



Director of School Improvement Candidate Pack

Candidate Pack



PONTEFRACT
ACADEMIES TRUST

Welcome

Welcome from the CEO and context for this appointment.

Dear applicant,

Thank you so much for being interested in the post of Director of School Improvement. We are delighted to provide you with an application pack.

It is hoped that the information provided will interest you and help you with the application process. The Trust is a cross-phase Multi Academy Trust made up of a range of converter and sponsored schools; six primary schools and two 11-16 secondary schools. The family of schools are all located within a tight geographic hub within Pontefract. Pupils are drawn from the local community, including a mix of different catchment areas.

I am delighted that the journey over the last three and a half years has improved pupils' outcomes across our schools. Our work prior to COVID-19 demonstrated a clear trajectory of improvement, and whilst there have been no national tests and examinations since 2019, we are confident that our school improvement journey has not lost any momentum. We have a tremendous staff body across our eight schools who live and model the guiding principles of the Trust in their daily work. The Trust is moving to the next phase of its organisational development. With improved outcomes, a clear school improvement model, robust quality assurance, plus the introduction of a new teaching and learning rubric, the Trust has a strong educational offer. We have also made a positive start in centralising the back-office functions that support school improvement. We shall continue to work hard in this area to free up school leaders and teachers from distractions so that they can focus upon delivering a high quality of education.

Context for this appointment

The Trust has a refreshed Strategic Plan for 2021-24. The link is [here](#). Our six Trust priorities are clear. Delivering on these areas will allow the children and young people who attend a Trust school to receive a first-class deal in and out of the classroom.

I referred to the Trust moving into the next phase as an organisation, and the strategic plan and our priorities reflect the organisation's maturity. The close geographic proximity of our Pontefract schools brings many opportunities. The vast majority of pupils that join us in the early years stay with us until they are 16; this means we have an opportunity to develop greater coherence on the educational journey for pupils from five to sixteen. We have started this work but there is more to do.

One of our strategic priorities for the Trust is growth, governance, and partnerships. Sustainable growth means building school improvement capacity across our schools, and our track record for improvement over recent years now provides us with a solid platform to build.

The plan is not to grow our family of schools for growth's sake. We must preserve the work that we have delivered in our schools; however, we should also be in a position educationally and with our operations to work with schools locally and regionally so that more pupils gain from our excellent staff and approach.

Considering the above context, I am delighted to announce the new role of Director of School Improvement across the Trust. As a member of the Trust's executive team, the successful candidate will lead on school improvement and quality assurance strategies across the family of primary and secondary schools. There will be two Directors of School Improvement. Crucially, the roles are not split into primary and secondary phases; they are identical in nature and remit to support the delivery of our 4-16 offer. The successful candidate will work alongside Tom Fay, currently Director of Primary Education. Tom will move across from his current executive role to become one of the Directors of School Improvement. The Director of School Improvement role is an exciting opportunity for an experienced and qualified professional with drive, ability and creativity who can make a real and direct impact upon children's learning.

The vacant role would suit someone who has experience driving positive change in schools and has a proven track record in school improvement. It provides an excellent opportunity for anyone who wishes to utilise their skills, knowledge, and experience to impact across more than one school in the Trust. The role will be working alongside Tom and report directly to the CEO, initially taking executive leadership responsibility for four schools. The position is an opportunity to take responsibility and accountability for leading on the support, advice and guidance that enables our schools to succeed and improve to deliver the best possible educational experience for all our children. The start date for the role is likely to be September 2022, however, there will be opportunities for transition work before that date.



Julian Appleyard OBE
CEO



About the Trust.

Achievement Without Excuses.

We have an unwavering focus on achievement. This is paramount so that all of our children and young people enjoy greater life chances.

We take responsibility for ensuring that they succeed. We own our own performance and do not rest on our laurels or seek to blame others.

Excellence As Standard.

We set high standards. "Good enough" is simply not. We do not accept second best from our pupils or ourselves.

The Trust aims to be a highly reliable school improvement organisation that is disciplined in its approach to improving performance. A Trust with clear plans and simple and precisely executed systems that not only develop and sustain excellent performance, but never stifle individual flair.

Stronger As One.

We take collective responsibility for each other and the results of all of our children and young people. We enjoy sharing our success as a Trust while recognising the strengths of individuals and each school. To this end, collective accountability is rooted in a "if one fails we all fail" mentality.

As a family of schools we collaborate with each other, challenge each other and share best practice. We do not let competition get in the way of our desire to get the best outcomes for all.

Our Mission.

Running top-quality, high-achieving schools that give our children and young people the chance in life they deserve.

Our Vision.

Where every child and young person makes outstanding progress.

Our People Matter.

We know that our people make a difference to the lives of our 3–16-year-olds. We want to make our schools places where great teachers want to teach, lead and build a career. Investment in the recruitment, development and retention of the best people is a top priority.

We aim to provide professional work environments where our people have the support and tools to do a great job and push our children and young people to scale new heights in a safe and secure environment.

Pupils Come First.

Our schools are run for the benefit of children and young people, not the ease of adults. Their achievement comes first and staff in schools and the central Trust office work to this end.

The Trust aims to keep low priority tasks away from front line teachers and leaders so that they can focus explicitly on our core business of teaching and learning.

Our Schools.

The Pontefract Academies Trust family includes a range of schools across Pontefract. We provide education from nursery, through primary and secondary.

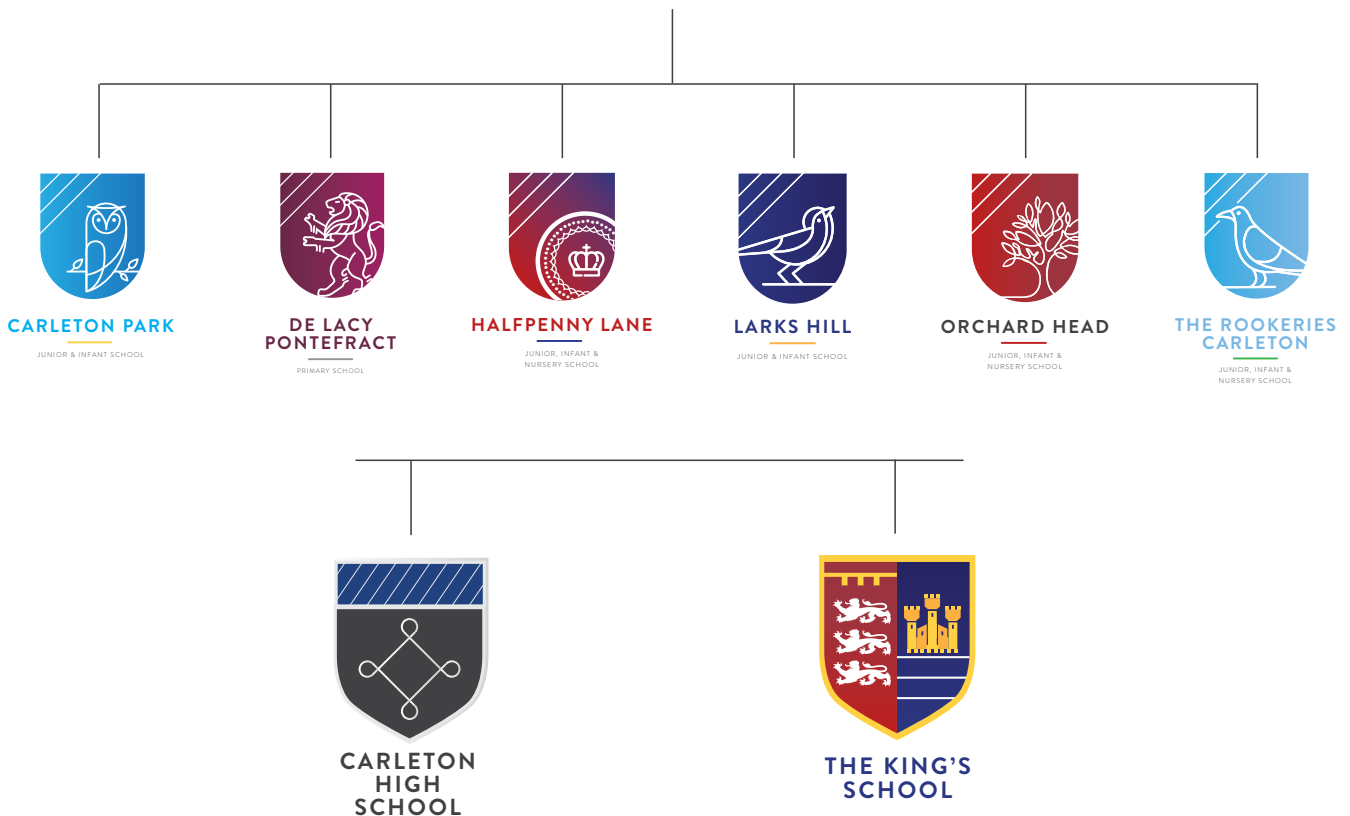
Each school is individual and responds to the needs of its local community to provide the best possible opportunity for its young people. However, being part of a Multi Academy Trust means each school can benefit from shared resources and systems that allow collaboration for the benefit of our children and young people.

8 SCHOOLS

ONE TRUST



PONTEFRACT
ACADEMIES TRUST



Job Description:

Director of School Improvement

Reporting to:	Chief Executive Officer
Responsibility for:	Headteacher(s)
Salary:	Dependent on experience
Location:	Central team and travel to schools

Job Purpose

As a member of the Executive Leadership Team this post is responsible for leading on:

- Development of the Trust's school improvement model, associated plans and framework; in co-ordination with other Director(s) of School Improvement and any future school improvement team;
- Delivery and co-ordination of school improvement support for identified schools within the Trust;
- Developing and delivering quality assurance systems across the Trust's schools;
- Reporting to the Trust Board on the quality of education and the impact of school improvement activity.

Key Responsibilities and Accountabilities

- Be an active member of the Trust's Executive Leadership Team;
- Contribute towards development and delivery of the Trust's three-year strategic plan, operational plan, school development plans and school self-evaluations;
- Development of the Trust's school improvement model, associated plans and framework, in co-ordination with other Director(s) of School Improvement and any future school improvement team;
- Provide advice and professional expertise to support the strategic growth of the Trust, including active involvement in the Trust's due diligence process of new schools;
- Deliver and co-ordinate targeted school improvement support for identified schools across the Trust;
- Provide support and challenge to schools to secure high levels of pupil and staff performance and deliver an exciting and challenging curriculum;
- Analyse school and Trust performance data and utilise it to inform targeted support for schools and strategically plan and manage delivery of school improvement activities;
- Develop and deliver quality assurance systems across the Trust's schools;
- Produce reports to the CEO, Executive Leadership Team and the Trust Board on the quality of education, and the impact of school improvement activities;
- Contribute towards strategy and policy updates;
- Take strategic responsibility for Trust wide areas as allocated by the CEO.

Job description continued on next page



Job description continued

Applied Knowledge and Expertise

- Apply extensive experience in the leadership of schools to school improvement planning, due diligence, intervention in schools facing challenging circumstances and the development of the Trust's strategy and framework for school improvement;
- Use significant experience in preparing schools for Ofsted inspections, as well as detailed knowledge of the inspection framework and practices, to improve the standards in schools;
- Utilise in-depth knowledge and experience of working in the educational sector to design and deliver effective quality assurance systems and processes across schools and support the design of intervention strategies to improve academic standards and outcomes;
- Apply experience in change management and leadership training to target improved performance and lead Trust wide organisational change;
- Apply experience of encouraging collaboration between schools, across the Trust and with other external agencies to support improvement, sharing of best practice and reduce the replication of effort;
- Apply knowledge of statutory and regulatory compliance to ensure compliance across all schools.

Decision Making and Problem Solving

- With the CEO and Executive Leadership Team, create and regularly review structures across the schools that reflect the Trust's and each school's values and enables management systems, structures, and processes to work effectively;
- Work with the Executive Leadership Team, Director of School Improvement, Headteachers and any future central school improvement team to monitor and evaluate the academic performance, leadership, and management of schools;
- Support and work towards the aim that all schools maintain at least a 'good rating', with the goal of eventually becoming 'outstanding';
- Lead transformational change both strategically and operationally in all schools;
- Delegate key responsibilities and operations across any future central school improvement team and across the wider organisation.

Operational and Resource Management

- Identify opportunities across the group of schools for financial gains and sharing of resources through school-to-school collaboration;
- Ensure that all resources available to schools are used in ways which are for the promotion and achievement of the school's priorities, values, and objectives;
- Work with the Chief Executive Officer, the executive leadership team and headteachers to prioritise resource allocation and maximise value for money through developing a strong knowledge of school financial KPIs and application of curriculum led financial planning;
- Works closely with the Trust's Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial officer and Headteachers to oversee the staffing resource of each school to ensure curriculum efficiency within agreed parameters.

Leadership and Management of People Development

- Drive a culture of high expectations, supporting school leadership teams to improve standards across all phases and curriculum areas;
- Ensure leaders across the Trust receive the appropriate teaching and leadership training and continue to develop their practice;
- Work with Headteachers to recruit staff of the highest quality across the group;
- Promote a positive culture throughout the organisation and adopts behaviours that exemplify the Trust's values;
- Line manage and performance develop Headteachers of identified schools and any future members of a central school improvement team, setting ambitions and encouraging continuing professional development;
- Build own leadership capacity and takes responsibility for own professional development by actively engaging with and seeking out areas for improvement;
- Work alongside the CEO and executive leadership team on the development, talent management and succession planning of staff across schools.

Job description continued

Stakeholder Management

- Nurture robust, open, and effective relationships with all parties across the Trust and with key external agencies including, Wakefield Local Authority, DFE, Regional Schools Commissioner, Teaching School Hubs and other Trusts and maintained schools;
- To keep abreast of local, national, and international policy, practice, and research in relation to schools working in challenging contexts and advise accordingly;
- Foster a culture of collaboration by creating networks and opportunities for schools and individuals within the Trust and its schools to engage each other and to build effective extended networks that have impact;
- Facilitate the partnership and networking of Headteachers, school leaders and the Trust staff to share and promote best practice and to support each other with challenges;
- Create effective working relationships with the senior leadership team of each school;
- In conjunction with Headteacher at each school create and maintain an effective partnership with parents;
- Strengthen each school's positive image in the wider community;
- Lead in developing community engagement, promoting a continuous culture of change, high standards and expectations.

Supporting the work of the Trust

- Develop and maintain the guiding principles of the Trust so that it is intrinsic and permeates all aspects of the schools' life and curriculum;
- Develop strong and positive relationships with colleagues in the Trust and contribute to collaborative work across academies cross phase;
- Be a member of the Executive Leadership Team and attend such meetings;
- To attend Trust Board meetings, as required and attend the Education and Standards Committee (a subcommittee of the Trust Board).

Performance Management and Review

- The annual appraisal process will be used to assess performance against agreed objectives and professional development plans in accordance with the Trust Policies and Procedures.

Other Duties and Responsibilities

- Promote high standards of personal professional conduct in accordance with the Trust Employee Code of Conduct;
- Be aware of and comply with policies and procedures relating to child protection, financial regulations, health, safety and security, confidentiality and data protection, reporting all concerns to an appropriate person;
- Be aware of and support difference and ensure equal opportunities for all;
- Contribute to the overall vision and values of the Trust;
- Appreciate and support the role of other professionals;
- Be prepared to provide additional support to the Central Trust or other schools of the Trust if required;
- Attend and participate in relevant meetings as required;
- Participate in training and other learning activities and performance development as required
- Be proactive in seeking appropriate advice and guidance where required;
- Any other reasonable duties commensurate with the scale and seniority of the post, as directed by the CEO.

The duties and responsibilities highlighted in this Job Specification are indicative and may vary over time. Post holders are expected to undertake other duties and responsibilities relevant to the nature, level and scope of the post and the grade has been established on this basis.

Person specification

			Assessed by	Assessed by
No.	Categories	Essential or Desirable	Application Form	Interview or Task
1.	Degree educated	E	✓	
2.	Qualified Teacher Status	E	✓	
3.	Evidence of continuous professional development	D	✓	
4.	Qualified to teach and work in the UK	E	✓	
Experience				
5.	Strong record of educational leadership, significant experience as a Headteacher/Executive Leader gained within either a primary or secondary setting;	E	✓	✓
6.	Demonstrable record of taking a school or group of schools to an Ofsted 'Good' or better judgement as a Headteacher/Executive Leader;	E	✓	✓
7.	Experience of developing and motivating senior leaders to achieve success;	E	✓	✓
8.	Experience of writing, implementing and reviewing successful improvement plans and strategies that bring impactful change;	E	✓	✓
9.	Extensive experience of leading CPD activities for others;	E	✓	✓
Abilities, skills and knowledge				
10.	Able to develop strategic awareness, peripheral vision, and see the bigger picture;	E	✓	✓
11.	Effective partnership working skills – able to build and draw on the strengths of others to generate outstanding results;	E	✓	✓
12.	Sound knowledge of current educational policy, national initiatives and implications for in-school practices;	E	✓	✓
13.	Detailed knowledge of effective school improvement practices and extensive knowledge of effective intervention strategies to impact on school standards;	E	✓	✓
14.	Able to interpret complex data and produce reports that strategically review and evaluate resources and performance;	E	✓	✓
15.	Able to develop processes that encourage the sharing of best practice across schools and clusters of schools;	E	✓	✓
16.	Able to pursue challenging and rigorous questions and probe explanations;	E	✓	✓
17.	A strong sense of personal accountability and the ability to hold others to account, including senior school leaders;	E	✓	✓
18.	Able to work accurately with attention to detail, and be creative in approaching problem solving;	E	✓	✓
19.	Able to build strong working relationships with Trust Board and SPRB members, Headteachers, and school staff at all levels;	E	✓	✓
20.	Able to prioritise, work efficiently and accurately, particularly under pressure, to deadlines and using own initiative;	E	✓	✓
21.	An understanding and commitment to safeguarding issues and promoting the welfare of children and young people;	E	✓	✓
Personal Qualities				
22.	A commitment to leadership of inclusive schools, where the needs of all children are met, including vulnerable pupils, those from disadvantaged backgrounds, those with SEND, and the most able;	E	✓	✓
23.	Adaptive and responsive to change;	E	✓	✓
24.	Holds and articulates the Trust guiding principles, leads with moral purpose, ethically and with integrity;	E	✓	✓
25.	Flexible; thrives on change, enjoys working at pace and able to respond to changing demands;	E	✓	✓
26.	Integrity and commitment to the Nolan principles of public office; display the highest levels of integrity and probity, and be committed to the highest levels of effort, endeavour and focus on standards;	E	✓	✓
27.	Personal resilience, persistence and perseverance with a positive mindset, optimistic and a good work companion at all times;	E	✓	✓
28.	Willingness to travel to Trust schools, and when necessary, work outside normal working days for public and other meetings, and to achieve deadlines.	E	✓	✓

How to apply:

For further information about this exciting opportunity please contact the recruitment team at recruitment@patrust.org.uk or 01977 232146.

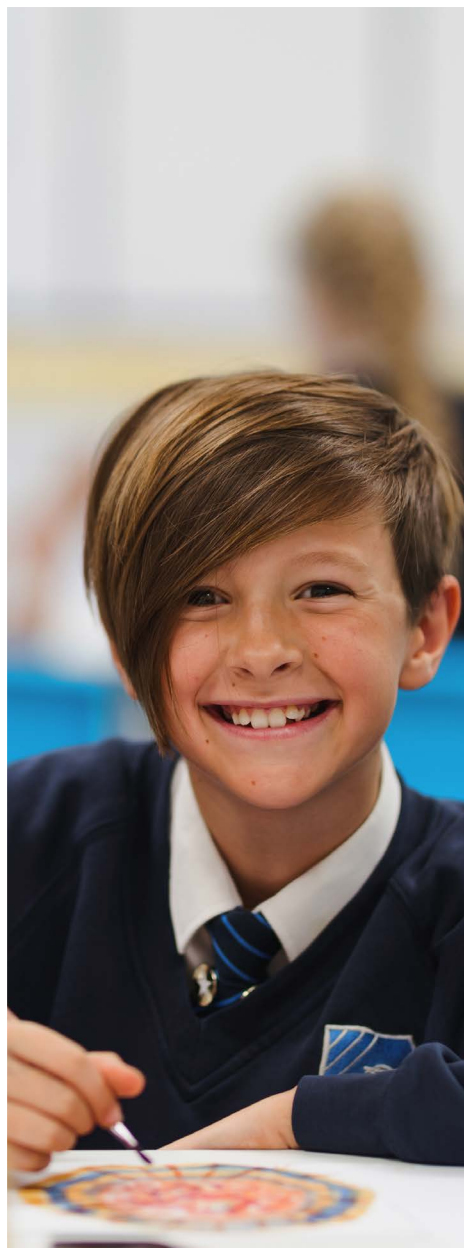
Please submit your application via the Face-Ed link on our website at pontefractacademiestrust.org.uk/vacancies before the closing date. Please submit a covering letter which fully addresses the competence outlined in the job description and person specification. This should be no longer than 2 sides of A4.

Closing date: **Wednesday 22nd December 2021**

Interview date: **Week commencing 10th January 2022**

Start date: **September 2022**

We look forward to hearing from you.



Pontefract Academies Trust

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The Pontefract Academies Trust are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We will ensure that all our recruitment and selection practices reflect this commitment. All successful candidates will be subject to DBS checks along with other relevant pre-employment checks.