.

Operational/ Financial Leadership

- to take responsibility for the annual business plan, long-term strategic plan, self-evaluation, academic performance improvement plans, financial management plans and asset management, with a particular focus on the complexity of the Trust's secondary estate;
- to set and agree with Trustees ambitious annual and longer-term academic performance targets for all our schools and to maintain a framework of Indicators cascaded through the central and regional leadership teams designed to monitor performance against agreed targets;
- to ensure that the Trust's systems give real-time understanding of performance, provide assurance on outcomes and the quality and consistency of practice and allow for rapid and targeted response to emerging concerns;
- to hold leaders accountable for performance and develop a cadence of review and monitoring with the leadership team that will provide early insight on progress, will highlight issues and ensure early action taken to resolve them;
- to lead the Trust's central team and Academy Principals in operating DRET as a sustainable and commercially viable MAT, fostering a culture of sound financial management and continuous improvement across a range of financial and operational metrics.

External Relations

- in partnership with the Chairman, to act as an ambassador for DRET, presenting our vision and values to wider audiences;
- to build and nurture excellent relationships with the Regional Schools Commissioners, the Department for Education, the Education and Skills Funding Agency, OFSTED and other external partners;
- to build and nurture excellent relationships with external agencies, local authorities, local communities, businesses and other MATs;
- to continue to build our profile nationally as a leading MAT and a key influencer in education debate.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

The Chief Executive of David Ross Education Trust will be a leader of exceptional calibre. S/he will demonstrate the following qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and personal attributes:

Qualifications

- a good first degree;
- a recognised post-graduate qualification (desirable, not essential);
- a demonstrable record of continuous professional development.

Experience

- a proven record of successful strategic and operational leadership in rapidly evolving, complex, multi-site organisations;
- experience of leading people and retaining talent successfully through periods of growth and development;
- an excellent track record of raising standards and performance in complex, multi-stakeholder settings;
- a proven record of working closely with Boards to develop and deliver both long term strategies and short to medium term performance objectives.
- successful track record of robust financial management and budgetary control and of creating a leadership culture that ensures delivery of tough performance targets with constrained financial resources.

Essential knowledge and skills

- outstanding ability in the leadership and management of people including advocacy, facilitation and negotiation skills;
- politically astute with well-developed networking, stakeholder management, negotiation and influencing skills;
- exceptional communication skills, including the ability to bring clarity to complex issues, to listen and to negotiate and influence;
- business acumen and the ability to grow an organisation;
- a well-developed understanding of the issues surrounding the development of educational provision in the UK.

Personal attributes

- flexible, positive and resilient;
- inspirational in the leadership of teams;
- energetic and entrepreneurial;
- reflective, self-aware and ready to learn;
- creative and able to innovate;
- welcomes challenge and can challenge others appropriately;
- the highest standards of professional and personal integrity;

- a belief in learning from the independent sector and other educational systems to develop world-class provision;
- understands the language of education;
- a deep commitment to improving educational outcomes for children of all backgrounds.



TERMS OF THE APPOINTMENT

The appointee will be expected to work from DRET's head office in Loughborough. Residing near Loughborough during the working week is not essential, but it is desirable.

A competitive remuneration package, commensurate with the responsibilities of the role and the seniority of this position in the education sector will be offered to the successful candidate.

David Ross Education Trust is committed to equality, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. An enhanced DBS check is required for all staff. We are an equal opportunities employer that recruits on merit and we welcome applications from all members of the community.



APPOINTMENT PROCESS AND HOW TO APPLY



David Ross Education Trust has retained the services of Perrett Laver to help identify the widest possible field of suitable candidates and assist in the assessment of candidates against the requirements for the role. An executive search exercise is being undertaken alongside the public advertisement of the post.

Applicants should submit full curriculum vitae and a covering letter of application addressed to David Ross, Chairman, which fully addresses the competencies outlined in the job description and person specification and outlines their interest in DRET.

Completed applications should be uploaded at <https://candidates.perrettlaver.com/vacancies/> or emailed to rosemary.fisher@perrettlaver.com quoting reference number 4524. The closing date for applications is 0830 hrs GMT on Thursday 30th January 2020.

Longlisted candidates will be invited for interview with Perrett Laver during the weeks commencing 17th and 24th February 2020. The shortlist of candidates will be selected in the week commencing 2nd March 2020 and shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend a first-round interview and informal meetings during the weeks commencing 16th and 23rd March 2020.

A smaller group of finalist candidates will then attend a final round interview with the Trust Board in the week commencing 23rd March 2020.

Protecting your personal data is of the utmost importance to Perrett Laver and we take this responsibility very seriously. Any information obtained by our trading divisions is held and processed in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation. The data you provide us with is securely stored on our computerised database and transferred to our clients for the purposes of presenting you as a candidate and/or considering your suitability for a role you have registered interest in.

As defined under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Perrett Laver is a Data Controller and a Data Processor, and our legal basis for processing your personal data is 'Legitimate Interests'. You have the right to object to us processing your data in this way. For more information about this, your rights, and our approach to Data Protection and Privacy, please visit our website <http://www.perrettlaver.com/information/privacy/>

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