Waterton
Academy Trust

Application Pack

Trust SENCO

watertonacademytrust.org

Job Title	Trust SENCO
Salary & Grade	L1-L3
Contract	Full time, Permanent
Reporting to	Head of SEND and Inclusion
Start Date	January 2027

Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in the role of Trust SENCO at Waterton Academy Trust.

Waterton Academy Trust is a primary-only multi academy trust consisting of 16 primary schools and 5 specialist settings across Wakefield and Barnsley. Our shared ambition is to secure the very best outcomes for every child, ensuring they are fully prepared for future success and able to thrive within inclusive, supportive learning environments.

This is an exciting opportunity for an experienced and highly skilled SEND leader to join our Trust and play a pivotal role in shaping and developing high-quality inclusive practice across our schools. The successful candidate will provide strategic leadership for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), working in partnership with school leaders, SENCOs, staff, families and external agencies to ensure that all children receive the support they need to achieve their full potential.

We are seeking an individual with a strong understanding of current SEND legislation, policy and best practice, together with a proven track record of driving improvement and achieving positive outcomes for children and young people with additional needs. The successful candidate will have the ability to influence and inspire others, develop the expertise of SEND professionals across the Trust, and lead initiatives that promote consistency, inclusion and excellence in provision.

The role requires a collaborative leader who is passionate about championing the needs of children with SEND and committed to ensuring that inclusive practice is embedded within every aspect of school life. You will work closely with Trust leaders and school-based SENCOs to evaluate provision, identify areas for development, support effective use of resources, and strengthen partnerships with families and external professionals.

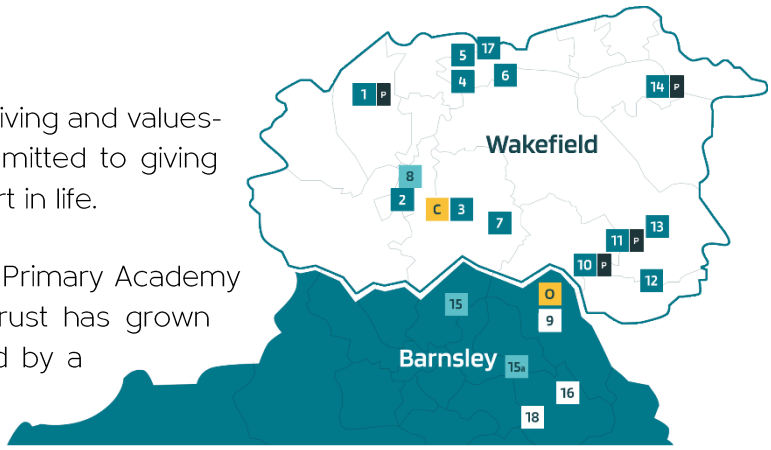
At Waterton Academy Trust, we are proud of our culture of collaboration, innovation and continuous improvement. You will be joining a dedicated team of professionals who are committed to ensuring that every child belongs, succeeds and flourishes. We offer a supportive and forward-thinking environment where leaders are empowered to make a meaningful difference to the lives of children and their families.

If you share our commitment to inclusion, have a passion for SEND leadership and are excited by the opportunity to influence practice across a growing Trust, we would be delighted to hear from you.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Warm Regards, Laura Thresh, Head of SEND and Inclusion

About Us



Waterton Academy Trust is a thriving and values-led partnership of schools committed to giving every child the best possible start in life.

Established in 2014 with Walton Primary Academy as its founding member, the Trust has grown steadily and strategically, guided by a strong moral purpose and a deep understanding of the communities we serve. We believe that **success is a shared experience** – every learner, every member of staff, and every school should flourish, together.

Our Locations

Waterton Offices

C - Centre for Excellence
O - Operations Office

Waterton Schools

1 - Wrenthorpe Academy
1p - Wrenthorpe Pre-School
2 - Sharlston Community School
3 - Walton Primary Academy
4 - Normanton Junior Academy
5 - Lee Brigg Infant and Nursery School
6 - Normanton Common Primary Academy
7 - Crofton Infant's School
8 - Hammer Lane Aacademy
9 - Churchfield Primary School
10 - King's Meadow Academy
10p - The Meadow Pre-School
11 - West End Academy
11p - The Woodland Pre-School
12 - South Kirkby Academy
13 - Ackworth Mill Dam School
14 - Cherry Tree Academy
14p - Cherry Blossom Pre-School
15 - Newstead Academy
15a - Hunningley Academy
16 - Kings Oak Primary
17 - Alfoffs Junior Academy
18 - Jump Primary Academy

By the end of 2026, we expect to support more than 4,000 pupils across our schools, with a dedicated team of over 600 staff and an annual turnover approaching £28 million.

Our growth has not been about size alone - it reflects the strength of our educational offer, the diversity of our provision, and the depth of our partnerships.

We work across two key regions - Wakefield and Barnsley - and are proud to be seen as a trusted and collaborative presence within the wider education system. All our schools are primary-phase, and collaboration sits at the heart of how we work.

In response to local need, our first independent special academy – Newstead Academy opened in Barnsley in 2023 and has already grown to include a satellite site based at Hunningley. Building on this success, we have opened a new specialist setting - Hammer Lane Academy - in Wakefield in September 2025. These developments are a testament to our commitment to inclusive education and our ability to work alongside local partners to meet the needs of all learners.

We also know that a great start in education begins early. That's why we've expanded our offer to include four pre-school settings, with plans for further growth.

If you share our belief that all children deserve the highest-quality education and want to be part of a forward-thinking, people-centred organisation, we'd love to hear from you.

Our Vision and Values

The Trust is proud of its shared vision and values, which are embedded across all aspects of our work.

This vision – centred on collaboration, aspiration, enjoyment, and equity – guides our actions and unites our schools in a common purpose. We aim to create a culture where success is a shared experience, every child enjoys a rich and relevant curriculum, and all pupils are supported to achieve their full potential, regardless of background.

Candidates interested in joining the Trust are encouraged to explore our vision and values to ensure they align with their own ethos and long-term aspirations.

Our Pupils

Waterton Academy Trust serves communities with some of the highest levels of deprivation in the region, and in the country. In response, we place children's well-being, voice, and enrichment at the very heart of our work. We believe that every pupil, regardless of background, should feel the full benefit of belonging to a trust that puts their experience of school first.

Pupil voice is not just encouraged - it's embedded in our decision-making. Our elected Children's Parliament meets regularly with the CEO and Headteachers, sharing their views and shaping priorities for improvement. Their efforts were recognised nationally, receiving a letter of commendation from former Prime Minister Theresa May.

Beyond the classroom, we create rich and joyful experiences that promote creativity, confidence, and healthy living. Our roaming art gallery, Waterton's Got Talent, and Waterton Young Chef of the Year celebrate the diverse talents of our pupils, while our annual MATlympics and extensive sports offer promote inclusion, teamwork, and well-being.

These experiences are not just events; they are integral to our mission – ensuring that every child in a Waterton school is heard, celebrated, and empowered to thrive.

Children's Parliament

Waterton Has Talent

MATlympics

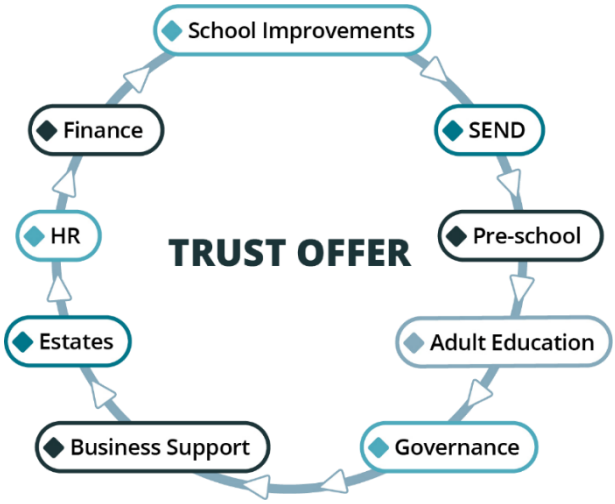
Young Chef

Art Initiative

Eco Council

Girls Football

Trust Offer



At Waterton Academy Trust, we are proud to provide a consistent, high-quality offer that enables every school - regardless of size, Ofsted rating, or context - to thrive. Our Trust Offer ensures that all academies benefit from the same comprehensive package of educational and operational support, tailored to meet individual school needs while remaining accessible to all.

This offer is underpinned by our belief that school leaders should be able to focus their time and energy on what matters most: delivering excellent teaching and learning. By reducing operational burdens and providing high-quality, evidence-informed school improvement support, we create the conditions in which pupils and staff can flourish.

Our investment in a strong and expert central team means that every school can draw upon specialist support in areas such as safeguarding, governance, curriculum, finance, HR, IT, estates, marketing, and data protection. This support is complemented by access to legal advice and professional development, including high-impact CPD, leadership development, and coaching.

The Trust Offer is more than a service package - it's a reflection of our values. It supports excellence, equity, and collaboration across all Waterton schools, enabling leaders to deliver the very best for their pupils, every day.

To read about impact in 2025, please read our annual report to stakeholders on the Trust website.
https://www.watertonacademytrust.org/academies/trust-performance/

Job Description – Trust SENCO

Job Title	Trust SENCO
Reporting to	Head of SEND and Inclusion
Grade	L1 - L3

Main Purpose	This is a key role, central to the leadership of inclusion in our academies and therefore securing the best possible outcomes for our children. Based in our primary academies, the successful candidate will need to be flexible in their approach to working patterns, and travel between the group of academies will be required. Across our academies you will: • Deliver the strategic development of SEND policy and provision • Be responsible for day-to-day operation of the SEND policy and co-ordination of specific provision to support individual pupils with SEND • Provide professional guidance to colleagues, working closely with staff, parents and other agencies
Key Responsibilities	• **Strategic Development**: Have a strategic overview of provision for pupils with SEN or a disability across the school, monitoring and reviewing the quality of provision.. Make sure the SEND policy is put into practice and its objectives are reflected in the school improvement plan. Maintain up-to-date knowledge of national and local initiatives that may affect the school's policy and practice. Evaluate whether funding is being used effectively, and suggest changes to make use of funding more effective. • **Operation of the SEND policy and co-ordination of provision**: Maintain an accurate SEND register and provision map. Provide guidance to colleagues on teaching pupils with SEN or a disability, and advise on the graduated approach to SEN support. Be aware of the provision in the local offer. Work with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and other external agencies. Be a key point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority (LA). Analyse assessment data for pupils with SEN or a disability. Implement and lead intervention groups for pupils with SEND, and evaluate their effectiveness • **Support for pupils with SEN or a disability**: Swiftly identify and accurately assess pupils' needs including SEND. Co-ordinate provision that meets the pupil's needs, and monitor its effectiveness. Ensure records are maintained and kept up to date. Review education, health and care plans (EHCP) with parents or carers and the pupil. Communicate regularly with parents or carers. Ensure if pupils transfer to another school, all relevant information is shared, and support a smooth transition. Promote the pupils' inclusion in the school community and access to the curriculum, facilities and extra-curricular activities. • **Leadership and management**: Work with the headteacher and governors to ensure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 in terms of reasonable adjustments and access arrangements. Prepare and review information the governing board

	is required to publish. Contribute to the school improvement plan and whole-school policy. Identify training needs for staff and how to meet these needs. Lead staff CPD. Promote an ethos and culture that supports the school's SEND policy and promotes good outcomes for pupils with SEN or a disability. The SENCO will be required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, and follow school policies and the staff code of conduct.
Expectations of All Employees	• Represent and promote Waterton Academy Trust values internally and externally • Ensure that all stakeholders receive an excellent customer service experience in all dealings with you and with Waterton Academy Trust • Deliver your day-to-day duties consistently with the agreed service level • Actively promote and act, at all times, in accordance with Trust policies, e.g. Code of Conduct, Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities and Safeguarding • Make a commitment and contribution to the overall ethos and values of the trust, upholding these in all activities connected with the role • Undertake other duties commensurate with the job level Promote high standards of personal professional conduct in accordance with the Trust Employee Code of Conduct
Additional Information	• 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.
Working Conditions	Based across our academies dependent on current need.
Characteristics of the Post	Employees are encouraged to participate in training activities in order to enhance their own personal development. **The employment checks are required:** • Evidence of entitlement to work in the U.K. • Evidence of essential qualifications – see job specification • Two satisfactory references • Confirmation of medical fitness for employment • Registration with appropriate bodies (where applicable) The following employment checks are required for those positions which are based in a school or working with vulnerable young people and adults: Evidence of a satisfactory safeguarding check e.g. DBS check at the relevant level.

Person Specification – Trust SENCO

AF: Application Form
OT: Occupational Task
CQ: Certificates/Qualifications
I: Presentation
I: Interview
R: Reference

Qualifications	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
Educated to degree level or equivalent	X		AF/CQ
Qualified Teacher Status	X		AF/CQ
Evidence of further relevant qualifications in relation to SEND and Inclusion	X		AF/CQ
Experience	**Essential**	**Desirable**	**Assessed**
Primary or specialist teaching experience	X		AF
Experience of leading SEND within school	X		AF/P
A history of strong commitment to inclusion with high expectations for all learners	X		AF/P
Experience of supporting staff to impact positively on pupil outcomes and experiences	X		AF/P
Experience of leading staff training and development sessions	X		AF/P
Experiencing of evaluating and monitoring SEND within a setting, leading to positive impact	X		AF/P
Skills	**Essential**	**Desirable**	**Assessed**
A wide and current knowledge of approaches to meeting the SEND needs of all learners within a setting (primary/ specialist)	X		AF/P/I
Sound knowledge of the SEND Code of Practice	X		AF/P/OT /I
Strong understanding of the key components of QFT and ordinarily available provision	X		AF/P/OT /I
Knowledge of Wakefield/ Barnsley LA SEND systems and how to navigate	X		AF
Ability to plan and evaluate interventions	X		AF/P/OT /I
Ability to work with external agencies for the benefit of children	X		AF/P/OT
Understand the pivotal role parents play in supporting their child's education and ensure parental relationships are strong	X		AF/P/OT /I
Ability to model and share best practice and ways of delivery	X		AF/P/I
Up to date knowledge of the primary national curriculum and assessment & reporting arrangements	X		AF/P/I
Personal Attributes	**Essential**	**Desirable**	**Assessed**
Visible and approachable, empathetic and enjoys engaging with children, staff, parents, and the wider community	X		R
A commitment to the vision, guiding principles and strategic goals of the trust	X		AF/I/R

Commitment to the safeguarding of vulnerable young people and adults	X		R
A strong belief in inclusivity and a passion for the education of children	X		AF/I/R
High level of personal integrity and the ability to hold confidential information at all times	X		AF/I/R
An understanding of health and safety requirements of a working environment and willing to fully implement all aspects	X		AF/I
An understanding of equal opportunities issues and willing to positively promote equality, diversity, and inclusion within an educational context.	X		AF/I
Suitability to work with children and young people	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
Satisfactory DBS disclosure and standard Trust pre-secondment checks	X		AF, R, I
Ability to work in a way that promotes the safety and well-being of learners	X		AF, R, I

Next Steps

For further information about the opportunity please contact Laura Thresh lthresh@watertonacademytrust.org

To Apply

Please submit applications via My New Term.

Selection Timeline

Closing Date: Monday 19th October 2026 - midday

Shortlisting: Monday 19th October 2026

Interviews: Tuesday 20th October 2026 – Friday 23rd October 2026

Start Date: January 2027 or sooner if possible

Waterton Academy Trust is wholly committed to ensuring children and young people are fully supported and safe. We are dedicated to the safeguarding of all children and young people whilst promoting their welfare and expect all staff and volunteers to share this responsibility. An enhanced DBS check is required for the successful candidate, this process is completed by an online third party company. The position is also subject to two satisfactory references. Shortlisted candidates will be asked to provide details of any unspent convictions and those that would not be filtered, prior to the date of interview. We are committed to treating all applicants fairly and have a policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders which is available to applicants on request. Waterton Academy Trust is wholly committed in ensuring that all employees, future employees and applicants are treated equally regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

It is an offence to apply for the role if the applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.