



Evolution Academy Trust
Progress through Partnership

Recruitment Pack

Headteacher
Poplars Primary School



Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the role of Headteacher at Poplars Primary School.

This is a truly exciting opportunity to lead a successful and thriving school within a highly supportive and ambitious primary multi-academy trust. At Evolution Academy Trust, we believe that exceptional leadership transforms lives, and we are proud to provide an environment where leaders, staff and pupils can flourish.

Our Headteachers are fully supported by a talented central team, strong, collaborative school leaders, and dedicated colleagues across our Trust. Together, we share a commitment to both educational, and wider excellence, reflected in our positive Ofsted outcomes, strong school communities, and unwavering focus on securing the very best outcomes and educational experience for every child.

We are seeking an outstanding leader who will build on Poplars Primary School's successes, inspire staff and pupils, and lead the next phase of the school's development. This is an opportunity for a values-driven leader to make a lasting difference, maintaining high standards while embracing innovation and growth.

We will support you with a comprehensive induction programme, high-quality professional development, and exceptional opportunities for collaboration. You will work alongside an experienced and supportive network of Headteachers and central team colleagues who are committed to sharing expertise, developing leadership, and achieving excellence together. Most importantly, you will join a Trust where children are at the heart of everything we do and where our school leaders are empowered to succeed.

To help prospective candidates gain a deeper understanding of the school and the role, we invite you to join us for a school visit on **Thursday 1st October at 12:30pm** as the initial stage of the recruitment process. We warmly encourage interested candidates to contact Katie Lawson (Director of School Improvement) on k.lawson@evolutionacademytrust.org.uk to arrange to attend, or let us know if you are unable to but would be interested to discuss this exceptional opportunity further.

We look forward to hearing from leaders who share our ambition, values and commitment to providing an exceptional education for every child.

Katie Lawson





Welcome to Poplars Primary School

We believe every child is unique and has the potential to achieve great things. We are committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment where children can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.



We encourage our children to work together, support one another, and learn the importance of teamwork. We instill a sense of ambition and responsibility in every pupil, fostering the confidence to set high goals and the determination to achieve them. With responsibility at the heart of our values, we teach children to take ownership of their learning, their actions, and their role within the wider community.

Our dedicated team of teachers and staff work together to inspire a love of learning, foster creativity, and develop lifelong skills. We value close partnerships with our families and believe that by working together, we can ensure every child succeeds. We are proud of the positive and inclusive atmosphere at our school, where every child feels supported, valued, and encouraged to be the best they can be.





Our mission

To ensure all children leave our academies as well-educated, confident and responsible citizens, enabling them to be fully prepared for their next stage of education.

Our values



Ambition:

We always aim high

We are ambitious and have high expectations for all. We focus on effort, hard-work and provide the right support at the right time, enabling everyone to achieve their very best.



Collaboration:

We achieve more working together

We value honesty and positive relationships. We embrace new ideas and change through purposeful collaboration.



Responsibility:

We take responsibility for our own actions

We are kind, respectful to others and value differences within and beyond our local communities.

Our Trust

We are a primary-specialist multi-academy trust based in Norfolk and Suffolk. We provide our 12 schools with the assistance, tools and foundations to enable pupils and staff to grow, develop and thrive.

We give schools the highly effective central support they need, alongside the autonomy to make their own choices informed by local knowledge and requirements, enabling leaders to focus on school improvement and outcomes for children.

We make no apologies in focusing all of our work on improving academic and personal outcomes for all children, regardless of background. Our central educational team and subject specialists provide robust monitoring, reviews, support and training to enable this through our curriculum and wider personal development work. Importantly, we work collaboratively with school leaders, teachers, support and admin staff to ensure improvements make a sustained impact.

www.evolutionacademytrust.org.uk



The Application Process

We would love the opportunity to welcome you to our school and help you get a feel for our community. To ensure the role and school are the right fit for you, we invite you to join us for a school visit on **Thursday 1st October at 12.30pm** - If you would like to attend, please contact Katie Lawson at k.lawson@evolutionacademytrust.org.uk.

Interview Process – Provisional dates

Stage 1: Thursday 15th October, held at the school.

Stage 2: Friday 16th October, held at Our Trust central offices in Poringland.

We are committed to making the recruitment process as welcoming and informative as possible and look forward to meeting you.

Role to commence – January 2027

How we work

Evolution Academy Trust demonstrates a highly effective balance of standardisation, economies of scale and collaborative benefits of being in a MAT. It combines these with sensible local and contextual knowledge, recognising the need for nuances and working positively with staff, children and our communities. Our ultimate focus is on ensuring children get a great education and strong support to meet their needs and this is achieved through supporting and enabling our staff to be their very best.



Our strengths

- 1. Primary school focus and specialism** – all of our expertise is within the primary age ranges from nursery to Year 6 and we are therefore able to ensure our collaboration, support, training and resources are firmly focused on this important phase in children's lives. We also understand the region and local challenges very well, which enables us to innovate and adapt while ensuring ambitions remain high.
- 2. Highly effective Trustees and LGBs** – we provide business, financial, educational and wider expertise to serve our children and local communities. We value both the expertise of our Board of Trustees and the local contextual insights from our LGBs – we work as one team and focus on what is best for children.
- 3. Strong centralised support** – we provide highly effective centralised support to our schools in areas including governance, education, HR, IT, procurement, contract management, estates and finance. This is a strong feature of our primary MAT and provides both additional expertise to our schools and enables school leaders to focus on school improvement and outcomes for children.
- 4. School improvement is our priority** – we make no apologies in focusing all of our work on improving academic and personal outcomes for all children, regardless of background. Our central educational team and subject specialists provide robust monitoring, reviews, support and training to enable this through our curriculum and wider personal development work. Importantly, we work collaboratively with all school leaders to ensure improvements and sustained impact.
- 5. Staff professional development** – we provide and enable high-quality professional development for all of our staff, both centrally and locally – with a strong focus on subject knowledge and pedagogy, from a research-informed and 'sensible' lens. We have high ambitions for all children and focus on the impact in classrooms of CPD, including supporting our most vulnerable learners. We work closely with a range of partners to enable this and our staff-engagement and well-being surveys reflect this culture.

Central Team



Andrew Hunt
Chief Operating
Officer



Katie Lawson
Director of School
Improvement



Luke Delderfield
Head of
Operations



**Suzanne Lightwing-
Smith**
Director of People



Angie Chusonis
Head of
Safeguarding and
Attendance



Fiona Taylor
Head of
Communications
and Community



Lisa Brockett
Executive
Assistant and HR
Support



Paul Tidman
Estates and
Facilities Lead



**Laura Llewellyn-
Stamp**
Senior HR Business
Partner



Angela Greaves
Head of
Governance

Headteachers



Edward Savage
Angel
Road Schools



Kate Harris
Bignold Primary



Deb Lambert
Coldfair Green
Primary



Zara Lambert
Costessey Primary



Samuel Keeler
Dell Primary



Julia Halliday
Elm Tree Primary



Kate Estlea
Eaton Primary



Jo Snelling
Filby Primary



Anna Catlin
Nelson Infant



**Ashley
Cunningham**
Poplars Primary



Corrina Peachment
Wensum Junior

Working at our Trust

Our staff are dedicated, hard working professionals who deserve the very best support across the board – whether it's career development, CPD or wellbeing. We want to look after them to ensure they can give their best to our children.



"I am passionate about being part of Evolution Academy Trust as it has allowed me to develop my headship skills in a safe environment whilst being challenged in a supportive manner, being allowed to take bold decisions for the benefit of our pupils. I like that no two schools are the same – maintaining our own school identities for our local context is something that is welcomed and embraced as a Trust. The strong support we are given from the central team allows us to focus on our core goal of improving outcomes for our young people."

**Julia Halliday, Head, Elm Tree Primary
and Education Lead – Curriculum**

"I enjoy working at Evolution Academy Trust because of its commitment to making a real difference in the lives of children. Our Trust fosters a supportive and collaborative environment that values innovation and continuous improvement in education. Working here allows me to be part of a team that genuinely cares about every student's success and well-being, while also investing in staff development and growth. The shared passion for high-quality education and community impact creates a motivating and inspiring workplace, where I feel empowered to help make positive changes each day."

**Ashley Cunningham, Acting Headteacher,
Poplars Primary School**



Working for Evolution Academy Trust means being part of a supportive and dynamic environment where no two days are the same. My role offers a wide variety of experiences and responsibilities, providing opportunities to progress and grow both personally and professionally. The training available, both internally and externally, is vast and varied with ongoing support to succeed and develop valuable skills for the future. The strong sense of a community workplace encourages collaboration across schools, sharing best practices and ideas that benefit everyone. Most importantly, I have the knowledge that I play a key part in making a real difference to pupils and their families, helping to lay a solid foundation for each child's educational journey, so they can fulfil their highest potential.

**Carly Green
School Business Partner, Nelson Primary School**

Benefits

Our benefits package is carefully designed with the intention of supporting all aspects of our employees' wellbeing. With a deep commitment to communication, we strongly encourage all our team members to have a voice through regular employee surveys, and we tailor our benefits around what is important to them.



Financial wellbeing

- Competitive salaries
- Generous pension schemes for both teaching and support staff
- Life assurance
- Eligibility to join Blue Light Discount scheme



Occupational wellbeing

- Clear job roles and accountabilities
- Focus on Continuing Professional Development
- Employee networks and knowledge sharing
- Clear and honest career support



Physical wellbeing

- Cycle to Work Scheme
- Eye Care
- Occupational Health Support
- Supportive sick pay provision
- Opportunity to take part in a range of group events throughout the year, promoting wellbeing, teamwork and social connection across the Trust.



Emotional wellbeing

- Generous holiday entitlement and commitment to 'protected time off'
- Employee Assistance Programme – counselling and advice line and Wellbeing app
- Virtual GP Service
- Strong focus on culture with a shared vision and purpose