Waterton
Academy Trust

Data Protection Officer



watertonacademytrust.org

Summary

Job Title	Data Protection Officer
Salary & Grade	Wakefield Grade 11 (NJC SCP 36-39) £48,738 to £51,928 FTE **£28,980 to £30,876 actual annual salary, based on 22 hours per week**
Contract	Permanent, part-time, 52 weeks per year
Hours	**22 hours per week** We welcome applications from experienced professionals seeking a flexible working arrangement and are happy to discuss how these hours might be worked across the week, including hybrid working and home working. We are interested in finding the right person and establishing an arrangement that works well for both the individual and the Trust. The working pattern and preferred office base will be agreed with the successful candidate.
Workplace / Location	Flexible base at either of the Trust's central offices: **Operations Office:** Waterton Academy Trust, The Business Village, Snydale Road, Cudworth, Barnsley, S72 8RP. **Education and Governance Office:** Waterton Academy Trust, Centre for Excellence, The Grove, Walton, Wakefield, WF2 6LD. The successful candidate can be based at either location, depending on their preference. The role also offers opportunities for hybrid working, with occasional travel between Trust offices and schools as required.
Reporting to	Head of Governance (line management), with direct access to the CEO and Board of Trustees in carrying out the statutory DPO function.
Start Date	As soon as possible, subject to the successful candidate's notice period and satisfactory pre-employment checks.
Applications	Informal enquiries and conversations about the role are welcome. Please contact admin@watertonacademytrust.org to arrange a discussion. Closing date: Wednesday 2nd December, 9am Short Listing: 3rd and 4th December
Interviews	Thursday 10th December 2026

Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in the role of Data Protection Officer at Waterton Academy Trust. We are delighted that you are considering joining our team.

At Waterton Academy Trust, we are committed to providing high-quality education within safe, supportive and inclusive environments, where every child has the opportunity to thrive. Underpinning this commitment is the importance we place on strong governance, effective systems and the responsible management of information across all our schools.

This is a newly established post within our central Trust structure, reflecting both the continued growth of Waterton Academy Trust and the importance we place on data protection and information governance. We have well-established systems, policies and procedures in place, and this appointment provides an opportunity to build on these strong foundations, ensuring our arrangements remain effective and responsive as the Trust continues to develop.

As Data Protection Officer, you will play an important role in ensuring that the Trust meets its legal and regulatory responsibilities, while promoting a culture in which personal information is handled securely, appropriately and with care. Working closely with school leaders and central Trust colleagues, you will provide specialist advice and independent assurance, alongside taking direct responsibility for the processing of Subject Access Requests and Freedom of Information requests, the careful review and redaction of sensitive information, and the management of other information rights requests.

We are looking for someone who combines strong specialist knowledge with sound professional judgement and a practical, supportive approach. You will need to build positive working relationships, communicate complex requirements clearly and provide constructive challenge where needed. This is an opportunity to take professional ownership of an important function within a growing organisation, building on our established arrangements and ensuring that the personal information entrusted to us by pupils, families and staff continues to be managed responsibly and securely.

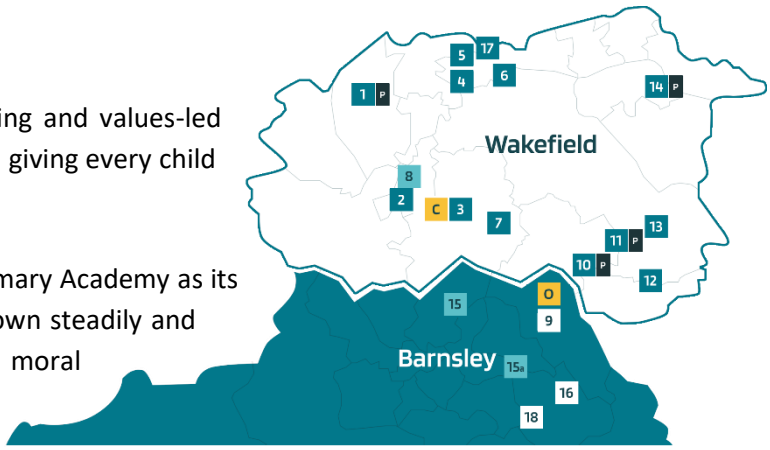
Thank you for considering this opportunity.



Dave Dickinson OBE
Chief Executive Officer



About Us



Waterton Academy Trust is a thriving and values-led partnership of schools committed to giving every child the best possible start in life.

Established in 2014 with Walton Primary Academy as its founding member, the Trust has grown steadily and strategically, guided by a strong moral purpose and a deep understanding of the communities we serve. We believe that **success is a shared experience** — every learner, every member of staff, and every school should flourish, together.

Our Locations

Waterton Offices
C – Centre for Excellence
O – Operations Office

Waterton Schools
1 – Wrenthorpe Academy
1p – Wrenthorpe Pre-School
2 – Sharlston Community School
3 – Walton Primary Academy
4 – Normanton Junior Academy
5 – Lee Brigg Infant and Nursery School
6 – Normanton Common Primary Academy
7 – Crofton Infant's School
8 – Hammer Lane Aacademy
9 – Churchfield Primary School
10 – King's Meadow Academy
10p – The Meadow Pre-School
11 – West End Academy
11p – The Woodland Pre-School
12 – South Kirkby Academy
13 – Ackworth Mill Dam School
14 – Cherry Tree Academy
14p – Cherry Blossom Pre-School
15 – Newstead Academy
15a – Hunningley Academy
16 – Kings Oak Primary
17 – Altofts Junior Academy
18 – Jump Primary Academy

Waterton Academy Trust is responsible for 16 primary academies, two independent specialist academies and five pre-school settings. We support approximately 4,300 pupils, employ more than 600 colleagues and have an annual income of approximately £34 million.

Our growth has not been about size alone - it reflects the strength of our educational offer, the diversity of our provision, and the depth of our partnerships.

We work across two key regions - Wakefield and Barnsley - and are proud to be seen as a trusted and collaborative presence within the wider education system. All our schools are primary-phase, and collaboration sits at the heart of how we work.

In response to local need, we opened our first independent specialist academy, Newstead Academy, in Barnsley in 2023. The provision has since expanded across multiple sites. In September 2025, we opened Hammer Lane Academy in Wakefield, further developing our specialist offer and our ability to work alongside local partners to meet the needs of children with SEND. These developments are a testament to our commitment to inclusive education and our ability to work alongside local partners to meet the needs of all learners.



We also know that a great start in education begins early. That's why we've expanded our offer to include five pre-school settings, with plans for further growth.

Our Vision and Values

The Trust is proud of its shared vision and values, which are embedded across all aspects of our work.

This vision – centred on collaboration, aspiration, enjoyment, and equity – guides our actions and unites our schools in a common purpose. We aim to create a culture where success is a shared experience, every child enjoys a rich and relevant curriculum, and all pupils are supported to achieve their full potential, regardless of background.

Candidates interested in joining the Trust are encouraged to explore our vision and values to ensure they align with their own ethos and long-term aspirations.

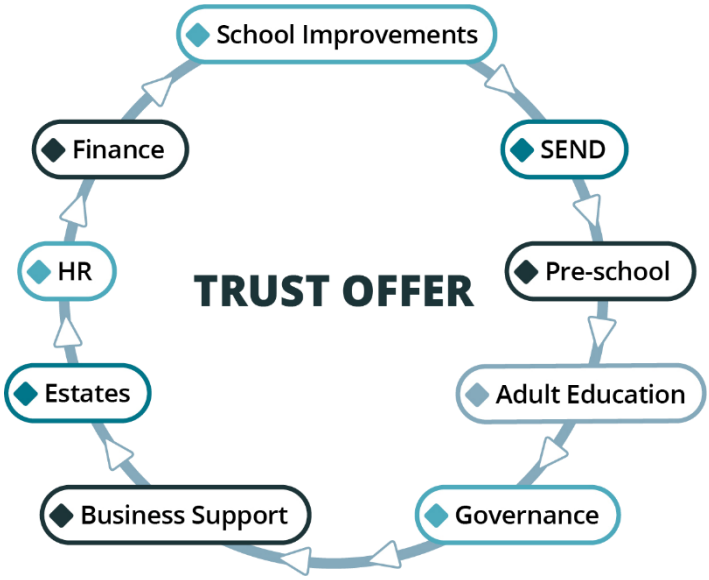






Trust Offer

As a trust, Waterton has statutory and ethical obligations in relation to supporting our academies, and we look to meet these through the delivery of our Trust Offer. The trust has invested significantly in creating a substantial central team, and it is through this team and key external partners that the trust offer is delivered.



To support its aims and meet its obligations, the trust provides each of its academies with access to the same trust offer. The offer is categorised into two main areas, the operations offer and educational offer. Access to the trust offer is an entitlement regardless of a schools current Ofsted rating, financial position, size, or provision status. The level of support provided is tailored according to current need, however the entire offer remains accessible to all academies at all times.



At the heart of our offer is our commitment to ensure our academies can concentrate on their primary role of delivering outstanding teaching and learning through evidence-based practice.

Our offer therefore looks wherever possible to drive school improvement through CPD, challenge and support, whilst simultaneously removing the business-based burdens that prevent headteachers and senior leaders from being in the classroom or involved in school improvement work.

The trust offer provides a range of services delivered or procured centrally in order to provide our academies with the best possible value. Central support is provided in the key areas of Safeguarding, Governance, School Improvement, Finance, HR, IT, H&S, Estates Management and Data Protection. Our central services work closely with school leaders to provide consistent systems, specialist advice and practical support. The Data Protection Officer will work alongside colleagues across these services, particularly Governance, IT, HR and Safeguarding, to maintain effective information governance arrangements throughout the Trust. In addition, schools have access to legal advice and marketing initiatives as required. The delivery of the core offer brings with it a cost that is incorporated into each academy's operational budget and is an integral part of not only the Waterton funding model, but more importantly the school improvement model.

To read about impact read our annual report to stakeholders available on the Trust website.

Why Join Waterton?

This is an opportunity to take on a varied and professionally rewarding role within a growing multi-academy trust that recognises the importance of effective data protection and information governance. As our first dedicated Data Protection Officer, you will have the opportunity to build on well-established systems and shape how we develop our arrangements for the future. You will have the professional independence to provide specialist advice and constructive challenge, alongside the satisfaction of managing practical casework and seeing the difference your work makes.

You will be part of an established central team, working alongside experienced colleagues across Governance, IT, HR, Safeguarding and our schools. We value people who bring expertise, exercise sound judgement and take a practical, supportive approach to solving problems. We also recognise that experienced professionals value flexibility and a sustainable working pattern. This is a permanent, part-time role offering flexibility in how the 22 hours per week are worked, including opportunities for hybrid working. For someone who enjoys combining detailed, technical work with wider professional responsibility, this is an opportunity to make an important contribution to an organisation that continues to grow and develop.

Employee Benefits

Waterton Academy Trust emphasises the well-being, satisfaction, and growth of its employees through a comprehensive Employee Benefits Package. The full employee benefits guide can be found on our website.
Key highlights include:

- **Employee Assistance Programme (EAP):** Access to confidential health and well-being services through the Schools Advisory Service (SAS)
- **Wellbeing Charter:** The trust prioritises mental and physical health with a Wellbeing Charter that promotes a respectful, inclusive culture.
- **Flexible Working:** Options like job sharing, part-time work, compressed hours, hybrid and home working, and phased retirement are offered to accommodate diverse employee needs.
- **Occupational Health Services:** Professional support for physical and mental health challenges, with access to expert advice and preventive care.
- **Pension Schemes:** Employees have access to both the Teachers' Pension Scheme and the Local Government Pension Scheme
- **Additional Benefits:**
    - Cycle to Work Scheme
    - Discounted Gym Memberships

Job Description – Data Protection Officer

Job Title	Data Protection Officer
Reporting to	Head of Governance
Professional accountability	Independent statutory DPO function, with direct access to the CEO and Board of Trustees

Purpose of the role	This is a newly established post, reflecting the growth of Waterton Academy Trust and the importance of effective data protection. The postholder will build on established systems and procedures, combining independent statutory DPO advice and assurance with hands-on responsibility for administering and processing Subject Access Requests (SARs) and Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, including document review, redaction and the preparation of responses. The role requires sound professional judgement, a practical approach and positive working relationships with school leaders and central colleagues. The Trust, as data controller, retains accountability for its compliance decisions.
Key Responsibilities	**1. Statutory DPO advice, monitoring and assurance** • Fulfil the designated DPO functions under the UK GDPR, including informing and advising the Trust and its staff about data protection obligations, and monitoring compliance with legislation and Trust policies. • Provide independent, risk-based advice on data protection matters, including the lawful handling and sharing of sensitive pupil, staff and family information. • Coordinate and maintain the Trust's Record of Processing Activities (ROPA), working with schools and central teams to ensure that processing activities are accurately documented, regularly reviewed and updated when systems, processes or data-sharing arrangements change. • Advise on and monitor the effectiveness of privacy notices, retention schedules, data-sharing and data-processing agreements, ensuring these remain accurate, legally compliant and aligned with the Trust's processing activities. • Plan and undertake proportionate compliance reviews; identify recurring risks, recommend improvements and monitor agreed actions. • Advise on privacy notices, records of processing, retention schedules, data sharing and processing agreements, and privacy by design when new systems or processes are introduced. • Provide data protection guidance and awareness activities for staff and school leaders, drawing on incidents, enquiries and review findings. • Act as a contact point for the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), cooperate with the regulator and provide

	periodic reports on compliance, risks and recommendations to senior leadership and, as appropriate, trustees. • Maintain knowledge of relevant legislation and guidance, including developments under the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025. **2. Operational administration of SARs and FOI requests** • Personally manage SAR and FOI cases from receipt to completion, including acknowledgement, deadlines, correspondence, case records and secure issue of responses. • Coordinate searches and retrieval of records from schools, central teams and information systems, providing clear instructions and following up outstanding material. • Review and organise potentially large or complex sets of records; assess relevance, disclosure obligations, applicable exemptions and third-party information, seeking legal advice where needed. • Carry out accurate and secure electronic redaction, including checks that withheld information cannot be recovered; maintain a clear record of disclosure decisions. • Prepare legally compliant SAR and FOI responses, applying the appropriate statutory framework and, for FOI, considering the public interest test where required. • Maintain clear audit trails and report on request volumes, timeliness, themes and lessons learned. • Support arrangements for reconsideration or independent review of contested decisions, recognising the need to avoid reviewing the postholder's own decisions. **3. Incidents, complaints and information governance** • Coordinate the investigation and assessment of personal data breaches, advise on containment and risk to individuals, and support any required ICO or individual notifications within statutory timescales. • Lead the case management and preparation of responses to data protection complaints, liaising with legal advisers and the ICO as appropriate. • Work with IT, HR, Safeguarding, SEND, Governance and school colleagues on secure information handling, data sharing, records management and risks associated with suppliers, digital systems and emerging technologies. • Identify improvements arising from breaches, complaints, SARs, FOI requests and audits, and help relevant teams implement them. **4. Working relationships and professional independence** • Be line managed by the Head of Governance for employment and operational matters while exercising independent judgement in the statutory DPO role, with direct access to the CEO and Board of Trustees. • Provide constructive challenge without receiving instructions about the conclusions of statutory DPO advice or monitoring; declare and manage any potential conflicts of interest.

	• Work collaboratively with colleagues who are responsible for finding and supplying records, making relevant operational decisions and implementing agreed compliance measures. • Maintain appropriate processes for urgent incidents and statutory deadlines during non-working days, in conjunction with designated Trust colleagues.
Expectations of All Employees	• Contribute to and uphold the overall vision and ethos of Waterton Academy Trust. • Recognise own strengths and areas of expertise and use these to inspire, advise and support others. • Promote teamwork, working in partnership to ensure effective working relations. • Treat all colleagues and stakeholders with courtesy and consideration. • Be aware and always comply with all Waterton Academy Trust Policies. • Uphold the Trust's safeguarding, equality, confidentiality and professional conduct requirements. • Undertake visits to schools and central offices where needed • Participate in relevant continuing professional development. • Maintain a presence in local and national professional networks and through these, and other means, ensure a continuous overview of appropriate policies and developments to keep abreast of current and best practice. • To prepare policy and review papers as required and requested. • Other duties commensurate with the grade of the post as directed by management.
Additional Information	The job description is not an exhaustive list of duties and responsibilities. It may be reviewed in consultation with the postholder as the trust develops. The postholder will on occasion be required to work flexibly, outside of their remit following reasonable instruction from the Trust. The employment checks are required: • Evidence of entitlement to work in the U.K. • Evidence of essential qualifications – see job specification • Two satisfactory references • Confirmation of medical fitness for employment • Registration with appropriate bodies (where applicable) • Evidence of a satisfactory safeguarding check e.g. DBS check at the relevant level. This post is subject to a six-month probation period.

Person Specification

AF: Application Form
OT: Occupational Task
CQ: Certificates/Qualifications
P: Presentation
I: Interview
R: Reference

Qualification	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
Relevant professional qualification, degree or substantial equivalent experience in data protection or information governance	X		AF / CQ
Evidence of keeping specialist knowledge up to date through professional development	X		AF / CQ
Recognised data protection qualification (for example BCS, CIPP/E, CIPM or equivalent)		X	AF/ CQ / I
Specialist experience	**Essential**	**Desirable**	**Assessed**
Substantial practical experience administering SARs from receipt to disclosure, including detailed records review, exemptions, third-party information, redaction and response drafting	X		AF / I / OT
Practical experience administering FOI requests, applying exemptions and, where appropriate, public interest considerations	X		AF / I
Experience of developing, maintaining or reviewing Records of Processing Activities (ROPA)		X	
Experience of digital document review and secure electronic redaction, including quality checking disclosures		X	AF / I
Experience assessing data protection breaches, advising on action and meeting statutory deadlines	X		AF / I
Experience advising on DPIAs, data-sharing arrangements and compliance risks	X		AF / I
Experience advising senior colleagues, reviewing arrangements and making practical recommendations	X		AF / I
Experience in education, safeguarding, SEND or a multi-site public service organisation		X	AF / I
Knowledge and Judgement	**Essential**	**Desirable**	**Assessed**
Strong current knowledge of UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018, FOI legislation, ICO guidance and DPO independence requirements	X		AF / I
Ability to assess difficult disclosure decisions accurately and to explain the reasons clearly and proportionately	X		AF / I / OT
Ability to manage multiple live cases, prioritise competing deadlines and maintain accurate case records	X		AF / I / R
Ability to give independent, constructive advice while building effective professional relationships	X		AF / I / R

Clear writing skills, including accurate case responses, accessible guidance and concise reports	X		AF / I / OT
Understanding of data risks associated with sensitive children's information, digital platforms and external providers	X		AF / I
Personal Qualities	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
Ability to build effective working relationships with colleagues at all levels	X		I / R
Ability to work under pressure, with accuracy, unsupervised and on own initiative to meet statutory deadlines	X		R / OT
Ability to command confidence, credibility and maintain strict confidentiality in all matters	X		I / R / P
A flexible approach and a strong work ethic	X		AF / I / R
High integrity with an ethically sound approach to building internal and external relationships	X		AF / I / R

Practical Requirements	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
Driving license and own transport	X		AF

Waterton Academy Trust is wholly committed to ensuring children and young people are fully supported and safe. We are dedicated to the safeguarding of all children and young people whilst promoting their welfare and expect all staff and volunteers to share this responsibility. The trust has policies and procedures relating to safeguarding and child protection available on request.

Waterton Academy Trust follows safer recruitment processes which all applicants will be subject to. This includes the interview process containing questions about the safeguarding of children and the disclosure of criminal records and other vetting checks.

An enhanced DBS check is required for the successful candidates, this process is completed by an online third-party company. All successful candidates are required to join the DBS update service with an annual cost of £13.

The position is also subject to two satisfactory references. Shortlisted candidates will be asked to provide details of any unspent convictions and those that would not be filtered, prior to the date of the interview.

We are committed to treating all applicants fairly and have a policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders which is available to applicants on request.

Waterton Academy Trust is wholly committed in ensuring that all employees, future employees and applicants are treated equally regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.