



**Senior Leadership Recruitment – A Case Study**

When Leigh Academies Trust (LAT), the Dartford based Trust which has gone from strength to strength since its creation in 2008, approached Farrer Barnes to assist with the next phase of its recruitment growth, we were delighted to assist.

Providing the educational vision and direction for the Trust, the CEO, Simon Beamish and the Deputy CEO, Neil Willis, decided in line with the strategy, to recruit a HR Director, new Finance Director, Cluster Finance Controller and Business Controller, to prepare effectively for the future.

The steady and successful progress that has been made since 2008 is apparent with all of their current academies judged Good or better by Ofsted, and their mission is to achieve Outstanding in all of their schools.

*'As a successful multi-academy trust, we are being encouraged by the Department for Education to grow further, but will never do so at the expense of the communities we already serve. We have no intention of expanding beyond the South East of England.'*  
**Simon Beamish, CEO, December 2014.**

Given the importance of recruiting the right people to enable them to drive their vision, LAT chose to use a recruitment company not just to access the expertise a specialist recruiter can bring, but also to tap into a known source of candidates with the specific skills and experience required for such a drive.

LAT approached Farrer Barnes, a national specialist within the academy world and with over 20 years experience of senior leadership recruitment. Farrer Barnes was chosen due to their reputation as one of the finance and HR leaders within this specialist sector and holders of the Independent Academies Assured Service Quality Mark.

Working closely with LAT, branded advertising in relevant trade journals and online sites combined with Farrer Barnes extensive database of Academy candidates were used to establish an initial list of suitable candidates for each separate position. Farrer Barnes team of Peter Newey (MD) and Sarah Ottley (Head of Education Recruitment) then held detailed discussions with each of the prospective candidates around Dartford to enable them to present final shortlists to LAT.

The deadlines for the positions were arranged to match LAT timelines and to ensure that resources were available for the interview process with minimal disruption.

Farrer Barnes were on hand to offer further insight and background information on each of the chosen interviewees, and provide candidate feedback afterwards.

The interview processes went smoothly and the four successful individuals were delighted to join this exciting Trust, Richard Taylor and Jonathan Shaw above being two of them.



Left: HR Director Richard Taylor



Right: Jonathan Shaw, BC

***In describing the interview process and its subsequent outcome, Neil Willis commented;***

*'We were delighted with the quality and range of applicants that Farrer Barnes was able to attract for each post, and the assistance that we received throughout the recruitment process. As a consequence we have added further outstanding leadership to the Finance and HR functions of the Trust, ensuring exceptional support in these key areas to all senior leaders in each of our academies'*

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