
WELCOME TO SHIRE OAK ACADEMY

Shire Oak Academy is an exciting and vibrant learning community where students enjoy great success in and outside of the classroom. We aim to provide an outstanding, positive learning environment and value the high quality of relationships that enable this to be true of all aspects of school life. Our Academy motto, 'Turning Potential into Excellence' is important to us as we prepare our students for successful adult lives in an increasingly competitive world. We support and encourage our students to try their best to achieve success in all areas and help prepare them for their future choices, not only in their academic learning, but also within other areas such as music, sport, art and drama.

At Shire Oak Academy we have a strong focus on academic achievement throughout the academy and develop our young people to be independent and resilient learners. We are immensely proud of our inclusive ethos and of the positive relationships that we build with parents and the local community. We believe that all students can achieve.

We hold high expectations of each other and seek to support each other in ensuring that all members of the school community enjoy an enriching and fulfilling experience during their time here.

The predominant focus of the academy is on working with students to develop the attitudes, skills and knowledge which combine to create successful and independent learners. Our ASPIRE approach is threaded throughout our work in this area. We seek to provide a stimulating and challenging classroom experience in partnership with excellent student support systems.





OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

2020-2025 (Mid-Point 2022)

COMMON PURPOSE (OUR MISSION)	Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes.
LIFE TO THE FULL (OUR VISION)	Equipping our students to (1) realise their potential (2) thrive in the world of work (3) make a positive contribution to the local, national and international community.
GOOD RIGHT & TRUE (OUR APPROACH)	Good: Honesty, integrity, and positivity in our approach to people and tasks. Right: Professionalism, teamwork, and a pioneering spirit (innovation). True: Accuracy, precision and sincerity in our work.

OUR PRIORITY THEMES



Transformation: Social Mobility, Social Justice.

- 1.1 Develop and deliver an ambitious, relevant and responsive **CURRICULUM** inside and outside the classroom (academic, vocational, enrichment and cultural).
- 1.2 Enhance aspirational, inspirational, evidence-based **TEACHING** and experiential **LEARNING**.
- 1.3 Support students' physical **SAFETY**, mental **WELLBEING** and **CHARACTER** development including through student leadership in the community.



System and Structures: Enabling Successful Schools.

- 2.1 Develop effective **MAT CENTRAL TEAMS**, structures and systems to support schools with clear SLAs that demonstrate commitment and drive improvement.
- 2.2 Recruit, develop and maintain effective **LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE** at all levels while succession planning for the future.
- 2.3 Strengthen leaders' commitment to the students and staff in more than one school through **COLLABORATION** and **SYSTEM LEADERSHIP**.



Digital Transformation: Teaching, Learning and Leadership Practice.

- 3.1 Upskill teachers to become experts in **DIGITAL TOOLS** and **PLATFORMS** (personalising high-quality content and interaction with students).
- 3.2 Reduce **STAFF WORKLOAD** and discover **NEW EFFICIENCIES** through collaboration, automation (AI/IoT), innovation and influence beyond one school.
- 3.3 Optimise evidence-based decision making through **DATA ANALYTICS**.



Becoming an Employer of Choice

- 4.1 Further develop a well-trained, professionally **SKILLED & MOTIVATED** workforce (through opportunities + **CPD** beyond one school).
- 4.2 Deliver consistent, harmonised **PAY** and **CONDITIONS OF SERVICE** as one employer committed to fairness across uniquely diverse schools.
- 4.3 Introduce staff rewards and **RECOGNITION** and increase staff retention and internal **PROGRESSION** (promotion within the Trust) for staff [Note: This links to our EDI commitments].



Growing the Trust (in size and influence)

- 5.1 Demonstrate **TRUST CAPACITY** through improvements in existing schools (performance tables) and through securing **GOOD AND BETTER OFSTED JUDGEMENTS** that are recognised by parents, external stakeholders, future partners, and the DFE.
- 5.2 Increase **STUDENT NUMBERS C.5K -> C.10K** through increasing PAN, recruitment/retention in post-16 and through additional schools joining the Trust.
- 5.3 Realise **EXPANSION** projects and **BUILDING PROGRAMMES**.

OUR TOOLKIT



Scheme of Delegation	System Leadership	Professionalised Governance
QA & External Reviews	Integrated Business Planning	Teacher & Leader Development
Single Digital Platform	Professional Support Services	Therapists / Clinical Team

External Network Contribution: DFE Advisory Boards, CST, Chartered College, Whole School SEND, LLSE, UoB



OUR TRUST BLUEPRINT FOR LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE

OUR PURPOSE Increasing opportunities, improving outcomes.

OUR MANTRA Life to the full in pursuit of what is good right and true

OUR PRINCIPLES

[P1]
**Social Mobility
and Social Justice**

[P2]
**Belonging and
Inclusion**

[P3]
**Innovation and
Improvement**

[P4]
**Safeguarding and
Wellbeing**

OUR VALUES (WHO WE ARE)

[V1]
We Care

We are:
Kind
Compassionate

We are uncompromising
in our pursuit of:
Excellence
Rigour

[V2]
We are Courageous

We are:
Ambitious for all our
students and staff

We are:
Agile, flexible and bold
in our decision-making
(including taking the
'difficult decisions')

[V3]
We are Candid

We are people of:
Honesty
Sincerity

We welcome:
Clarity
Feedback
Critique

[V4]
We are Accountable

We model:
Leadership
Integrity

We demonstrate:
Objectivity
Openness

OUR PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOURS

In our work:

We work with accuracy and precision; we are inquisitive and professional
We demonstrate positivity, resilience and determination.

In our relationships:

We uphold and embrace fairness, equitability and teamwork.
We collaborate respectfully, and demonstrate commitment to each other.

In our development:

We engage with quality educational research.
We develop ourselves and others through tailored professional learning.

In our approach:

We are outward looking with a pioneering spirit.
We navigate change with a commitment to serve our local communities.

THE MERCIAN TRUST

The Mercian Trust is one of the largest regional Trusts in the West Midlands with 9 schools and more than 9,700 students. We are making strategic investments of time, focus, and resources into our people and organisational culture – and we are prioritising the development of leaders at all levels.

About The Mercian Trust

The Mercian Trust was incorporated in January 2018 and currently governs nine secondary schools, comprising selective grammar schools, large comprehensive schools, an alternative provision free school and a 14-19 specialist studio school.

In 2021, the Regional Schools Commissioner approved the merger between The Mercian Trust and Q3 Academies Trust. The formal merger transfer was completed on 1st May 2022 when all nine academies of the two Trusts became part of the same family of schools governed by The Mercian Trust.

- Aldridge School (11-18)
- Q3 Academy Great Barr (11-18)
- Q3 Academy Langley (11-16)
- Q3 Academy Tipton (11-18)
- Queen Mary's High School (11-18, selective)
- Queen Mary's Grammar School (11-18, selective)
- Shire Oak Academy (11-18)
- The Ladder School (Alternative Provision)
- **Walsall Studio School & Sixth (14-19)**

The Members of The Mercian Trust include The Vine Trust and the Queen Mary's Foundation. Both are charitable organisations focused on improving the futures of local young people.

Plans for the future

We are nearing the conclusion of our current 2020-25 strategic plan:

- 1. Leading students on a transformational journey** empowering social mobility and delivering social justice.
 - a. Develop and deliver an ambitious, relevant and responsive curriculum inside and outside the classroom (academic, vocational, cultural)
 - b. Enhance aspirational, inspirational, evidence based teaching and experiential learning
 - c. Support students' physical safety, mental wellbeing and character development including student leadership in the community
- 2. Establishing systems and structures** to enable successful schools
 - a. Develop effective MAT central teams and systems (finance/HR/Estates and more) to support schools with clear SLAs that demonstrate commitment and drive improvement
 - b. Recruit, develop and maintain effective leadership and governance at all levels while succession planning for the future
 - c. Strengthen leaders' commitment to the students and staff in more than one school through collaboration and system leadership
- 3. Driving the digital transformation**
 - a. Upskill teachers to become experts digital education (personalising high-quality content and interaction with students)
 - b. Reduce staff workload and discover new efficiencies through collaboration, automated operations, innovation, and influence beyond one school
 - c. Optimise evidence-based decision making through data analytics

4. **Becoming an employer of choice**

- a. Further develop a well-trained, professionally skilled and motivated workforce (through opportunities and CPD beyond one school)
- b. Deliver consistent, harmonised pay and conditions of service as one employer committed to fairness across uniquely diverse schools
- c. Introduce staff rewards and recognition and increase retention and internal progression (promotion within the trust) for staff in all schools

5. **Growing the Trust in size and influence**

- a. Demonstrate Trust capacity through improvements in existing schools (performance tables) and through securing good and better Ofsted judgements that are recognised by parents, external stakeholders, future partners and the DfE
- b. Increase student numbers from c5k to c10k through increasing PAN, recruitment/retention in post 16 and through additional schools joining the Trust
- c. Realise expansion projects and building programmes

Areas of focus for the Trust board at the moment include:

1. **Successful Growth**

Having consolidated following our successful Trust merger, we are now preparing for our next period of growth in size and influence including new schools joining our Trust, increases in PAN, and increases in sixth form numbers. Ensuring this growth enables us to develop and refine our structures, systems and staff to be even more successful for our schools and the communities we serve. We are well-positioned to make a significant contribution to a Trust-led education sector.

2. **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) -** The Trust is passionate about its commitment to social mobility, social justice and inclusion in three significant areas.

- a. **Students** - Closing the gaps in opportunity, attainment and progress for disadvantaged students, students with SEND, vulnerable students and others with protected characteristics that may mean they are more likely to face discrimination and prejudice.
- b. **Staff** – Developing and nurturing opportunities for staff (including leadership development) particularly for those who are more likely to face discrimination and prejudice.
- c. **Governance** - Increasing numbers of non-executive leaders and governors from underrepresented groups.

3. **Digital Transformation**

Delivering the digital transformation of how we teach, learn, lead and operate. The Trust is establishing a single consolidated digital ecosystem / infrastructure that facilitates 'economies of scale' and 'network effect' of being part of one charitable trust.

Trust ethos & values

Our name is rooted in history and expresses a geographical identity and ambition. The ancient kingdom of Mercia encompassed much of what we now recognise as the West Midlands – and crucially for us it included what we now call the Black Country. It was in Mercia that St Chad established an association of small monasteries which fostered unity through bonds of kinship.

Now, almost fifteen hundred years later, we look to demonstrate the same spirit in our approach. We are a family of schools committed to each other – diverse in nature, proud custodians of our history and success, but together, one charitable trust with a common purpose.

Our Trust exists to equip our students to:

- Realise their potential
- Thrive in the world of work

- Make a positive contribution to the local, national and international community.
- Our mission is **increasing opportunities** and **improving outcomes**. Our mantra is Life to the full in pursuit of what is **good, right and true**.

Shire Oak Academy

Centre Lead – Internal Alternative Provision (INSPIRE)

Job Title:

Centre Lead – Internal Alternative Provision (INSPIRE)

Salary:

Grade 7 (SCP 22 – 27)

Responsible to:

Headteacher

Responsible for:

INSPIRE Team (Teaching Assistants, HLTAs, Therapeutic Practitioners and Associated Staff)

Role Type:

Middle Leadership – Pastoral / Inclusion / Alternative Provision Leadership

Contract Type:

Term Time Only, 37 hours per week

Working Hours:

Monday to Thursday, 8:00am – 4:00pm

Friday, 8:00am – 3:30pm

Purpose of the Role

To provide strategic and operational leadership for INSPIRE, the academy's Internal Alternative Provision, ensuring a high-quality, inclusive and therapeutic environment that enables pupils with additional behavioural, emotional and social needs to engage successfully in education.

The Centre Lead will oversee the day-to-day running, development and evaluation of the provision, leading staff, systems and processes to secure positive outcomes for pupils and support successful reintegration into mainstream education where appropriate.

The role will work closely with senior leaders, pastoral teams, SEND staff, families and external agencies to ensure that provision is responsive, well-coordinated and aligned with whole-school priorities.

Key Responsibilities

Leadership & Strategic Development

- Lead and manage the strategic development and daily operation of INSPIRE for KS3 and KS4 learners.
- Develop and implement a clear vision for the provision that aligns with the academy's inclusive ethos and improvement priorities.
- Ensure INSPIRE provides a safe, structured, nurturing and purposeful learning environment for all pupils.
- Contribute to academy improvement planning, ensuring the provision plays an effective role in supporting attendance, behaviour, safeguarding and inclusion outcomes.

- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the provision through quality assurance, data analysis, pupil outcomes and stakeholder feedback.
 - Lead the ongoing development of systems, procedures and operational practices to ensure effective and consistent delivery across the provision.
 - Oversee staffing structures, deployment, timetabling and operational organisation within INSPIRE.
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Provision Management & Pupil Support

- Oversee referral, admission and transition processes into and out of INSPIRE, ensuring decisions are needs-led, equitable and evidence-informed.
 - Coordinate and chair regular pupil review meetings, reintegration planning meetings and multi-agency discussions.
 - Monitor pupil engagement, attendance, behaviour, SEMH development and academic progress to ensure appropriate interventions and support are in place.
 - Oversee personalised support packages, hybrid timetables and reintegration pathways for pupils accessing the provision.
 - Ensure effective safeguarding, risk assessment and behaviour support systems are embedded and consistently implemented.
 - Maintain accurate records, reports and documentation relating to pupil progress, provision impact and external agency involvement.
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Staff Leadership & Development

- Line manage and support staff working within INSPIRE, including HLTAs, Teaching Assistants, Therapeutic Practitioners and other associated staff.
 - Provide clear direction, accountability and professional support to ensure high standards across the provision.
 - Lead staff meetings, operational briefings and professional development activities linked to alternative provision, SEMH and inclusive practice.
 - Support staff wellbeing and foster a collaborative, reflective and solution-focused team culture.
 - Contribute to the wider development of staff confidence and understanding in supporting pupils with SEMH, ASC, ADHD and additional needs.
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Partnership & Multi-Agency Working

- Work collaboratively with the SENCO, pastoral leaders, safeguarding team and senior leadership team to ensure joined-up support for pupils.
- Build strong relationships with parents/carers, ensuring clear communication and effective partnership working.
- Liaise with external agencies and professionals, including educational psychologists, CAMHS, social care and alternative provision partners, to coordinate appropriate support for pupils.
- Represent INSPIRE at internal and external meetings as required.

Quality Assurance & Compliance

- Ensure the provision operates in line with academy policies, safeguarding requirements and statutory guidance.
- Monitor the quality and consistency of interventions, support plans and pupil provision.
- Contribute to reporting and evaluation processes relating to attendance, behaviour, safeguarding, SEND and inclusion.
- Support academy leaders in preparing for inspections, reviews and external quality assurance processes linked to alternative provision and inclusion.

Whole-School Contribution

- Contribute as a middle leader to the wider strategic development of the academy.
- Promote inclusive practice and support the academy's commitment to improving outcomes for vulnerable learners.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues across the academy to strengthen reintegration pathways and reduce barriers to learning.
- Undertake other duties appropriate to the level and nature of the post as directed by senior leaders.

Safe Working Practices for Adults Working with Children

All staff at Shire Oak Academy are expected to model and uphold the Trust's ethos of safe, respectful, and professional conduct when working with students. The postholder must act in line with safeguarding principles and actively promote a culture of vigilance and care.

Safeguarding Statement

Shire Oak Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All appointments are subject to an enhanced DBS check, satisfactory references, and other relevant employment checks.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Assessment
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GCSE English and Maths (Grade 4/C or above) • Evidence of ongoing professional development linked to SEND, SEMH, behaviour, safeguarding or inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) or relevant leadership/inclusion qualification • Further qualification in SEND, SEMH, leadership or trauma-informed practice • Leadership or management qualification 	AF (Application Form)
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience working with children and young people with SEMH, anxiety, trauma and/or communication needs • Experience supporting students with EHCPs and additional needs • Experience working within a trauma-informed and/or attachment-aware environment • Experience within a specialist provision, alternative provision or inclusive education setting • Experience leading, managing or coordinating staff teams and operational practice • Experience of multi-agency working and partnership with families and external professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience leading a specialist provision or alternative education setting • Experience developing systems, processes or operational practice within a provision • Experience managing referrals, reintegration pathways or personalised timetables 	AF, I (Interview), R (Reference)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience monitoring pupil progress, attendance, behaviour and wellbeing outcomes 		
Skills and Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong leadership and team management skills • Excellent interpersonal, communication and relationship-building skills • Ability to provide calm, consistent and solution-focused leadership • Ability to lead and motivate a multidisciplinary team • Strong organisational, administrative and operational management skills • Ability to analyse information and make evidence-informed decisions • Ability to manage challenging situations effectively while maintaining positive relationships • Ability to contribute strategically to inclusion, behaviour and safeguarding priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to deliver CPD, coaching or mentoring to staff • Experience using data systems and provision tracking tools to monitor impact 	AF, I
Knowledge and Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good understanding of inclusive education, EHCPs and the SEND Code of Practice • Strong understanding of SEMH needs, trauma-informed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarity with a range of interventions and support approaches for SEMH and neurodiverse learners • Knowledge of alternative provision frameworks and current inclusion practice 	AF, I

	<p>practice and relational approaches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of safeguarding procedures, statutory responsibilities and professional conduct • Understanding of behaviour support, reintegration practice and pupil wellbeing • Understanding of barriers to learning and strategies to improve engagement and outcomes for vulnerable learners 		
Personal Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compassionate, resilient and emotionally intelligent • High expectations and commitment to inclusion for all learners • Reflective and open to feedback and continuous improvement • Flexible and adaptable in response to changing situations • Professional integrity and ability to maintain confidentiality • Commitment to collaborative working and positive relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sense of humour and commitment to the ethos and values of Shire Oak Academy and INSPIRE 	I, R
Other Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to undertake an enhanced DBS and all pre-employment checks • Commitment to ongoing professional development and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant training such as Mental Health First Aid, Team Teach or equivalent therapeutic/behaviour training 	AF

	training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people 		
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OUR OFFER TO YOU

- A superb staff team committed to doing their absolute best for all in our school community.
- Support from our Trust central teams and other schools in our Trust to ensure you have the tools to deliver success (our schools are all located close to one another, and we work better when we are working together).
- A wealth of support for your ongoing continuing professional development, including a Trust-wide programme for support staff drawing on expertise from across the Mercian Trust.
- A comprehensive employee assistance and staff benefits package including Simplyhealth (cash-back health plan and 24:7 video call and telephone access to GP and counselling), salary sacrifice schemes, and discounts portal (ranging from gym membership to discount cards and vouchers for online and high street retailers).
- There will never be a dull moment; we never stand still, every day offers new challenges and opportunities within an ambitious, forward-thinking team.

SAFEGUARDING AND SAFER RECRUITMENT

- The Mercian Trust is committed to equal opportunities, safeguarding, and promoting the welfare of children and young adults. We expect all staff to share this commitment. As this post involves working in regulated activity unsupervised with children all post-holders are subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks including an online search check, Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check.
- You are required to uphold all relevant policies in respect of child protection and safeguarding, which are based on KCSIE (2024) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018).

- You are required to demonstrate and model the Nolan Principles (The Seven Principles of Public Life): Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, and Leadership. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life>
- You should demonstrate your commitment to our equality policy and all our related work to promote diversity, inclusion and belonging.

KEY INFORMATION – HOW TO APPLY

Post	Centre Lead for Internal Alternative Provision INSPIRE
Responsible to	Headteacher
Contract and Salary	Full time, permanent Grade 7 (SCP 22-27)
Start Date	1 st September 2026 or sooner if possible
Informal Confidential Conversations and Visit of School	To speak to someone about the post and arrange an informal visit, please contact either Sophie Gasson, SLT IAP Lead s.gasson@soa.merciantrust.org.uk or Jess Karchud SLT IAP Lead j.karchud@soa.merciantrust.org.uk
How to apply	Please complete the Online Application Form via our Mercian website.