



Academy Information for Candidates



Director of Secondary Education

Astrea Academy Trust is an ambitious, dynamic Trust on a mission to tackle historic educational disadvantage and raise standards of education and opportunity across all our schools.

We are committed to never settling for second best, and our aim is that every child in our 26 academies gets a brilliant education by removing any barriers to achieving this.

Our academies are based across South Yorkshire and Cambridgeshire, often in areas or at schools which have experienced generationally poor educational opportunities. Our role is to change that. We have grown rapidly over the last six years and now educate around 74,000 students in 26 academies and settings.

We are committed to a knowledge-rich curriculum and a traditional approach to teaching, behaviour and culture. With careful curriculum design, spaced retrieval practice, strong attention to behaviour policy and practice, detailed assessment and achieving mastery in small steps, rates of progress across our secondaries have recently increased greatly.

We believe in explicit instruction and have been greatly influenced by Lemov's 'Teach Like A Champion', Rosenshine and recent developments in cognitive science. Excellent teaching must sit alongside a very carefully sequenced curriculum, with a culture of deliberate practice and instructional coaching.

In all our schools, we have worked hard to create a scholarly culture that is warm and strict, disciplined and joyful, where there is 'purpose not power', and crucially where teachers can focus on teaching and pupils can focus on learning.

As a Trust of 26 schools, we have the capacity to scaffold and support our leaders both educationally and operationally - with finance, HR, technology and data teams, and a Regional Director and subject specialists.

If you are aligned to our mission and values, 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 very best wishes,

Richard Tutt
Director of Secondary Education



About the Trust

The trust has 26 academies across South Yorkshire and Cambridgeshire

We are committed to ensuring that all children in the trust have accelerated opportunities that enable them to learn, thrive, and lead successful lives. Our ambition is to tackle historical educational disadvantage and to play our part in the social regeneration of areas that have experienced poor education opportunities.

The trust has grown rapidly since its creation and now educates around 15,000 students in 26 academies. In Cambridgeshire, the trust comprises four secondary schools and one SEMH special school. In South Yorkshire, the trust works through seventeen primary academies, one all-through school, and three secondary schools.

The trust's Executive Team is led by Rowena Hackwood as Chief Executive Officer. A wider central team supports the work of individual academies in core areas such as academic support, inclusion, governance, finance, HR, estates, and IT. With a 2030 strategy in place, we are clear and specific about our vision for behaviour, curriculum and teaching quality.

All our academies are rated **GOOD** by Ofsted.



Astrea in Numbers

26
ACADEMIES

2,000
MEMBERS
OF
STAFF



£115m
TOTAL
INCOME



100%
RATED 'GOOD'

14,000 PUPILS

£3.9m
REINVESTED
INTO SCHOOLS
TO IMPROVE
FACILITIES AND
INFRASTRUCTURE



About Astrea Academy Trust

SECONDARY ACADEMIES

Within our secondary academies we have a clear and specific vision for behaviour, curriculum and teaching principles, which is codified and widely shared.

Our shared values are scholarship, curiosity & tenacity. We are unapologetically ambitious for every child, regardless of their background, prior attainment or needs. Our goal is to ensure that all our scholars have the option to attend university or pursue an aspirational alternative. Through quality first teaching, we work tirelessly to remove any barriers to success for all children.

OUR KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Exceptionally high aspirations, with a firm emphasis on academic attainment
- Ambition for every scholar to have the option to attend university or pursue an aspirational alternative
- A knowledge-rich curriculum
- Innovative teaching approaches focusing on direct instruction, means of participation, and developing fluency, greatly influenced by Lemov's 'Teach Like a Champion', Rosenshine, and recent developments in cognitive science
- A commitment to reducing unnecessary tasks through our academy-led Workload Charters
- A belief that our staff are our greatest asset, fostering a developmental environment where everyone can thrive and grow in their role
- A calm and purposeful learning environment that is warm, welcoming, and friendly
- Centralised behaviour systems to further support teacher workload
- A focus on improving reading ability
- A broad range of extra-curricular activities, including sports, music, performing arts, and academic clubs.



About Astrea Academy Trust

A KNOWLEDGE-RICH EDUCATION

By a knowledge-rich education, we mean a rigorous and extensive knowledge-based education, that draws its material and methods from the best and most important work in both the humanities and the sciences.

The aim of a core knowledge education is not primarily to prepare students for a job or career, it is more to transform their minds so that they are able to make reasonable and astute judgments and engage fruitfully in conversation and debate – not just about contemporary issues, but also about the universal questions that have been troubling mankind throughout history.

We want children to leave our schools with the confidence that comes from possessing an essential general knowledge. A knowledge-rich education should not confine itself to the Western canon but should embrace other cultures and traditions. What that canon includes will be subject to review but will always be closely connected to the history and the present nature of the society in which we live, including our international connections.

WHAT ASTREA OFFERS

- Ongoing CPD, career development, and promotion opportunities
- Extensive support and progression opportunities
- Collaborative planning with a developing centralised KS3 curriculum and associated artifacts
- A feedback policy focused on whole-class feedback – no onerous marking policies
- Disruption-free learning and a 'warm/strict' behaviour system
- Highly visible/supportive senior leaders who have your back
- Centralised detentions, including homework detentions - no need to organise, run or chase them
- No formal graded lesson observations – just ongoing 'no-stakes' drop-ins based around instructional coaching for continuous development
- Excellent support from the Astrea Trust Central team and other colleagues in secondary schools



**COTTENHAM
VILLAGE COLLEGE**
Astrea Academy Trust
LEARN, THRIVE, SUCCEED

Codifying Culture

‘We are what we repeatedly do.
Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.’

Excellence is a habit



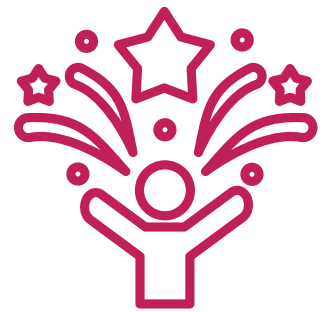
Students rise to meet our high expectations. Maintaining our standards is paramount to establishing strong cultural norms and fostering a culture of excellence.

Warm/Strict (WWF)



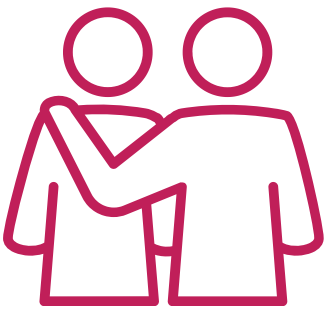
We maintain high expectations for students while fostering an environment of warmth, genuine care, and positivity. This nurtures a supportive learning atmosphere which is both disciplined and joyful.

Joy and belonging



Belonging is one of the most powerful human emotions. Our school creates warm, welcoming, and friendly environment that are fully inclusive, ensuring every student feels joy and a sense of belonging.

Kindness & Politeness



These values are essential for a positive school culture. We foster an environment where kindness, politeness, and gratitude are consistently practiced, creating a respectful and supportive community for all students.

Purpose not power



Actions, intentions, and words are guided by purpose, not merely by positions of authority. All colleagues can clearly articulate the rationale behind actions and decision-making processes.

Over communication



We consistently revisit and reinforce our mission, values, and principles. Over-communicating our core purpose ensures everyone remains aligned. Our values are lived not laminated.

Codifying Culture

‘A strong culture is taught not caught’

Praise & Recognition



Recognition, praise, and rewards drive positive change. We aim to praise students every lesson, every day. Sanctions are issued when wrong choices are made.

Rowing together



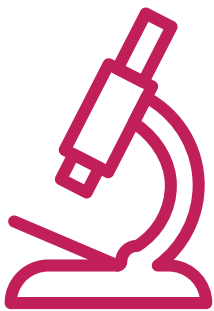
Aligned around our vision and values, all staff row together with relentless consistency. Ignoring issues undermines our culture; instead we collectively row together for the benefit of all.

Aspiration



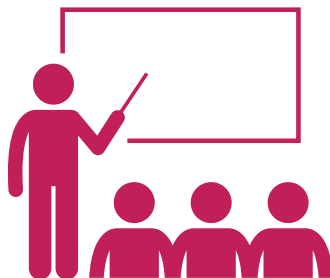
We deliver a knowledge-rich curriculum providing the foundation for excellent outcomes and further opportunities. We believe everyone can succeed. We focus on raising attainment, not just aspirations, turning goals into reality.

Sweat the small stuff



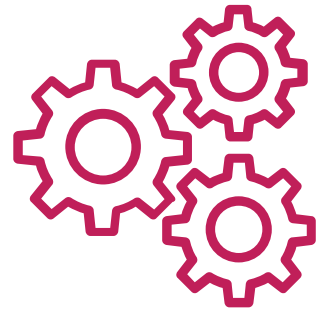
Leaders and staff adopt a meticulous approach, with a relentless drive to ensure fundamental basics are consistently in place and maintained at all times.

Teachers can teach and students can learn



We are committed to fostering an environment where exemplary behaviour is the foundation for disruption free learning. All teachers and support staff can teach and do their jobs free from disruption, no matter their status.

Routines



Universal classroom routines help establish a culture focused on learning. By setting shared expectations and consistent behaviours, we shape the values and norms that define our school community.

Our Mantras

Work Hard, Be Kind



Success through effort and empathy:

We achieve our goals and build positive relationships.

100%



Only Excellence:

We always give 100%, because we know that nothing less will do.

We are Cottenham



United in Excellence:

We are a team, a family and a community. We work together to achieve our goals.

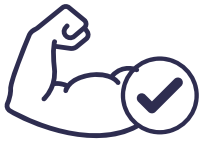
Top of the Mountain



Reach for the Summit:

We aim to be the best by constantly pursuing excellence and overcoming challenges.

Hard work wins



Persistence Pays Off:

We embrace effort and dedication, knowing that consistent hard work leads to success and achievement.

It's who I am



Authenticity in Action:

We make choices informed by our values which shape our identity and empower us to become the best versions of ourselves.

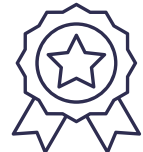
Are you a zero hero?



Be the best we can be:

Striving to be the best by consistently choosing integrity, excellent behaviour, and perfect attendance.

Be a merit machine



Merits like confetti:

When we work hard, we are rewarded and recognised for our efforts. This builds a positive culture of belonging.

You deserve disruption free learning



Persistence Pays Off: We embrace effort and dedication, knowing that consistent hard work leads to success and achievement.

Climb the mountain to university



Aspire to Academic Greatness: We want to ensure everyone has the option to go to university or aspirational alternative.

Do the right thing, even when it's difficult



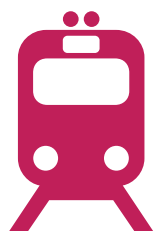
Integrity Over Ease: We always choose to do the right thing, even when it's hard. It shows our true character.

How To Find Us

**Cottenham Village
College
High Street
Cottenham
Cambridge
CB24 8UA**

Public Transport Links

Cottenham Village College is well served by regular public transport services.



- **Bus services:** The Stagecoach 8 and 8A services run frequently between Cambridge and Cottenham, providing direct links from the city centre.
- **Nearby bus stops:** The closest stops to the college are Bramley Close (1-minute walk) and The Green (3-minute walk).
- **Journey time:** The journey from central Cambridge takes approximately 30–40 minutes by bus.



- Cottenham Village College is on High Street, Cottenham, north of Cambridge.
- From Cambridge or the A14, follow signs for Histon and Cottenham, then follow village signs to the college.
- Limited parking is available on site.

All about Cottenham

- **Location:** Cottenham is a large and friendly village in Cambridgeshire, located about 6 miles north of Cambridge, combining rural surroundings with easy access to the city.
- **Community Size:** It is one of the largest villages in England, with a strong sense of community and a wide range of local groups and activities for children and families.
- **History:** Cottenham has a long history dating back over 1,000 years, and is mentioned in the Domesday Book, making it a place rich in local heritage.
- **Green Spaces & Transport:** The village is surrounded by open countryside and footpaths and is well connected by regular bus routes to Cambridge and nearby villages.

Scan the QR code below for exact directions to our academy using Google Maps.



Candidate Charter

We want every candidate to have an informed, engaging, and positive experience, and to support this we've created our Candidate Charter which outlines our commitment to you.

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

- Transparency – we will treat you with respect, honesty and fairness.
- Protecting your privacy – we'll ensure your information is secure and handled sensitively.
- Understanding – you will be given everything you need to make informed decisions.
- Showcasing talent – we will provide a good opportunity for you to share your skills, experience and potential.
- Feedback – we will provide constructive feedback professionally and promptly.
- Listening – we welcome feedback and we'll act on what you have to share.
- Inclusivity – our hiring decisions align with our commitment to create a high quality, diverse workforce.

WE WILL:

- Provide you with clear, accurate and timely information.
- Give you the opportunity to ask questions – and we'll ensure you get the answers you need.
- Respond to enquiries promptly and usually within 24 hours during the working week.
- Adopt a fair and consistent assessment process.
- Make sure you have all the documentation and details you need for an interview, well in advance.
- Provide you with real insight about what it's like to be part of our team.
- Ensure all offers are fair and equitable.
- Seek feedback on your experience at every opportunity, so we can continue to improve.

IN RETURN WE ASK THAT YOU:

- Be honest and upfront about your experience, aspirations and motivations.
- Provide open and accurate information when submitting an application.
- Always give yourself the best opportunity to succeed – research who we are and how we work.
- Let us know if situations change in relation to your interest and help us understand why.
- Prepare yourself for interview and let us know how we can support you.

How to apply

Your application

If you like what you've read so far and think you can see yourself as a key member of the Astrea team, it's time to fill in your application.

Your application is an important part of the selection process as it's used to determine whether or not you'll be chosen to have an interview. It's really important that you try to capture all of the relevant information we have asked for on the form so we can get a good feel for who you are and why you're great.

All applications must be submitted through My New Term - the link to our careers page is here: [Astrea Academy Trust Careers Page Link](#)

Tips for a great application

- Check out the person specification - this highlights the key aspects we're looking for.
- Be yourself. Your personality, values and vision are the most important to us - you must be a great fit!
- Be sure to read this pack and our policies thoroughly to ensure you are fully aligned to our ways of working. If so - tell us about it!
- Make sure you tell us what skills you have that make you perfect for this role. Tell us the impact of your work, don't just list the tasks that you have completed.
- List any formal qualifications on your application. We'll need to see the certificates for your qualifications at interview stage.
- Make sure you include paid work, unpaid work and any work experience in your employment history. Start with your current employment, or if you are currently unemployed, your most recent employment. If there are any gaps in your employment, you must tell us why for safer recruitment purposes.
- At least one of your referees should be your current employer. If you are not currently employed, provide your most recent employer. If you don't have any employment history, think about professional referee's who would best describe your strengths for the role and your suitability to work with children.

How to apply

Astrea Academy Trust are an equal opportunities employer, committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Successful applicants are subject to an enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service check and satisfactory employment references.

As well as verification of identity, we ask all successful candidates to undertake an enhanced DBS disclosure. In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance, we may also conduct an online search about any shortlisted candidates as part of our due diligence to identify any matters that might relate directly to our legal duty to meet safeguarding duties.

DISABILITY CONFIDENT EMPLOYER

Astrea Academy Trust is delighted to be part of such an important movement, which will ensure we have the guidance to challenge attitudes towards disability, tap into wider talent pools and help all individuals across the Trust fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations. As a Disability confident employer, we have pledged to promote a culture that ensures there are no barriers to the development and progression of disabled staff.



Any questions

Who do I contact if I have any questions about the role?

If you'd like to speak to a colleague ahead of submitting an application, please refer to the job advert and contact the lead person for the specific role. We'd love to answer any questions you may have. Likewise, a phone call or teams meeting may work for you - please reach out and we'll make it happen.

Who should I contact if I have any special requirements?

If you're unable to complete our online application form and need some support, and/or you need our documents in an alternative format, for example, large print, please contact our recruitment team recruitment@astreaacademytrust.org.

How long will it take for you to decide if I've got an interview?

This can vary depending on the number of applications we receive for each vacancy. Generally speaking, we do try our best to make or decision and contact applicants invited for interview within a week of the closing date.

Will I be notified if my application is unsuccessful and will I receive feedback?

We know how much time and effort goes into an application and we really appreciate the time you've taken to apply for a job with us. During the shortlisting stage, your application status will be updated on MyNewTerm & you will receive an automated email from the system. Due to the volume of applications we receive, we're unable to provide feedback to unsuccessful candidates at the shortlisting stage.





Please visit our website to
learn more

www.astreacottenham.org