



Astrea Academy Trust  
LEARN, THRIVE, SUCCEED

# Strategic Lead Attendance (Trust Vice Principal

## Candidate Pack



# Introduction



Thank you very much for your interest in becoming Strategic Lead for Attendance (Trust Vice Principal) at Astrea.

This is a very exciting time to be joining Astrea as a Strategic Lead for Attendance (Trust Vice Principal). Our secondary academies are all graded as 'Good' by Ofsted, and are now building on this, undergoing a period of deep improvement work, on their journey to achieve a scholarly culture of excellence and top 5% similar school performance. This role is crucial to supporting this transformation. The postholder will be responsible for attendance across all our secondaries in South Yorkshire and Cambridgeshire.

We are values-driven and our vision is to provide an inclusive, aspirational and academic education for all our scholars, so that all of them will learn, thrive and lead successful lives. We are unapologetically ambitious for every child, no matter what their background, prior attainment or needs. We want to ensure that all our scholars have the option to be able to go to university or aspirational alternative. We are not going to reduce expectations because of a child's background or home life, or because they are new to English or have a special education need. In fact, the opposite is true. It is our job to redouble our efforts to help children overcome these barriers so that they can flourish.

We are committed to a knowledge-rich curriculum and a traditional approach to teaching, behaviour and culture, influenced by Lemov's Teach Like A Champion and Tom Bennett. 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). With careful curriculum design, spaced retrieval practice, detailed assessment and achieving mastery in small steps, rates of progress can increase 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 2022-23 we launched the Astrea behaviour curriculum, where behaviour expectations and routines are explicitly taught and deliberately practised. The creation of a scholarly culture that is warm and strict, disciplined and joyful, where there is 'purpose not power', ensuring impeccable behaviour, where teachers can focus on teaching and scholars can focus on learning, underpins everything. There needs to be relentless consistency with the implementation of the behaviour policy in every classroom, and overcommunication of the 'why' to all stakeholders, to help ensure impeccable behaviour.

# Introduction

We have also embarked on a process of codifying what works across our secondary academies, through publication of a series of frameworks, which inform academy policies. Sir David Carter states 'Without some degree of standardisation, the turnaround process will be lengthier and more chaotic than is necessary and the casualties are not the adults, but the children who only have 2280 days of schooling between reception and the end of Year 11.' With this in mind, it is imperative that our scholars are in our schools for as many of those 2280 days as possible.

The position will give you the opportunity to have a huge influence on this and is a great match for someone who shares the Trust's vision for educational excellence and has the focus to help drive improvement at scale and pace. You will be a team builder, expect a lot from people and provide strong support to them.

As a Trust of 26 academies, we have the capacity to support you educationally and operationally. You will be provided with a strong infrastructure of support – with our financial, HR, technology and data teams, who work with Regional Directors in some key areas – and with educational support, working with the Director of Curriculum and Assessment and the central team of National Subject Leads, who you can use to support the quality of provision.

If you are aligned to our mission and values, have an excellent track record of improving young people's education and a drive to do more, we very much look forward to hearing from you. If you would like an informal discussion about the position, please email me at [richard.tutt@astreaacademytrust.org](mailto:richard.tutt@astreaacademytrust.org).

With best wishes,

Richard Tutt,  
Director for Secondary Education



# About the Trust

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## 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

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**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



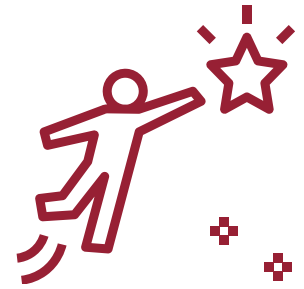
Recognition, praise, and rewards drive positive change. We aim to praise students every lesson, every day. Sanctions are issued when wrong choices are made.

## Rowing together



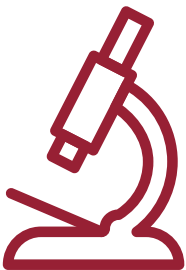
Aligned around our vision and values, all staff row together with relentless consistency. Ignoring issues undermines our culture; instead we collectively row together for the benefit of all.

## Aspiration



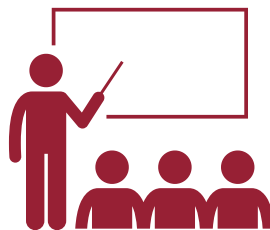
We deliver a knowledge-rich curriculum providing the foundation for excellent outcomes and further opportunities. We believe everyone can succeed. We focus on raising attainment, not just aspirations, turning goals into reality.

## Sweat the small stuff



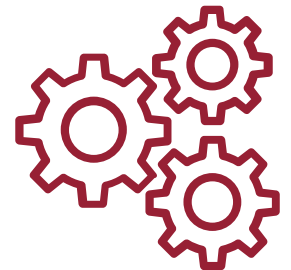
Leaders and staff adopt a meticulous approach, with a relentless drive to ensure fundamental basics are consistently in place and maintained at all times.

## 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

<b>Role Title</b>	Strategic Lead for Attendance (Trust Vice Principal)
<b>Responsible to</b>	Regional Director
<b>Salary</b>	LS20 - LS24

## **PURPOSE OF THE ROLE**

Attendance is one of the most important indicators of whether a system is working for children.

This role exists to ensure that every academy across the trust has the systems, leadership, and culture in place to secure strong attendance - and that those systems translate into consistent, daily practice.

The Strategic Lead for Attendance will provide trust-wide leadership and oversight of attendance, ensuring a clear, coherent strategy that is implemented with fidelity and leads to measurable improvement, particularly for disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils.

This is a senior role for an experienced school leader who understands the reality of front-line delivery. The successful candidate will bridge the gap between trust strategy and classroom impact, working closely with principals and senior leaders to ensure that attendance improves because practice improves.

While attendance is the primary focus, the role requires a strong understanding of safeguarding, and preferably experience as a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), to ensure that attendance systems align with safeguarding responsibilities and support vulnerable pupils effectively.

## **CORE ACCOUNTABILITIES**

- Set and lead a clear, trust-wide attendance strategy with defined standards and expectations
- Ensure consistency of attendance systems, processes, and practice across all academies
- Provide strategic oversight and assurance on attendance performance and risk
- Translate strategy into practical, front-line implementation that improves daily attendance
- Support and challenge academy leaders to secure improvement where needed
- Build leadership and staff capability through training, coaching, and modelling
- Use data to identify trends, target intervention, and evaluate impact
- Ensure a strong focus on persistent absence, disadvantaged pupils, and vulnerable groups
- Ensure attendance systems align with safeguarding and inclusion practice
- Contribute to wider trust inclusion priorities

# About the role

## WHY THIS ROLE MATTERS

This role is about ensuring that attendance improves because the system works. It means:

- expectations are clear and consistently applied
- leaders know what good looks like and how to deliver it
- scholars who should be in school are in school

## STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP & OVERSIGHT

- Develop and lead a clear, evidence-informed attendance strategy across the trust, aligned to national guidance and trust priorities
- Establish trust-wide expectations, standards, and non-negotiables for attendance
- Provide strategic advice to the Head of Inclusion, Executive Team, and Principals on attendance performance, risks, and priorities
- Ensure alignment between trust strategy and academy-level implementation
- Maintain oversight of attendance as a key trust performance indicator, ensuring it is given appropriate priority at all levels

## TRUST-WIDE ASSURANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Establish robust systems for monitoring, evaluating, and assuring attendance practice across all academies
- Provide clear, regular reporting on attendance trends, risks, and impact
- Identify variation in performance and ensure timely intervention
- Hold leaders to account for attendance outcomes through clear expectations and follow-up
- Ensure readiness for external scrutiny (e.g. Ofsted) in relation to attendance and inclusion

## DRIVING IMPROVEMENT ACROSS ACADEMIES

- Work directly with Principals and senior leaders to improve attendance outcomes
- Diagnose issues at academy level and design targeted improvement approaches
- Support the development and implementation of effective action plans
- Provide both support and professional challenge where expectations are not met
- Ensure that improvement activity leads to sustained changes in practice and outcomes

## SYSTEMS, PROCESSES, AND IMPLEMENTATION

- Design and embed clear, effective attendance systems that are simple, scalable, and consistently applied
- Ensure robust systems are in place to accurately track and maintain oversight of all pupils, including those educated off-site (e.g. alternative provision and Elective Home Education), with clear accountability for their provision and engagement
- Ensure clarity around roles, responsibilities, and escalation processes
- Evaluate the effectiveness of systems and refine based on impact
- Ensure strong alignment between attendance, behaviour, safeguarding, and pastoral systems
- Reduce unnecessary complexity and focus on what works in practice

# About the role

## **DATA, INSIGHT, AND IMPACT**

- Lead the use of attendance data across the trust to drive improvement
- Identify key trends, including persistent absence and vulnerable groups
- Ensure data is used effectively at trust, academy, and classroom level
- Track the impact of interventions and adjust strategy accordingly
- Ensure trust-level attendance reporting reflects the full scholar cohort, including those not educated on-site, using this insight to identify risk, gaps in oversight, and areas requiring intervention
- Build confidence in leaders and staff to use data well

## **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

- Develop the capability of senior and middle leaders to lead attendance effectively
- Deliver high-quality CPD across the trust
- Coach and support leaders to improve implementation
- Build a network of strong attendance leaders across academies
- Share best practice and create a culture of collaboration

## **VULNERABLE PUPILS, SAFEGUARDING, AND INCLUSION**

- Ensure attendance strategies are closely aligned with safeguarding and inclusion practice
- Maintain a strong focus on scholars with persistent absence and those at risk
- Support academies to identify and respond to barriers to attendance early
- Work with safeguarding leaders and DSLs to ensure joined-up support for vulnerable scholars
- Use knowledge of safeguarding systems to strengthen attendance approaches
- Ensure all scholars, including those in alternative provision or Elective Home Education, remain visible within trust systems, with appropriate oversight to secure their safety, engagement, and access to education

## **WORKING WITH FAMILIES AND EXTERNAL PARTNERS**

- Support academies to build strong, respectful relationships with families
- Promote approaches that balance high expectations with appropriate support
- Strengthen use of external agencies to remove barriers to attendance
- Contribute to system-level partnerships where needed

## **PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

- Model high standards of professional conduct and leadership
- Promote the trust's values and ethos
- Maintain a relentless focus on improving outcomes for scholars
- Act with integrity, clarity, and resilience

# Person Specification

- **QUALIFICATIONS**

- Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)
- Degree or equivalent

- **EXPERIENCE**

- Successful senior leadership experience in a school
- Proven track record of improving attendance or leading a significant whole-school priority
- Experience of leading and influencing across teams or multiple settings
- Experience of using data to drive improvement
- Experience of working with vulnerable scholars

- **KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING**

- Strong understanding of attendance, inclusion, and barriers to attendance
- Good understanding of safeguarding systems and statutory responsibilities
- Understanding of effective school systems and implementation

- **PERSONAL SKILLS & ATTRIBUTES**

- Credible and authoritative leader who can influence at all levels
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills
- Ability to balance support and challenge
- Clear, confident communicator
- Relentless focus on impact and outcomes
- High levels of organisation and accountability
- High expectations and a no-excuses mindset
- Commitment to improving outcomes for all scholars
- Resilient, determined, and solution-focused
- Able to build strong relationships quickly
- Values-driven and aligned to the trust ethos

- **DESIRABLE**

- Experience as a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or equivalent
- Experience of working at trust or system level
- Experience of leading cross-school improvement
- Experience of designing and delivering training at scale
- Evidence of continuous INSET and commitment to further professional development

**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.
- Show us what impact you have had in your current setting, what have you implemented, how did you do this, what were the results and what did you learn.
- 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](mailto: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](http://www.astreaacademytrust.org)



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