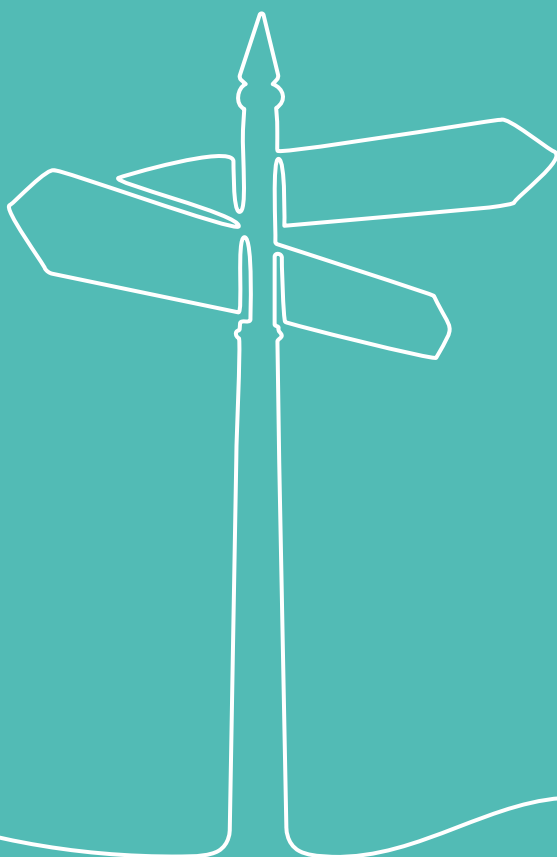


Principal recruitment

information pack



[OAT]
Ormiston Academies Trust
AN OAT ACADEMY





Welcome

Thank you for the interest you have shown in the position of Principal at Cowes Enterprise College, An Ormiston Academy. I hope this information pack will be helpful and clearly convey what we are looking for: an exceptional leader who shares our vision and is fully committed to excellence in all aspects of curriculum, teaching and learning, and pastoral care, for the benefit of all our students and their families.

[Cowes Enterprise College](#) is based in Cowes on the Isle of Wight. The school is an 11-19 co-educational academy with 1,164 students, including 185 students in the sixth form. The proportion of students with special educational needs is just above the national average, and the number of students eligible for Pupil Premium funding is broadly in line with the national average. The school has secured strong outcomes at key stage 4, although we remain ambitious for these to improve further. The sixth form offers an academic curriculum and performs consistently well, securing excellent destinations for our students, including progression to some of the best universities in the country.

This is an exciting time to join the vibrant and caring learning community at Cowes Enterprise College. Our focus on our mission statement, “Educate for life”, ensures that we provide a safe and secure learning environment where all students can succeed and reach their full potential.

Our broad, balanced and aspirational curriculum, combined with strong pastoral care, supports students to become successful and responsible 21st century citizens and lifelong learners. Cowes Enterprise College became an academy and joined Ormiston Academies Trust in September 2014.

The school works closely with the Trust on its own school improvement journey, while also actively collaborating with other Ormiston academies nationally on a range of projects and initiatives to improve outcomes and life chances for students.

All students have access to a wide range of extracurricular activities, and everyone is encouraged to engage fully in the wider life of the school. Opportunities include the Combined Cadet Force, sport, performing arts, links to the local maritime industry, and social action projects. Cowes Enterprise College sits at the very heart of its community and works hard to build positive relationships between students, the local community, and parents and carers.

I hope you enjoy reading about Cowes Enterprise College and, if you feel you can deliver what we are looking for, please submit your application by **9am on Monday 2 February 2026**. For further information about this exciting leadership opportunity, please contact our recruitment partner, Chris Gartner from Think Leadership, on 07454 679 918 or via email at chris.gartner@thinkrecruitment.co.uk.

Rachel Richards
Chair of Governors



Welcome from the students

We are proud to attend Cowes Enterprise College, an Ormiston Academy that puts academic rigour at the heart of everything it stands for. Our supportive network goes above and beyond to ensure that every student and staff member strives to achieve our motto of 'Educate for life' and embodies our three core values of responsibility, resilience and respect.

Our academy encourages inclusivity in the treatment of all members of our school community. This is supported by our excellent pastoral care, which promotes equal respect and tolerance, alongside enrichment opportunities across all year groups, that provide an exciting backdrop for our learning.

Built on this strong foundation of kindness and community, students and staff feel comfortable and supported. This enables us to overcome challenges in our work and school life, learning the power of resilience in the face of obstacles.

The ability to be both respectful and resilient, no matter the level of challenge, applies not only to school life but also provides us with valuable life experience that can be applied to future opportunities.

Our academy is actively involved in local traditions, such as maritime events, festivals including the literary festival at Northwood House, and the annual Poppy Appeal for Remembrance.

As such, a strong sense of responsibility to both our Cowes community and our school community is integral to the experience at Cowes Enterprise College.

By proudly demonstrating our three core values, we help raise a generation of young people who feel confident to put themselves forward and do good in the world, while recognising the core qualities that make a skilled and good person.

We wish you the very best of luck with your application and hope to see you soon.



Note from the CEO

Welcome to Ormiston Academies Trust. As Chief Executive Officer, I'm delighted that you are thinking about joining us.

Becoming a Principal within Ormiston Academies Trust is more than a job – it's a chance to make a profound and lasting difference. With over 40 schools – currently 32 secondary schools, seven primary schools, three alternative provision schools and three special schools, this post is a huge opportunity to have significant impact on the lives of children, families and teachers. It will be a career-defining role for the successful candidate.

As one of the largest and longest standing trusts in the school system, we are guided by our founder, Peter Murray's belief that every child deserves the chance to thrive. We exist to provide pupils with the best learning opportunities in every classroom, in every school, every day. We also understand that education is about more than academic achievement – it's about enriching lives and building futures. Our schools are located across a diverse range of communities, each with its own unique character, strengths and challenges.

As a Principal, you will lead with purpose, set high expectations, and create a culture where every child can succeed. You will not only shape the vision and aspirations of your academy but also play a key role in influencing the direction of our Trust over the next five years.

We deeply value the expertise and professional judgment that great leaders bring, and we empower them to make a lasting impact. There is much to be proud of at OAT, but we are not complacent. We are committed to continuous improvement in everything we do.

I hope you find that this pack gives you some insight into both our organisation and the qualities we look for in our Principals. For a confidential discussion about this role, please go to the 'How to apply' section of this pack.



Best wishes

Tom Rees
Chief Executive Officer



About the role

As Principal, you will play a pivotal role in creating an exceptional educational environment where every child has the opportunity to thrive. Your leadership will ensure that the academy is not only a great place for students to learn but also a rewarding and fulfilling workplace for staff.

You will be the driving force behind the academy's success – an architect of its future. This is a position of influence, where you will shape culture, raise aspirations, and make a lasting impact. Beyond your school, your vision will contribute to the wider success of the Trust and its reputation within the sector. We value your expertise, experience, and passion to inspire excellence and deliver success for every student and every member of staff.

Job title: Principal

Line manager: Education Director

Salary: OAT Principal Group 7 P24 – P34 (£103,029 – £131,578).

Disclosure level: Enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service)

What you will deliver

1. Lead on the strategic direction and development of the academy, working in partnership with teams locally and across the organisation
2. Ensure that great teaching is happening in your school, in every lesson, every day, for every child. Lead improvement in outcomes and ensure strong destinations
3. Further develop a culture that promotes excellence, developing an ethos of high expectation, achievement and inclusion so that your academy is a place where young people thrive
4. Ensure the priorities of the Trust are implemented effectively and consistently. This will include ensuring challenging targets are set, through robust data analysis, and ensuring that our progress boards are operating effectively to drive improvement

5. Facilitate collaboration and communication throughout your academy, ensuring that your team creates a culture where they share what is best, and learn from each other to deliver better education for children and families
6. Monitor and evaluate the quality of the curriculum, the quality of teaching and standards of learning as well as the achievement of all students, including those supported through enhanced resources, to set and meet ambitious targets for improvement
7. Engage with and be supportive of our work to attract, train and retain teachers into the Trust, including ITT, ECF and internship programmes
8. Engage in a collaborative approach to workforce planning and talent management, working closely with colleagues across the Trust to ensure that we are identifying skills gaps, needs and training requirements for the future, and planning to meet those needs now
9. Manage, monitor and review the range, quality, quantity and use of all available resources to improve the quality of education, improve students' achievements, ensure efficiency and secure value for money
10. Lead a culture of safeguarding, with the highest standards of care and welfare for the community. Ensure compliance with policies and systems
11. Engage in collaborative activity with the central teams to ensure that the academy develops holistic and integrated plans that enable it to optimise outcomes for children whilst ensuring long term financial sustainability. This includes pupil number, education, resource, premises, ICT and financial planning
12. As a member of the senior team, you will be expected to contribute to the overall success of the Trust by embracing its values, approaching problems positively, and demonstrating a commitment to excellence. You will of course carry out your responsibilities to the best of your ability, engaging in ongoing learning and development to enhance your performance and advance your career, and will absorb additional responsibilities that are in keeping with the role and grade

Your skills and experience

You will have a significant and credible track record as a Principal or Deputy Head. You will be aligned with the purpose, ethos and values of the Trust and have the maturity to lead a team, whilst collaborating with other teams to get things done.

Ultimately, you will share our belief in the power of education to change lives for young people, and have the intellectual, interpersonal and operational capabilities required every day to improve education at a local level within a national organisation.

Education and qualifications

- Must be educated to degree or masters level
- Must have a recognised teaching qualification
- Have achieved, be working towards or are committed to working towards NPQH

Knowledge, experience and understanding

- Track record as a credible Headteacher or Deputy Head with significant experience
- Evidence of driving change and developing high quality systems and procedures
- An excellent teacher in at least one key stage of the secondary age range
- Evidence of being solutions-focused with the ability to think creatively, engage others in developing solutions, and inspire others to achieve desired outcomes

Skills

- Sound judgement, an open mind and clarity of vision regarding the bigger picture
- The drive and energy to take a wide range of people with you on a journey of development and improvement
- A highly effective teacher whose practice inspires and develops others
- Strong organisational and management skills, along with the ability to help others plan, anticipate and manage to your own high standard
- The ability to effectively manage budgets, facilities and resources
- IT skills, confidence and a willingness to learn more about new technologies and innovations
- Excellent communication skills in all formats including being able to report to senior stakeholders
- You must be able to work independently of direction and have strong delegation and multi-tasking skills
- Working under pressure and managing complexity

The curriculum

At Cowes, our curriculum isn't just a framework, it is the heartbeat of everything we do. Ambitious, high-quality teaching underpins a rich, coherent and balanced learning experience for every child.

As Principal, you will shape and influence a dynamic learning experience that empowers every student to thrive across a broad and inclusive curriculum: from core academic disciplines to languages, humanities, creative and practical subjects, and physical education.

As part of our ambitious and forward-thinking Trust, Cowes is working alongside our other schools to develop a common Trust curriculum. Through our Common Curriculum Project, we are developing a shared, high-quality curriculum model and aligned examination boards across all of our schools. This work is strengthening professional development, enabling collaboration, and unlocking shared resourcing, assessment expertise, and curriculum planning. Our common curriculum will support consistency, progression and equity for pupils, while reducing workload and creating powerful opportunities for staff to learn from one another and refine practice together.

Crucially, this is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Each school retains the ability to contextualise, adapt and shape the common curriculum to meet the needs of its pupils and community. At Cowes, this means continuing to build on our distinctive identity and local context.

Our setting is truly unique. Overlooking the Solent with panoramic views of the New Forest and Portsmouth, we have developed an award-winning Maritime Futures curriculum that connects learning to our local environment and thriving maritime industry. Drawing on the rich history, geography and economic opportunities on our doorstep, this curriculum gives learning purpose, relevance and real-world impact, whilst still aligning with the Trust's core curriculum principles.

Inclusivity sits at the heart of our vision. Every student, regardless of background, can access the full richness of our curriculum as intended. Complementing this, our Student Charter guarantees a wide range of exceptional experiences that bring learning to life.

We recognise that the world is evolving rapidly, and our curriculum evolves with it. It is fluid, responsive and continuously refined to meet new challenges and opportunities. As Principal, you will play a pivotal role in shaping this journey: leading and developing staff, championing innovation, and ensuring every young person leaves Cowes prepared to succeed in an increasingly complex and global future.

As a trust, we believe every child deserves the opportunity to thrive regardless of their background.





Why work for Ormiston?

Our vision is for a school system where every child thrives, regardless of background. Our people are at the heart of our approach – they are our greatest asset.

We exist to provide the best learning opportunities every day, in every school for every child. It is the people and teams in our Trust who make this a reality and ensure we have the greatest impact. If you join us at Ormiston, whatever your role, your work will have purpose and meaning.

A culture that inspires

We are values-led and care deeply about the pupils in our schools.

Our Trust values are woven through everything that we do:

1. **Ambition:** we believe everyone can achieve and we aspire for excellence in all we do
2. **Learning:** we are always learning and see development as the route to improvement
3. **Perseverance:** we embrace challenge and learn through doing difficult things

4. **Collaboration:** we achieve more through working together
5. **Inclusion:** we break down barriers to learning and participation

Our culture, underpinned by our values is supported by:

- Promoting a supportive culture that values honest, sometimes challenging, feedback as an opportunity for learning and growth
- Ambitious goals for all pupils and staff
- A sense of belonging and a collective attitude of achieving more together and delivering excellence
- A dedicated survey where we listen carefully and respond to the views of staff
- Regular exposure to the Trust's Senior Leadership Team, for learning and support
- Regular internal communications, including newsletters, which include updates from our CEO
- A focus on collaboration, best practice and sharing of expertise



Collaboration really is a core value here at Ormiston. Seeing how we all work together for the good of our pupils, motivates me every day!

Staff member

Benefits that care for you

We value hard work and dedication and we're committed to ensuring you are supported, both professionally and personally, so that you can make the most impact for the children and young people in our schools.

Alongside nationally-agreed terms and conditions, we offer a generous benefits package. This includes:

- Generous pension and life cover
- Access to health and wellbeing programmes, including counselling services
- Discounts on retail, travel and leisure through our benefits platform
- Free and confidential legal, tax and health 24/7 helpline
- Cycle to work scheme
- Automatic pay progression
- Flexible working arrangements
- And much more as part of a leading multi-academy trust

Professional development that supports your growth

At Ormiston we invest in you. With learning as one of our core values, we see it as the pathway to continuous improvement and have designed our sector-leading

professional development programmes to support your ambitions and unlock your potential. From bespoke career pathways to opportunities for leadership development, we help you achieve your goals through:

- National conferences with inspiring speakers and workshops
- Access to subject experts and lead practitioners who share best practice across the Trust
- Trust-wide inset and staff development days in addition to academy scheduled training days
- Career-advancing initiatives such as NPQs, apprenticeships and professional development plans

Complementing our formal approach, we embrace our identity as a learning organisation by encouraging staff to take ownership of their professional development, recognising everyday moments as opportunities to learn and grow. We foster a culture where honest feedback is freely given and openly received.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion

We are proud to be a values-led and performance-driven organisation and we're creating an inclusive environment where everyone can thrive. We are committed to attracting and retaining diverse talent, fostering belonging and supporting all staff to succeed – helping to meet our overarching purpose of making a difference for every child and young person that we support.



The professional development I've experienced here is unparalleled. I feel valued and supported to achieve my best.

Staff member



About OAT

Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT) is a leading, not-for-profit, multi-academy trust which has been transforming schools across the country since 2009, which champions the academic achievement and all-round development of the young people it serves.

At the heart of everything we do is a simple yet powerful vision: a school system where every child can thrive, and our mission is to ensure every child has excellent learning opportunities, inside and outside of the classroom, which enrich their lives and afford them choice and opportunity in the future.

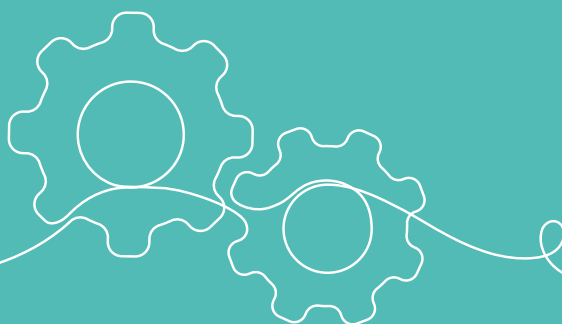
We have always tackled the toughest challenges in education and we're now moving to the next phase of our development, ensuring that all children and young people can benefit from what is best from within our schools. We have a central team of experts who work closely with our academies throughout England.

The senior team has a proven track record of delivering high quality education at national, regional and institutional levels. This team is overseen by a board with a wealth of national experience and expertise in business and education policy-making, delivery, governance and finance. Strong and aspirational leadership is central to our academies' success, and we have always developed new leaders from within, with nearly a third of OAT academy leaders being home-grown. Additionally, to enhance the strength of our own talent, we recruit high-quality, external school leaders with experience of raising aspirations, and ensuring the highest standards of performance and behaviour.

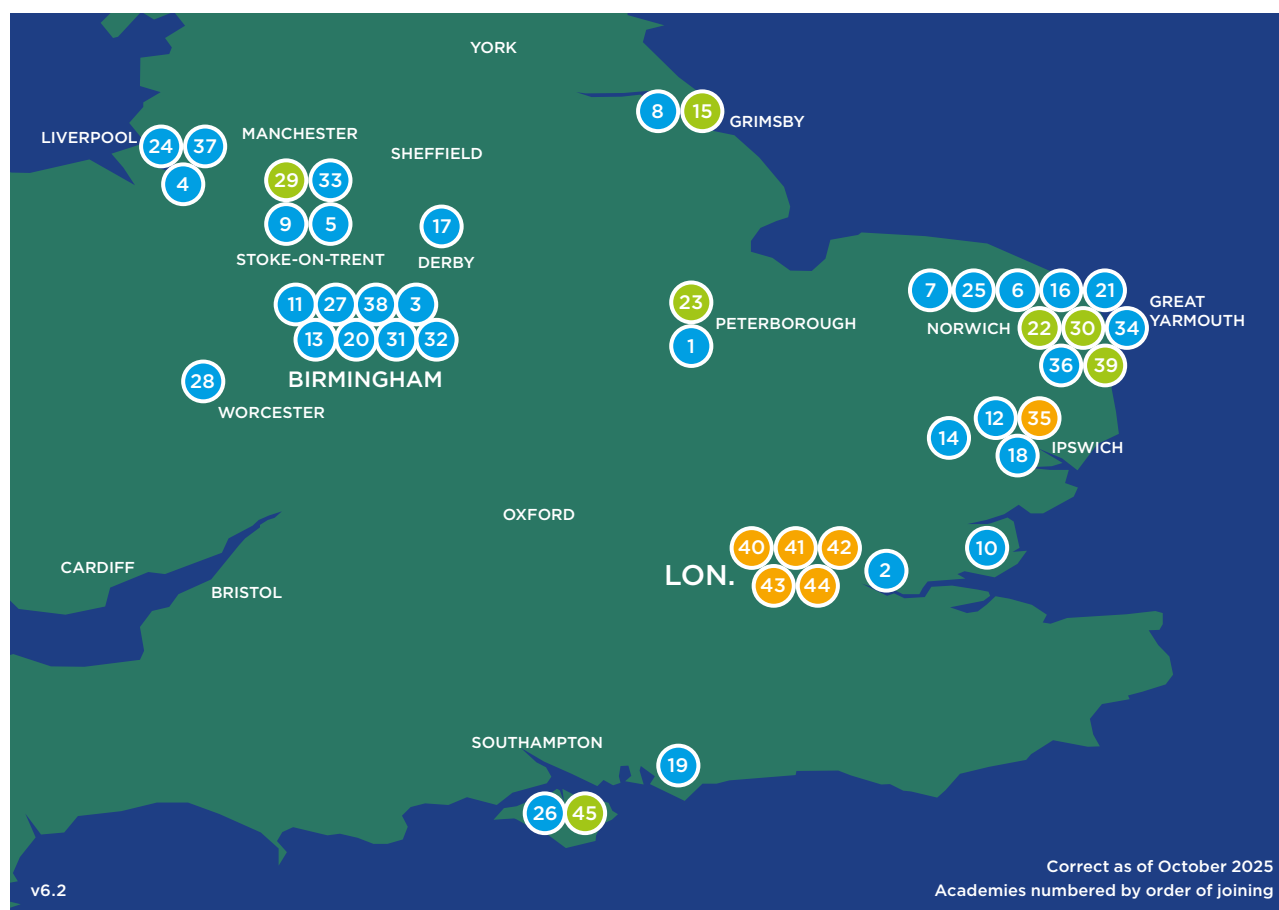
Please visit the [OAT website](#) for more information.

OAT is a leading, not-for-profit, multi-academy trust

which has been transforming academies across the country since 2009.



Our network



PRIMARY

- 39 Ormiston Cliff Park Primary Academy
- 30 Edward Worlledge Ormiston Academy
- 22 Ormiston Herman Academy
- 45 Hunnyhill Ormiston Academy
- 23 Ormiston Meadows Academy
- 29 Packmoor Ormiston Academy
- 15 Ormiston South Parade Academy

SECONDARY

- 4 Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy
- 36 Broadland High Ormiston Academy
- 38 Brownhills Ormiston Academy
- 1 Ormiston Bushfield Academy
- 24 Ormiston Chadwick Academy
- 25 City of Norwich School, An Ormiston Academy
- 21 Cliff Park Ormiston Academy
- 26 Cowes Enterprise College, An Ormiston Academy
- 16 Ormiston Denes Academy
- 12 Ormiston Endeavour Academy
- 34 Flegg High Ormiston Academy
- 13 Ormiston Forge Academy
- 11 George Salter Academy
- 9 Ormiston Horizon Academy
- 17 Ormiston Ilkeston Enterprise Academy

- 8 Ormiston Maritime Academy
- 33 Ormiston Meridian Academy
- 32 Ormiston NEW Academy
- 2 Ormiston Park Academy
- 10 Ormiston Rivers Academy
- 3 Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy
- 37 Sandymoor Ormiston Academy
- 27 Ormiston Shelfield Community Academy
- 5 Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy
- 19 Ormiston Six Villages Academy
- 18 Stoke High School - Ormiston Academy
- 14 Ormiston Sudbury Academy
- 31 Ormiston SWB Academy
- 28 Tenbury High Ormiston Academy
- 6 Ormiston Venture Academy
- 7 Ormiston Victory Academy
- 20 Wodensborough Ormiston Academy

ALTERNATIVE PROVISION AND SPECIAL

- 40 Ormiston Beachcroft Academy
- 41 Ormiston Bridge Academy
- 43 Ormiston Kensington Queensmill Academy
- 42 Ormiston Latimer Academy
- 44 Ormiston Queensmill Academy
- 35 Thomas Wolsey Ormiston Academy



Work for us

Work where it matters most, achieve what matters more. Be part of a team where passion meets purpose, as we work together where the challenge is greatest to change the lives and build the futures of children and young people.

Ormiston, where every member of staff enjoys...

- The opportunity to build on the legacy of those who came before – being part of one of the longest standing trusts, created with the sole purpose of enabling children and young people to thrive
- Working for a trust nationally recognised for its impact on disadvantaged children – a rewarding, stimulating career where staff are challenged to be the best they can be, for the pupils we are proud to serve
- Being part of a team and community where you belong – being part of a well-resourced and ambitious network of experts and professionals that work at the heart of communities
- A supportive environment to grow your career – an extensive professional development programme, alongside flexible working arrangements and generous benefits



How to apply

Location: Cowes Enterprise College, An Ormiston Academy, Isle of Wight

Reporting to: Education Director

Start date: September 2026

Closing date for applications: 9am on Monday 2 February 2026

Interview date(s): Tuesday 10 and Wednesday 11 February 2026. Shortlisted candidates will be notified on Tuesday 3 February 2026.

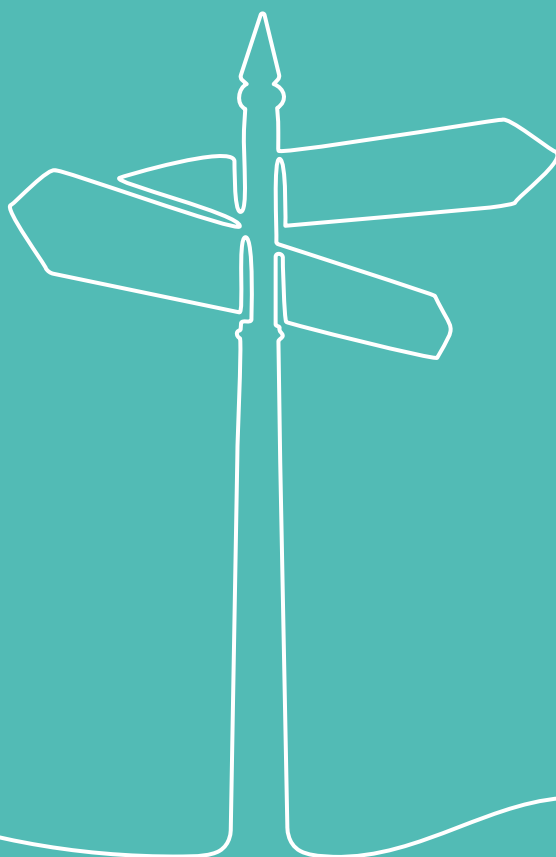
Salary: OAT Principal Group 7 P24 – P34 (£103,029 – £131,578)

Other benefits: Membership of TPS, 42 days annual leave + statutory holidays, family private health insurance and excellent CPD opportunities. Relocation assistance may be available to support the successful candidate.

For further information about this exciting leadership opportunity please contact our recruitment partner, Chris Gartner from Think Leadership on 07454 679 918 or via email at chris.gartner@thinkrecruitment.co.uk.

Applicants can also arrange a tour of the academy by contacting the Principal's PA Louise Iorio, at lorio@cowesec.org or by phone on **01983 203103** (main academy phone line).





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