



Active  
Learning  
Trust

**Candidate Pack**  
Department Leader  
April 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

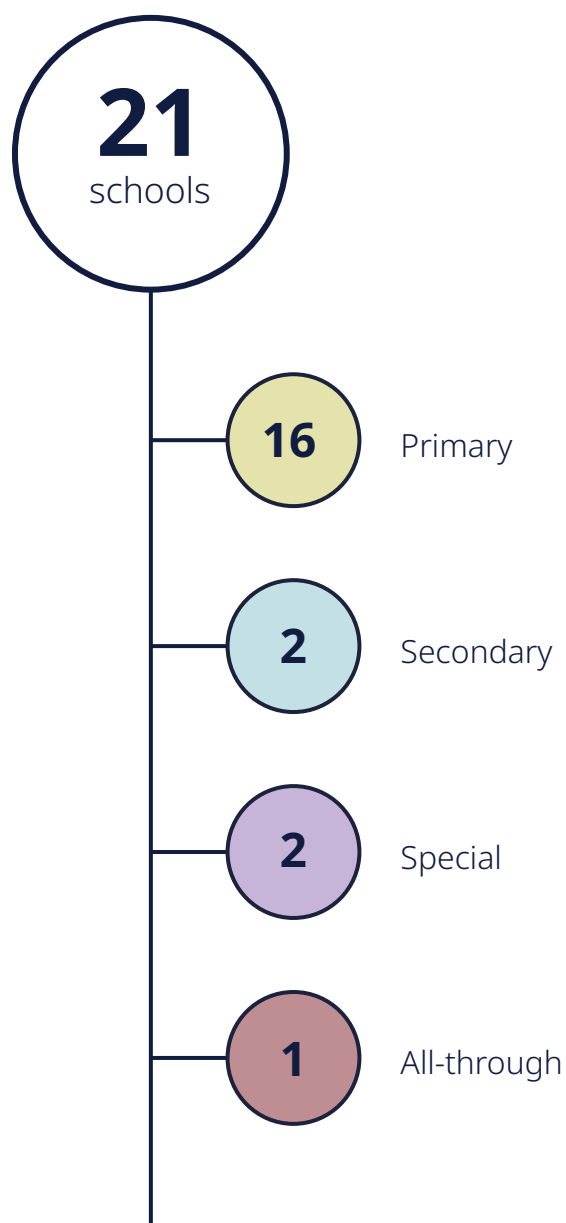
# Our Schools

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

## Department Leader

### A leadership role where expertise, influence and purpose come together

We are looking for a Department Leader to join the senior leadership team at Highfield Littleport Academy, our 2-19 special school in Cambridgeshire. This role blends high-quality teaching with the strategic leadership of a learning pathway or department, shaping curriculum, pedagogy and practice to ensure pupils with complex needs thrive. Working closely with the Assistant Headteacher and wider leadership team, the postholder will lead others with clarity and care, strengthen provision through collaboration with families and colleagues, and contribute meaningfully to the academy's improvement journey. This is a role for an experienced teacher who believes that excellence, inclusion and relationships sit at the heart of transformative education.

### Summary of Key Responsibilities

- Provide professional leadership of a department or learning pathway, aligned to the academy improvement plan
- Lead curriculum development, teaching and learning, ensuring high expectations for all pupils
- Line manage and support staff, including contribution to CPD and performance development
- Teach effectively within the special school context, promoting strong progress and wellbeing
- Contribute actively to senior leadership, behaviour systems, safeguarding and partnership with families

### 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 Emma Brooke, School Business Manager, at: [emma.brooke@highfieldlittleport.org](mailto:emma.brooke@highfieldlittleport.org)



Highfield  
Littleport  
Academy

### Location

Littleport, Cambridgeshire

### Contract

Full Time, Permanent

### Salary

Leadership Scale L6 - L10  
£58,569 - £64,691

### Closing Date

30 April 2026

### Start Date

September 2026

# Job description

## Department Leader

<b>Salary:</b>	Leadership L6 – L10
<b>Academy Site:</b>	Highfield Littleport Academy
<b>Reporting to:</b>	Assistant Headteacher

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### Main purpose

To be responsible for leading delegated aspects of the academy, including a Department Leader role/learning pathway.

To play a key role as part of the senior leadership team, in formulating the aims and objectives of the academy; establishing the policies through which they shall be achieved, managing staff and resources to achieve the aims and objectives of the academy, and monitoring progress towards their achievement.

To develop and sustain strong links with parents and the wider community, in order to sustain their involvement in the successful provision of education at the academy.

The Department Leader will have responsibility for leading relevant area/s of the Academy Plan, and have a line management role within a learning pathway across the school. The post holder will have at least one subject development area as well.

### Duties and responsibilities

#### Teaching

- Plan and teach well-structured lessons to assigned classes, following the academy's plans, curriculum and schemes of work
- Assess, monitor, record and report on the learning needs, progress and achievements of assigned pupils, making accurate and productive use of assessment
- Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of pupils
- Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils
- Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils
- Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge
- Participate in arrangements for preparing pupils for external tests

#### Whole-academy organisation, strategy and development

- Contribute to the development, implementation and evaluation of the academy's policies, practices and procedures, so as to support the academy's vision and values

- Make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the academy
- Work with others on curriculum and pupil development to secure co-ordinated outcomes
- Provide cover, in the unforeseen circumstance that another teacher is unable to teach

### **Health, safety and discipline**

- Promote the safety and wellbeing of pupils
- Maintain good order and discipline among pupils, managing behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment

### **Professional development**

- Take part in the Trust's appraisal procedures
- Take part in further training and development in order to improve own teaching
- Take part in the appraisal and professional development of others, where appropriate

### **Communication**

- Communicate effectively with pupils, parents and carers

### **Working with colleagues and other relevant professionals**

- Collaborate and work with colleagues and other relevant professionals within and beyond the academy and Trust
- Develop effective professional relationships with colleagues

### **Personal and professional conduct**

- Uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside the academy
- Have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the academy, and maintain high standards of attendance and punctuality
- Understand and act within the statutory frameworks setting out their professional duties and responsibilities

### **Management of staff and resources**

- Direct and supervise support staff assigned to them, and where appropriate, other teachers
- Contribute to the recruitment and professional development of other teachers and support staff
- Deploy resources delegated to them

### **Safeguarding**

- Work in line with statutory safeguarding guidance (e.g. Keeping Children Safe in Education, Prevent) and our safeguarding and child protection policies
- Work with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) to promote the best interests of pupils, including sharing concerns where necessary
- Promote the safeguarding of all pupils in the academy and the Trust

## **Additional areas of responsibility for the upper pay range (UPR)**

- Contribute significantly to the development, implementation and evaluation of the academy's policies, practices and procedures, so as to support the academy's vision and values
- Have extensive knowledge of designated subject/curriculum areas, related pedagogy and assessment
- Provide a critical role in the life of the academy/trust
- Be a role model for teaching and learning
- Make a distinctive contribution to the raising of pupil standards
- Take advantage of appropriate opportunities for professional development and use the outcomes effectively to improve pupils' learning
- Lead on teaching and learning, pedagogy or curriculum initiatives as directed
- Provide pastoral care as required and being aware of mental health and wellbeing needs
- Provide advice, coaching and mentoring to other teachers in order to help them develop and meet the relevant standards

## **Additional areas of responsibility for the department leader**

- To provide professional leadership and management of a key area of school development plan, as determined on an annual needs basis with the Assistant Head and Headteacher.
- To assist the Assistant Head in managing behaviour in your department on a daily basis.
- To provide professional leadership and management of delegated areas of the school's curriculum.
- To take an active role in the schools' leadership team, contributing to the development of identified areas leading to high standards of teaching, effective use of resources and improved standards of learning and achievement for all children.
- To ensure that work with families is carried out in your department and areas of responsibility.
- Planning and/or carrying out duties linked to the shared curriculum offer across the school sites in your areas of responsibility.
- To work with the Assistant Head in organising daily cover.
- To provide the Assistant Head and Headteacher with information that adds into the long term CPD plan.
- To have a Department Leader line management role and specialist staff role/s as appropriate to areas of whole school responsibility.

### **Teaching responsibilities**

As a qualified teacher, you will carry out the professional duties as set out in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) and meet the Teachers' Standards.

## **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 persons.

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

## Department Leader

**E** = Essential / **D** = Desirable

<b>Qualifications &amp; Training</b>		
Degree	E	
Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)	E	
Relevant National Professional Qualification (NPQ)		D
<b>Experience</b>		
At least 2 years of special school teaching experience	E	
At least 2 years of leadership experience		D
Teaching experience in different Key Stages and Pathways	E	
Managing curriculum development	E	
Evidence of leading and line-managing others successfully and with impact	E	
Evidence of leading CPD to a range of stakeholders		D
Participation in external reviews		D
Management of ECTs and their development		D

<b>Skills and Knowledge</b>		
Show evidence of vision, initiative and leadership in managing change to enhance and raise standards	E	
Dealing and communicating effectively with parents	E	
Strong communication skills using a range of communication methods	E	
Be able to effectively manage student behaviour	E	
Demonstrate a detailed understanding of effective teaching	E	
Understand how an effective curriculum is constructed	E	
Demonstrate a detailed knowledge of Highfield behaviour and attendance strategies	E	

<b>Personal Qualities</b>		
Embodies of the Active Learning Trust's values: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I aspire, we achieve</li> <li>- We're curious, creative and bold</li> <li>- A family, not a house share</li> <li>- Comfortable being candid</li> <li>- Humour, humility, humanity</li> </ul>	E	
Commitment to uphold the seven principles of public life (the <a href="#">Nolan principles</a> ) at all times	E	
Commitment to maintaining confidentiality at all times	E	
Demonstrate initiative, self-motivation and a growth mindset	E	
Ability to lead and manage colleagues sensitively	E	
<b>Equal Opportunities</b>		
Commitment to inclusion, equality and diversity	E	
<b>Safeguarding</b>		
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.

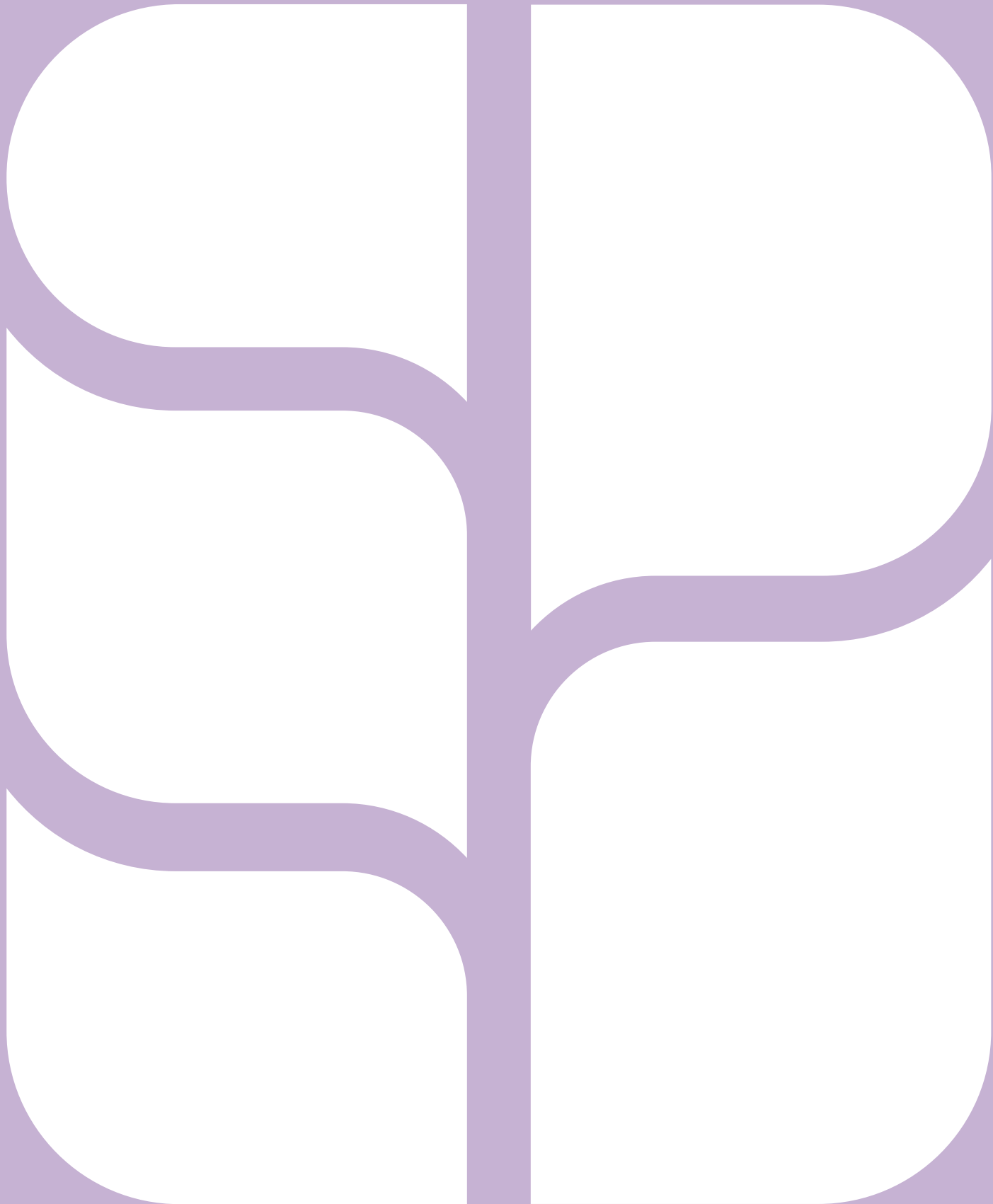
No CVs are accepted in line with requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education, therefore all applications are required to be completed using the MyNewTerm platform.

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.

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 to pre-employment checks including the taking of satisfactory references and enhanced criminal record clearance in line with the need to create and maintain a safe culture. Please be advised that references may be requested prior to interview for roles within our academies, where permission has been given to do so via MyNewTerm.

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](http://www.activelearningtrust.org)