

COGNITA

THRIVING SCHOOLS. INSPIRING FUTURES.

CANDIDATE PACK MANAGING DIRECTOR

We are looking for exceptional leaders to help shape the next chapter of Cognita in Asia. These are significant roles for people who can bring clarity, ambition and impact across a diverse group of schools, creating the conditions for students, colleagues and communities to thrive.

“ Our ambition is clear: to build the world’s most trusted global schools’ platform, where every school is empowered to thrive, measurably and meaningfully. ”

DAVID BALDWIN
GROUP CEO



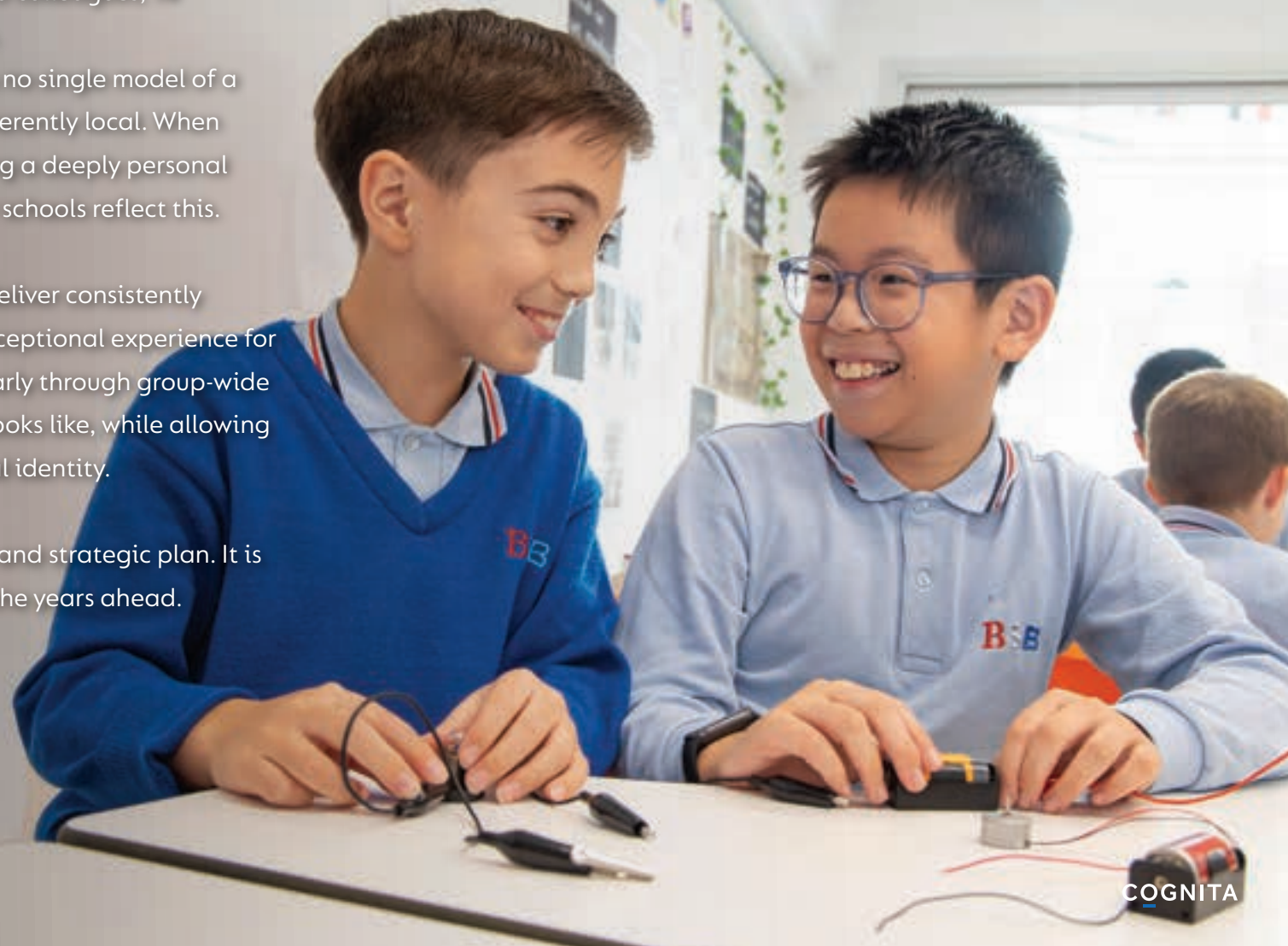
ABOUT **COGNITA**

Cognita is a global family of over 90 schools across 21 countries, with more than 100,000 students, 22,000 colleagues, 14 curricula and 9 languages of instruction.

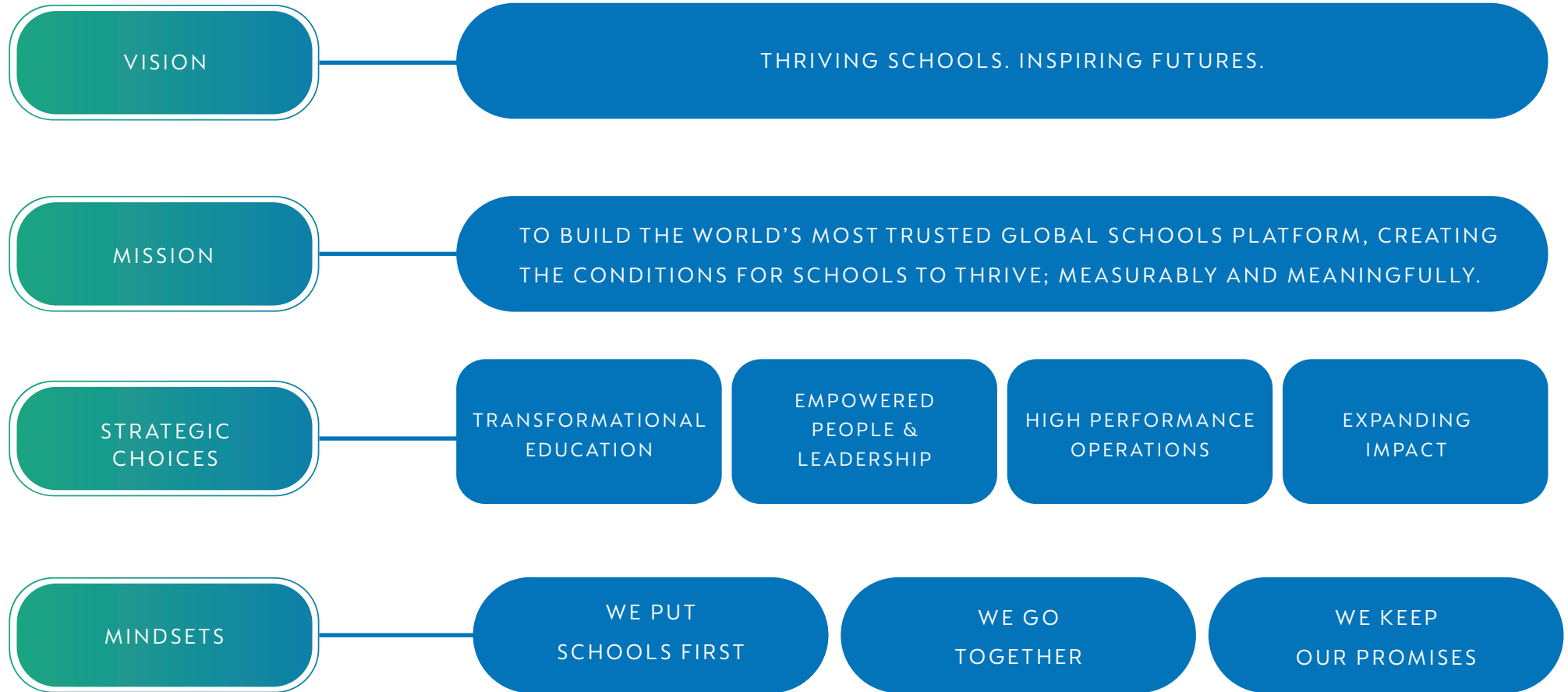
Our strength lies in our diversity. There is no single model of a Cognita school because education is inherently local. When families choose a school, they are making a deeply personal and community-based decision, and our schools reflect this.

What unites us is a shared ambition to deliver consistently high-quality education, alongside an exceptional experience for students and parents. We define this clearly through group-wide standards that articulate what “great” looks like, while allowing schools the freedom to express their local identity.

We have recently launched a new vision and strategic plan. It is ambitious and sets a clear direction for the years ahead.



THE COGNITA STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK



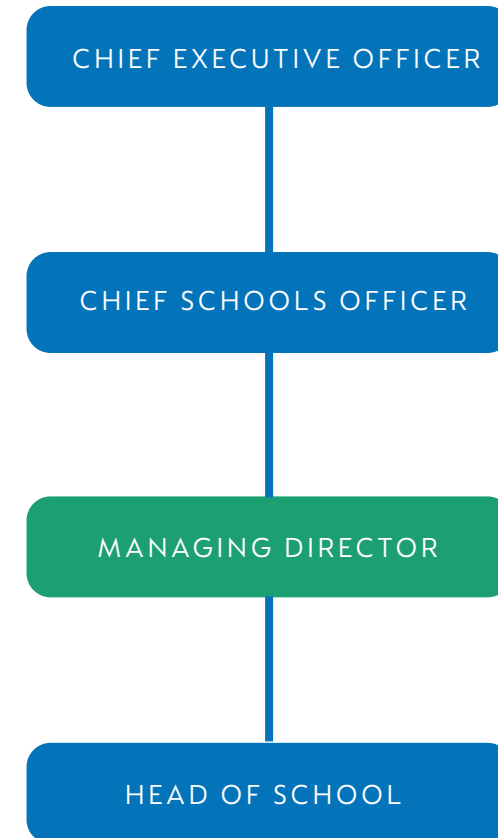
HOW COGNITA OPERATES

STRUCTURE

As a global organisation, clarity of structure is essential. Cognita is evolving its operating model, and these Managing Director roles are central to that model.

CLUSTERS (COGS)

Each of our schools sits within a “Cog”, a group of schools led by a Managing Director, who collectively work together to drive improvements in outcomes and experiences across our schools. The Managing Director line manages each Head of School, oversees select commercial and operational activity, and is accountable for the overall performance of the schools.



PLATFORM SERVICES

Cognita is reshaping how it supports schools through platform services, providing expert functional support across key areas of the organisation. Each function (called Centres of Excellence) is led by world-class professionals, giving schools and Managing Directors access to specialist expertise, guidance and support.

These teams are not line managed by the Managing Director, which is intentional. This ensures that Managing Directors remain focused on the quality of education, the experience and outcomes of students and parents, and orchestrating impact at school level, while being supported by a high-quality global platform.

These services include:

- Student & Campus Safety
- Education
- People
- Marketing & Sales
- Finance
- Legal
- Property
- Technology



THE ROLES

We are recruiting two Managing Directors to lead our schools in Asia, a significant part of the Cognita organisation. These are critical leadership positions, focused on creating meaningful impact across multiple schools.

We are looking for smart, emotionally intelligent and commercially minded leaders. People who understand what great education looks like, and who know how to lead others to deliver it consistently and at scale.

Each Managing Director will lead the performance, leadership quality and growth of a Cog, with full accountability for educational, commercial and financial outcomes. Accountable to the Chief Schools Officer (East), the Managing Director is responsible for the day-to-day performance of schools, translating group standards into effective in-school execution.



MANAGING DIRECTOR, SINGAPORE

Working with:

- Stamford American International School
- The Australian International School
- Brighton College Singapore

MANAGING DIRECTOR, SOUTHEAST ASIA

Working with:

- CHIREC International School, Hyderabad, India
- Stamford American School, Hong Kong
- International School Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
- International School Ho Chi Minh City, American Academy, Vietnam
- St. Andrews International School, Sathorn, Thailand
- St. Andrews International School, Dusit, Thailand
- St. Andrews International School, Sukhumvit 107, Thailand
- St. Andrews International School, Green Valley, Thailand

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

SAFEGUARDING, SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- Ensures all schools meet group standards for safeguarding and campus safety
- Maintains a strong culture of student protection, compliance and risk management

LEADERSHIP CAPABILITY AND CULTURE

- Strengthens leadership capability across schools
- Builds a culture of accountability, collaboration and continuous improvement
- Ensures strong succession and leadership depth across the cluster
- Ensures that the Cognita Mindsets are lived and used to drive cultural cohesion

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND OUTCOMES

- Accountable for the performance of all schools within the Cog across:
 - quality of education and student outcomes
 - student and parent experience (VOE, VOP, VOS)
 - enrolment, retention and utilisation
 - financial performance
- Maintains a strong focus on student and parent experience as key drivers of performance

LEADERSHIP OF HEADS OF SCHOOL

- Line manages Heads of School, setting clear expectations and holding them accountable for delivery
- Appraises capability, capacity and potential of school leadership teams through direct evidence to continually build capacity within the school, within the cluster and across Cognita
- Build a leadership pipeline across the cluster and identify future school leaders for the wider Group
- Ensures strong, consistent leadership across all schools

DELIVERY OF GROUP STANDARDS

- Ensures all schools operate in line with group-wide standards
- Supports Heads to translate standards into effective school and classroom practice
- Drives consistency and reduces variation across schools

EXECUTION AND OPERATIONAL DISCIPLINE

- Ensures strong day-to-day execution across all schools, maintaining focus on:
 - quality of delivery across student, parent and employee experience
 - operational effectiveness
 - resource utilisation

PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND INTERVENTION

- Tracks school performance closely using defined metrics
- Identifies underperformance and risks early and acts decisively
- Provides targeted support and challenge to drive rapid improvement

ENGAGEMENT WITH CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

- Works with Centres of Excellence to access support and expertise
- Ensures that services are effectively used to improve school performance
- Maintains accountability for outcomes within the cluster

GROWTH AND MARKET DEVELOPMENT

- Assesses market growth assessment and competitive positioning to optimise the offer and functioning of each school
- Manages capacity optimisation across the cluster



EXPECTATIONS

As a senior leader, the postholder is expected to:

- Act as a system leader, contributing to the success of Cognita as a whole, beyond the immediate remit of the role.
- Work collaboratively across organisational boundaries, supporting alignment and coherence between functions, cogs and schools.
- Role model the highest standards of professional behaviour, integrity and judgement, aligned with the organisation's mindsets.
- Demonstrate collective accountability, supporting organisational priorities and decisions, and contributing to a culture of transparency, trust and continuous improvement.
- Exercise sound judgement in balancing educational quality, operational effectiveness and commercial considerations in decision-making.
- Undertake any other responsibilities reasonably requested, consistent with the seniority and scope of the role.

EXPERIENCE & PROFILE

EXPERIENCE

- Proven leadership of multiple schools, sites or complex operations, with full accountability for performance
- Track record of delivering measurable improvement in outcomes (education and/or commercial)
- Experience of line managing senior leaders and building leadership capability
- Accountability for financial performance, including budgets and resource allocation
- Experience of leading through change, challenge or underperformance
- International or multi-jurisdiction education context
- Multi-site P&L accountability
- Experience of growth, enrolment strategy and/or capacity optimisation
- Experience working with centralised/platform functions

CAPABILITIES

- Performance leadership: Drives consistent delivery and holds others to account
- Data-informed: Uses metrics and insight to diagnose issues and act decisively
- Leadership judgement: Accurately assesses and develops school leaders
- Operational discipline: Ensures strong execution, efficiency and consistency
- Commercial awareness: Understands drivers of enrolment, retention and financial performance
- Stakeholder focus: Prioritises student, parent and employee experience as key performance drivers
- Strong understanding of education quality frameworks and school improvement approaches
- Ability to operate effectively across diverse cultural and geographic contexts
- Experience leading transformation or improvement programmes

LEADERSHIP MINDSET

- Accountable: Owns outcomes without deflection
- High standards: Sets clear expectations and follows through
- Decisive and resilient: Acts quickly and effectively in the face of challenge
- Balanced judgement: Integrates educational quality, experience and commercial considerations
- System-minded: Thinks beyond individual schools to cluster and group performance
- Coaching orientation: Committed to developing future leaders
- Continuous improvement: Seeks to refine systems and outcomes over time
- Cultural adaptability: Comfortable leading across diverse school communities

HOW TO APPLY

To apply, please email your detailed CV and a cover letter to Lynne Rennie at lynne.rennie@cognita.com. Your cover letter should highlight your interest in the role and how your experience aligns with the key criteria.

The deadline for applications is 15 May 2026, but we encourage early submissions. References will only be contacted at the final stages of the process, and only with your prior consent.

If you would like to discuss the role further, please contact Lynne Rennie directly at +971 52 725 1457.

Cognita Schools are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers and other third parties to share this commitment. Safer recruitment practice and pre-employment background checks will be undertaken before any appointment is confirmed.



