

Cheshire Academies Trust

Be part of our Tribe



Trust Business Manager

Recruitment Pack

December 2025



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 pleased to welcome your interest in the role of Trust Business Manager.

Cheshire Academies Trust comprises eleven, soon to be fourteen, primary and special academies led by experienced leaders, all committed to pushing the boundaries of excellence. Our vision is to inspire our staff so that our pupils can contribute to a better world. We place a strong focus on disadvantaged and SEND pupils; it is through their outcomes that we measure our impact and effectiveness.

Our Trust is supported by a dedicated team of educational, strategic and operational leaders who work together to create a nurturing, ambitious environment for staff and pupils.

You will join our central team as one of three Trust Business Managers. This is a senior role in our organisation, working closely with central and executive team colleagues to strengthen the Trust's operational excellence and ensure our schools are equipped to deliver the best outcomes for pupils. You will oversee the delivery of key resource and operations functions (financial management, estates, H&S management, procurement and HR compliance) so that our academies can build capacity, operate efficiently and sustain high-quality provision.

We are seeking a team player who embodies our culture and can build strong professional relationships across diverse teams. You will have a proven record in high-quality business operations, excellent communication skills, and the ability to guide schools through complex organisational and financial challenges. Strategic thinking, sound commercial judgement and a strong grasp of systems, risk management and operational innovation are essential.

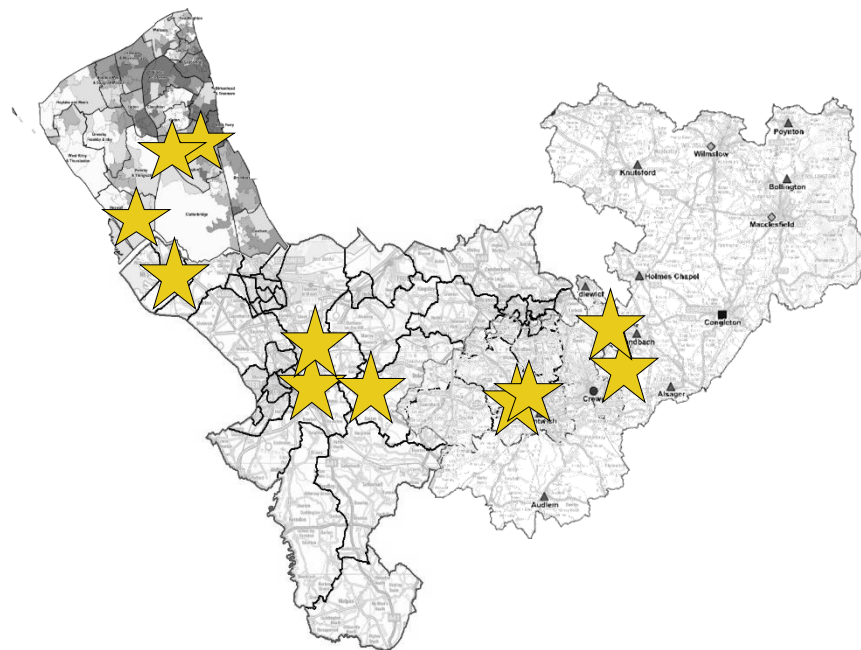
Thank you for considering a career with Cheshire Academies Trust. If you would like to discuss the role or arrange an informal conversation, please contact our CFOO, Luci Jones, at lucijones@cheshireacademiestrust.co.uk

Warm regards,

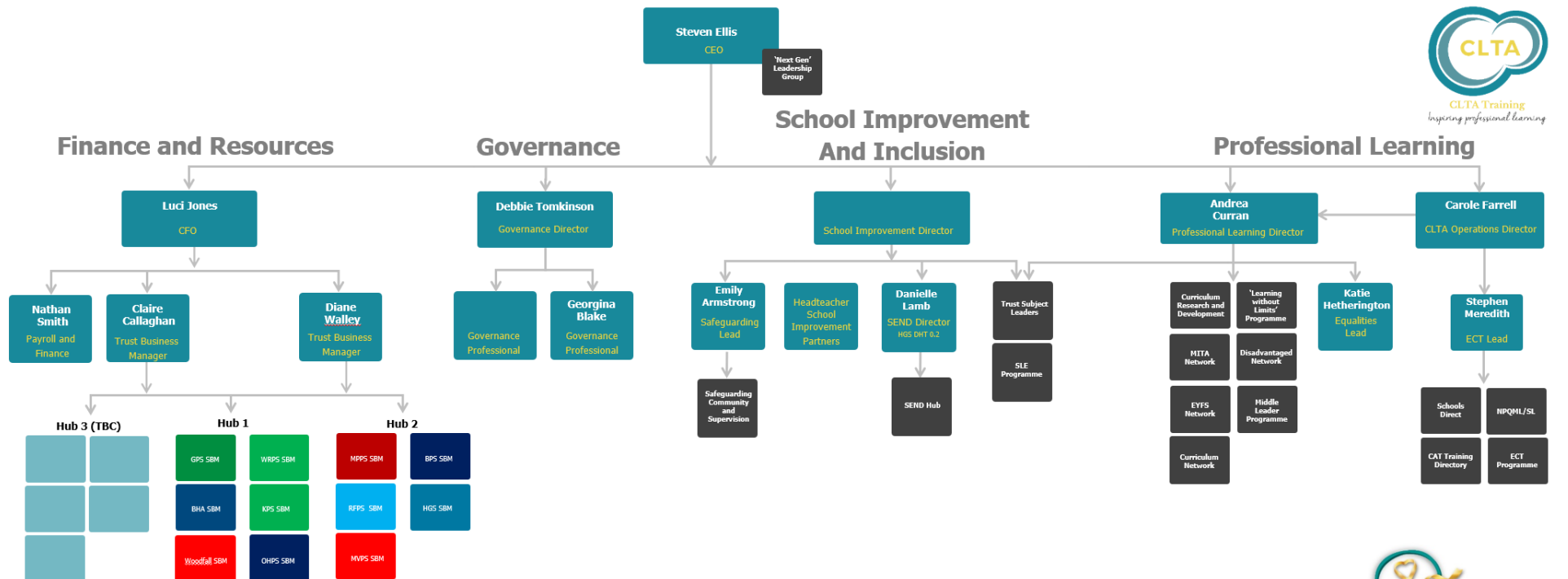
Steve Ellis
CEO



Our Schools and Teaching School (CLTA):



Central Team Structure:





Trust Business Manager Vacancy

Joining Cheshire Academies Trust (CAT) as a Trust Business Manager is a chance to play a central role in improving outcomes for children by strengthening the leadership and operational effectiveness of our academies.

Reporting to the Chief Finance & Operations Officer (CFOO), you will be a key member of the central team, working closely with School Business Managers, Headteachers and Governors across 5–7 schools. You will help ensure that every academy has the resources, systems and support it needs to deliver high-quality, inclusive education.

This is a hybrid role. It offers a high degree of flexibility, with mostly home-working (or office-based if preferred) and regular, planned visits to school sites in Cheshire, Wirral and Liverpool to build strong, consistent relationships.

You will act as the Trust's lead contact for resource management, supporting schools to meet the CAT financial framework and Resource and Operations Strategy. Working alongside the CFOO, you will:

- Mentor and coach School Business Managers, supporting their wellbeing and professional growth.
- Guide financial and operational practice, including budget planning, monitoring and value-for-money decision making;
- Lead weekly SBM network meetings, strengthening collaboration and consistency across the Trust.
- Design and deliver training for school and Trust colleagues;
- Support recruitment to key business and support roles;
- Provide technical financial expertise and contribute to Trust-wide policies, processes and reporting;
- Strengthen compliance, including with the Academy Trust Handbook 2025 and Trust policies;
- Champion the effective use of Trust systems, including Civica, Xero for Education, Planergy and IMP.

As CAT begins its next phase of growth, this is an opportunity to shape how resource management and operations work at Trust level. We are seeking a motivated, forward-thinking professional with integrity, excellent communication skills and the ability to build strong, trusting relationships. You will be confident in:

- Managing multiple priorities in a busy, changing environment;
- Analysing and presenting data to support decision making;
- Working autonomously while contributing to a wider central team.

You will bring proven financial management experience, ideally in a multi-site or complex organisation (education, public sector or not-for-profit experience is particularly welcome). You will be proficient in Microsoft 365 applications and familiar with MIS and business systems (or keen and able to learn quickly). We will also consider candidates with an equivalent blend of qualifications and substantial relevant experience in school business leadership or finance, HR or operations in a similar role.

This is a 37 hours per week, 52 weeks per year role. We actively support flexible working and will welcome applications from suitably qualified candidates who wish to job share or work on a term time only basis.

Please state clearly in your application if you are seeking a flexible or alternative working pattern. Our usual central team hours are 9:00–17:00, Monday to Friday, but you will be expected to work flexibly to meet the needs of the Trust. For example, the majority of our Governing Body meetings take place in the evening, so you would adjust your hours in order to attend.

We offer:

- Permanent contract (after 6-month probation)
- Annual pay increases on a national scale
- 26 days' annual leave + bank holidays (rising to 31 days after 5 years)
- Funded, personalised training plan
- Local Government Pension Scheme membership
- Annual flu jab
- Salary sacrifice schemes (Cycle to Work, White Goods)

We are proud of our collaborative, values-led culture and you will join a central team that works closely with schools, is approachable and supportive, and is committed to staff wellbeing as well as pupil outcomes.

Application Process:

Please submit your application via the View My New Term website. The closing date is Friday 9th January at 9am. We aim to interview week beginning 19 January for an early as possible start in 2026.

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.

Job Description



Cheshire Academies Trust
Inspiring hearts and minds

Strategic and Trust-Level Responsibilities

- Act as an ambassador for Cheshire Academies Trust, modelling the Trust's values and professional standards;
- Serve as the primary resource management contact for nominated academies, providing expert guidance and maintaining strong relationships;
- Support academies to meet all requirements within the CAT financial framework, ensuring high standards of financial stewardship across the Trust;
- Attend stakeholder meetings as a representative of the Trust, providing assurance, insight and updates on financial and operational matters;
- Support the CFOO in evidencing Trust-wide compliance with the Academy Trust Handbook, internal controls, policy frameworks and statutory responsibilities.

Leadership, Coaching and Workforce Development

- Act as a mentor and coach to School Business Managers, supporting their wellbeing, confidence and capacity, ensuring their professional development aligns with the delivery of the Resource and Operations Strategy;
- Work with Headteachers to support the appraisal and performance management of SBMs.
- Lead and facilitate weekly SBM network meetings, ensuring effective communication, consistent practice and shared professional learning;
- Co-lead academy away days with the CFOO, contributing to leadership development, strategic planning and Trust-wide alignment;
- Deliver training to SBMs, administrative teams and other key personnel in nominated academies, based on identified need.

Operational and Business Management Support

- Provide advice and guidance to academy business managers on HR, estates and H&S management, trading operations, capital projects, procurement, risk management and income generation; ensuring value for money and compliance with Trust procedures;
- Supervise the completion and accuracy of the academy office overview for nominated academies, providing rapid support and intervention where work is not timely, accurate or compliant;
- Support Headteachers with SBM recruitment, contributing to selection processes, role clarity and onboarding.

Financial and Systems Expertise

- Provide technical and administrative accounting support to academies and the central Trust, including budget setting, monitoring, financial reporting and system queries;
- Work with the CFOO to deliver CAT's resource management training programme for new academies or newly appointed staff;
- Contribute actively to the development and refinement of Trust systems, including processes, digital tools and reporting frameworks, ensuring consistency and efficiency across all academies.

Collaboration and Professional Conduct

- Maintain close, effective working relationships with colleagues in the central team, modelling a collaborative approach to problem solving;
- Engage with ongoing CPD, sector developments and changes in regulation, proactively maintaining professional expertise;
- Deliver a positive and supportive experience for CAT academies and their staff, ensuring those joining the Trust feel valued, guided and well supported.

Post:
Trust School
Business Manager

Salary:
NJC Pay Scale
SCP 33-38
£44,075 -
£49,282

Location:
Hybrid (work
from
Home/Wirral/
Cheshire/Liverpo
ol)

Reports to:
CFOO

Person Specification

			Assessed by:	
No.	Categories	Essential or Desirable	App Form	Interview or Task
1.	Degree/Level 6 educated with relevant blend of professional qualification (AAT, CIPFA, CIMA, CIPD, ILM, CMI etc);	E	✓	
2.	Experience in similar role in education sector or equivalent;	E	✓	
3.	Evidence of continuous professional development;	D	✓	
4.	Ability to work in the UK;	E	✓	
5.	Is motivated by a desire to see our colleagues, academies and the central Trust succeed;	E	✓	✓
6.	Engages and cooperates fully with the wider central Trust team	E	✓	✓
7.	Has excellent interpersonal and communication skills including the ability to deal with people on all levels with sensitivity, tact and diplomacy;	E	✓	✓
8.	Ability to manage multiple stakeholders;	E	✓	✓
9.	Has a proactive approach with the ability to work on your own initiative (operate with autonomy and authority);	D	✓	✓
10.	Able to thrive in a busy environment with deadlines that includes concurrent projects and priorities;	E	✓	✓
11.	High levels of numerical literacy and the ability to understand, manipulate and interrogate data to understand patterns, trends and insight;	D	✓	✓
12.	Experienced in and adept at using Microsoft applications, especially Excel, Teams, Word;	D	✓	✓
13.	Experienced in and adept at using Trust MIS systems including Civica HR, XfE, IMP;	D	✓	✓
14.	Has a successful track record with the ability to make and learn from mistakes;	E	✓	✓
15.	Experience in financial management;	D	✓	✓
16.	Experience of working in a growing, complex, busy environment that is across multiple sites and stakeholders;	E	✓	✓
17.	Able to work flexibly to suit the needs of the Trust.	E	✓	✓

Equal Opportunities				
17.	Awareness, understanding and commitment to the pursuit of equal opportunity, anti-racism and in the terms of service and delivery and employment practice	E	✓	✓
18.	Awareness and knowledge of disability discrimination policy	E	✓	✓
19.	A willingness to share expertise with colleagues and positively assist their development	E	✓	✓

How to apply

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 and a DBS check. We will also undertake social media checks on shortlisted candidates, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (KCSiE 25) guidance.

If you believe you are the ideal candidate for our Trust School Business Manager position or would like more information, please email our CFOO, Luci Jones to arrange an informal discussion lucijones@cheshireacademiestrust.co.uk.

To apply, please complete the application process on the View My New Term website.

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 do not hear from us by, please consider your application unsuccessful on this occasion.

Post Start Date:

Ideally February 2026

Closing Date: Friday 9th January 2026

Shortlisting: Monday 12th January 2026

Interviews: week commencing 19th January 2026

We reserve the right to close advertisements early. Advertisements will therefore close at 9am either on the advertised closing date, or the day the decision has been taken to close the advertisement early.

