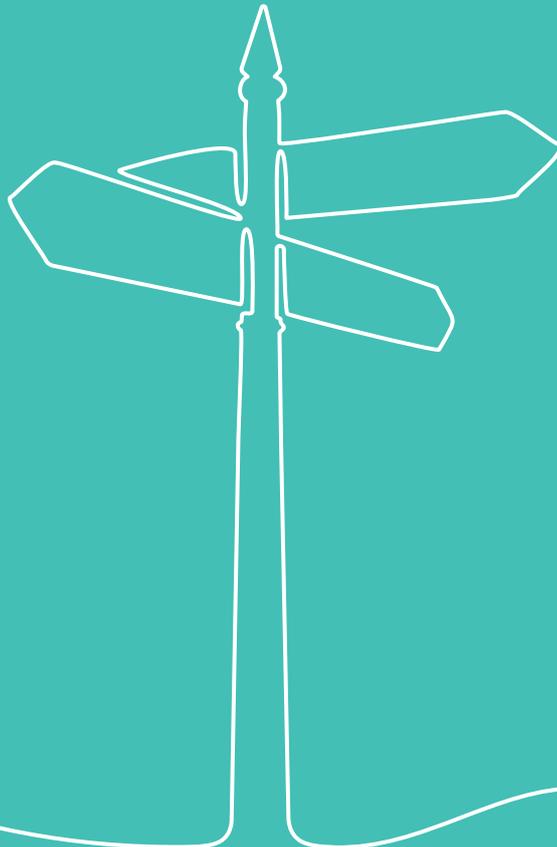




ACHIEVING MORE TOGETHER

Director of Secondary Education

Recruitment information pack







Note from the CEO

Welcome to Ormiston Academies Trust. As Chief Executive Officer, I'm delighted that you are thinking about joining us.

The role of Director of Secondary Education at Ormiston Academies Trust is an opportunity for an ambitious and high performing leader, to deliver higher educational outcomes at scale, and have national impact. It is a career-defining role.

As one of the largest and longest standing trusts in the school system, we are guided by our founder, Peter Murray's belief that every child deserves the chance to thrive, regardless of their background. Our mission is to ensure every child has excellent learning opportunities, inside and outside of the classroom, which enrich their lives and allow them choice and opportunity in the future. Our communities are diverse, and we work where the challenge is greatest; a responsibility we embrace.

2025 was a year of significant progress for Ormiston: our outcomes improved, school behaviour and culture were strengthened, and pupil absence and suspensions decreased significantly. We launched a new Common Curriculum project across the secondary phase, sharing a high-quality curriculum model with consistent examination boards. We welcomed our 45th school and were proud that our annual staff survey showed 90% of staff report being proud to work at their school. Yet we remain ambitious, humble, and clear that our best work still lies ahead.

As Director of Secondary Education, you will play a pivotal role in accelerating sustained improvement across our secondary schools, shaping strategic direction, and line managing our Education Directors who are responsible for defined geographical regions of our secondary schools.

You will provide decisive, strategic leadership that elevates the performance of our Education Directors, and supports Principals to secure the best outcomes for every pupil. We value the expertise and judgement of great leaders, and we empower them to make a lasting impact.

I hope this pack gives you insight into our organisation and the qualities we look for in our senior leaders. For a confidential discussion about this role, please go to the 'How to apply' section of this pack.



Best wishes

Tom Rees
Chief Executive Officer

About the role

We are seeking an exceptional and experienced leader to join our Trust as Director of Secondary Education. This is a pivotal role in Ormiston, focused on accelerating school improvement across our secondary academies, developing a team of Education Directors, and supporting Principals to deliver the best outcomes for every pupil.

The successful candidate will combine strategic vision with operational rigour, building a culture of high ambition, collective responsibility, and excellence across the secondary phase. Alongside the National Director of Secondary Education, you will lead a team of Education Directors, foster collaborative working between schools, and ensure that every decision, resource, and intervention drives measurable improvement. This role operates across the full Trust and multiple regions, with direct line management responsibility for a small portfolio of schools, likely to be in the east region, which encompasses Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk. We have a Birmingham office and you will travel to our academies and other locations as necessary.

You will have senior responsibility within the Trust, deputising for the National Director of Secondary Education where necessary, representing the secondary phase in Trust-wide decision-making, and directly line-managing a small group of Principals. If you are passionate about developing leaders, accelerating outcomes, and making a difference in schools and communities, this is an exciting opportunity to shape the future of secondary education in our Trust.

What you will deliver

1. Building the capacity and impact of Education Directors

- Line manage a team of Education Directors responsible for defined geographic regions, driving school improvement across the secondary phase.
- Alongside the National Director of Secondary Education, lead, coach, and develop the Education Director team to become a high-performing team capable of translating ambition into effective action in schools.
- Support Education Directors in developing the leadership capacity of Principals and senior leaders within their schools.
- Ensure Education Directors work effectively with central functions (people, finance, data) to remove barriers and accelerate school improvement.
- Support the monitoring of performance across regions, identifying risks, variations, and areas requiring targeted intervention.

2. Direct line management of Principals

- Directly line manage a small group of Principals, providing coaching, support, and accountability to accelerate improvement in their schools.
- Develop Principals' leadership skills and clarity of purpose, enabling them to lead improvement effectively and build strong leadership teams within their schools.

- Hold Principals and school leaders to account for pupil outcomes, leadership standards and delivery against Trust expectations, while maintaining strong professional relationships and high expectations.
- Ensure clarity of vision, measurable objectives, and credible improvement planning within each school.

3. Accelerated, sustained improvement across the secondary phase

- Support the effective implementation of Trust and local priorities consistently across all secondary academies.
- Foster a culture of high ambition and collective responsibility, ensuring Principals maintain high expectations for pupils and staff, and challenge low expectations constructively with practical, measurable actions.
- Secure rapid and sustained improvement in pupil outcomes across all secondary academies. Increase the pace of improvement where progress is slower than expected, through targeted leadership and focused support.
- Raise outcomes and reduce variation between schools and across key pupil groups, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.
- Promote and develop a cluster-based operating model for geographically close schools, encouraging shared learning, resources, and collaboration to accelerate improvement.

- Ensure leaders are actively engaged in professional development, collaborating with the Head of People Development and other Trust teams to deliver leadership programmes and support talent growth.
- Lead proactive workforce planning and talent management.

4. Deputising for the National Director of Secondary Education

- Contribute to the development and implementation of the Trust's secondary education strategy, translating strategic priorities into clear, operational plans across regions and schools.
- Support the National Director in shaping Trust-wide education strategy, bringing insight from the secondary phase and ensuring alignment with broader system priorities.
- Deputise for the National Director as required, ensuring continuity of leadership and decision-making.

Person specification

Experience

- Successful experience as a secondary Principal, with a strong and sustained track record of accelerating school improvement and improving pupil outcomes.
- Proven leadership experience within a multi-academy trust or equivalent multi-school organisation.
- Successful experience of leading and developing multi-school teams or system leaders across multiple schools, as an Education Director, Executive Principal or equivalent.
- Clear, demonstrable evidence of impact across more than one school, including raising standards, strengthening leadership capacity, and reducing variation.
- Proven success in improving outcomes in challenging contexts, particularly in areas of high socio-economic disadvantage.
- Experience of working effectively with central support functions (people, finance, data) across a number of schools, to remove operational barriers and accelerate improvement.
- Experience of representing a senior leadership function at Trust-wide level, contributing to strategy, planning, and organisational decision-making.

Knowledge

- An expert understanding of secondary education, accountability measures, curriculum, assessment and effective school improvement strategies.

- Expert knowledge of performance management systems and how to use them to secure measurable impact across multiple schools.
- Knowledge of effective leadership development approaches and coaching for senior leaders.
- Awareness of the challenges and opportunities in areas of socio-economic disadvantage and strategies to close attainment gaps.
- Understanding of cluster-based or collaborative school models and system-wide improvement approaches.

Skills and behaviours

- Exceptional leadership and people management skills, with the credibility to lead experienced Principals and Education Directors.
- Ability to provide high support and high challenge, holding senior leaders to account while building trust and professional respect.
- Strong strategic capability, translating Trust ambition into clear, actionable priorities with measurable outcomes.
- Highly developed analytical skills, able to interpret complex performance data and identify precise improvement levers.
- Ability to operate effectively as a deputy, exercising sound judgement, maintaining alignment with the National Director of Secondary Education, and ensuring continuity of leadership.
- Collaborative and system-minded, fostering shared responsibility and collective efficacy across regions and schools.
- Resilient, decisive, and persistent in securing improvement in complex and demanding environments.
- IT skills, confidence and a willingness to learn more about new technologies and innovations.
- Excellent communication skills in all formats including being able to report to senior stakeholders.
- You must be able to work independently of direction and have strong delegation and multi-tasking skills.
- Working under pressure and managing complexity.

March 2026

Our education priorities

We believe that each school has its own unique identity and exists as part of its local community which serves children and families. As a group of schools, we have several shared priorities which we work on in collaboration, to enable each school to deliver for its community.

An excellent education with great outcomes for all pupils

- High-quality curriculum delivered through expert teaching in all subject areas for all pupils.
- School cultures with high levels of behaviour and pastoral care for all pupils.
- A broad, rich and targeted enrichment programme for all pupils.

To improve
behaviour and
culture

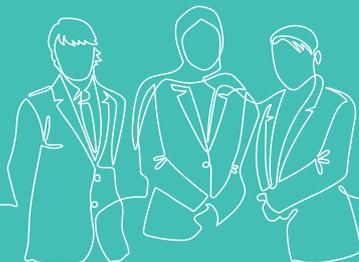
To develop great
teaching

To raise attainment,
particularly of
children from
disadvantaged
backgrounds

To strengthen
approaches to
reading

Our education priorities are underpinned by
inclusion and **enrichment**

**As a Trust, we believe every child
deserves the opportunity to thrive**
regardless of their background.





Our Trust strategy

We are focused on supporting and enabling our schools to thrive. We are a national trust that understands and values the need for unique education for local communities.

Our strategy has five priorities:

An excellent education with great outcomes for all pupils:

We will be in the top 20% of schools and trusts nationally for attainment, progress and attendance, and attainment for disadvantaged pupils will have increased by 20%.

A strong educational delivery model: We will have a highly effective model which has demonstrated its capacity to support rapid and sustained school improvement, along with the internal capacity and the partnership to develop programmes that help schools to continually improve.

High performing people and teams: We will have consistent high performance and learning culture across the organisation which attract and retain high calibre individuals who are aligned to our values.

Enabling functions which are operating effectively and sustainably: We will run enabling functions which are highly effective and support schools to focus on delivering excellent education within an environmentally and financially sustainable envelope. Our ICT and Estates infrastructure will support schools to deliver an excellent education.

Thriving clusters of schools: We will be a trust made up of mixed, thriving local clusters of schools playing an important role in supporting the system around SEND and alternative provision (AP).

This means that...

- Disadvantaged pupil outcomes will be in the top 20% nationally.
- We will have halved the number of pupils who read below their chronological age.
- We will have doubled the number of staff who say that pupil behaviour and professional development are good in their school.
- 75% of staff recommend their school as a good place to work.
- Schools will be 100% Ofsted good or outstanding.
- We will have thriving clusters of schools and will be known nationally for the contribution we make to the system on workforce, inclusion and raising standards for disadvantaged pupils.



Why work for Ormiston?

Our vision is for a school system where every child thrives, regardless of background. Our people are at the heart of our approach – they are our greatest asset.

We exist to provide the best learning opportunities every day, in every school for every child. It is the people and teams in our Trust who make this a reality and ensure we have the greatest impact. If you join us at Ormiston, whatever your role, your work will have purpose and meaning.

A culture that inspires

We are values-led and care deeply about the pupils in our schools. We have five values:

1. **Ambition:** we believe everyone can achieve and we aspire for excellence in all we do.
2. **Learning:** we are always learning and see development as the route to improvement.
3. **Perseverance:** we embrace challenge and learn through doing difficult things.
4. **Collaboration:** we achieve more through working together.

5. **Inclusion:** we break down barriers to learning and participation.

Our culture, underpinned by our values is supported by:

- Promoting a supportive culture that values honest, sometimes challenging, feedback as an opportunity for learning and growth.
- Ambitious goals for all pupils and staff.
- A sense of belonging and a collective attitude of achieving more together and delivering excellence.
- A dedicated survey where we listen carefully and respond to the views of staff.
- Regular exposure to the Trust's National Leadership Group, for learning and support.
- Regular internal communications, including newsletters and updates from our CEO.
- A focus on collaboration, best practice and sharing of expertise.



Collaboration really is a core value here at Ormiston. Seeing how we all work together for the good of our pupils, motivates me every day!

Staff member

Benefits that care for you

We value hard work and dedication, and we're committed to ensuring you are supported, both professionally and personally, so that you can make the most impact for the children and young people in our schools.

Alongside nationally agreed terms and conditions, we offer a generous benefits package. This includes:

- Generous pension and life cover
- Access to health and wellbeing programmes, including counselling services
- Discounts on retail, travel and leisure through our benefits platform
- Free and confidential legal, tax and health 24/7 helpline
- Cycle to work scheme
- Automatic pay progression
- Flexible working arrangements
- And much more as part of a leading multi-academy trust

Professional development that supports your growth

At Ormiston we will invest in you. With learning as one of our core values, we see it as the pathway to continuous improvement and have designed our sector-leading professional development programmes to support your ambitions and unlock your potential.

From bespoke career pathways to opportunities for leadership development, we help you achieve your goals through:

- National conferences with inspiring speakers and workshops.
- Access to subject experts and lead practitioners who share best practice across the Trust.
- Trust-wide inset and staff development days in addition to academy scheduled training days.
- Career-advancing initiatives such as NPQs, apprenticeships and professional development plans.

Complementing our formal approach, we embrace our identity as a learning organisation by encouraging staff to take ownership of their professional development, recognising everyday moments as opportunities to learn and grow. We foster a culture where honest feedback is freely given and openly received.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion

We are proud to be a values-led and performance-driven organisation and we're creating an inclusive environment where everyone can thrive.

We are committed to attracting and retaining diverse talent, fostering belonging and supporting all staff to succeed – helping to meet our overarching purpose of making a difference for every child and young person that we support.

“ The professional development I've experienced here is unparalleled. I feel valued and supported to achieve my best.

Staff member



About OAT

Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT) is a leading, not-for-profit, multi-academy trust which has been transforming schools across the country since 2009, and championing the academic achievement and all-round development of the young people it serves.

At the heart of everything we do is a simple yet powerful vision: a school system where every child can thrive. Our mission is to ensure every child has excellent learning opportunities, inside and outside of the classroom, which enrich their lives and afford them choice and opportunity in the future.

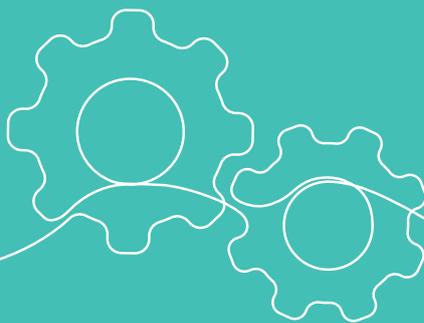
We have always tackled the toughest challenges in education, and we are now moving to the next phase of our development, ensuring that all children and young people can benefit from what is best from within our schools. We have a central team of experts who work closely with our schools across the country.

The senior team has a proven track record of delivering high-quality education at national, regional and institutional levels. This team is overseen by a board with a wealth of national experience and expertise in business and education policy-making, delivery, governance and finance. Strong and aspirational leadership is central to our academies' success, and we have always developed new leaders from within, with nearly a third of OAT academy leaders being home-grown. Additionally, to enhance the strength of our own talent, we recruit high-quality, external school leaders with experience of raising aspirations, and ensuring the highest standards of performance and behaviour.

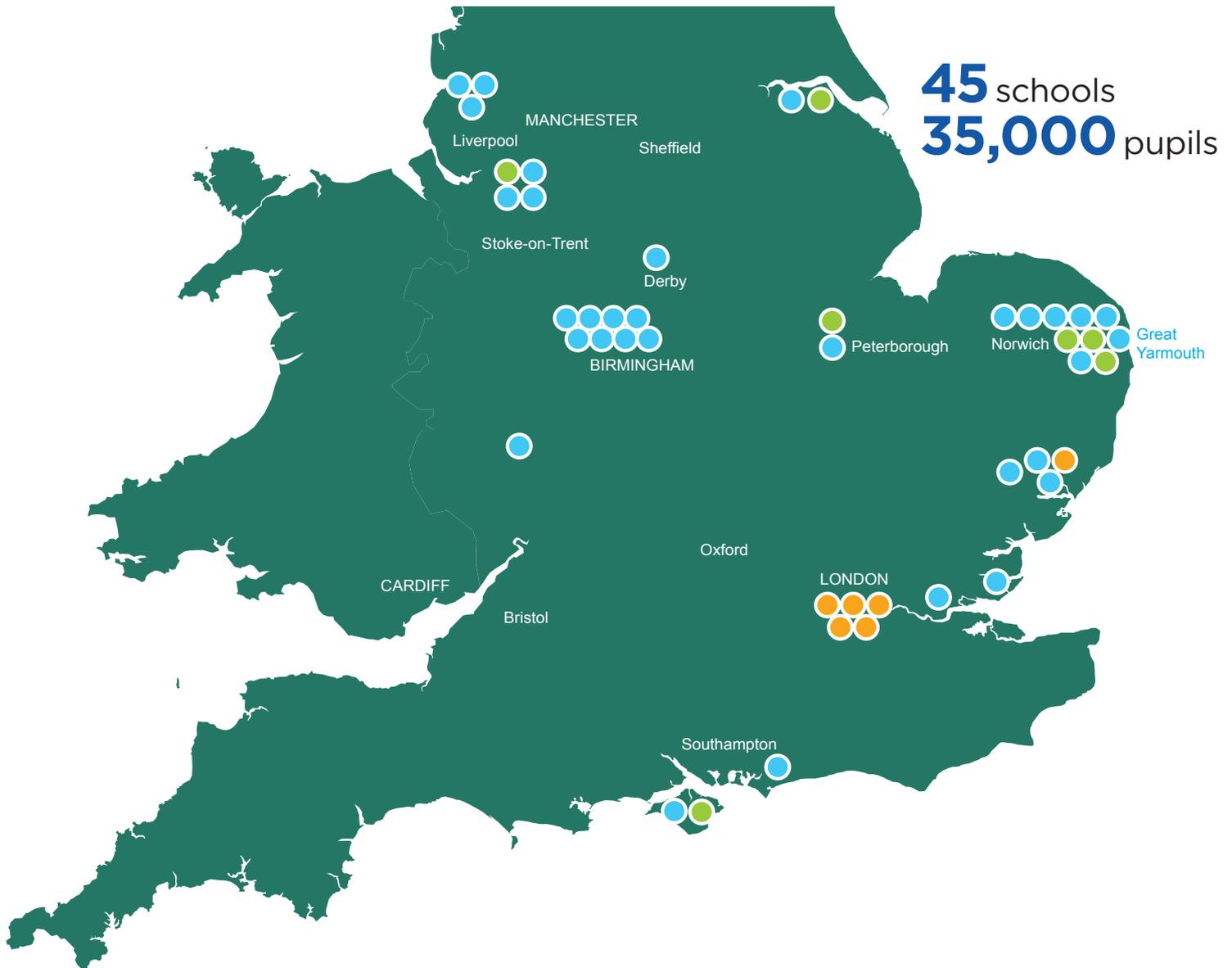
Please visit the [OAT website](#) for more information.

OAT is a leading, not-for-profit, multi-academy trust

which has been transforming schools across the country since 2009.



Our network



32

Secondary schools

7

Primary schools

6

Alternative provision (AP) and special schools

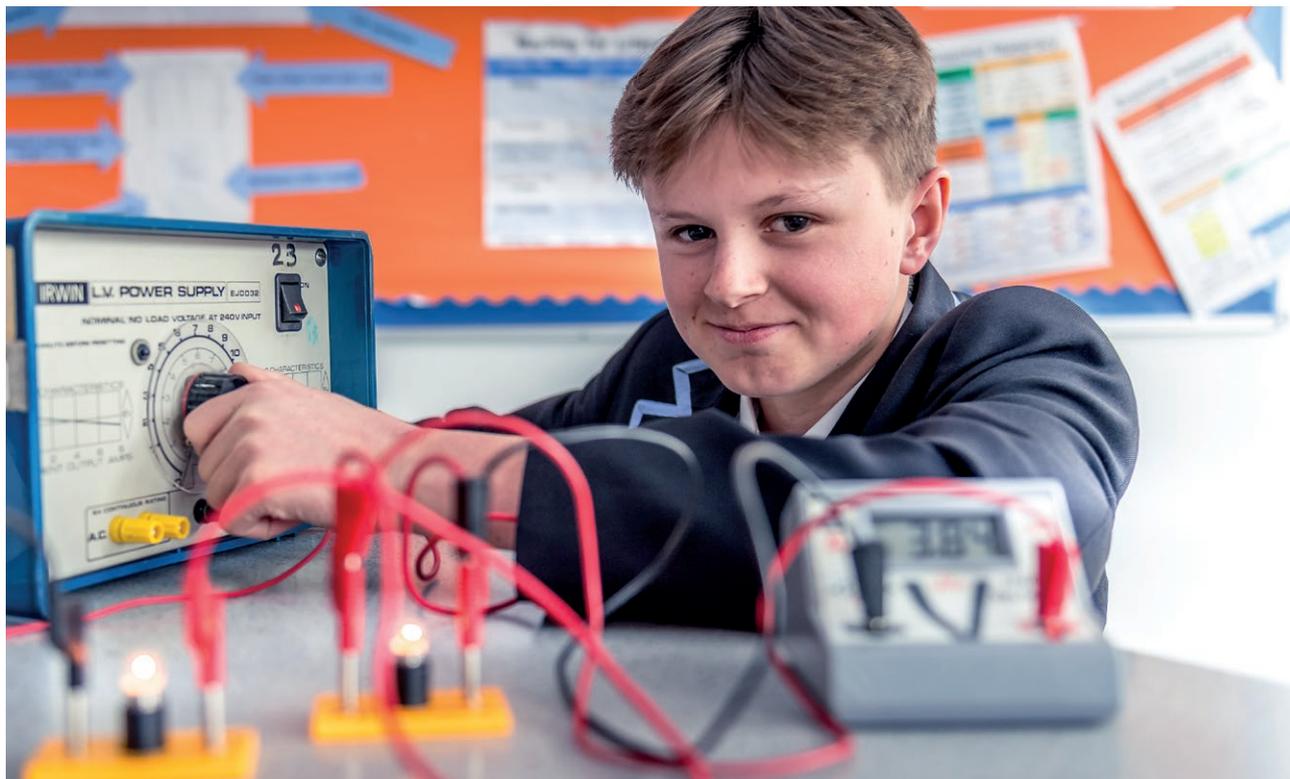


Work for us

Work where it matters most, achieve what matters more. Be part of a team where passion meets purpose, as we work together where the challenge is greatest to change the lives and build the futures of children and young people.

At Ormiston, every member of staff enjoys:

- The opportunity to build on the legacy of those who came before - being part of one of the longest standing trusts, created with the sole purpose of enabling children and young people to thrive.
- Working for a trust nationally recognised for its impact on disadvantaged children - a rewarding, stimulating career where staff are challenged to be the best they can be, for the pupils they are proud to serve.
- Being part of a team and community where you belong - a well-resourced and ambitious network of experts and professionals that work at the heart of communities.
- A supportive environment to grow your career - an extensive professional development programme, alongside flexible working arrangements and generous benefits.



How to apply

Location: Flexible, able to travel to schools in the east region

Reporting to: National Director of Secondary Education

Start date: September 2026

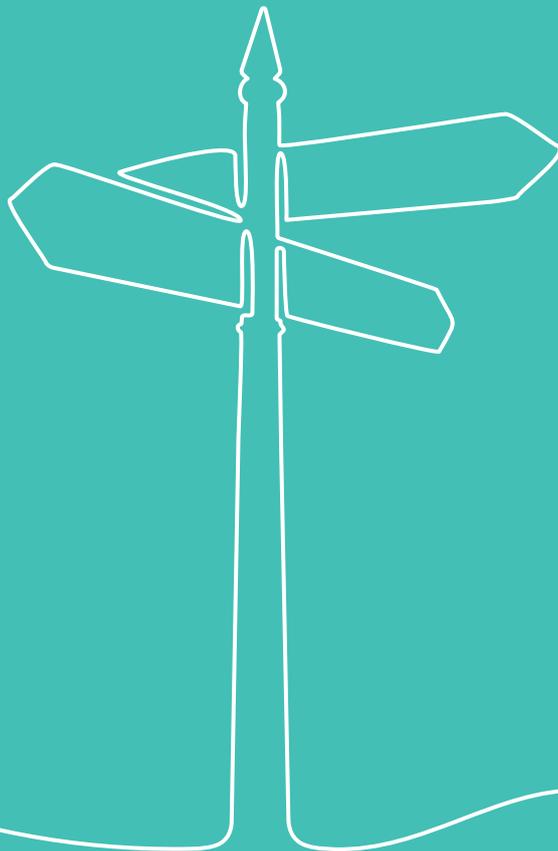
Closing date for applications: 9.00am Monday 13 April

Interview date(s): Friday 17 April

Salary: £150,000 to £160,000

Other benefits: Flexible working, membership of LGPS, 31 days annual leave + statutory holidays, family private health insurance and excellent CPD opportunities. Relocation assistance may be available to support the successful candidate.

For further information about this exciting leadership opportunity please contact Natasha Rancins, National Director of Secondary Education on **07971 531 920** or via email at natasha.rancins@ormistonacademies.co.uk.



[OAT]
Ormiston Academies Trust
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