



Astrea Academy Trust
LEARN, THRIVE, SUCCEED

Head of Inclusion (Secondary)

Candidate Pack



Introduction

This pack is designed to help give you a sense of what it would be like to work with us and help you decide whether you can see yourself joining us on our journey of transformational change to secure excellent outcomes for all children.

We believe that every child has the right to a high-quality education and learning, and that all children have the right to feel they belong in our schools. We are on a shared mission to disrupt disadvantage and drive deep school improvement. To do this well, we know that we must ensure that those that find learning hardest have the same high expectations and intellectual rigour that society demands of our most able children.

The Head of Inclusion (Secondary) will lead a bold, evidence-informed inclusion strategy across our secondary schools nationally. This is a very rare opportunity to influence inclusion at scale. This is more than simply an inclusion role, it is a chance to reshape how inclusion is understood, designed and delivered across a Trust with a national profile. It would allow you to make significant and sustained impact on the life chances of children.

We believe that schools must teach powerful knowledge, 'the best that has been thought and said' and an 'entitlement curriculum' for all, with an underpinning philosophy that 'education for all should confer the benefits associated with education for the rich' (Michael Young). To achieve this, we design carefully sequenced curricula underpinned by spaced retrieval practice, detailed assessment, and mastery in small steps, enabling children to make exceptional progress.

Our approach to teaching is grounded in explicit instruction, shaped by Lemov's Teach Like A Champion, Rosenshine's principles, and the latest developments in cognitive science. Excellent teaching sits at the heart of this model, supported by deliberate practice and high quality instructional coaching, to deliver the very best classroom practice.

This role is open to senior leaders or other Trust leaders with a proven track record of delivering excellent outcomes and who possess the drive to support our mission. If you are aligned with our values, passionate about improving young people's education, and ready for a role that combines classroom excellence with Trust-wide impact, we would be delighted to hear from you.

I recommend that you read this pack carefully, including the job description and role profile. If you are interested in this role, I strongly encourage you to arrange a conversation prior to the interview date. To arrange a telephone or Teams call, please contact recruitment@astreaacademytrust.org.

With very best wishes

Matt Carnaby
Director of Curriculum & Assessment



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



Our Vision and Values

Our future success is underpinned by a strong set of shared values. These values are important because they support the vision, shape the culture, and make a statement about what we hold dear.



SCHOLARSHIP:

We are informed by the best of academic and organisational thinking and research, using this where we can and expanding it where possible.



CURIOSITY:

We ask searching questions, not taking things at face value, seeking out the best of what is known and engaging in appreciative enquiry.



TENACITY:

We deliver on our promises and see things through to completion. We embody pace, urgency and determination in our focus on improving outcomes for children and on our own performance.

Our Academies

PRIMARY



SECONDARY



ALL-THROUGH



SPECIAL



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



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



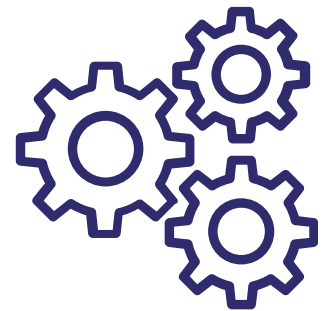
Leaders and staff adopt a meticulous approach, with a relentless drive to ensure fundamental basics are consistently in place and maintained at all times.

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.

About the role

Role Title	Head of Inclusion (Secondary)
Responsible to	Director of Curriculum & Assessment
Salary	Central Teachers: £74,814 - £82,877 FTE

ROLE SUMMARY

We believe that every child has the right to high-quality education and learning, and that all children have the right to feel like they belong in our schools. This is best characterised by ensuring that those that find learning the hardest should have the same high expectations and intellectual rigour that society demands of our most able children.

We believe that what works for SEND and disadvantaged children works for all children. We believe that inclusive routines, high-quality teaching and a knowledge-rich curriculum should be the first intervention.

We are ambitious for every Astrea student to succeed and, by 2030, for every Astrea school's performance to be in the top 5% of similar schools nationally. The only way to realise this ambition is by ensuring all students entrusted to Astrea schools achieve strongly – this includes the most vulnerable. This role will be central in driving the Trust's commitment to supporting academic excellence and the personal development of every child.

PURPOSE

Reporting to the Director of Curriculum & Assessment (Secondary), you will lead the development of a strategy for inclusion which challenges a more traditional framing of inclusion around problems within children. Rather, you will develop an approach which strengthens the main teaching offer, to ensure that high-quality teaching is truly the first intervention, with thorough and expert extra support.

You will feel that teaching children with special educational needs is a sought-after responsibility that teachers and leaders see as high prestige. We know that children with SEND make less progress than their peers. Your role will be to, with support, lead a strategy which challenges and changes this.

You will have an inclusion by design mindset. You will believe that while some children need more than others and some need bespoke activities or resources, the expectation for all children must be the same. They are known, they are safe and they have access to high-quality learning with brilliant curriculum and expert teachers.

About the role

PURPOSE (CONT.)

You will believe that labelling children as disadvantaged or placing them on the SEN register risks inadvertently lowering expectations on exactly the group of children that we should care the most about. Your role will therefore be focused on improving children's outcomes, ensuring that children are taught through high-quality teaching and supported with appropriate interventions.

Equity of experience, opportunity and outcomes is a moral imperative to ensure that every child can flourish.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Strategically lead the development of the Secondary inclusion strategy.
- Support the implementation of exceptional curricula in the secondary phase for our most vulnerable children.
- Collaborate with colleagues working in behaviour, attendance and SEND.
- Ensure that high quality teaching is the firm foundation of our inclusive offer.
- Lead on the early identification and use of evidenced informed interventions.
- Strengthen and capture the professional knowledge of the Secondary Directorate's inclusion specialists so that it can be shared and scrutinised, as well as sourcing the best educational knowledge and expertise externally.
- Provide specific expertise to the wider Astrea Education Team.
- Provide exceptional leadership of inclusion and support and develop inclusion leadership within our schools.
- Maintain and promote excellent relationships with external agencies and stakeholders.
- Engage and work with parents and other stakeholders.
- Contribute to the development of education strategy and the creation of sustainable short; medium and long-term business plans to ensure the attainment of goals and objectives set by Astrea Trustee Board.
- Support schools to achieve their performance targets for inclusion, which include academic and attendance targets for SEND.



Astrea Academy Trust

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Person Specification

QUALIFICATIONS

- Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)
- Evidence of continuous INSET and commitment to further professional development
- Desirable to hold a National Professional Qualification for SENCO (NPQ for SENCO) or a commitment to undertake this upon appointment.

EXPERIENCE

- Suitable senior leadership experience
- Exceptional knowledge and expertise of inclusion
- Demonstrate success in designing and delivering resources and training programmes that led to clear improvements in provision
- Experience of working to support other schools ideally as part of a trust structure
- Proven track record of school improvement at senior leadership level, with specific responsibility for SEND and/or Inclusion

KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING

- Detailed knowledge of the SEND Code of Practice and associated legislation
- In-depth knowledge of statutory and wider policy landscape, including current trends in research and best practice in SEND
- Thorough understanding of the policy landscape in relation to inclusion
- Ability to balance detailed analysis with strategic vision
- Knowledge of cognitive science and the role it plays in learning

PERSONAL SKILLS & ATTRIBUTES

The ability to:

- Promote the Trust's aims positively, and use effective strategies to lead and manage
- Develop good working relationships within the team, in particular with colleagues working in behaviour, attendance and SEND
- Establish and develop close relationships with parents, trustees, Trust senior staff, governors and the community
- Communicate effectively (both orally and in writing) and be approachable to a variety of audiences
- Work in an organised manner, committed to the task in hand, and able to work to deadlines
- Lead and manage highly effective teams

Operational success

relies fundamentally

on **the success**
of our people 

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.astreaacademytrust.org



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