



Acorn
Education Trust

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Acorn Education Trust

Welcome from **David Middleton**

Chair of Trustees

Thank you for your interest in the post of Chief Executive Officer (CEO), I hope the information enclosed in this pack inspires you to apply.

Our current CEO is retiring having led Acorn Education Trust from the outset and we are now looking to appoint a principled, thoughtful, and inspirational leader to this exciting role. Our new CEO will help shape and realise the vision of the Trust as well as visibly leading through future phases of development, evolution, and change.

The candidate will have strong, proven people and organisational skills as well as a compelling track record in education. They will understand what excellence looks like in terms of professional and teaching standards, learning outcomes and first-class pastoral care, and they will be committed to the very best practice in safeguarding. They will also be committed to putting children and learning first and foremost at every step.

The successful candidate will role model our values and ethos to all they may interact with, both internally and externally, engaging the hearts and minds of those they are responsible for in the process. They need to understand Acorn's place in our community and how we can act as an anchor for those we live amongst and serve, today, tomorrow, and beyond; regardless of background, faith or degree of privilege.

Our family of 21 settings, all based in Wiltshire, have a shared mission to work together to ensure an excellent and sustainable 0-19 education across a range of settings. If this sounds like a challenge you know you can succeed in, and you have the vision, dynamism and restlessness required for a role such as this, we would love to hear from you.

Thank you for the time and care you will take in considering your application.



David Middleton
Chair of Trustees

About Acorn Education Trust

Preparing young people for their world in their time

Acorn Education Trust was established in 2014 to provide a local solution to a national strategy.

We now serve 21 settings: 16 primary schools, 3 secondary schools and 2 nurseries.

Our mission is to 'prepare young people for their world in their time' and this sits at the heart of all we do. We strive for excellent leadership, excellent teaching and excellent learning.

Our vision is to transform lives through education.

We celebrate our schools unique and individual characteristics, recognising the communities they serve. We value our staff and the contribution they bring to our schools and the trust and look to foster leadership and succession planning as well as offering greater opportunities within the trust.

Every Headteacher focuses on leading teaching and learning in their school. Central teams manage the business element of the Trust which allows us to share resources, improve IT and estates infrastructure and invest in school-to-school support. We are therefore able to direct as much money as possible into teaching and learning thus improving the life chances of all our young people.

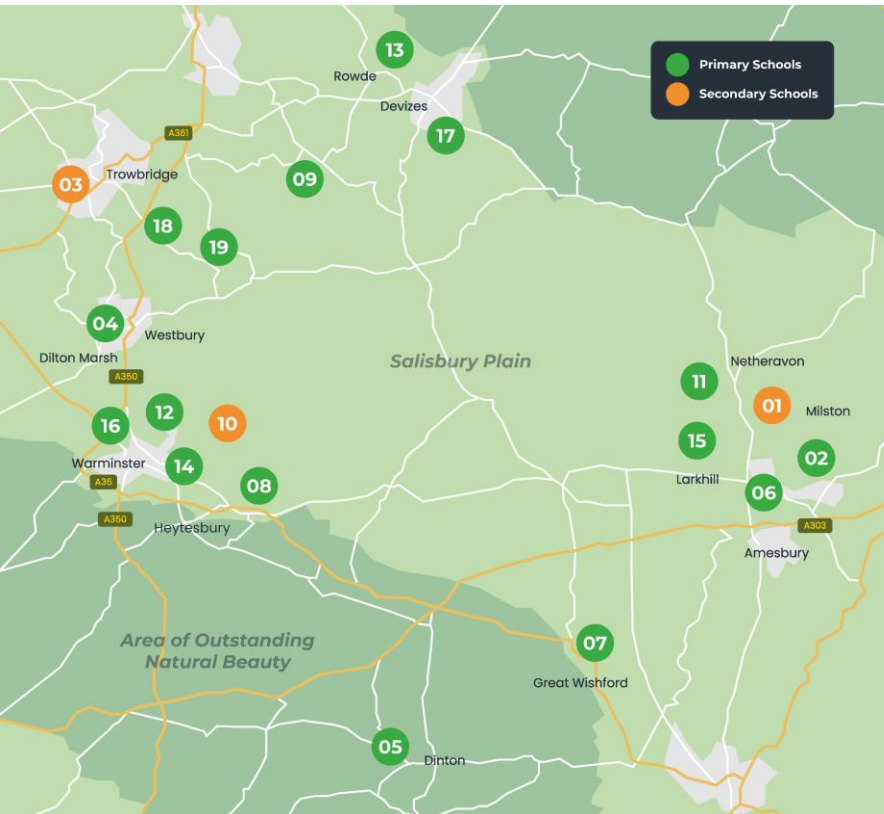
Our values


In every Acorn setting you will see:

- A** Active and visible leadership
- C** Care, support and challenge
- O** Opportunities for all
- R** Readiness to reach out
- N** Needs of all are paramount

Our settings

Our settings include 16 primary schools, three secondary schools and two nurseries (based within primary settings). Two of our secondary schools include Sixth Forms and 12 of our primary schools are CofE schools, all working within the Diocese of Salisbury.
























Acorn

Education Trust

Our Settings

- 01.  Avon Valley Academy
- 02.  Bulford St Leonard's Church of England Primary School
- 03.  Clarendon Academy
- 04.  Dilton Marsh Church of England Primary School
- 05.  Dinton Church of England Primary School
- 06.  Durrington All Saints Church of England Infant School
- 07.  Great Wishford Church of England (V.A.) Primary School
- 08.  Heytesbury Church of England Primary School
- 09.  Keevil Church of England Primary Academy
- 10.  Kingdown School
- 11.  Netheravon All Saints Church of England Primary School
- 12.  New Close Primary School
- 13.  Rowde Church of England Primary Academy
- 14.  St John's Church of England Primary School
- 15.  St Michael's Church of England Primary School
- 16.  The Avenue Primary School and Children's Centre
- 17.  Wansdyke School
- 18.  West Ashton Church of England Primary School
- 19.  Willowbrook Primary School

Job description

Job Title	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
------------------	-------------------------------

Reporting to	Acorn Education Trust Chair of Trustees
---------------------	---

Main purpose

- The Trust CEO is responsible for leading the Senior Executive Team of the Trust, enabling the Trust and all its schools/services to be sustainably successful over time.
- To provide high-level strategic leadership and management across all aspects of the Trust's activities.
- To ensure that the Trust provides high quality education for all its students through the effective and efficient use of resources and people.
- As the most senior leader, the CEO will represent the Trust with a wide range of stakeholders and partners, enabling it to fulfil its civic responsibilities.
- As Accounting Officer for the Trust, the CEO is responsible for ensuring the Trust meets its statutory financial and legal requirements.

The CEO is expected to lead and inspire school senior leaders, teachers, and pupils to excel across all schools within the Trust. Each school is embedded within and serves its community, and fostering and strengthening collaborative and collegiate working practices are considered essential. Earning and retaining the respect of and empathy with Headteachers is critical.

Assisted by a lean, professional Senior Executive Team, the CEO will be empowered by the Board of Trustees to deliver the Trust's Vision, Values and Strategic Priorities. The CEO will provide strong, highly visible leadership within and across wider communities and networks. The CEO will hold the Senior Executive Team accountable for its support and challenge to schools in delivering outstanding outcomes for pupils whilst adding tangible value using centralised school resources.

The CEO is accountable to the Trustees for the performance of the Trust; Trustees must be provided with accurate management and financial information as evidence of where the Trust is and where it is going. Precise analysis of school performance, next steps and any risk mitigation will be expected to ensure attainment targets and progression are at the core of all we do.

Continues on next page

Duties and responsibilities

Vision, culture and ethos

- Deliver continuous school improvement.
- Foster a culture of high aspirations and high expectations for pupils and staff.
- Support and develop teachers and school leaders to deliver engaging and inspirational teaching.
- Ensure that there is a clear and evidence-based understanding of the full spectrum of pupil needs and ensure those needs are fully met.
- Promote a culture of inclusion for all in the Trust family so everyone feels valued.
- Encourage all voices to be heard by providing communication channels where views, concerns, fears, and ideas will be addressed quickly, fairly, and compassionately.
- Promote and grow Christian distinctiveness, which is essential in our church schools, as is the enduring relationship with the respective dioceses. All faiths are to be welcomed and supported.
- Champion change, provide transformational leadership to drive an evolving organisation forward and meet strategic priorities.
- Manage the Trust's growth so that consensus is built among stakeholders and collaboration is strengthened at all levels inside and outside the Trust.
- Manage a sustainable Trust growth strategy with a robust and transparent due diligence process to understand the character, strengths and needs of new joining schools and ensure a practical onboarding experience.
- Embrace and encourage innovation and creativity so the organisation is agile and well-positioned to meet the demands of a changing educational landscape.

People and partners

- Oversee people processes and initiatives that positively impact delivering the Trustees' vision of being a recognised employer of choice.
- Deliver a systematic approach to talent management in the Trust, supporting professional growth with high-quality CPD opportunities to build capacity and capability for school improvement.
- Oversee and validate a management strategy to deploy staff where most needed to support school improvement.
- Ensure staff well-being is a strategic priority with regular analysis of the drivers for well-being, including workload.
- Foster a collaborative and outward-looking Trust with solid external relationships where best practice can be shared and harnessed for the good of all.
- Manage and continuously update a succession plan of critical posts across the organisation, ensuring similar projects are in place throughout the Trust.

Duties and responsibilities

Teaching and learning

- Be accountable for all aspects of teaching and learning standards across the Trust, setting clear principles and expectations, and ensuring the Trust's education vision is understood and embraced.
- Deliver a teaching and learning assessment culture that encourages professional reflection, constructive advice, constant evaluation of teaching impact and honest dialogue with peers and leaders to deliver the best for our pupils.
- Embrace and encourage innovation in teaching delivery. Develop professional learning networks to drive creativity and share best practice.
- Evaluate and deliver a digital strategy that maximises technological opportunities to enable high-quality teaching and learning.
- Build greater capacity for school improvement and ensure high-quality interventions are targeted at schools causing concern by guaranteeing early identification of emerging issues with clear action plans and resources to secure rapid progress.
- Identify, exploit, foster and spread excellence wherever it is within the Trust.

Curriculum and assessment

- Establish aligned curriculum principles which are successfully implemented and evaluated in context.
- Implement curriculum principles across each phase of education, with clear expectations on progress against age-related benchmarks.
- Ensure each school curriculum meets statutory and local requirements, delivers the highest educational outcomes, and reflects shared best practice.
- Implement curriculum alignment for primary and secondary school pupils to deliver seamless educational and pastoral transition.
- Establish a Trust approach to assessment, including alignment at critical stages of a pupil's educational journey.
- Deliver systems and processes utilising assessment data to inform management decisions, school improvement interventions, CPD activity and resource allocation.
- Ensure assessment approaches support the workforce reform guidelines.
- Establish, implement, and evaluate moderation/standardisation procedures to support teaching staff in developing and using assessment principles.

Quality assurance and accountability

- Implement a data strategy to ensure the Trust has a well-developed, accessible, and timely approach to using quantitative and qualitative data to support evidence-based decision-making in all aspects of its work.
- Introduce and embed a rigorous Trust quality assurance model to help schools identify their development needs.

Duties and responsibilities

Quality assurance and accountability (continued)

- Seek and analyse regular feedback from pupils, parents, and other stakeholders to triangulate key data metrics to support continuous improvement.

Governance capability

- Ensure that school improvement is a core part of the business, and that Trustees are provided with regular quantitative and qualitative data, including stakeholder feedback, to ensure a clear picture of school performance across the Trust.
- Foster a strong culture of supportive and positive scrutiny and challenge for leaders and teachers.
- Together with the Senior Executive Team, ensure sufficiently clear reports in data and analysis are presented appropriately to enable Trustees to exercise strategic oversight of the Trust's educational performance, financial sustainability, workforce development planning, risk management and reputation.
- Ensure that local school governance is informed, effective, and compliant in accordance with the Trust's articles and promoting the ethos of the Trust.
- Ensure that the agreed scheme of delegation is well understood and is applied consistently, with clear responsibilities to develop, implement and evaluate school improvement in the Trust.
- With the Chair of Trustees, assist the Board in regularly reflecting on its effectiveness and develop appropriate governance structures to support its schools.
- With the Board of Trustees, ensure the Trust has a clear succession plan for those appointed in the governance of the Trust.

Business operations

- Manage the Trust's operations, with sole accountability to the Trust Board, and ensure all policies are updated and appropriate to deliver the statutory duties of the Trust.
- As the Trust Accounting Officer, secure effective structures, rigorous systems, and processes to manage resources robustly and to ensure the financial health and sustainability of each school and the Trust overall, as set out in the Academy Trust Handbook.
- Take responsibility for propriety and regularity in managing public funds and day-to-day operations.
- Ensure robust and legal arrangements are in place to manage the development of the Trust, including place-planning and asset management, the programme of capital projects, procurement, and income generation.
- Ensure robust and practical procedures are in place for the safety, health and environmental performance of all schools and workplaces within the Trust.

Duties and responsibilities

Business operations (continued)

- Ensure robust and appropriate proactive risk mitigation and risk management for the Trust and that the risk strategy is aligned with local school risk strategies.
- Ensure that Trust structures, systems and the allocation and deployment of resources are scalable and sustainable for future growth.
- Ensure that the Trust meets all legislative and statutory requirements, including safeguarding, health and safety, those required by Companies House and the Charity Commission, data protection and the Master and Supplementary Funding agreements.
- Monitor progress against agreed targets and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), including meeting all statutory and legislative standards and providing a coherent and accurate account of improvement to the Board, taking action where necessary

Supervision and management

- Complete line management of the Senior Executive Team.
- Responsible for the effective line management of Headteachers in the Trust.
- Motivate and coach others. Challenge and hold individuals and teams to account to drive improvement and deliver outcomes.
- Ensure continuous professional development of the Executive Team to increase capability that will directly benefit schools and the wider Trust.
- Anticipate and plan to maintain a robust executive leadership team, including succession planning, which should extend to school leadership teams.

Safeguarding and wellbeing

- Safeguarding children and staff and their wellbeing must run through everything the Trust does. Everyone must have a voice, understand how to raise concerns, know the mechanics of whistleblowing, be listened to, and have their concerns addressed quickly, empathetically and within guidance detailed in Trust policies, employment law and broader legislation. The Single Central Register, as mandated in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, paragraphs 268-272', is a vital document that must be actively maintained and updated.
- The successful candidate must meet the person specification, and the post is subject to safeguarding checks, including an enhanced DBS check and Children's Barred List check. The post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020.

Person specification

Criteria	Essential
Education and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educated to degree level or equivalent (or have requisite experience) and able to demonstrate commitment to ongoing personal development • National Professional Qualification for Executive Leadership (NPQEL) or equivalent professional leadership qualification (MBA) • Successful experience and a proven track record in a senior leadership role within a MAT, for example as an Executive Headteacher, Regional Director, Director of Education • Evidenced experience of organisational improvement
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven experience of harnessing and building organisational growth and transformation • Experience of successfully developing teams of professionals, delegating effectively, and managing change successfully • Proven experience of strategic financial management, including budget formulation, medium-term financial planning, monitoring and control and strong business acumen • Detailed knowledge of public finances, procedures, practice, and regulations (preferably ESFA and education sector requirements). • Proven experience and success of building and managing effective partnerships and links with stakeholders and maximising networks and opportunities • Proven track record of performance managing professional staff; driving morale, raising standards, and promoting a team ethos, particularly regarding a multi-site organisation
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A deep knowledge and understanding of the wider educational agenda, including current national policies and educational issues • Knowledge and understanding of the regulations and processes required to operate a multi-academy trust • Knowledge of the strategies for raising school achievement and advancing effective teaching and learning • Knowledge of and commitment to the highest standards in all areas of school leadership and management
Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to the Nolan principles of public life • Empathy with the distinctive Christian ethos of the Trust's church schools • Commitment to safeguarding and wellbeing of children and staff.

The CEO will be required to follow school policies and the staff code of conduct.

Please note that this is illustrative of the general nature and level of responsibility of the role. It is not a comprehensive list of all tasks that the successful applicant will carry out. The post holder may be required to do other duties appropriate to the level of the role.

How to **apply**

To apply

Please visit our [Acorn Careers page](#) to complete an application form.

Please use the Supporting Statement section to explain why you are right for the job, including any experience, skills or other information that makes you suited to the CEO position at Acorn Education Trust. Please keep your statement to no more than two sides of A4.

Acorn Education Trust, c/o Kingdown School, Woodcock Road,
Warminster, BA12 9DR

01985 801055

hello@acorneducationtrust.com

Acorn Education Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. If successful in obtaining this post you will be subject to a Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service and health screening. We are an equal opportunities employer. As part of our safer recruitment processes, if you are shortlisted for the post, we will carry out a social media account search.