



# Candidate Pack

## Principal

Richard Rose Morton Academy



**Richard Rose Morton Academy**  
The best in everyone™  
Part of United Learning





# Welcome

**Thank you very much for your interest in becoming Principal of Richard Rose Morton Academy.**

Richard Rose Morton Academy serves families in the Morton area of Carlisle and educates around 900 pupils aged 11–16. While the school benefits from modern facilities and a committed staff team, we know there is more to do to ensure every child achieves well. This is a school with real strengths and opportunities, but it needs a renewed sense of ambition and focused leadership to deliver consistently high standards.

Our goal is clear: to raise expectations, strengthen teaching and learning, and create a culture where excellence is the norm. This is a role for a leader who can inspire ambition, drive improvement, and manage change – someone who sees challenge as an opportunity to make a lasting impact. If you are passionate about improving outcomes and creating a school where every child thrives, we would be delighted to hear from you.

United Learning is a big group of schools – with over 75,000 pupils and more than 10,000 staff – so we have the capacity to support you educationally and operationally. At the same time, we are values led and base all that we do on good relationships, so you will be joining

a big family. Reporting directly to the Regional Director, you will be supported both personally and professionally, benefitting from the strength of a national Group who will support your development and that of your staff and school.

We are committed to fairness, diversity and inclusion. We are currently working hard to improve the representation of black, Asian and minority ethnic leaders at headship level and to raise our proportion of women leaders to match their representation in our wider workforce. Whoever you are, if you have a strong track record of improving young people's education and a drive to do more, we very much look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes,

Sir Jon Coles, Chief Executive



This is a school with real strengths and opportunities, but it needs a renewed sense of ambition and focused leadership to deliver consistently high standards.



# The Academy

**Richard Rose Morton Academy is an 11–16 secondary school located in the western area of Carlisle, Cumbria, with just over 900 pupils on roll. The Academy is part of United Learning and works closely with Richard Rose Central Academy nearby. While the school enjoys modern facilities and a committed staff team, outcomes and culture are not yet where they need to be. There is a clear opportunity to raise aspirations and ensure that every child achieves well.**

The vision is simple but ambitious: “to be a great school community in everything we do.” To achieve this, teaching and learning must be strengthened, expectations raised, and a culture of achievement and care embedded. The foundations are in place – excellent facilities, strong community links, and dedicated staff – but the next Principal will play a pivotal role in turning these assets into sustained success.

The Academy benefits from a state-of-the-art £25 million building, set within 31 acres of landscaped grounds, offering an inspiring environment for learning. Specialist facilities for science, technology, performing arts, and sport enable a rich and varied educational experience. Public visual and performing arts shows throughout the year raise student confidence and showcase the Academy’s creativity within the community.

The curriculum is broad, balanced, and ambitious, underpinned by the Academy’s core values: Ambition, Confidence, Creativity, Respect, Enthusiasm, and Determination. Students benefit from a strong Education with Character programme, including enrichment activities such as enterprise projects, outdoor challenges, and leadership opportunities. Academic outcomes have begun to improve, and the next phase is about creating a culture where ambition and excellence flourish.

The Academy is part of the Carlisle Cluster alongside Richard Rose Central Academy, with both schools working collaboratively and sharing services such as a Finance Manager. Many of the school’s Year 11 students progress to Richard Rose Central Academy Sixth Form for post-16 study. A key strength of this partnership is the joint development of a unique link with the University of Cumbria to raise aspirations, further enriched by initiatives such as the University’s collaboration with Imperial College London to offer postgraduate medical studies – an example of the exciting opportunities available in the region.

Staff at Richard Rose Morton Academy benefit from the support and expertise of United Learning, which provides access to professional development opportunities, subject specialists, and collaborative networks. This strong culture of improvement and shared practice makes the Academy a place where colleagues can grow and develop their careers while contributing to meaningful change.

As Principal, you will likewise benefit from the extensive support of United Learning, including the expertise of a Regional Director and a highly effective team of Subject Advisers. Our knowledge-rich mastery curriculum, complemented by common assessments, provides deep insights into student performance and enables benchmarking across thousands of pupils in United Learning schools. This strong framework, combined with national resources and leadership support, will give you the tools to lead with confidence and drive meaningful change.

Alongside this, you will also benefit from the support of a strong and committed Local Governing Body (LGB). The LGB plays a vital role in ensuring that the school remains deeply connected to its community while maintaining high standards of governance and accountability. Working in partnership with the Principal, the LGB will provide strategic guidance, challenge, and support to help drive improvement and sustain excellence. Their local knowledge and dedication will complement the resources and expertise provided by United Learning, creating a robust framework for success.

This is a role for a leader who can bring clarity, determination, and ambition to the Academy. The successful candidate will have the opportunity to lead a step change in expectations and achievement, shaping a culture where excellence becomes the norm.

We fully recommend that you take the opportunity to make an informal visit prior to making your application to see the school for yourself. If you would like to arrange a visit or discuss the role in further detail, please contact Geoff Morris at [geoff.morris@unitedlearning.org.uk](mailto:geoff.morris@unitedlearning.org.uk) or by phone on 07811 345 638.

Carlisle is a historic cathedral city in the heart of Cumbria, offering an exceptional quality of life and access to some of the UK's most breathtaking landscapes. The Lake District National Park – a UNESCO World Heritage Sites – right on the doorstep, alongside the Solway Coast, North Pennines, and Southern Uplands of Scotland. This unique setting provides unrivalled opportunities for outdoor adventure, from hiking, fell running, and mountain biking to paragliding, wild swimming, sailing, and water sports. For those who love nature and the outdoors, Cumbria is a paradise.

Carlisle combines heritage with modern living, offering affordable housing, green spaces, and a growing cultural scene. The average house price is significantly below the UK average, making relocation an attractive option for families and individuals alike.

Connectivity is another major advantage. Carlisle enjoys excellent transport links, with London just over three hours away by train and easy access to Newcastle, Manchester, Glasgow, and Edinburgh. Major airports are within reach, and there is a strong digital infrastructure.

For families, Carlisle offers good schools, a welcoming community, and proximity to higher education institutions such as the University of Cumbria. The city also boasts a strong healthcare infrastructure and benefits from partnerships with leading universities for research and postgraduate opportunities.

Culturally, Carlisle is vibrant and diverse. Historic attractions such as Carlisle Castle and Tullie House Museum sit alongside live music venues, theatres, and festivals. The city's retail and leisure offer continues to grow, complemented by green spaces and family-friendly amenities.

Named one of the happiest places to live in the UK, Carlisle and the wider Cumbria region provide a rare combination of affordability, connectivity, and natural beauty. Whether you're seeking a lively city lifestyle or peaceful countryside living, this area offers a warm welcome and an outstanding quality of life.



# About United Learning

**United Learning is a Group of schools which aims to provide excellent education to children and young people across the country. We seek to improve the life chances of all the children and young people we serve and make it our mission to bring out ‘the best in everyone’ – pupils, staff, parents, and the wider community. We uniquely comprise schools in both the state and the independent sectors.**

As a Group, we can offer more to both staff and young people than any single school could offer alone. The growing range of outstanding group-wide activities that we can provide will mean that more young people will have truly exceptional and inspiring experiences.

We believe that our Group contains the most developed relationships and practical interaction between independent and state schools in the country, creating benefits for all the schools involved.

United Learning comprises both United Church Schools Trust, which operates our fee-paying independent schools, and United Learning Trust, which operates our state-funded academies.

To find out more about United Learning, please visit the website [www.unitedlearning.org.uk](http://www.unitedlearning.org.uk)

As part of United Learning, Richard Rose Morton Academy will share the objective of bringing out ‘the best in everyone’, enabling each student to become a balanced, happy and articulate person with intellectual freedom, confidence, compassion, integrity and a lifelong love of learning.



# Our Ethos

Our approach to education is underpinned by a sense of moral purpose and commitment to doing what is right for children and young people. We believe in supporting our colleagues to achieve excellence and in acting with integrity in all our dealings within and beyond the Group. We believe the safety and welfare of all children and young people is paramount. We summarise this ethos as ‘the best in everyone’ which underpins our core values:

**Ambition** – to achieve the best for us and others.

**Confidence** – to have the courage of our convictions and to take risks for the right cause.

**Creativity** – to imagine possibilities and make them real.

**Respect** – of ourselves and others in all that we do.

**Enthusiasm** – to seek opportunity, find what is good and pursue talents and interests.

**Determination** – to overcome obstacles and achieve success.

As a single organisation, we seek to bring together the best of independent and state sectors, respecting both traditions and learning from each other. We believe that each of our schools is and should be distinctive – committed to developing its own strengths and identity while sharing our core values to promote service, compassion and generosity.

## Continuing Professional Development

We believe that successful organisations make a priority of developing their staff; all the more so in education, where the people of the organisation are its most important asset. While the development of all staff is important, we make the support and professional development of Heads and senior leaders a particular priority, given the impact that leaders have on the life of staff and pupils alike.

We work on the basis that each of us, however effective, can always improve. The successful candidate of Richard Rose Morton Academy will be set personal development objectives with the Regional Director each year and will be supported to achieve them.

The Principal will also be asked to take a role in supporting the leadership of the whole organisation, working with other Heads in the

Group, and sharing ideas and practice with one another.

They will also have the benefit of accessing a range of networks, including the Group Education Forum, which brings together Heads from across the Group six times a year. United Learning are passionate about staff development, for example we provide 360-degree feedback as part of professional development, and we have also commissioned training programmes from major universities.

We believe that schools are at their best when they are autonomous and able to develop a distinctive ethos, reflecting the needs of their pupils and the context within which they work. The Group can get behind the work of Heads and leaders in schools through creating strong networks, providing outstanding educational support and professional development, and by taking the strain of professional functional support. We aim to ensure that the technology, finance, HR and data support is provided more effectively and efficiently than would otherwise be possible, so that Principals can focus on educational leadership.

The newly appointed Principal at Richard Rose Morton Academy will also benefit from a comprehensive induction programme which has recently been reviewed to ensure it is effective and to promote success.

# Our Framework for Excellence

To achieve our mission, our schools prioritise five key principles:

- 1** The best from everyone
- 2** Powerful knowledge
- 3** Education with character
- 4** Leadership in every role
- 5** Continuous improvement



Our aim is to bring out 'the best in everyone'. So, we must expect the best from everyone, all the time. Every child is a special individual, capable of extraordinary things. Who can know the limits of any child's potential?



# Our Framework for Excellence

## 'The best from everyone'

Our aim is to bring out 'the best in everyone'. So, we must expect the best from everyone, all the time. Every child is a special individual, capable of extraordinary things. Who can know the limits of any child's potential? So, we expect unreasonably – we constantly challenge children to do what they think they can't, to persist, to work hard and to be at their best.

From every adult we expect the same: that they are at their best, expect unreasonably of themselves, are determined and resilient and pass those expectations on to the children in all they do. We act with the utmost love, care and good faith – the highest standards come with the greatest attention to the wellbeing of all.

## 'Powerful knowledge'

Our most important purpose is to teach young people things they would not learn outside school, which free them to think and act more powerfully in their lives. Words and numbers are our most powerful ways of representing the world. Mastery of language and fluent mathematical skills are therefore our top priority. We aim to prepare young people to make a success of their lives: a core entitlement to subject-based learning; the development of talents; an understanding of work and society.

Worthwhile learning is often hard. Inspiring teaching is what gives access to difficult concepts and the thrill of intellectual discovery. Powerful knowledge is not static or backward-looking. It includes the ability to critique, challenge the status quo, think and learn.

## 'Education with character'

Academic success is very important. Exam passes are an important aspect of that. But there is more to a good education. Our schools also aim to develop character, compassion and service. Young people are expected to contribute to their school and to society; to try things which they think they cannot do; to persist in the face of difficulty; to become resilient in overcoming obstacles; to manage themselves; to

work independently on things which challenge them; to work with others and in teams; to be courageous and caring; to lead.

We want young people to look back on a joyful schooling which has inspired and challenged them, given them wide opportunity and prepared them for the ups and downs of life.

## 'Leadership in every role'

Our children are leaders of the future. We expect them to start today – taking advantage of structured opportunities to lead and taking responsibility for themselves and others. Every adult in the school is a leader. In every word, tone and gesture, they set direction and expectation. We expect every adult to take responsibility and the initiative to do what is right for the children.

All those in formal leadership positions create the climate in which others work. They demand the highest standards, build a performance culture, develop their teams and create the space for others to lead. All leaders listen, grow relationships, act with integrity and care and expect the best from themselves and others in building a happy, confident school.

## 'Continuous improvement'

However good we are, we can be better. We constantly look for improvements and implement them with pace. We look for ideas for improvement inside the organisation and out; we observe one another; we steal good ideas with pride and look to make them better; we work together to improve.

We always look at the evidence and are rigorous in evaluating impact. We stop or change things which aren't working; we improve things which are. We aim for high leverage, high impact for low effort and low cost. We constantly look to have more impact for less cost and effort and to spend every pound wisely.

# Job Description

The Principal will lead and inspire excellence throughout the Academy. They 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 in their future life and work.

As a senior leader within United Learning, the Principal, together with the Local Governing Body (LGB), will be responsible for establishing and implementing the vision and direction for all staff and pupils throughout the school. In leading the school, the Principal will ensure that United Learning's ethos and values are deeply embedded and visible, securing 'the best in everyone' for all stakeholders.

**Broadly, the responsibilities of the role are as detailed below:**

## Educational Leadership and Management

- Ensuring excellent academic outcomes in all 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 becoming an outstanding school;
- Ensuring the welfare and safety of all pupils from all groups, including their safeguarding.

## Strategic Leadership and Management

- Leading the implementation of The United Learning Way, which outlines the guiding educational principles of our Trust, throughout Richard Rose Morton Academy.
- Defining and delivering the vision and objectives of the school and the School Strategic Plan as agreed with the LGB and the Regional Director;
- Leading the school in partnership with the LGB and United Learning senior leaders;
- Developing and maintaining the values of United Learning within the school;
- Contributing professionally to the broader United Learning agenda.

# Job Description

## 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 well-being within the Framework for Excellence;
- 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 the Principal.

## Financial and Business Management

- Working closely with the Business & Operations Manager and finance colleagues to ensure budgets are set and managed within guidelines agreed with the LGB and the Group through the Regional Director and Chief Financial Officer;
- 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;
- Implementing key Group-wide policies and strategies (e.g. in relation to Compliance, Finance, HR and Technology);
- Ensuring that efficient administrative systems are implemented and managed;
- Managing, maintaining and utilising the site and facilities to their full value to the Academy, the Group and the community;
- Ensuring that health and safety and safeguarding policies are managed and implemented.

## Links with 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;
- Making a strategic contribution to the development of the Group;
- Developing strong and effective partnerships with local primary schools, colleges and universities;
- Ensuring that the school contributes to United Learning cluster initiatives.

## Reporting

- The Principal of Richard Rose Morton Academy reports to the Regional Director who reports to the Director of Secondary Academies for United Learning, who is responsible to the overarching Charity Board through the Chief Executive.
- The LGB, and its Chair in particular, will also work closely with the Principal in relation to its responsibilities to act as a 'critical friend' to the school. This relationship with the Chair and LGB will be key to driving the school forward and further developing local partnerships.
- The Principal will keep the Regional Director fully informed on the progress of the school and will submit reports for consideration as appropriate. The Principal will participate in an annual performance review as part of the agreed appraisal process.

# Person Specification

## Education and Training

- Educational and professional qualifications appropriate for the role of Principal of the school. Such qualifications would normally include a degree from a recognised university, professional qualifications (for example PGCE) and ideally a further post graduate qualification;
- 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;
- A proven track record of securing excellence in an educational establishment;
- A proven track record in rapidly raising pupils' achievements;
- Evidence of the ability to develop excellent relationships with staff, members of the local community, parents and pupils (across key stages);
- Experience in leading and developing colleagues and effective teams.

## 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 all phases of education, from early years through to Post-16;
- 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 United Learning values, the United Learning Way, and the Framework for Excellence;
- 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 Group;
- Openness, sense of humour, energy and enthusiasm.

# Terms & Conditions of Employment

## Employer

United Learning

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## Position

Principal, Richard Rose Morton Academy

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## Reporting Line

Regional Director, Secondary Academies

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## Location

Richard Rose Morton Academy or such other nearby place operated by the school or to which the school may relocate.

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## Start Date

January 2027

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## Starting Salary

The salary will be commensurate with the significance and importance of the post and the experience of the successful candidate. Pay is above STPCD with additional increases for excellent performance.

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## 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. United Learning would expect you would not have less than six weeks of the year without any work involvement. Staff are guaranteed one paid personal day off each year.

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## Teachers' Pension Scheme

The Principal is eligible to be a member of the TPS.

## Health Insurance

The Principal is eligible to be a member of United Learning's medical insurance scheme, currently with BUPA. It is also possible for other family members to be included within the policy but, when this happens, there is a charge.

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## Ill Health

United Learning's sick leave and pay policy will apply. The policy allows for a three years' sliding qualification period, at the end of which you will be entitled to full pay for 100 working days and half pay for 100 working days.

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## Relocation

Assistance with relocation is negotiable and may be available up to a maximum of £8,000 on the basis of receipts relating to actual relevant expenditure.

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## Safeguarding

United Learning is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff to share this commitment. This appointment will be subject to an enhanced DBS Check, medical clearance, online checks and employment references, all of which are satisfactory to United Learning.

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## Benefits

We encourage flexible working and offer opportunities where it meets the needs of the role. We also have a wide range of benefits, including a Health Cash Plan which gives you money back on essential healthcare, discount schemes that save you money, as well as access to an Employee Assistance Programme, discounted gym memberships, cycle purchase and car leasing.

# 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 please contact our Head of Leadership Recruitment, Geoff Morris on [geoff.morris@unitedlearning.org.uk](mailto:geoff.morris@unitedlearning.org.uk).

Visits are warmly encouraged and can be arranged through Geoff Morris.

All applications should be submitted online via our [website](#).

The closing date for receipt of completed applications is 9am on 15 June 2026.

## The Selection Process

We will treat all enquiries, formal and informal, in confidence.

The selection process will be as follows:

All applications will be acknowledged by email. If you have not received acknowledgement that your application has been received within two working days of sending it, please contact **Philippa Beckett** on [philippa.beckett@unitedlearning.org.uk](mailto:philippa.beckett@unitedlearning.org.uk).

Shortlisting is scheduled to take place on 16 June 2026.

The selection process will take place on **Tuesday 23 June** and **Tuesday 30 June** at Richard Rose Morton Academy. You do need to be available for both dates.

Candidates will be offered full feedback on their application and/or interview.



