



Inspiring Futures  
through Learning



# Chief People Officer Inspiring Futures through Learning

Information for Applicants  
2024



# Welcome

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I am delighted that you are considering applying to the role of Chief People Officer at Inspiring Futures through Learning (IFtL).

IFtL was formed in 2016 committing to school improvement, development, innovation and collaboration as tools that improve the lives and learning of **all** our people; adults and children alike.

Since then, we have achieved great success. We can quantify our success in Ofsted reports, performance data, financial spreadsheets and our recruitment and retention figures. However, most important to note is that we can only achieve such success because of our culture and ethos. It is our more qualitative success that makes IFtL truly unique. We are a strong family, with different personalities and differing abilities but we have the golden thread that pulls us together - a belief that we are stronger together; that we will go that extra mile for each other and support each other when things aren't going the way we want them to.

The camaraderie is second to none as our school improvement system is strongly embedded in our schools and we use the skills and expertise to support each other. There is nothing new about a self-sustaining school improvement system – but the way we do it is unique to us and something that we are extremely proud of.

This is of course a result of the amazing passion and commitment of our 1000+ colleagues. As Chief People Officer, you will be a strategic leader creating and modelling positive impact through development of a People vision and strategy which supports all of our colleagues, ensuring IFtL is an employer of choice in our sector and our local communities – inspiring futures!

I look forward to welcoming you.

**Sarah Bennett**  
CEO of IFtL



# Working at IFtL

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To support all our colleagues, IFtL is committed to finding ways to ensure that your personal, financial, professional, and pastoral needs are met during your time with the IFtL. Wherever possible, we seek out innovative and impactful ways to add real benefits to our teams - from helping with cost-of-living pressures, ensuring that professional development is readily and easily accessible through to wellbeing assistance - to ensure the work-life balance is being managed effectively.

## Benefits of our Trust

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As part of Inspiring Futures through Learning, the successful candidate will have access to staff benefits package which includes discounts on gym membership, cinema tickets, days out and cycle to work scheme. As a Senior Leader you will also have access to a comprehensive CPD package including one to one leadership coaching.

### **Private Medical Insurance**

The successful candidate will receive, extensive medical insurance from a leading provider giving you access to private medical appointments and treatments for peace of mind should you be unwell or suffer an injury.

### **Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)**

The Health Assured programme offers:

- Confidential and compassionate guidance on any issues, professional and personal.
- Life support: Unlimited access to counselling and a pathway to structured telephone counselling at your convenience.
- Legal information: For any issues including debt management, accountancy, lawsuits, consumer disputes, property or neighbour legalities.
- Bereavement support: experienced counsellors who can help with grief and related stress plus a team of legal advisors to help with legal issues.
- Medical information: Qualified nurses are on hand to offer advice on a range of medical or health-related issues.
- CBT online: EAP have a range of CBT self-help modules, informative factsheets and invaluable advice videos from leading qualified counsellors.
- Weekly mood tracker: Keep track of your financial, physical and general wellbeing via the weekly mood tracker.
- Mini health checks: My Healthy Advantage offers a collection of mini health checks within the app for the following: height & weight (BMI), waist, sleep, alcohol, mental health and fatigue.
- Unlimited access to Health Assured wellbeing articles that provide support on health and advisory issues.



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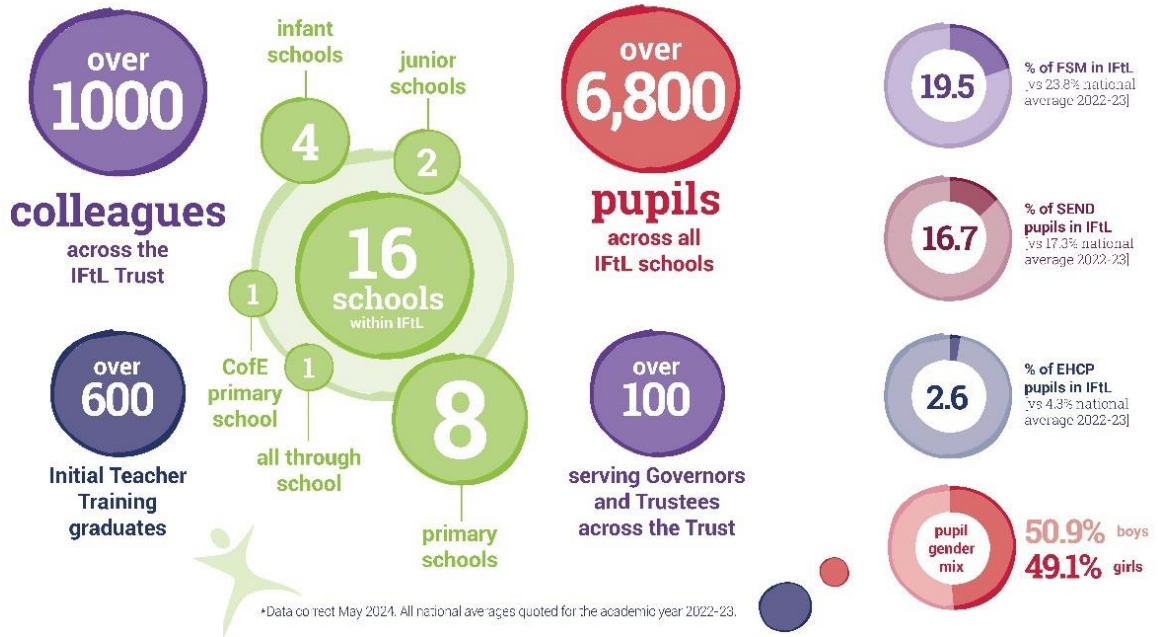
## About Inspiring Futures through Learning (IFtL)

### Introduction

IFtL is an innovative, forward thinking, growing multi-academy trust with it's heart in school improvement through system leadership – developing people who collaborate, share, learn from each other and are committed to the best for our children and communities.

As at May 2024, IFtL has 16 schools across Milton Keynes and Corby, North Northamptonshire, with 5 incoming schools confirmed to join in the near future.

# IFtL in Numbers



Our schools, and IFtL overall, reflect the diversity of our communities and our people. Each has a different journey, set of experiences and expertise to share. Celebrating and valuing these through open, positive and respectful collaboration is a critical part of our successful collaboration model.

## Vision and Values

Our vision and values run through everything we do and are prominent within our people related processes.



**Inspiring Futures through Learning**

**Our vision**  
To inspire the futures of us all through learning together

**Our IFL family**  
As an IFL family we understand, and are committed to, our responsibility in shaping and influencing the lives of future generations. We do this in partnership with our families, our communities, fellow educators, and other local and regional partners. We also do this with national policy makers and global leaders. We are committed to the levels of collaboration required to shape and protect the future. We start with our schools, our family, and from there we grow. At IFL, we are never alone – one united family striving for excellence in all that we do.

**Our drivers**

- Creating ambitious, lifelong learners in strong schools**  
Imaginative schools that provide accessible, equitable, aspirational opportunities for all children to flourish
- Delivering high standards of curriculum for all within a positive learning culture**  
Engaging, active, evidence based and rewarding lessons that build rich knowledge for life
- Investing in staff development to create innovative, research led, career pathways**  
Nurture, train, recruit, develop, deploy and retain great professionals throughout their careers and the wider system we serve
- Ensuring expert governance with a strong local identity**  
Robust and ethical accountability measures, engaging effectively with parents and the wider community
- Strong financial management with efficient and effective operational structures**  
Delivering value for money and prioritising the use of resource to improve educational quality
- Being leaders in our community recognising our wider civic responsibility**  
Work with other civic structures to advance education for the public good in the communities we serve and beyond
- Nurturing a safe, secure and engaging environment in which we all thrive**  
Keeping everyone safe and well within an IFL culture of collaboration and care

**Our values**

- F Fun**  
We enjoy what we do. We make positive contributions. We take pleasure from success.
- U Unique**  
We celebrate difference. We champion diversity. We are diverse in our thinking.
- T Together**  
We share the same promise. We support and encourage. We cooperate, collaborate and care for each other.
- U Unafraid**  
We are confident to challenge. We are courageous in our thinking. We are robust in our decisions.
- R Responsible**  
We act in the best interests of our communities and each other. We are accountable for our actions. We stand up to scrutiny.
- E Energetic**  
We are positive and dynamic. We explore new worlds. We endeavour to achieve.
- S Safe**  
We are secure in our beliefs. We are protective and firm. We make decisions together.

**Our outcomes**  
★ Ambitious Learners ★ Rewarding Experiences ★ Skilled Professionals ★ Expert Governance ★ Firm Foundations ★ Community Champions ★ A safe place to be!

## Strategic Direction

IFtL is an ambitious, dynamic and multi-faceted MAT with a strong vision that demands excellence, innovation and focus. We are realistic about ourselves and the environment in which we operate – we are clear that solid foundations and addressing challenges with a timely, solution focused approach allows us the flexibility to relentlessly continue in our vision to inspire futures for us all. Our Strategic Plan outlines our approach for the next three years of development and growth of IFtL. Through awareness, analysis and recognition of our current position and environmental factors, we have identified specific areas of focus for the next period that enhance, strengthen and complement our overall vision and Strategic Priorities.



The Strategic Plan Strands interconnect – each area of development and enhancement will purposely affect the direction of the organisation and will impact on the whole. Further information regarding the strands themselves is available at <https://www.iftl.co.uk/about/strategic-plan/>





## Job Description

### Chief People Officer – Inspiring Futures through Learning

#### Purpose of role:

The Chief People Officer will play a key role in shaping the culture of IFtL, supporting the development of the organisation and the schools and ultimately impacting the learning of all our children and young people. The postholder will lead the development of IFtL's People vision and strategy ensuring that IFtL is an employer of choice; attractive, competitive, developmental and engaging for all colleagues. They will enable the strategic and operational delivery of the strategy, designing and delivering people and organizational development interventions that have impact.

Our pupils and young people come from a wide range of backgrounds, and so do our colleagues. We aim to reflect and celebrate diversity in our workplace in order to create an inclusive culture that adds real value to our vision of inspiring the futures of us all through learning together.

#### Key areas

- To develop and deliver IFtL People Vision and strategic priorities working collaboratively with stakeholders.
- To align the people strategy within the overall IFtL strategy and ensure regular review and reporting to the CEO, Executives and Trustees.
- To be the professional expert on all HR/People matters and ensure IFtL remains compliant with all legislation and educational regulations; Safeguarding is a critical element of this.
- To be the trusted adviser to the CEO, Trustees and Executives along with the Headteachers on key people matters.
- To continue to develop a fit for purpose people function for IFtL ensuring the function delivers high-quality cost-efficient support for schools and IFtL overall.
- To support Line Managers, enhancing their leadership and management of their people with a clear understanding of accountability and responsibility.
- To design and implement effective people/organisational development programmes to help drive the attraction, development and motivation of people.
- To advise and lead on change and transformation (including structure and culture) including any growth of IFtL.





- To actively contribute to IFtL's Equality Objectives, playing a key role in delivery of these.
- To work with other Executive Board members and Heads of Departments to ensure that IFtL's core support functions are effectively coordinated.
- As a member of the IFtL Executive Board, to contribute to the overall IFtL strategy, delivery and performance.
- Contribute at a strategic level to identify HR/people and resourcing priorities and recommend appropriate people management solutions which support IFtL's aims, in addition to providing a fully integrated HR service across the organisation.
- Build the People function ensuring this delivers high quality strategic, advisory and transactional services for IFtL overall and individual schools.
- Act as the key lead to ensure all HR/people policies and procedures are up to date in terms of best practice and legislative changes.
- Produce appropriate reports for the Executive and Trustees.
- Lead on the resolution of complex sensitive or high impact HR/people matters.
- Strategically develop HR/people management technology and processes to ensure HR information, policies and procedures are efficiently and properly managed and implemented and best practice is shared across the team, and the wider Trust as required.
- Support the budgeting process related to HR to ensure it reflects expected benchmarks, staffing structures and best practice.
- Own strategic responsibility for the maintenance of personnel records both electronic and manual in line with statutory, audit and data protection requirements.
- Lead of employee relations for the Trust including managing relationships with recognised trades unions.
- Comply with all IFtL and school policies and procedures.
- To co-operate in any staff development activities required to effectively carry out the duties of the post and to participate in IFtL's appraisal process.
- Any other reasonable duties commensurate with the level of the post.

### **Management of People**

- Build, manage and support the People team, ensuring effective resource deployment to deliver strategic and operational support.
- Take responsibility for own personal development.

### **Main contacts and relationships**

Internal: Board, People Committee, CEO and Executive Board, Education leaders and Headteachers, HR team.

External: Local and National HR networks, HR providers.

The Chief People Officer, in consultation with the CEO may be asked by IFtL to undertake other duties reasonably regarded as falling within the duties and responsibilities of the post. This job description will be reviewed annually at the end of the academic year or earlier if necessary. In addition, it may be amended at any time after consultation with the postholder.

Inspiring Futures through Learning is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All employees are expected to share this commitment, to follow IFtL's safeguarding policies and procedures, and to behave appropriately towards children at all times, both in work and in their personal lives.

All school based posts are defined as Regulated Activity and therefore this post is subject to an Enhanced with **Barred List Criminal Records Bureau** check.

# Person Specification

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## Knowledge and qualifications

Essential, i.e. the postholder must have:

- Membership of the Chartered Institute of Professional development.
- Evidence of continuing professional development.
- The ability to inspire, motivate and lead a team of HR/People professionals, challenging them constructively and appropriately.
- Knowledge of change management and organisational development approaches.
- In-depth knowledge of employment law and HR best practice and the ability to apply these using a pragmatic and common-sense approach.
- Knowledge and understanding of Safeguarding including safe recruitment.
- Evidence of innovative thinking and creative approaches to strategic challenges.

Desirable, i.e. the postholder would ideally have:

- Education to degree level or equivalent.
- Evidence of post-graduate study.
- An understanding of national terms and conditions and education legislation which impact on employment within schools and academies.

## Experience

**Essential, i.e. the postholder must have:**

- Significant experience of working at senior level leading HR/People in a complex organisation.
- Experience of working in a multi-site organisation.
- Significant experience of leading and developing a professional HR/People team.
- Experience of leading culture change and organisational development, with evidence of impact on culture and people results.
- Experience of designing and implementing flexible and innovative organisational development solutions that deliver strategic priorities and change.
- Experience of managing organisational change such as growth and mergers.
- Experience of working with trade unions and leading employee relations.
- Experience of managing disputes and high level, sensitive, complex casework.
- Experience of successful financial planning and budget management.

**Desirable, i.e. the postholder would ideally have:**

- Experience of working within the education sector, particularly schools.

## Skills and Personal Qualities

### Essential, i.e. the postholder must have:

- The ability to lead and manage change, working in collaboration with key stakeholders and delivering results.
- A thorough knowledge of equality, diversity and inclusion and wellbeing policy requirements and practices.
- The ability to quickly establish credibility and build strong working relationships at all levels.
- Strong analytical, strategic thinking and project management/planning skills.
- Effective oral and written communication skills, with proven ability to negotiate and influence change with sensitivity and emotional intelligence.
- The ability to work to deadlines, adapt to changing conditions and generate effective solutions to new situations and problems as they arise.
- Excellent IT skills, including the ability to use MS Office software packages such as Word, Excel and Outlook, and Google Workspace.
- Knowledge and understanding of budget management and financial systems.
- Highest levels of integrity and probity and a commitment to highest levels of effort, endeavour and focus on standards.
- A commitment to education and achieving the best outcomes for children and young people.

## Terms of Employment

### Remuneration

This appointment attracts a competitive salary NJC Salary Band N £84,157 - £92,609

### Pension

Membership of the local government pension scheme. This is a defined benefit, salary-related career average pension scheme. The essentials: LGPS ([lgpsmember.org](http://lgpsmember.org))

### Contract

This is a permanent, full-time executive appointment. Flexible working options can be discussed.

### Location

Based from the IFtL office at Fairfields Primary School, Milton Keynes MK11 4BA, this post will require travel to our schools in line with business priorities. Some working at home is possible.

### Holiday allowance

28 days plus bank holidays.

### How to apply

Please see the 'Careers' section of [www.iftl.co.uk](http://www.iftl.co.uk)

### The selection process

Closing date Monday 16 September 2024

Interviews Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024

# How to apply

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The closing date for applications is  
**Closing date Monday 16 September 2024**

Interviews will be held on:  
**Interviews Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024**

Applications must be completed on MyNewTerm.

For more information on the role and to arrange a discussion about the role, please contact Stephanie Boak on [sboak@iftl.co.uk](mailto:sboak@iftl.co.uk)

Details about Inspiring Futures through Learning can be found here [www.iftl.co.uk](http://www.iftl.co.uk)

