



Chief Operations Officer Application Pack



HALLAM
NURSERY & PRIMARY SCHOOL



HILLSBOROUGH
NURSERY & PRIMARY SCHOOL



MEYNELL
NURSERY & PRIMARY SCHOOL



SOUTHEY GREEN
NURSERY & PRIMARY SCHOOL



WISEWOOD
NURSERY & PRIMARY SCHOOL



BRADFIELD
SECONDARY SCHOOL



FORGE VALLEY
SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM



TAPTON
SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM



Chaucer
School



A WELCOME FROM

LEE BARBER, CHIEF EXECUTIVE



Welcome to INOVA Multi-Academy Trust and thank you for your interest in joining our organisation. I am the Chief Executive Officer, and I feel incredibly proud to lead such a wonderfully diverse group of schools, that have people at their heart.

At INOVA Multi-Academy Trust, our vision is clear and unapologetically ambitious: Transforming lives through the power of learning. We are a values-led Trust, committed to Innovation, Collaboration, and Excellence. These principles guide everything we do — from the way we educate and support our learners, to how we develop our staff and engage with our communities.

Each of our schools is unique, shaped by its local context, and we are proud to celebrate that diversity. But what unites us is a shared commitment to equity, high standards, and the belief that every child — regardless of background, need, or starting point — deserves a brilliant education and the opportunity to succeed.

At the heart of INOVA Multi-Academy Trust is a people-centred culture. We believe that when we invest in people, we invest in futures. That's why we have created a Trust model that is agile, responsive, and grounded in trust — one that removes unnecessary noise from schools and enables Headteachers and staff to focus on what really matters: the young people we serve.

Our central teams provide high-quality support and challenge, reducing workload and unlocking capacity at school level. From curriculum development and inclusion, to safeguarding, wellbeing, and digital transformation, we direct more resources where they matter most — into classrooms, into staff development, and into building futures full of possibility.

We also believe in doing things differently — whether that's through our Institute of Talent, our evidence-led school improvement strategy, or our collaborative leadership networks. We don't just strive for compliance — we strive for brilliance.

As CEO, I have the privilege of working alongside a deeply committed team of leaders, educators, governors, and support staff — all of whom share a common purpose: to unlock potential and create opportunity.

As a prospective staff member, or simply interested in our work, I invite you to explore our Trust and connect with our journey. Together, we are building futures worth believing in.

Thank you again for your interest in joining us and the best of luck with your application.

INOVA Multi Academy Trust

At INOVA Multi-Academy Trust, we believe wholeheartedly that our people are our greatest strength. It is our talented, dedicated and passionate colleagues—across our schools and central team—who make it possible for our pupils to flourish. When staff feel valued, supported and empowered, they create the conditions where children and young people can thrive.

We are committed to fostering a culture where colleagues feel respected, listened to and encouraged to bring their best selves to work every day. INOVA staff consistently go above and beyond, demonstrating professionalism, creativity and care in everything they do. Their commitment is the driving force behind the high aspirations we hold for every learner.

We also recognise that working in education can be fast-paced and demanding. That's why we take a solutions-focused approach, removing barriers wherever possible and ensuring our people have what they need to succeed—whether that's protected time for wellbeing, access to outstanding professional development, or simply the space to pause for a much-needed cup of tea.



OUR MISSION

To equip young people with the knowledge, skills and character to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

From nursery to destination, our pathways will embed a culture of innovation, collaboration and excellence delivered through high quality, inclusive and enjoyable educational experiences.



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Our Vision Is To Transform Lives Through The Power Of Learning

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OUR VALUES

INNOVATION

- We embrace forward thinking solutions
- We experiment, learning from our success and failures
- We champion the use of cutting-edge resources
- We are agile in our approach

COLLABORATION

- We ensure a safe and transparent culture
- We are proactively involved in our communities
- We apply resilience and adaptability
- We promote teamwork and inclusivity

EXCELLENCE

- We have high standards and expectations
- We continually evaluate, seeking improvement
- We insist on equity for all
- We foster a culture of ownership and responsibility





Working at INOVA Multi Academy Trust is a daily reminder that education changes everything. Being part of that journey — and doing it with a team that leads with heart — is what makes this place so special.

L MOORE - PRIMARY BUSINESS MANAGER



OUR OFFER

Each of our schools has its own distinctive character, reflecting the local community it serves. Children joining us have a broad range of abilities and social backgrounds. We recognise and celebrate different aptitudes and interests and believe that everyone can develop through dedication and hard work, leaving our schools fully prepared for successful lives.

PRIMARY EDUCATION

One of our primary schools is graded Ofsted 'Outstanding' and all others are graded 'Good' giving our children an excellent start to their education and preparing them fully for their secondary transition.

SECONDARY & SIXTH FORM EDUCATION

Our secondary schools work in close collaboration to further develop our curriculum and outcomes. Our sixth form provision is Ofsted graded 'Good' or 'Outstanding.'

CENTRAL SERVICES

Our support staff are highly valued, and we offer a range of central services to our schools to enable them to concentrate on outstanding teaching, high quality learning and effective support for individual needs. Services include:

- Catering
- Communications and Marketing
- Facilities and Estates
- Finance
- Governance
- HR
- IT
- School Improvement



At INOVA, we build brighter futures by nurturing not just pupils, but each other. When you're surrounded by people who truly care, every challenge becomes an opportunity to shine.



OUR BENEFITS



26 DAYS

annual leave plus bank holidays (for non term-time staff), rising to 31 days after 5 years of service



HEALTHY MINDS

24/7 confidential support for wellbeing, health, relationships, work, and legal or financial issues — including counselling, CBT, and nurse advice.



CAR SCHEME

Save on your next car with our salary-sacrifice scheme, plus **free staff parking** across all INOVA locations.



PENSION

Competitive pension schemes, including the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) and the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)



DISCOUNT

Access exclusive discount schemes for teachers and public service staff across retail, travel, and lifestyle.



CYCLE

Save on bikes and equipment through our Cycle to Work Scheme, stay active, and reduce your carbon footprint.



VACCINATIONS

Annual flu vaccinations are offered free to all staff at our school sites to help keep you healthy.



EYE-CARE

Eligible colleagues can enjoy eye-care vouchers to help with regular eye tests and maintain good vision.



HEALTH CARE

Discounted health cover through Westfield Health to support your wellbeing and provide extra care.

WE ALSO OFFER

Menopause advice and support

Support during absence

Support with short and long-term health conditions

Disability support

Neurodiversity support

Staff benefits

Mental health support

Support and advice for carers

A suite of HR policies

Reasonable adjustments

... also did I mention we're also pretty good fun. Staff socials and department gatherings are a regular feature of life at INOVA schools. We believe that fostering outside of school strengthens our community and enhances collaboration.



THE ROLE

We are seeking to appoint an exceptional Chief Operating Officer (COO) who will play a pivotal role in shaping and delivering our Trust's strategic vision. The successful candidate will be a values-driven, highly skilled professional with strong commercial and operational expertise, capable of leading and developing our services to enable educational excellence across our academies.

Working in close partnership with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Trustees and C-Suite, the COO will ensure the Trust's operations are efficient, financially robust, compliant and resilient, creating the conditions in which schools and young people can thrive.

The COO will be responsible for the strategic leadership and operational management of the Trust's non-educational functions. This typically includes:

- People/Human Resources
- Data Protection
- Estates and facilities
- IT and Digital
- Insights
- Health and safety & Risk
- Marketing & Communications
- Public Relations

The role ensures that operational excellence underpins strong educational outcomes.

Salary Range	Competitive
Hours of Work	37 hours per week
Responsible To	Chief Executive Officer Reporting to 3 Trust Board Committees: Risk, Audit & Governance People & Remuneration Finance & Resources
Responsible For	Directors
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Government pension scheme • Flexible working • Cycle to work scheme • Discounted membership for Westfield Health • Occupational Health • Wellbeing programme • Continuous CPD and training • BUPA Healthy Minds scheme



RESPONSIBILITIES

Key responsibilities:

- Provide strategic leadership of all non-teaching/operational functions across the Trust (e.g. estates, HR, IT, governance/compliance, and business services) to support the Trust's school excellence strategy.
- Work closely with the CEO and C-Suite to translate the Trust's vision and School Improvement Plans into robust operational plans, KPIs and reporting.
- Lead Trust-wide business transformation and continuous improvement, including the redesign of central and school-based professional services, operating models and processes.
- Oversee estates and facilities management, including capital projects, health and safety, asset management and long-term premises planning across all academies.
- Ensure legal, regulatory and policy compliance (e.g. safeguarding processes, health and safety, data protection/GDPR, Freedom of Information, procurement, contractual obligations).
- Lead operational risk management and business continuity planning, including development, testing and review of Trust-wide resilience arrangements.
- Develop and oversee the People strategy for both school and central teams, working closely with the People Director to support recruitment, retention, talent management and staff wellbeing.
- Manage and develop senior operational leaders and build a high-performing, collaborative central services team.
- Contribute to financial sustainability through efficient resource planning, value-for-money procurement, and monitoring of operational budgets in partnership with the CFO.
- Provide high-quality reports, insight and recommendations to the Trust Board and its committees to support effective governance.
- Champion a positive, inclusive culture aligned with the Trust's values and the needs of local communities.



THE PERSON

<p>SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong strategic and analytical skills, with the ability to translate strategy into operational plans, KPIs and deliverable projects. • Excellent understanding of key operational areas relevant to a MAT: estates and capital, HR and people, IT/digital infrastructure, health and safety, and governance/compliance. • Strong financial acumen and commercial awareness, including understanding of budgets, value-for-money, contracts and procurement. • Highly developed leadership, communication and influencing skills, with the ability to build effective relationships with headteachers, governors, trustees and external partners. • Strong project and programme management skills, able to prioritise and deliver multiple initiatives across different sites. • High level of digital literacy, including familiarity with MIS, finance/HR systems and broader digital transformation.
<p>QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantial senior leadership experience in operations in a complex, multi-site organisation (ideally a MAT, public sector, or similarly regulated environment). • Proven track record of leading organisational change and transformation programmes, including technology-enabled and service redesign projects. • Direct responsibility for several professional service functions (e.g. HR, estates, IT/digital, governance/compliance, administration). • Experience of risk management, business continuity and ensuring compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements (including health and safety and data protection). • Experience of reporting to, and working with, Boards or Trust Boards and their committees. • Evidence of building and leading high-performing teams and developing senior staff.

the person cntd.



THE PERSON

<p>PERSONAL QUALITIES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committed to the Trust's educational mission and improving outcomes for young people in our communities. • Values-driven, with high standards of integrity, fairness and confidentiality. Resilient, calm under pressure and able to make balanced decisions in complex situations. • Collaborative, visible and approachable leader who models teamwork and respect. • Results-focused, with a continuous improvement mindset and willingness to challenge the status quo constructively.
<p>WORK RELATED CIRCUMSTANCES (INCLUDING WORKING CONDITIONS)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role is primarily based at the Trust office and will involve travel across school sites. The post-holder must be able to travel independently between locations in an efficient and reliable manner. Where driving is the chosen method, a valid driving licence and access to suitable transport will be required.



HOW TO APPLY

Applications for this role must be made via our Employment Application Form.

The closing date for applications is Sunday 15 March 2026 at 23:59 hrs and interviews will be held on Thursday 26 March 2026.

If you have any queries please contact Katie Mellors via execadmin@inovamat.org.

SAFEGUARDING

INOVA Multi-Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We will ensure that all of our recruitment and selection practices reflect this commitment. All candidates will be subject to the following employment checks:

SHORTLISTED CANDIDATES:

- References will be requested before interview
- A Criminal Convictions Disclosure Form will be requested at interview
- Evidence of right to work in the UK will be requested at interview
- Qualification certificates will be requested at interview
- Disclosures concerning child protection investigations, relationships with pupils, employees, governors or trustees, prohibition orders and section 128 directions (where applicable) will be requested at interview
- We may conduct online searches for shortlisted candidates prior to making our final decision. If any information obtained from the online searches raises concerns around someone's suitability for the role, or to working with children, then this may be raised with the candidate at interview and/or we may take advice from the local authority children's service.

SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES:

- Successful candidates will be required to undertake a DBS Enhanced Disclosure (with barred list) check
- Successful candidates will be required to complete a Childcare Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 Declaration (for applicable posts)
- Pre-employment medical screening.

Please Note: Canvassing of any employee, Trustee or member of the Local Governing Board, directly or indirectly, and your application will be disqualified.



HOW TO APPLY

POLICIES

Our approach to safeguarding and school safeguarding policies can be found on the Trust website: [Safeguarding | INOVA Multi-Academy Trust](#)

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

We are committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and ensuring that all stages of recruitment and selection are fair and that applicants are not discriminated against on the grounds of race, nationality, gender religion, age, disability, marital status or sexual orientation.

DATA PROTECTION

As part of the recruitment process, we need to collect your personal data. For more information about what we do with your personal data, please see our Recruitment Privacy Notice on the [policies](#) page of our website.

