



Partnership Learning



DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

RECRUITMENT PACK

MARCH/APRIL 2024



## Partnership Learning

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the post of Director of School Improvement at Partnership Learning. This is an exceptional opportunity to lead the school improvement functions of a thriving multi-academy trust at a significant stage in its development and growth.

### Trust Overview

Partnership Learning is currently responsible for thirteen academies – secondary, primary, all-through, special and UTC – across four local authorities (Barking and Dagenham, Havering, Waltham Forest and Southend) serving over 10,000 pupils. The Trust is already set to grow to more than 16,000 pupils and 16 schools as its current and approved new schools grow. Subject to formal DfE approval, the Trust is also expecting to incorporate four additional schools and 3,000 pupils from the existing QED Trust in Hillingdon in Autumn 2024. Further expansion is envisaged in the coming five years, aiming to reach 20-25 schools and 20,000+ pupils. The Trust also encompasses Partnership London SCITT – a successful ITT provider which gives access to high quality ECTs.

The Trust has successfully established brand new schools – four up and running so far, all Ofsted ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ with three more approved to open in the next two to three years; has transformed under-performing schools – seven so far – five of which have already been moved up to Good or better, with two awaiting Ofsted but on track to move up; and has incorporated two existing strong schools.

Current Ofsted Grades: Outstanding 2, Good 8, Requires Improvement 2, Inadequate 0, No grade yet 1

### Trust Vision

#### Statement of Vision and Purpose

The Trust’s aims are:

- to transform young lives through high quality education and strong values; and
- to support and empower personal and community well-being;  
by:
  - establishing great new schools;
  - transforming under-performing schools;
  - ensuring its schools achieve and maintain excellence; and
  - collaborating with local partners to strengthen communities

The Trust:

- values the individual character of its schools and their leaders, whilst encouraging and facilitating the development and deployment of effective common strategies to ensure that all its pupils thrive within well-structured, safe and aspirational environments;
- takes responsibility for challenging under-performance and driving improvement, whilst supporting its schools and their leaders through collaboration and effective use of combined financial and human resources.

## Trust Philosophy

Partnership Learning does **not** believe in a top-down model, with central control over curriculum, teaching styles and behaviour strategies. On the contrary, the Trust believes that Headteachers generally know best what their schools need – developing their identity, ethos and priorities for innovation – and it will always be the schools which deliver the outcomes, not the Trust.

Headteachers in Partnership Learning schools have similar levels of autonomy to those leading local authority schools or stand-alone academies – including driving school vision and strategy, curriculum design, teaching and learning strategies, behaviour policy, staff structure and recruitment, appraisal and budget-setting - under the oversight of their Local Governing Board.

We believe that this is the most effective approach – fostering a strong sense of ownership and responsibility and encouraging innovation – and is most likely to attract and retain the strongest school leaders.

This approach is carried through in our financial model. We believe in keeping the maximum amount of money with schools – our central costs are equivalent to a top slice of only 2.4%.



## Director of School Improvement Role

This is an exciting opportunity for an enthusiastic, committed educationalist with both a strong track record in improving schools and an interest in the strategic development of a growing Multi-Academy Trust. It will provide excellent scope for widening and deepening professional skills and experience.

Whilst the core task of the Director of School Improvement is the leadership of the Trust's school improvement functions, we are also looking for someone who can contribute to the wider development of the Trust and its continuing growth.

As a key member of the central senior team, the successful candidate will have the opportunity to contribute to strategic planning and effective collaborative working across the other central functions of Finance, HR, Estates and ICT.

The school improvement function itself has developed alongside the early phases of the Trust's growth and is operating an effective cycle of school challenge and support. However, the new postholder will have the opportunity to develop this further as the Trust seeks to move all its schools 'from Good to Great'.

## Trust Central Staffing

Post	Postholder
<b>SENIOR TEAM</b>	
Chief Executive	Roger Leighton
Director of Operations	Karen Sayers
Consultant – Strategy and Development	Judith Black
Director of Finance	Lee Medlock
Director of Estates	Marc Auden
Director of ICT	Mark Junnix
Director of School Improvement	Vacancy
<b>SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM</b>	
Principal School Improvement Lead	Nicola Masters
Principal School Improvement Lead	Jason Hughes
<b>FINANCE TEAM</b>	
Financial Accountant	Louise Moss
Finance Officer	Martine Wood
Finance Adviser	Kingsley Lane-Williams
<b>ESTATES TEAM</b>	
Facilities Management Officer	Tony Williams
Estates Compliance Manager	Carl Smith
<b>OTHER</b>	
HR and General Administrator	Amy Davis
Attendance Manager and Company Secretary	Margaret Brand
Attendance Officers	x 2
ICT Support Staff	x 16



## School Improvement Function

The Trust's school improvement function has two key objectives:

- To support and challenge school leaders to continually improve outcomes for their pupils
- To provide Trustees with assurance that the Trust's schools are delivering the highest quality education

At the core of the Trust's approach to school improvement is the concept of 'collaborative convergence' – that although the Trust does not impose MAT-wide strategies and solutions it does encourage and facilitate collaboration, which is designed to lead organically to convergence around agreed best-fit solutions.

The Trust's core School Improvement Team currently consists of the Director of School Improvement and two Principal School Improvement Leads (one full-time, one part-time) but there are plans to expand capacity from September 2024.

The Trust also brings in additional school improvement capacity on a consultancy basis as needed, for instance to carry out specialist Safeguarding audits or SEND reviews. Trust schools are also increasingly making use of the Challenge Partners organisation.

The Trust's School Improvement Team has a key role in:

- Setting high aspirations across the Trust – through challenge and support
- Bringing key interest groups together - eg SEND/English/Maths/Reading/EYFS
- Sharing good practice eg behaviour/teaching and learning/assessment
- Developing common teaching resources, assessment tasks, moderation
- Talent retention and development, succession planning
- Developing convergence organically whilst retaining each school's ethos



The Trust has developed a Framework for School Improvement - a cycle of evaluation and review activities - which includes:

- **Termly School Summaries:** A detailed audit and self-evaluation tool, based on the Ofsted framework, which is completed by each school's leadership team, validated by a member of the School Improvement Team and presented to the Board of Trustees with termly updates.
- **Termly Framework Meetings:** Termly meetings between a member of the School Improvement Team and Headteachers/SLT in each school to review data and self-evaluations, identify priorities for the term ahead and discuss and agree support from the Trust or external providers.
- **Twice-yearly Peer Reviews for each school:** Varying in focus from whole school Teaching and Learning Reviews to Deep Dives in a specific subject, involving reviewers external to the school such as Headteachers or Senior Leaders from other Trust Schools, other local schools or a Local Authority inspection team.

Work programmes for each member of the School Improvement Team flow out from the areas of focus agreed with each school, with prioritisation of those schools with the greatest need and/or in the Ofsted inspection window.



### **Employee Benefits**

Partnership Learning's Terms and Conditions for central team posts closely follow those for equivalent-level Local Government posts.

Benefits include membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme, a Car User Allowance, a Staff Wellbeing Service and a Cycle to Work Scheme.

### **Next Steps**

We hope that what you have read motivates you to apply for this post. If you would like an informal discussion about the role, either before or after applying, please email [office@partnershiplearning.com](mailto:office@partnershiplearning.com)

Your application's supporting statement should, of course, address key aspects of the selection criteria, although please do not feel that you need to evidence every single one of them. We look forward to receiving your application – Deadline for receipt 12 Noon on 15/04/2



## Partnership Learning

### Director of School Improvement

#### Job Description – March 2024

<b>Job Title:</b>	Director of School Improvement
<b>Work Location:</b>	Central Trust offices in Dagenham/Trust school sites as needed/Homeworking as appropriate
<b>Reports To:</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Salary Grade:</b>	Partnership Learning Executive Leadership Pay Scale Points 85-94
<b>Salary Range:</b>	£117,138 - £135,884
<b>Hours:</b>	Full-time
<b>Contract:</b>	Permanent
<b>Commencement:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2024 or sooner if possible

#### Job Purpose

The Director of School Improvement has strategic and operational responsibility for the development and performance of the Trust's schools and also contributes to the wider development of the Trust.

He or she provides leadership, support and challenge to the Trust's headteachers and oversees the Trust's school improvement function, working closely with the Chief Executive and other members of the Senior Team in order to:

- Provide overall educational leadership and direction to the Trust's schools
- Provide assurance to Trustees on the quality of leadership and management in the Trust's schools

- Overall responsibility for Trust schools' educational outcomes, Ofsted grades and continual improvement
- Oversee and further develop the Trust's school improvement functions
- Lead and manage the Trust's School Improvement Team
- Ensure the Trust's schools are compliant with legal requirements and statutory guidance relevant to this role
- Contribute to Trust growth through assisting in setting up new schools and attracting existing schools to join
- Contribute to the overall development of the Trust, including the interface with LAs and central Government
- Ensure and maintain the good reputation, values and vision of the Trust in all areas of their work.

## **Leadership & Strategy**

1 Lead the development of the school improvement aspects of the MAT's strategic and operational plans.

2 Oversee the Trust's school improvement functions and play a leading role in their delivery.

3 Lead and manage the Trust's School Improvement Team

4 Lead the design, review and revision of Trust-wide educational policies and procedures for schools.

5 Assist the expansion of the Trust, within the parameters set down by the Chief Executive and the Board of Trustees, by helping to explore and pursue appropriate opportunities to open, attract or sponsor additional schools.

6 Contribute to developing the overall strategic direction of the Trust and assist in managing the interface with Local Authorities and central and regional Government bodies.

7 Participate in agreed out-of-hours director on-call arrangements.

8 Seek to play a role in generating income for the Trust through selling central services to external users where possible and appropriate.

## **Trust School Outcomes**

1 Design, implement, review and revise Trust-wide Quality Assurance and data collection systems that provide assurance to the Board of Trustees that the MAT's schools are efficient and effective, with high-quality and continually improving outcomes for pupils.

2 Provide strategic leadership of all aspects of school improvement for the MAT's schools.



3 Provide professional leadership, advice, guidance and challenge to staff (outside the School Improvement Team) carrying out school improvement or quality assurance work for the Trust.

4 Provide professional leadership, advice, guidance and challenge to the headteachers/principals of the Trust's schools.

5 Ensure that appropriate measures are put in place to support and challenge all of the Trust's schools to achieve, and thereafter maintain, Ofsted Good or Outstanding ratings.

*The above-mentioned duties are neither exclusive nor exhaustive and the post holder may be required to carry out such other appropriate duties as may be reasonably required by the Chief Executive.*



## Partnership Learning

### Director of School Improvement

#### Selection Criteria – March 2024

##### ***Experience and Qualifications***

A first degree and relevant post-graduate qualifications
Evidence of updating professional skills
Currently or recently holding a senior management post with a successful track record
Evidence of the capability to be accountable for the work of a team
Successful experience of managing change
Evidence of expertise and success in raising pupil achievement and securing school improvement

##### ***Professional Knowledge***

Demonstrates knowledge of accountability lines from MAT schools to Trust Board and the DfE
Provides evidence of successfully managing strategic responsibilities in current and/or previous posts
Has the ability to help develop and expand the Trust as agreed by the Board
Thorough and up to date understanding of Ofsted inspection requirements
Clear understanding of school data generation, collation and analysis
Can set, maintain and actively promote high standards of professional competence in those they lead
Thorough knowledge of relevant education legislation and policy and the implications for the raising of pupil achievement

##### ***Personal qualities***

Evidence of strong leadership skills and professional competence
Ability to lead and manage people to work effectively as individuals and as a team towards a common goal.
Ability to rapidly gain the trust and professional confidence of Trustees, Headteachers, DfE and Local Authority officers and other key stakeholders
Shows a clear commitment to the principles of Partnership Learning and its vision for the MAT
Shows a strong commitment to partnership working with all stakeholders
Shows a strong commitment to equity in provision for pupils
Shows a strong commitment to equity in dealing with colleagues
The ability to enthuse, inspire and motivate colleagues
Effective decision-making skills; the ability to identify and implement solutions to complex problems
Excellent oral and written communication skills
Effective interpersonal skills
Strong self-management skills including the ability to plan time effectively for self and others
A high level of personal integrity and probity

## Advertisement - Director of School Improvement, Partnership Learning

Dates: Apply by Noon 15/04/24; Interviews w/c 22/04/24; Job start September 2024 or earlier if possible

Salary: Partnership Learning Senior Executive Scale Points 85-94 (£117,138 - £135,884)

Locations: Central Trust offices in Dagenham/Trust school sites as needed/Remote working as appropriate

Contract type: Full Time

Contract term: Permanent

**Partnership Learning**, a growing Multi-Academy Trust, is seeking a Director of School Improvement who will bring enthusiasm and drive to the leadership of the Trust's school improvement functions and also contribute to the wider development of the Trust.

Partnership Learning is currently responsible for thirteen academies – secondary, primary, all-through, special and UTC – across four local authorities (Barking and Dagenham, Havering, Waltham Forest and Southend) serving over 10,000 pupils. The Trust is already set to grow to more than 16,000 pupils and 16 schools as its current and approved new schools grow and it is planning to expand further in the coming five years, aiming to reach 20-25 schools and 20,000+ pupils.

The successful candidate will manage a School Improvement Team of three and will join a central senior team consisting of Chief Executive, Strategy and Development Consultant, Director of Operations, Director of Finance, Director of ICT, Director of Estates and Director of School Improvement. The Director of School Improvement plays a key role in the central team, with overall responsibility for the educational performance of the Trust's schools and as a contributor to the wider development of the Trust.

This is an exciting opportunity for an enthusiastic, committed educationalist with both a strong track record in improving schools and an interest in the wider development of an established Multi-Academy Trust at a key point in its growth.

### Key purposes of the role

- Provide overall educational leadership and direction to the Trust's schools
- Provide assurance to Trustees on the quality of leadership and management in the Trust's schools
- Overall responsibility for Trust schools' educational outcomes, Ofsted grades and continual improvement
- Oversee and further develop the Trust's school improvement functions
- Lead and manage the Trust's School Improvement Team
- Ensure the Trust's schools are compliant with legal requirements and statutory guidance relevant to this role
- Contribute to Trust growth through assisting in setting up new schools and attracting existing schools to join
- Contribute to the overall development of the Trust, including the interface with LAs and central Government
- Ensure and maintain the good reputation, values and vision of the Trust in all areas of their work.

Salary will be paid on the Partnership Learning Senior Executive Scale, on a ten point range: £117,138 - £135,884 Partnership Learning's Terms and Conditions for central team posts closely follow those for equivalent-level Local Government posts.

Applications can be made online only by application form available at [www.partnershiplearning.com](http://www.partnershiplearning.com) - CVs will not be accepted.

Closing date:

Noon 15/04/24

Interview date (subject to confirmation):

Week commencing 22/04/24

You must complete the application form electronically and email it to us by the closing date.

*Partnership Learning is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its pupils and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. An enhanced criminal record check via DBS will be undertaken for the successful candidate. This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and a comprehensive screening process, including a disclosure check, will be undertaken on all applicants.*