

# RSA

Central RSA  
Academies Trust



# CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

**L17 – L21**

**(£59,265 - £65,384)**



Registered Office:  
Assay Studios, B.06  
141-143 Newhall Street  
Birmingham, B3 1SF

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Company Number: 08166526  
Limited by Guarantee

# WELCOME MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL (CEO)

**Dear Candidate,**

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chief Operating Officer at the Central RSA Academies Trust. I am delighted that you are interested in working with us, and within an organisation that is closely aligned to the Royal Society of Arts (The RSA).

Our Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) has, at present, six schools and is still growing. We currently educate over three thousand pupils from Nursery school through to Sixth Form. You will see in our Trust Strategic Plan that we have the ambitious aims of achieving the very best for the young people in our schools, and the very best professional opportunities and environments for our excellent team of over five hundred professionals across the Trust.

## The opportunity:

We are looking to recruit a creative strategist who can rapidly develop a deep understanding of the support service requirements of our Trust. You will join a strong, forward-looking and supportive leadership team and will work with the Executive Principal (CEO) and Trustees of the Central RSA Academies Trust to secure its continuing success and support further development and growth of the Trust.

You will provide strategic leadership of all non-academic related services other than finance, ensuring their operational excellence and advising the Executive Principal (CEO), Principals, Trustees, Governors and appropriate senior leaders on all related matters.

## As a potential candidate you:

- will have a demonstrable track record of success in the effective leadership and delivery of business support services and managing transformational change;
- will have strong interpersonal skills with the ability to motivate, influence and negotiate effectively;
- will be strategically influential with the ability to translate vision into success;
- may come from private, public, voluntary or education sector backgrounds.

This is a fantastic opportunity to be involved in future developments in line with the Trust's Strategic Plan.

We are looking for an experienced professional with strong leadership and management skills, ambition and drive who shares our organisation's values. As a Trust we are strongly connected to the Royal Society of Arts, and we are looking for people who can authentically share our vision for social justice through exceptional schools.

We are looking for the successful candidate to start in October, however a later start date could be negotiated for the right candidate.

**Application Deadline:** 09.00am 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019

Please complete the online application form. In addition, we ask that you provide a written statement of no more than two sides of A4 detailing:

- how you feel your experience and qualities meet the person specification
- two examples of experience that demonstrate positive impact in your current or previous role(s)
- why you want to work in our Trust, and the challenges and opportunities we face

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*In our powerful communities, everything is possible, and aspirations are high. Outcomes are highly impressive.*

### Our Objectives:

- Outstanding professionals
- Innovative systems enabling creative schools
- Strong communities and partnerships  
...which enables...  
ambitious learners

### Our Values:

- Creativity
- Integrity
- Community
- Excellence

If you would like further information or would like to have an informal conversation about the role with the Executive Principal (CEO) please contact Jane Dominese, Head of Corporate Services, on telephone number: 0121 270 3117 or by email on: [hr@centralrsaacademies.co.uk](mailto:hr@centralrsaacademies.co.uk).

I look forward to receiving your application.



**Guy Shears**  
**Executive Principal (CEO)**  
**Central RSA Academies Trust**

# **WE BELIEVE IN BEST!**

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# INTERESTED IN BECOMING THE COO OF AN ORGANISATION WITH A POWERFUL VISION AND STRONG VALUES?

We are a group of schools with a strong and powerful relationship with The Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (The RSA).



The RSA has a [strong history](#) of supporting educational innovation, thinking and approaches, going back as far as the Nineteenth Century.

Today we work together as a group of schools, working closely with the RSA, to ensure the best possible educational outcomes for young people in our schools.

We aim to ensure excellent test and examination results for our students, and ensure they are fully prepared for a happy and fulfilling life.

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# OUR VISION

## Social justice through exceptional schools

### In detail:

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# OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

## Power to Create ...

- SO1 Outstanding professionals:** Winning teams of governors, leaders, staff and other stakeholders who are forward thinking, highly skilled, open, hard-working and determined to enable the success of others;
- SO2 Innovative systems enabling creative schools:** Innovative and sustainable schools that are creative, vibrant, safe, compliant, financially healthy, well resourced, and exceptionally well governed and led.
- SO3 Strong partnerships & communities:** Working closely with our local communities and parents to secure the best outcomes and opportunities. The RSA, and a wide network of links across all phases and across local authority boundaries, are powerful in supporting the development of all.

## ... which enable ...

- SO4 Exceptional learners:** Learners who are highly successful with the attributes, skills and qualifications for a fulfilling life. They have a high-quality school experience and enjoy an abundance of opportunities.

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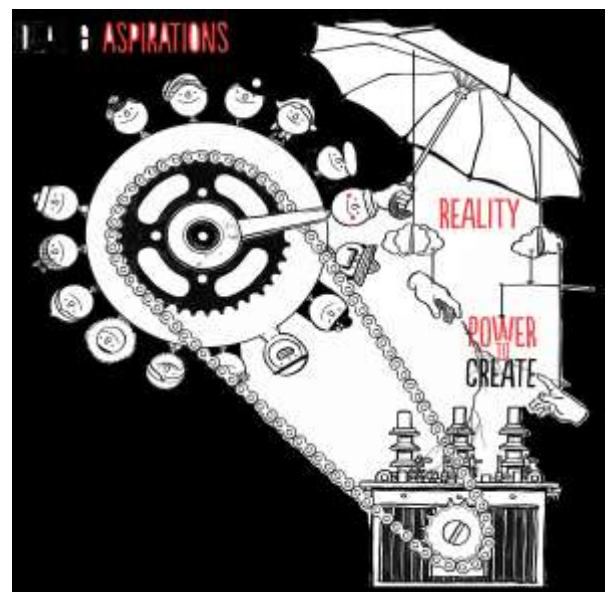
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# JOB DESCRIPTION and PERSON SPECIFICATION



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# JOB PURPOSE

## Background:

Our schools are located in Worcestershire and the Black Country, with our Head Office in the centre of Birmingham, in the Jewellery Quarter. The Trust is a mix of nursery, primary, first, middle, high and secondary schools. You will be based at our Head office and travel to schools as required.

## Key Relationships:

1. **Internal:** Trust Executive Principal (CEO), Trust Board, School Principals, Local Academy Governing Boards, Central Team, Leaders, Staff, Pupils.
2. **External:** The Royal Society of Arts, The Royal Society of Arts Academies, Key DfE and LA partners, The Diocese of Worcester, other partners as required, including other Multi-Academy Trusts.

## Reporting to:

The Executive Principal (CEO).

## Responsible for:

1. Representing the Trust as appropriate.
2. Overall responsibility for the Trust Support Team, Leadership and Management of all managerial and administrative staff (other than Finance), Human Resources, IT, Data, Marketing and PR, Projects and Conversions, Health and Safety, Risk Management, Estates & Facilities and Governance.

## Role Purpose:

1. The Chief Operating Officer (COO) is integral to the delivery of the Trust's strategic aims and will play a key role as a member of the Central Executive Team, providing dynamic leadership, strong management and clear direction across all non-academic services for the Trust, other than Finance, driving continuous improvement and developing and supporting the ongoing development of an optimistic culture.
2. The COO will work closely with the Executive Principal (CEO), the Chief Finance Officer (CFO), with the Principal of each school and Governors as appropriate, to provide strategic leadership across the Trust embedding our values and objectives throughout. This role will support the CFO in ensuring the financial health of the Trust, play a leading role in the delivery of our Trust Strategic Plan and develop high quality operational teams which are fit for our model of growth.
3. Carrying out such other duties as are required and as are commensurate with the grade for the post and as requested by the Executive Principal (CEO).

## Priorities:

1. The prime directive for the COO is to facilitate the best possible educational provision and outcomes by successfully removing any non-academic barriers to achieving academic goals, thus maximising the capacity of Principals and their staff by ensuring they are fully supported in their work by the central team and support staff across the Trust. This work will include guaranteeing compliance with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements.
2. Represent the central team at Executive Leadership level to the Board of Trustees and external bodies where appropriate.
3. Represent the central team in planning and development within the Trust and ensure clear and effective two-way communication between academy staff and the central team.

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## KEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### People:

1. The role will be critical in realising the growth potential of the Trust by developing and leading where appropriate on an effective HR and Organisational Development strategy (our Let's Talk People Strategy) aligned to the current and future needs of the Trust, and by ensuring that activities and resources are coordinated and managed in an effective, efficient and productive way, to support the delivery of high quality education to current and future students by overseeing the implementation of staff training.
2. Take a strategic lead in the wellbeing and engagement of our people across the Trust.
3. Ensure systems are in place that provide accurate and secure intelligence on our people assets across the Trust. This intelligence should feed into our overall people strategy.
4. Be ultimately responsible for the safety of all people who engage with our premises and estates, ensuring a good level of Health and Safety is maintained.
5. Develop high quality teams of professionals that support our vision of social justice through exceptional schools.
6. Strive for operational excellence on the part of every member of the central team and in all our academies, ensuring that:
  - the Trust support services function is well managed on a day-to-day basis;
  - systems and processes are rigorous, robust and fit for purpose;
  - staff work as one team towards a common purpose, are effectively and efficiently deployed, and perform to the highest standards;
  - clarity on what is centralised and delegated, through the scheme of delegation, will be central to achieving this;
7. Model professional behaviour, promoting high expectations as a lead professional.
8. Lead on the development and operation of Human Resource Policies and Procedures and ensure compliance with all relevant employment law.
9. Devise and implement the strategy for the Trust's support services, including staff structures, administrative functions, processes, procedures and performance measures.
10. Keep administrative processes and support staff structures and requirements under review, and to make recommendations for improving their effectiveness and efficiency, by analysing current and future needs and making recommendations to executive and governance leadership for changes in support staff structures and functions.

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11. Ensure all members of support staff have challenging appraisal objectives and personal development plans in place, which promote high expectations, and which are aligned with the Trust's vision, values and strategic objectives housed within the Trust strategic plan.
12. Keep abreast of professional developments and legislative changes, locally, nationally and internationally, and spread relevant information to all schools within the Trust.
13. Recommend to the Executive Principal (CEO) and Board the appointment/reappointment of appropriate professional advisers and contractors and be responsible for contract management, ensuring the Trust complies with best practice in all aspects of project planning, consultation, procurement, commissioning and delivery.
14. Ensure exemplary customer service and student satisfaction throughout Trust activities.
15. Deliver effective change management.
16. To line manage the senior support staff leads and provide operational lead on the Trust Development and Investment Plan.

### Risk and Governance:

1. Establish clear accountability for Health & Safety management across the Trust; reporting risks and mitigations to the Executive Principal (CEO) and Trust Board.
2. Take a lead role in external communications, including Public Relations and should any relevant incidents occur seek appropriate external advice.
3. Ensure that the Trust processes and procedures are compliant with statutory and regulatory requirements.
4. Line manage the Head of Corporate Services in leading Governance across the Trust maximizing on the value it adds to our strategic objectives.
5. Lead on risk management and mitigation, strengthening control, ensuring that the Executive Principal (CEO), Principals, Trustees and Governors are apprised of risks and issues and that these are being mitigated and managed appropriately.
6. Ensure the development and maintenance of all CRSAAT policies and procedures within the post holder's areas of responsibility, ensuring not only compliance with all relevant, statutory, requirements but that they are entirely fit for purpose, communicated to all relevant stakeholders and that training and development are provided to warrant understanding.

### Growth:

1. The COO will support the Executive Principal (CEO) in delivering on the CRSAAT's Growth Strategy, leading any future bids and due diligence processes ensuring the Executive Principal and Trust Board are fully aware of opportunities and threats that the conversion may present, and ensuring effective management of the Trust's Estates portfolio.
2. Identify and develop strategies and options in all non-teaching aspects that will contribute to the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the Trust, such as exploring internal synergies, and opportunities for partnership working.
3. The post holder will be responsible for the provision and strategic analysis of timely, accurate and valid performance information to the Executive Principal (CEO), Central Executive Team, Academy Principals, the Trust Board, Local Academy Boards and, where necessary, external parties.
4. Partner with our legal advisers on the conversion process ensuring compliance in all areas.

### Financial Health:

1. Be accountable for the overall support services staffing and non-staffing budgets and ensure that their requirements are integrated into the Trust's annual planning processes.
2. Drive efficiencies across support services and elsewhere in the Trust. Ensure income generation opportunities are maximised and staff are appropriately supported in securing relevant grant funding.
3. Leading on the CRSAAT's development and investment plan, the COO will ensure that our business model is scalable and effectively supports the growth of the Trust, leveraging economies of scale to enable even greater investment in children's education.

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4. Support the CFO on the development of healthy Academy budgets.
5. Lead on the development of systems and reports that provide the Executive Team and the Trust Board with relevant, clear and accurate financial data to inform key decision making.
6. Support the CFO in the development a three/five-year financial plan, which considers relevant statutory guidelines, and other sources of information about budget trends and local pupil demographics. These plans should be continually reviewed to reflect real time information.
7. Support the Executive Principal (CEO) and CFO to ensure compliance with the financial delegation thresholds by school finance banding.
8. Optimize the benefit to the Trust/Academies of funding from grants and other sources relevant to operations, ensure that funding is appropriately used and compliant with DfE statutory guidelines.
9. Where relevant, work with the CFO on commercial contracts and procurement processes for the Trust and ensure economies of scale are maximised.
10. Support the Executive Principal (CEO) and CFO to ensure the Trust complies with the Academies' Financial Handbook.

### Reporting:

1. To report to the Trust Board as required, and to the Executive Principal (CEO) through EIT on academy level performance, highlighting any concerns, what has already been done, and making recommendations for solutions where improvement is not rapid enough.
2. To protect Trust Board meeting times and be available at short notice to attend some or part of meetings as required.
3. Maintain responsibility for liaising with internal and external audit arrangements.
4. Ensuring compliance with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements, Company Memorandum and Articles, and the funding agreement with the DfE.

### Strategy:

1. Identify short, medium and long-term strategic objectives and priorities for support staff teams, in line with the Trust's Strategic Plan, and make appropriate contributions to the latter.
2. Lead the development, delivery and monitoring of the annual Development and Investment Plan to achieve objectives in each operational area.
3. Lead planning activities and monitor progress on key projects to ensure our support staff teams are enabled to support the Trust's key aims and objectives.
4. Ensure highly effective project management of any change or innovation.
5. Communicate and consult effectively as required with schools' leaders and other stakeholders to ensure change management leads to highly positive outcomes
6. Support the devising of our HR strategy which is aligned to and supports the current and future needs of the Trust, leading elements as appropriate, including supporting the implementation of the Trust's Let's Talk People Strategy, which ensures all staff can access engagement and career development activities.
7. Supporting the growth and long-term sustainability of the Trust and ensuring we attract, develop and retain the very best people through innovative and well-thought-out recruitment campaigns, clear pathways for development and career progression and support and encouragement for future leaders.
8. Work with the Executive Principal (CEO) and Principals to identify and agree resources to support academy requirements.
9. Where practicable and appropriate ensure structures and processes are streamlined and designed to minimise time input from Principals and other members of the SLT.
10. Ensuring business continuity plans are established and regularly reviewed by the Academies and the Central Team.

### Marketing and PR:

1. Ensure our social media and web presence supports our brand identity and profile development.

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2. Support the Trust to deliver effective recruitment campaigns in support of our student growth and revenue objectives.
3. Develop and maintain strong networks between the academies and support staff teams to ensure that all professional support services contribute to academy planning and support the Trust's current, future and emerging needs.

### **Safeguarding:**

1. To promote and safeguard the welfare of the children and young people that they are responsible for or come into contact with.
2. Must comply with all policies and procedures, specifically those relating to safeguarding, child protection, health, safety and security, equal opportunities, confidentiality and data protection.
3. Work within broad practice and managerial direction making decisions that positively impact upon raising student attainment in the Academies across the Trust.

**Whilst every effort has been made to explain the main duties and responsibilities of the post, each individual task undertaken may not be identified. Employees will be expected to comply with any reasonable request from those in a position of responsibility to undertake work of a similar level that is not specified in this job description.**



# PERSON SPECIFICATION

The Central RSA Academies Trust is looking for an experienced leader who can make a strong contribution to the wider strategic objectives of the Trust. The role holder **must** have the following competencies:

## Commercial

- Strong commercial awareness and is able to demonstrate a high degree of competence in management and strategic planning.
- Substantial experience of management and administration in a complex organisation.

## Educational

- Has experience of working in a multi-academy trust, within the sphere of operational management

## Communication

- Strong communication and interpersonal skills.
- Conveys and receives information effectively.
- Builds positive working relationships.
- Excellent and accurate standard of written and verbal communication.
- Is able to effectively transfer key and complex information to all levels of staff, adapting the style of communication as necessary and ensuring that this information is understood.
- Experience of managing complex stakeholder relationships.

## Managing Change

- The ability to critically appraise existing strategy, systems and processes and to identify and lead organisational changes to increase business effectiveness.
- Generation of new ideas and suggestions for change.
- Ability to manage change and respond and adapt to changing circumstances.
- Remains resilient, able to prioritise, when faced with adverse situations and conflicting demands.

## Personal Qualities

- Ability to develop a customer service culture to meet internal and external customer/client needs.
- Builds rapport and sustainable relationships with customers, seeking pro-actively to understand their needs and satisfaction levels.
- Looks to continuously review and improve performance standards of self and team.
- Is able to organise own time and others' time effectively, responds to changing priorities, and meet deadlines as required.
- Works co-operatively and flexibly with colleagues.
- Is able to effectively delegate, monitor performance and motivate the team.
- Seeks ideas and gives credit and acknowledges contributions and efforts of individuals to team effectiveness.
- A passion for high quality education for all.
- Promotes a trusting and empathetic, equitable and fair environment.

## Leadership

- A track record of leadership and risk management of a complex organisation.
- Is able to motivate and inspire individuals to give their best to achieve a desired result.
- Maintain effective relationships with individuals and the team as a whole, to ensure that the team is equipped to achieve objectives set according to the overall business need.

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- Leads the development and performance of staff through coaching, mentoring and peer support.
- Provides effective leadership, planning and values to the team, passing own skills and knowledge where possible.
- The ability to translate strategy and vision into day to day meaning.

## Special Conditions

The role requires flexibility to complete duties, and you may, from time to time, be required to work alternative or additional days (including evenings, weekends and bank holidays) to meet the requirements of the role.

	Essential	Desirable
<b>Qualifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good A levels or equivalent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degree level qualification</li> </ul>
<b>Skills and abilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of continued commitment to personal professional development</li> <li>• Sound financial abilities, including management of budgets, assessment of financial risk and forward planning</li> <li>• Ability to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and be an effective ambassador of the Trust</li> <li>• Ability to build a collaborative organisational culture, encourage reflection, delegate responsibility, build teams, strive for continuous improvement and inspire staff to achieve their full potential within a highly collaborative working environment</li> <li>• Identify opportunities for new build schools and create an effective template for preparing bids</li> <li>• Ensure CRSAAT uses appropriate funding mechanisms to enable value for money on capital projects</li> <li>• Oversee all significant capital building projects and liaise with Principals, Governors, consultants, contractors and other interested parties as necessary</li> <li>• Investigate, source and maximise income (revenue and capital), liaising with funding agencies and Government, amongst others, and write bids</li> <li>• Ensure that any funds received from successful bids are spent appropriately, within budget and timescales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HR, Finance or Project Management Qualification</li> <li>• Ability to develop a compelling vision for the organisation, underpinned by a strong moral purpose and aligned to the values of the Trust</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge and Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Track record of successful leadership and strategy development within a comparable organisation</li> <li>• Awareness and understanding of key issues in relation to Finance, ICT, Human Resources, Estates, Procurement and contracting, health and safety and safeguarding</li> <li>• Experience of efficient and effective budget, financial, risk and resource management</li> <li>• Experience of developing funding bids and identifying sources of funding</li> <li>• Experience of business planning and development of financial strategies</li> <li>• Understanding of future challenges for Multi-Academy Trusts</li> <li>• Experience of leading innovation and change - a successful innovator of improvement that has demonstrable positive impact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of working effectively with a Board/LAGB in an equivalent setting</li> <li>• HR experience, in particular safer recruitment</li> <li>• Experience and knowledge of the safeguarding agenda and its application in the educational setting</li> <li>• Understanding of Academy funding and organisational models</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A successful track record of business management in any or all of the educational, public, private or voluntary sectors</li> <li>• Consultation, planning and implementation skills, developing appropriate strategies and achieving successful results</li> <li>• Successful experience of securing efficiency savings and/or income generation</li> <li>• Recent experience of leading a multi-professional team</li> <li>• Experience of working at a senior level in a large and complex organization</li> <li>• Ability to work well with Academy Principals and the Board of Directors (Trustees)</li> <li>• Experience of working with other agencies and partners to develop new approaches and accelerate improvement</li> <li>• High level communication (both written and oral) and IT skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge and understanding of marketing and branding strategies</li> <li>• Lean processing initiatives or equivalent</li> <li>• Experience of creating a healthy and sustainable business model</li> <li>• Experience of working in an Academy setting, with knowledge and understanding of multi academy structures</li> <li>• Negotiation and advocacy</li> </ul>
<b>Attributes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model and always demonstrate the Trust's core values to students and staff</li> <li>• Devolve responsibilities, delegate tasks and monitor and evaluate practices to see that they are being carried out and are effective</li> <li>• Deal sensitively with people and resolve conflicts</li> <li>• Exercise accountability effectively, efficiently and fairly</li> <li>• Prioritise and manage his/her own time effectively</li> <li>• Work under pressure and to deadlines</li> <li>• Achieve challenging professional goals</li> <li>• Take responsibility for one's own professional development</li> <li>• Have up to date knowledge of essential aspects of leadership and education</li> <li>• Commitment to co-operative values and working with and for children and young people</li> <li>• Demonstrate effective decision-making skills, including the ability to make quick decisions when under pressure and be willing to accept responsibility for decisions</li> <li>• Excellent time management and ability to work under pressure to tight deadlines</li> </ul>	
<b>Character</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal probity and integrity</li> <li>• Resilience, adaptability and resourcefulness</li> <li>• Suitable to work with children/young people</li> </ul>	
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the development and maintenance of appropriate administration systems to support the objectives and aims of the Trust</li> <li>• Maintain a disaster recovery strategy for the Trust, with detailed operational plans</li> <li>• Maintain systems in order to provide statistical and information returns for outside agencies</li> <li>• Maintain and ensure regular review of the Trust's data protection, personnel, safeguarding, fire safety and health and safety policies, and ensure that all required procedures, including Equalities Act requirements are in place</li> </ul>	

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*exceptional learners*

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- Creativity
- Integrity
- Community
- Excellence

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- Provide leadership, motivation, support and performance management for all direct reports
  - Ensure that direct reports are appropriately trained and developed and performance managed
  - Ensure the high standards of professional behaviour and performance are achieved, using systems of external accreditation and evaluation wherever possible
  - Contribute actively to the development of quality improvement programmes across the Trust
  - Undertake such other duties as reasonably correspond to the general character of the post and commensurate with being a member of the Trust ELT
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**Safeguarding:**

The Central RSA Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people/vulnerable adults and expects our staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Successful applicants will be required to provide references, undertake an enhanced check through the Disclosure and Barring Service, and comply with the Safeguarding Policy and child protection practices of the Trust.

**Equalities:**

The CRSAAT has a strong commitment to achieving equality of opportunity in its academies and in the employment of people. The post will ensure that the Trust meets its statutory obligations in relation to all aspects of equalities legislation.

On appointment the post-holder should sign below to indicate acceptance of, and agreement with, this job description

Signed: ..... Date: ..... Print Name: .....

**Our Vision:**

*Working together as part of the RSA Family of Academies, our exceptional schools create learning that is inspirational for all: igniting imagination and enabling creativity and curiosity which result in the highest achievement. People are valued and happy, developing the skills and networks for success and fulfilment.*

*In our powerful communities, everything is possible, and aspirations are high. Outcomes are highly impressive.*

**Our Objectives:**

- Outstanding professionals
- Innovative systems enabling creative schools
- Strong communities and partnerships  
...which enables...  
exceptional learners

**Our Values:**

- Creativity
- Integrity
- Community
- Excellence