



St. Aldhelm's
Academy



Principal Candidate Pack

WELCOME



Thank you for your interest in becoming Principal of St. Aldhelm's Academy.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of Authentic Education, I would like to thank you for your interest in the exciting role of Principal at St Aldhelm's Academy.

We hope that, after exploring this pack and conducting your own research, you will feel inspired to take your interest further. You would be most welcome to arrange a visit to St Aldhelm's Academy to gain a first-hand sense of our culture in action.

At Authentic Education, we champion collaboration, bold ideas and creativity. We are actively shaping a curriculum rich in real-world learning, critical thinking and digital literacy. To achieve this, pupils in our academies are supported by dedicated staff who are driven to secure the very best outcomes for every young person, regardless of their background.

The young people we serve are at the heart of everything we do, and their potential is our greatest inspiration. This is an opportunity to join a vibrant community where you can bring your leadership, experience and vision to help our students make courageous choices for their futures.

We are seeking an exceptional leader who shares our commitment to excellence and who will inspire staff and students alike.

Thank you for your interest in this important role and for considering joining Authentic Education.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alison Beane". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alison Beane
Chair of Trustees

ST. ALDHELM'S ACADEMY



St Aldhelm's Academy is a vibrant, non-selective secondary academy at the heart of the Bourne Valley community in Poole.

As part of Authentic Education, we are deeply committed to inclusion and equality, ensuring every child is empowered to thrive regardless of their starting point.

Historically, the academy has faced significant challenges in achieving consistent outcomes. The successful postholder will need to lead rapid transformation at the academy.

Our teachers and support staff are committed to the journey we are on, both in the classroom and beyond. They provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities and opportunities for students, which include regular field trips and cultural visits as well as residential stays to encourage personal development, leadership and teamwork.



SUPPORT FROM UNITED LEARNING



There has recently been significant change within the Trust's leadership. In response, the Board of Trustees has undertaken a careful review of how best to ensure strong and sustainable support for our academies, staff and pupils.

As part of this work, Authentic Education is now working in close partnership with United Learning, one of the country's most established and successful multi-academy trusts.

Through this partnership, United Learning is providing direct school improvement and leadership support across the Trust. This includes access to Regional Directors, specialist subject advisers and a range of central professional services, alongside the opportunity to engage with United Learning's extensive professional networks.

The academy is also benefiting from United Learning's curriculum expertise, including a knowledge-rich mastery curriculum and a suite of common assessments that enable leaders to gain deeper insights into pupils' learning and progress.

Alongside this work, the Board of Trustees is actively exploring how this partnership can develop further in order to secure the strongest possible long-term arrangements for our academies. This creates an exciting opportunity for the successful Principal to work within a strengthening partnership and to contribute to the next stage of the school's development.



PRINCIPAL AT ST. ALDHELM'S ACADEMY



We are looking for a leader who understands that St. Aldhelm's requires rapid transformation to provide the high-quality, ambitious education our students deserve.

We are seeking a visionary Principal who is determined to improve the lives of the young people we serve. This is a unique opportunity to lead the next phase of the school's improvement and make a positive impact on the wider community.

As Principal, you will:

- Provide strong, values-driven leadership to navigate the academy through its next phase of growth.
- Drive a culture of continuous improvement to establish high standards of teaching, learning, and pupil achievement where they do not yet consistently exist.
- Shape and implement the Trust's educational vision to ensure excellence becomes the norm.
- Strengthen relationships with pupils, families, staff, and the local community.
- Promote an inclusive and ambitious curriculum that prepares students for a future full of possibility.

While the journey ahead is demanding, the rewards are significant. In return for your dedication, you will benefit from:

- The opportunity to lead a school through a pivotal period of transformation and leave a lasting legacy.
- Support from an experienced Executive Team and a collaborative network of school leaders.
- High-quality professional development and leadership coaching tailored to the challenges of school improvement.
- Clear opportunities for career progression and impact across the wider Trust.

JOB DESCRIPTION



Post: Principal at St. Aldhelm's Academy

Salary: Highly competitive

Relationships

The post holder is accountable to the Director of School Improvement (Secondary) in all matters relating to this post. All staff are ultimately responsible to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The post holder will work closely with team members and support the team when necessary.

Purpose

As Principal of St. Aldhelm's Academy, you will lead and inspire excellence throughout the academy. You will work with all staff to ensure success for all pupils at every stage of their education and provide them with the skills and confidence for their future life and work.

The Principal, together with the Governing Body, will be responsible for establishing and implementing the vision and direction for all staff and pupils throughout the academy. In leading the academy, the Principal will ensure that the school's ethos and values are deeply embedded and visible to all stakeholders.

Reporting:

The Principal's direct reports who they line manage will include as a minimum, their PA (who also serves as the HR Academy Lead), the Vice Principal, and Assistant Vice Principals.

Main duties & responsibilities

Educational leadership and management

- Ensuring excellent academic outcomes in both key stages.
- Developing outstanding teaching and learning for all pupils.
- Embedding an aspirational and innovative culture of learning.
- Implementing a rigorous system of monitoring to evaluate the work of the school.
- Securing and maintaining high standards across the whole school.
- Embedding a fulfilling and enriching curriculum for all children.
- Setting and achieving aspirational targets for all pupils that ensure rapid progress to become an outstanding school.
- Ensuring the welfare and safety of all pupils from all groups, including their safeguarding.
- Maintaining and developing a calm and focussed school environment, with excellent staff-pupil relationships.

Strategic leadership and management

- Leading the school in partnership with the Governing Body.
- Defining and delivering the vision and objectives of the school and the School Strategic Plan as agreed with the Governing Body.
- Working collaboratively with the Trust, ensuring compliance and cooperation across the whole school.
- Developing and maintaining the values of the academy.

People leadership and management

- Leading on all staffing issues, including the appointment and development of staff.
- Ensuring a culture of working together to achieve high standards throughout the school.
- Promoting staff wellbeing.
- Managing performance and ensuring that staff receive appropriate support in order to achieve excellence.
- Leading reflective practice and inspirational professional development that enables all members of staff to flourish.
- Promoting equality and fairness for all staff.
- Taking responsibility for one's own professional development as Principal.

Financial and business management

- Working closely with the Academy Finance Manager and the Governing Body to ensure budgets are set and managed within guidelines agreed.
- Monitoring actual spending against budget.
- Monitoring and evaluating the impact of funding to support the progress and achievement of priority groups, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or those eligible for pupil premium funding.
- Ensuring that efficient administrative systems are implemented and managed.
- Managing, maintaining and utilising the site and facilities to their full value to the school and the community.
- Ensuring that health and safety and safeguarding policies are managed and implemented.

Links with the community and business

- Developing strong and effective partnerships with parents.
- Developing a thriving sense of school community to include present and past pupils and parents.
- Creating proactive, entrepreneurial and effective links with the wider community.
- Developing strong and effective partnerships with local primary and secondary schools, colleges and universities.

PERSON SPECIFICATION



Qualifications

- Educational and professional qualifications appropriate for the role of Principal of the academy (e.g., degree from a recognised university and professional qualification such as PGCE).
- Evidence of professional development across career to date.

Experience

- Demonstrable success in a leadership role in a comparable organisation and through significant periods of development at Deputy level or above.
- A proven track record of securing excellence in an educational establishment.
- A proven track record in rapidly raising pupils' achievements.
- Experience leading and developing colleagues and effective teams.
- Evidence of strong relationships with staff, parents, pupils, and the wider community.
- Experience of working effectively in a diverse community with high levels of deprivation.

Knowledge, skills and qualities

- An in-depth understanding of school leadership and school improvement needed to achieve outstanding pupil progress and personal development.
- The ability to create and implement effective management systems in which roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are clearly articulated.
- An understanding of the importance of research in developing approaches to learning and curriculum design and the ability to put this into practice.
- An understanding of expectations of the full range of secondary education.
- A thorough understanding of school markets, the analysis required to develop those and the skills to implement successful marketing strategies.

Personal qualities

- A clear understanding of and commitment to the development of the school's values.
- Belief in equality of opportunities for all pupils and staff regardless of culture, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or religious identity
- Clarity of vision with the ability to communicate it in a compelling and engaging way.
- An adaptable leadership style which encourages leadership from others and celebrates success.
- Determination and resilience.
- Sensitivity and wisdom in managing relationships with pupils, parents and staff.
- High level interpersonal and communication skills with the capacity to influence at all levels.
- High expectations of pupil achievement, conduct and behaviour.
- A commitment to collaborative working, both within the school and across the local community.
- Strong personal drive to engage with and develop the best in all children in the school.
- Openness, sense of humour, energy and enthusiasm.

TERMS & CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT



Employer

Authentic Education Trust

Position

Principal of St. Aldhelm's Academy

Reporting line

Director of School Improvement (Secondary)

Location

St. Aldhelm's Academy, Herbert Avenue, Poole, BH12 4HS

Start date

September 2026

Starting salary

A highly competitive salary will be offered and will be commensurate with the significance and importance of the post and the experience of the successful candidate.

Holidays

You are entitled to take holidays during the normal school holidays except where your presence is required for proper execution of your duties as Principal. We would expect you would not have less than six weeks of the year without any work involvement.

Pension

The Principal is eligible to be a member of the Teachers' Pension.

Relocation

Relocation assistance may be given as a contribution to expenses incurred (up to £5000) if relocation is necessary. This assistance is discretionary.

Safeguarding

Everyone at St. Aldhelm's Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our pupils and expect all staff to share this commitment.

An enhanced DBS check is required for all successful applicants.

Employee benefits

As a part of the Trust, you will have access to a range of employee benefits, such as:

- Strong potential for career progression and professional development opportunities.
- An Employee Assistance Programme, including: in the moment support and counselling sessions with an external provider.
- A range of employee benefits, including: free eye testing for DSE users through Specsavers, free will writing service and corporate gym memberships.

HOW TO APPLY



If you wish to discover more about this exciting opportunity, need any further information or would like to have an informal discussion or tour, please contact Geoff Morris at geoff.morris@unitedlearning.org.uk or telephone 07811 345 638.

Academy tours are available by appointment on 23 March 2026.

How to apply

To apply, please complete the online application form on MyNewTerm.

For the supporting statement section, please ensure you outline the following:

- Why you are interested in this role.
- How your experience and leadership approach align with the school's and Trust's priorities.

The selection process

All enquiries, both formal and informal, regarding the position will be treated in confidence. Receipt of applications will be acknowledged by email.

Shortlisting of candidates is scheduled to take place on Monday 9 and Tuesday 10 April 2026.

The interview process for shortlisted candidates will run over two days on Tuesday 21 April and Wednesday 22 April 2026. All shortlisted candidates will be asked to attend for interview on 21 April and to then be available for 22 April. After the first day of interviews, the panel will invite the final shortlisted candidates to proceed with a further interview on 22 April.

At the end of the process, candidates will be offered full feedback on their application and/or interview.

Key dates:

Application closing date: Wednesday 8 April 2026

Interview dates: Tuesday 21 April and Wednesday 22 April 2026

Start date: September 2026

ABOUT AUTHENTIC EDUCATION



Authentic Education is a diverse and supportive community of rapidly improving schools committed to providing high quality teaching and learning in the classroom and beyond.

Across the beautiful coastal districts of Dorset, we operate six primary academies, four secondary academies, a specialist sports and performing arts studio school, and two all-through SEMH specialist academies.

We are ambitious for the children and young people we serve, many of whom come from backgrounds of significant disadvantage. We want to see them live our values of courage, innovation and excellence in their daily lives, embracing the opportunities to discover more about themselves and to explore the possibilities our world holds for them.

Together we are ...

COURAGEOUS

INNOVATIVE

EXCELLENT





At Authentic Education, we inspire children and young people to:

- Make courageous choices: Equipping young people with the personal integrity and sound judgement to make good decisions in their learning and their lives.
- Embrace innovation to achieve success: Developing critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and digital literacy.
- Commit to the pursuit of excellence: Striving for the highest standards in pastoral care and academic achievement.



Our Difference: Educational Autonomy

We believe that the academies in our Trust should maintain their own unique identities. Every Authentic academy is supported to meet the needs of the specific communities it serves. We encourage a 'bold ideas' culture where creativity is celebrated, and families are treated as key partners in the educational journey.



Our Promise

We promise to support every child to be the best learner they can be. Our role is to nurture their potential through a personalised approach to learning and high-quality inclusion. We are ambitious for our students, and we commit to providing them with the highest standards of care and education to ensure they thrive.



Together we are ...

COURAGEOUS

INNOVATIVE

EXCELLENT

VISION, VALUES & CULTURE



Authentic Education Trust is committed to providing excellent education for all children, delivering a broad and balanced curriculum that improves life chances and prepares young people to succeed. Our move from Ambitions Academies Trust to Authentic Education Trust represents a positive evolution – aligning our academies with a Trust known for its inclusive, ambitious and community-rooted ethos.

What we stand for

Guided by our values of being **courageous**, **innovative** and **excellent**, we are committed to:

- Raising aspirations for pupils and families through high-quality learning experiences.
- Maintaining high standards of teaching and securing excellent outcomes for every pupil.
- Building strong, collaborative partnerships between parents, carers, staff and external stakeholders.
- Creating a secure and supportive environment with clear expectations where every pupil can thrive.
- Delivering a curriculum that blends breadth and balance with real-world learning, placing critical thinking, problem solving and digital literacy at its core.
- Developing a love of learning that lasts a lifetime.

Academy context

Across Authentic Education Trust, our academies are happy, supportive and vibrant communities, where every child's unique abilities and interests are welcomed and celebrated. Families work closely with staff and place a high value on education, contributing to a strong sense of partnership.

As part of aE, each academy benefits from being part of a group of schools united by shared values of courage, innovation and excellence, with a collective ambition to help young people discover who they are and explore the opportunities ahead. Our curriculum is rich in real-world learning, with critical thinking, problem solving and digital literacy at its core, preparing pupils for future success both in learning and in life.

Performance and outcomes

Our academies continue to deliver strong academic results, supported by committed staff and a curriculum shaped around authentic, meaningful learning. This reflects Authentic Education Trust's purpose of helping young people progress in learning, discover who they are and succeed in life.

Facilities

Our academies provide pupils with learning environments designed to inspire creativity, collaboration and the development of essential skills. Specialist spaces—such as areas for the arts, digital learning and performance—enable us to offer rich, real-world learning experiences that reflect Authentic Education's commitment to a broad and balanced curriculum.

Trust Vision Statement

Our mission is to inspire children and young people to:

- Make **courageous** choices
- Embrace **innovation** to achieve success
- Commit to the pursuit of **excellence**.





Together we are ...

**COURAGEOUS
INNOVATIVE
EXCELLENT**

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