



Active
Learning
Trust

Candidate Pack
Catering Manager
June 2026



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Dear applicant



Thank you for your interest in joining the Active Learning Trust. I know that choosing where to build your career is a big decision, and before I share the details of the role, I want to tell you why this is such a special place to work.

At ALT, we do things differently. We are a values-led organisation that believes our people are our greatest strength. We invest deeply in the adults who work with us, because when we help our colleagues grow, our pupils thrive. Ours is a community built on trust, care and ambition – where every member of staff is encouraged to discover their strengths, take opportunities, and know that their work is shaping brighter futures for the children in our care.

We don't see education as just a system; we see it as a moral mission. Every day, our staff bring energy, compassion and commitment to their roles, united by the belief that every child deserves the very best. We stand alongside you with high expectations, professional development, and unwavering support so that together we can achieve extraordinary things.

If you share our values and our passion for making a difference, we would be delighted to hear from you. I look forward to the possibility of welcoming you into our Trust – a place where people matter, potential is nurtured, and purpose drives everything we do.

With warm regards,



Lynsey Holzer
Chief Executive Officer

Active Learning Trust

Overview

Our multi-academy Trust was originally established in 2012 and is currently made up of 1,600 staff across 21 schools in East Anglia, serving over 8,600 young people and their families. Our shared Trust mission of delivering excellence to ensure our young people can thrive and prosper is at the heart of everything we do.

Our trustees fulfil their duties through our Trust Leadership Team, which includes our central team and school leadership teams, working together as one unified organisation with joint accountability. We have an established central team that is not only knowledgeable but also driven by an imperative to deliver the very best for the young people in our care.

At Active Learning Trust, we are restless for excellence and improvement so that our children can thrive and prosper. Deeply rooted in the heart of our communities, people choose to join our trust because we make a difference. We explore the art of the possible to find the right solutions for our children, our people and the wider education sector.

Our Team

Our team is made up of experts across all specialist areas, including education, finance, HR, communications and marketing, estates, governance, procurement, data and IT. Their skills allow us to deliver shared savings and, more importantly, provide essential services to schools, enabling school-based leadership to focus on improving outcomes for pupils in the broadest sense.

- We know our schools exceptionally well and we offer both honest reflection and evaluation of our strengths and areas for improvement.
- We have clear and appropriate plans for continuing to improve the quality of education and pupil achievement.
- We encourage and celebrate the individual characteristics of each of our schools and provide them with a good balance of autonomy central oversight and accountability.

Our People-First Philosophy

At Active Learning Trust, we invest in you from day one. We love working with specialists that are united by their skills and passion for shaping the future of education. We provide tailored coaching, leadership training and clear progression pathways that turn roles into fulfilling, lifelong careers. Guided by our values of open dialogue, bold thinking and supportive teamwork, we put your growth and well-being at the heart of everything we do - so you can focus on making a real difference in our schools and beyond.

Our Values

At the heart of our Trust are five core values that shape our culture and guide every aspect of our work. They influence our interactions, decisions and strategic direction, and they unite our school communities.



I aspire, we achieve



We're curious, creative and bold



A family, not a house share



Comfortable being candid



Humour, humility, humanity



“

ALT creates environments where professionals can be bold and courageous in their practice, bringing about excellent outcomes for both students and staff. Our students receive the best standard of education from practitioners who are motivated to give their best as they are supported by a Trust that treats all with humanity, humility and humour!

More personally, I'm grateful for the CPD and career opportunities presented to me, that have allowed me to grow from an NQT into a Headteacher in 8 years.

Louise Creed
Headteacher, The Albert Pye
and Ravensmere Schools Federation

Our Schools

Active Learning Trust encompasses 21 schools across East Anglia – eight in Cambridgeshire, 12 in Suffolk and two in Norfolk.

Our schools fall naturally into three designated geographical sub-regions – Ipswich, Norfolk & North Suffolk, and mid Cambridgeshire. This allows the Trust to apply 'hub' level school-to-school support and collaborative working along with other mutually supportive arrangements. The synergy this creates has become a key way of working for our teams and continues to develop further over time.

For more information on our schools, please visit our website.

[View our schools](#)



Job Vacancy

Catering Manager

Leading a high-quality catering service that supports learning and wellbeing

We are looking for a Catering Manager to oversee all aspects of food provision at Neale-Wade Academy, ensuring an efficient, safe and welcoming service for pupils and staff each day. This role combines hands-on leadership with strategic oversight, from planning nutritious menus and driving uptake, to managing budgets, suppliers and a committed catering team. With a strong focus on compliance, food safety and allergen management, the postholder will maintain high standards while continually improving the service. It is an opportunity to shape a catering offer that promotes healthy choices, reflects student needs and contributes positively to the wider school community.

Summary of Key Responsibilities

- Lead and manage the day-to-day catering operation, including food preparation, service delivery and team supervision
- Plan and develop menus that meet nutritional standards and support healthy eating for pupils
- Ensure full compliance with food safety, hygiene, allergen regulations and Trust policies
- Manage budgets, stock control and supplier relationships to deliver value for money
- Monitor service performance, customer satisfaction and uptake, implementing improvements where needed

Why Join Our Trust?

- Belong to a compassionate and inclusive trust that values you and the role you play.
- Join an experienced group of people that are fully dedicated to delivering the best for our children.
- Gain access to our VivUp employee benefit system, Cycle to Work scheme and local government pension scheme.

Contact

If you would like an informal discussion about the role, or for more info, please contact Donna Spendelow, HR Recruitment Officer, at: DSpendelow@neale-wade.org



Location

March, Cambridgeshire

Contract

Full time, Permanent

Working Pattern

37 hours, 39.6 weeks
(Term time plus)

Salary

ALT Grade G
£32,046 - £35,570 FTE

Start Date

September 2026

Job description

Catering Manager (Catering 5)

Salary: ALT Grade G

Academy Site: Neale-Wade Academy

Reporting to: Director of Operations

Main purpose

To be responsible for the safe, effective and efficient operation of all aspects of catering services within the academy.

To plan, operate and control the production and service of food related duties setting out programmes of work and line managing other catering staff.

Duties and responsibilities

Food and Catering

- To implement new ideas and promotions
- To promote healthy eating within the school
- To devise, plan and prepare food menus in accordance with nutritional standards, considering the dietary needs and preferences of pupils
- To plan and deliver an efficient, high-volume catering service within restricted service times, ensuring minimal queuing and a positive customer experience.
- To organise staffing and service points effectively to meet demand during peak periods.
- To identify opportunities to increase meal uptake and income, including through menu development, promotions, and service improvements.
- To contribute to wider academy events and hospitality where required.

Resources

- To ensure outlets are suitably resourced to meet customer expectations and service standards
- To ensure storage and management of food and other consumables in line with health and safety and hygiene regulations
- To take responsibility for the cleanliness of equipment, the kitchen and dining areas in the academy
- To order food and other commodities from suppliers with the agreed catering budget
- To manage relationships with suppliers, ensuring quality, value for money, and compliance with Trust procurement requirements.
- To monitor supplier performance and resolve any issues relating to quality, delivery, or cost.

Standards, Policies and Procedures

- To ensure a cost-effective sales mix for all outlets
- To manage and review quality standards and areas for improvement
- To ensure compliance with laid down procedures and rules including health and safety, COSHH and food hygiene
- To ensure compliance with food safety and allergen regulations, including the accurate identification, management and communication of food allergens to safeguard the health and wellbeing of all service users
- To assist with the development of policies and procedures relating to catering services
- To ensure full compliance with Natasha's Law and all associated food information regulations, including the accurate labelling of all pre-packed for direct sale (PPDS) food items.
- To implement and maintain robust allergen management systems, including ingredient traceability, clear communication of allergen information, and effective controls to prevent cross-contamination.
- To ensure all allergen information is accurate, up to date, and consistently communicated to staff and customers, with appropriate checks and verification processes in place.
- To ensure that all food safety management systems (e.g. HACCP) are fully implemented, monitored, and kept up to date.
- To lead on preparation for internal and external inspections, including Environmental Health inspections, ensuring the service consistently meets or exceeds required standards.
- To maintain accurate and auditable records in relation to food safety, hygiene, and compliance.
- To ensure the safe and effective supervision of pupils within dining areas, maintaining high standards of behaviour and safety.
- To work with relevant staff to support pupils with specific dietary or medical needs, ensuring appropriate controls are in place where required.
- To report and respond promptly to any food-related incidents or concerns, taking appropriate corrective action.

Budgeting

- To monitor and control all income and expenditure relating to catering operations, ensuring the service operates within budget and delivers best value.
- To develop and maintain effective systems for menu costing, portion control, and pricing to ensure financial sustainability.
- To regularly review sales, uptake, and profitability, taking appropriate action to maximise income and minimise waste.

Team Involvement

- To line manage the catering team
- To contribute to the recruitment of new employees
- To carry out appraisals for the catering team
- To develop and motivate team members
- To identify team training and development needs

Building Professional Relationships

- To monitor customer satisfaction levels

Record Keeping and Information Management

- To collate and analyse sales information to inform future production and ensure customer needs are met
- To record safety issues and action necessary improvements, where appropriate

Generic responsibilities of all Active Learning Trust employees

- To consistently uphold the Trust's Aims, Visions and Values.
- To work in a co-operative and polite manner with all stakeholders and visitors to promote and enhance the reputation of the academies and Trust.
- To work with children and young people within the framework of the academy in a courteous, positive, caring, and responsive manner.
- To take an active and positive role in the Trust's commitment to the development of staff and review procedures, undertaking training as required.
- To act in a professional way that is consistent with the values and expectations of the Trust.
- To be responsible for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people.

The Active Learning Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people. We expect all staff to actively share this commitment. All adults working in our Trust in whatever capacity will be part of a thorough safer recruitment process. All appointments will be subject pre-employment checks including the taking of satisfactory references and enhanced criminal record clearance (via the Disclosure and Barring Service) in line with the need to create and maintain a safe culture.

Please note that this is illustrative of the general nature and level of responsibility of the role. It is not a comprehensive list of all tasks expected to be carried out. It will be reviewed annually in conjunction with the appraisal process and planning for the next academic year. It will be reviewed, and it may be subject to modification or amendment at any time after consultation with the holder of the post. The duties may be varied to meet the changing demands of the Trust at the reasonable discretion of the Reports to Manager.

Person Specification

Catering Manager

E = Essential / **D** = Desirable

Qualifications & Training		
Literacy and Numeracy – ability to follow written guidance and procedures	E	
Relevant catering or hospitality qualification, or equivalent experience	E	
Level 3 Food Safety & Hygiene (or ability to obtain)	E	
Allergen awareness or specialist dietary training		D
Management or supervisory qualification		D
Experience		
Experience of managing a catering service, ideally within a school setting	E	
Experience of menu planning, including nutritionally balanced meals for children	E	
Experience of managing budgets, stock control and ordering processes	E	
Experience of leading, supervising and developing staff teams		D
Experience of managing catering audits or inspections (e.g. Environmental Health)		D

Skills and Knowledge		
Sound knowledge of food hygiene legislation, health and safety, and allergen regulations	E	
Knowledge of School Food Standards	E	
Demonstrates a robust understanding of allergen management and ensures safe systems are in place to protect pupils with dietary needs	E	
Strong organisational skills with the ability to manage multiple priorities effectively	E	
Able to interpret information and situations and solve varied problems or develop solutions	E	
Able to respond independently to unexpected problems/situations	E	
Excellent communication skills, including engaging with pupils, staff and parents	E	
Ability to maintain accurate records and ensure compliance with statutory requirements	E	
Competent in the use of IT systems for ordering, reporting and compliance	E	

Personal Qualities		
Embodies of the Active Learning Trust's values: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I aspire, we achieve - We're curious, creative and bold - A family, not a house share - Comfortable being candid - Humour, humility, humanity 	E	
Commitment to uphold the seven principles of public life (the Nolan principles) at all times	E	
Commitment to maintaining confidentiality at all times	E	
Commitment to providing a safe, inclusive and high-quality catering service	E	
Attention to detail, particularly in relation to food safety and allergen management	E	
Required to stand for long periods with some carrying of weights	E	
Ability to work in conditions with heat and noise	E	
Equal Opportunities		
Commitment to inclusion, equality and diversity	E	
Safeguarding		
Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.	E	

Application Process

How to Apply

You can browse and apply for all Active Learning Trust vacancies by clicking the link below to access our recruitment platform. Once you have found the corresponding vacancy, click on the 'Apply Now' button to begin your application. You can save your application and return to it at any time. Please ensure you have completed and submitted your application before the deadline shown on the job advert.

[View current vacancies](#)

Hints and Tips

To increase the chance of your application being considered for the role, please follow these steps:

- Use the Person Specification document to write your application. Consider using the headings and give examples where possible.
- Check for punctuation and grammar errors.
- Ensure your first referee is from your current or most recent employer. If you are employed within a school or academy, ensure you list your Headteacher as your first referee.
- All gaps in employment history must be explained. This should start from the date you left full-time education, including the summer holiday.



Useful Information

As an equal opportunities employer, we welcome applications irrespective of race, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation and/or age. We value the individuality and creativity that every worker potentially brings to the workforce.

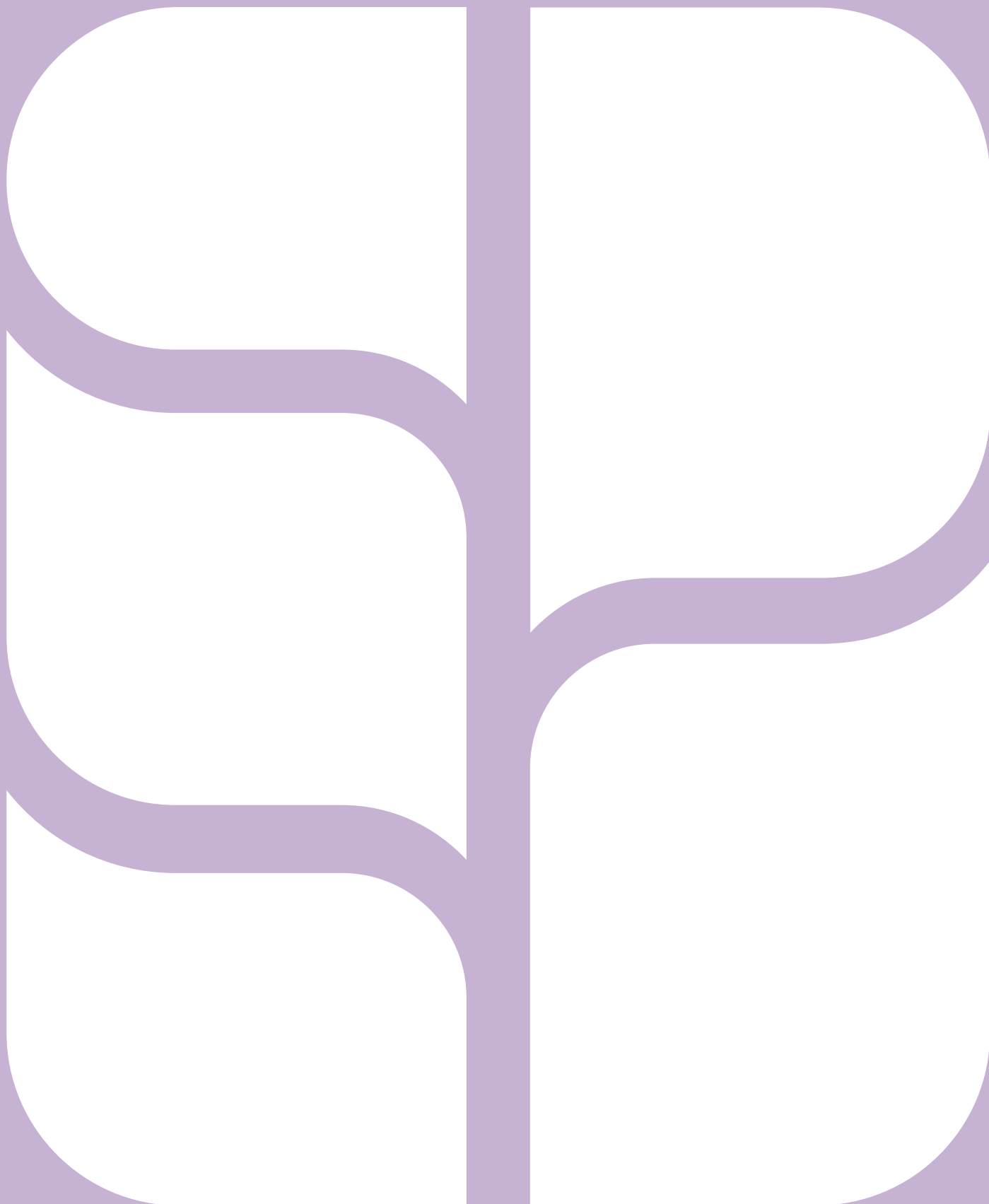
No CVs are accepted in line with requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education, therefore all applications are required to be completed using the MyNewTerm platform.

The Active Learning Trust reserves the right to interview and appoint prior to the advert closing date. With this in mind, we encourage you to apply as soon as possible.

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Candidates are advised that, if shortlisted for interview, they will be subject to an online search of information in the public domain.

This post will come under the requirements of the Childcare (Disqualification) 2009 Regulations and the successful applicant will be required to complete a declaration form to establish whether they are disqualified under these regulations.



www.activelearningtrust.org