

**ENTERPRISE
LIMITED**

ASCEND
LEARNING TRUST



RECRUITMENT PACK

Together we Belong, Believe, Become

WELCOME FROM THE CEO

Dear Applicant

Thank you for taking an interest in Ascend Learning Trust, where we pride ourselves on our core motto 'Together we Belong, Believe, Become'. As a community of schools, we strive to achieve this through our relentless commitment to our values of 'Compassion, Aspiration, Respect, Dedication and Integrity' for all of our students, with the potential of every individual within our community valued. As a result of our newly founded values, we strive to ensure that students receive an incredibly high standard of academic and pastoral care to enable them to leave school with the very best platform for their future. The schools within Ascend Learning Trust are a family, and as such they support each other to continuously improve, providing strength to each other.

As a mother of 3 school age children at primary, secondary, and apprentice level, I know how important young people's school experience is and it is a privilege to lead an organisation whose purpose it is to support this. As the newly appointed CEO of Ascend Learning Trust (from September 2023) I am fully committed, along with all of our staff to ensuring that each child's education is the very best that it can be.

This pack will give you details of the job description and list the main duties of the post, together with further details of the competencies (skills), experience, qualifications, knowledge and abilities required to do the job. It is important that you identify the competencies, experience, qualifications, knowledge and abilities that will be assessed by application form, as you will need to provide evidence that you meet these criteria.

References

We will require two satisfactory references before a job offer is confirmed; one of which must be your Line Manager/ Headteacher in your present or most recent employment.

Please remember to check that your referees are actually available to provide a reference, as failure to do this could cause a delay in confirming your appointment. Further information about the Ascend Learning Trust and the Academies within it, is available on our website info@ascendlearningtrust.org.uk We hope you will feel inspired to apply to work within the Trust.

Yours sincerely

Jane Coley
Ascend Learning Trust CEO

Together we Belong, Believe, Become



JOB DESCRIPTION

The job description lists all the main duties of the post, together with further details of the competencies (skills), experience, qualifications, knowledge, and abilities required to do the job.

The criteria listed within the job description detail the areas which will be assessed at both application and interview. It is important that you identify the competencies, experience, qualifications, knowledge, and abilities that will be assessed by application form, as you will need to provide evidence that you meet the criteria.

All employees have the responsibility to:

- Ensure any documentation produced is to a high standard and is in line with the Trust brand style.
- Be aware and comply with all policies and procedures relating to safeguarding, child protection, health, safety and security, whistleblowing, confidentiality, and data protection, reporting all concerns to the appropriate person.
- Participate in training and other learning activities as required.
- Participate in the Trust Performance Management process.
- Provide appropriate guidance and supervision and assist in the training and development of staff as appropriate.
- Promote the area of responsibility within the Trust and beyond.
- Represent the Trust at events as appropriate and as directed by the Chief Executive Officer.
- Support and promote the Trust ethos, vision, and values.

Role Summary:

The Trust Area Catering Manager holds a pivotal leadership position, responsible for the overall management and delivery of catering services within every school across the Academy Trust (MAT). This role centers on ensuring that all pupils and staff receive high-quality, nutritious, and appealing meals, while upholding the highest standards of health, safety, and food hygiene and following the Trust policies. The Trust Area Catering Manager will act as the direct line manager to all Head Chefs at each school, providing strategic guidance, operational support, and professional development opportunities to foster a cohesive and high-performing catering team throughout the Trust, and they shall set the strategic direction for catering services, ensuring consistency, financial sustainability, innovation, and a positive food experience for students and staff.

Key Accountabilities:

- **Strategic Leadership:** Develop and implement a Trust-wide catering strategy aligned with MAT values. Monitor service performance, drive continuous improvement, and embed innovation and feedback across teams.
- **Operational Management:** Oversee daily catering operations across sites, ensuring consistent service, menu quality, and dietary inclusion. Implement sustainable practices and digital systems like EPOS and online pre-ordering.
- **Compliance:** Ensure adherence to health and safety, food hygiene standards, and legislation including HACCP, COSHH, and Natasha's Law. Conduct audits, manage risks, and liaise with inspectors.
- **Staff Leadership:** Manage and support catering teams across the Trust. Lead recruitment, induction, training, and performance management. Foster development, autonomy, and a culture of wellbeing.
- **Financial Oversight:** Manage catering budgets, stock control, supplier sourcing (procurement) and costs,

monitor profitability and sustainability. Ensure high standards without compromising on financial targets.

- Engagement: Act as an ambassador for the Trust. Promote healthy eating, gather feedback from stakeholders, and support curriculum enrichment activities.
- Develop, review, and implement diverse, balanced, and seasonal menus that cater to the dietary needs, allergies, and cultural preferences of pupils and staff, ensuring compliance with national school food standards.
- Monitor compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements, including food hygiene, allergen labelling, health and safety, and safeguarding policies. Take corrective action promptly when required.
- Lead on the introduction and promotion of healthy eating initiatives, sustainability practices (such as reducing single-use plastics and food waste), and community engagement projects connected to food education.
- Maintain open and effective communication with school leaders, administrative teams, parents, and external agencies to ensure catering provision meets the evolving needs of each school community.
- Analyse key performance indicators (such as uptake rates, customer satisfaction, and budget adherence), report on outcomes, and implement strategies for ongoing improvement.
- Coordinate catering support for special events, school celebrations, and parent engagement activities, ensuring a consistent and professional service.
- Champion the professional development and wellbeing of catering staff, identifying training needs and facilitating access to relevant courses and qualifications.

Supervision & management:

Directly manage and mentor all Head Chefs, overseeing recruitment, induction, ongoing performance management, and career development to maintain a motivated and skilled catering workforce. Oversight of team rotas, cover planning, training, performance evaluation and development across multiple sites.

Resources responsibility:

Budget holder for all catering operations. Responsible for procurement, supplier contract management, stock control, and ensuring financial sustainability of the service.

Key Contacts and Relationships:

Internal

- COO, Headteachers, Head of Estates, Premise Teams, School Office Managers, Trust Leadership.

External

- Suppliers, Inspectors, Environmental Health Officers, Local Authorities.

Qualifications & Experience:

Essential:

- Level 3 Food Safety & Hygiene Certificate
- NVQ Level 3 in Catering or equivalent qualification.
- Proven experience managing multi-site catering operations.

Desirable:

- Degree in Hospitality Management, Nutrition/Dietetics; Health & Safety (IOSH/NEBOSH);
- Familiarity with MAT governance and catering management systems.

Knowledge and Skills

- Comprehensive understanding of food safety and hygiene regulations, including HACCP, COSHH, Natasha's Law, and allergen legislation
- Strong operational knowledge of catering service delivery in large-scale or multi-site environments
- Experience in developing inclusive, nutritious, and cost-effective menus tailored to diverse dietary needs, including allergies, medical conditions, and cultural preferences
- Skilled in financial management and budget control, including cost analysis, stock management, and supplier negotiations
- Leadership and team management expertise, with the ability to build, motivate, and develop high-performing catering teams across multiple locations
- Excellent planning and organisational skills, including project and rota management
- Strong IT proficiency, especially with catering management systems (e.g., EPOS, menu planning software) and general office applications
- Ability to interpret data and KPIs to drive service improvements and ensure compliance
- Clear and confident communicator, able to influence, engage, and build relationships with diverse stakeholders including school leaders, students, and suppliers
- Understanding of sustainable catering practices, including waste reduction, ethical sourcing, and environmentally friendly operations

Ascend Learning Trust

Welcome to Ascend Learning Trust, where we pride ourselves on our core motto 'Together we Belong, Believe, Become'.

As a community of schools we strive to achieve this through our relentless commitment to our values of 'Compassion, Aspiration, Respect, Dedication and Integrity' for all of our students, with the potential of every individual within our community valued.

Compassion

To always show kindness, inclusivity and empathy to each other and to encourage others to behave this way. To care for those around you and to consider the needs of all.

Aspiration

To 'dream big' and to set your goals with no limits. You work hard towards your goals and follow your dreams and always believe that anything is possible.

Respect

To treat everyone as you would always wish to be treated in both words and actions. This means listening to others, appreciating differences, showing kindness and always being considerate.

Dedication

Always try your very best to commit to and achieve all of your goals and never give up even when things are tough. Face challenges courageously and keep focused on your goals.

Integrity

Holding true to what you believe in and act in a way that shows this. Always be honest and if you are in the wrong accept feedback and apologise.

Our vision at Ascend Learning Trust is to create a sense of belonging for everyone. All our young people receive a holistic world-class education regardless of where they come from or their life challenges. They will leave their Ascend community with outcomes that opens doors to a fulfilling and successful future.

Together we Belong, Believe, Become





HOW TO APPLY

Please note CVs will not be accepted. You must complete the application in full giving details of all employment, training, and gaps in employment since leaving school.

Please ensure the closing date for applications is met, we cannot be held responsible for lost or late applications. Due to the large number of applications it is not always possible to respond to each application but we aim to respond within two weeks of the vacancy closing date.

If you would like to arrange a visit to the school, or for more information about applying, please contact the recruitment team on 01793 781485.

Applications should be submitted directly via MyNewTerm, you can access our careers page using the following link:

[Ascend Learning Trust MyNewTerm](#)



mynewterm