



Astrea Academy Trust

LEARN, THRIVE, SUCCEED

Regional Director Secondary

Candidate Pack



Introduction



Thank you very much for your interest in becoming Regional Director (Secondary) for South Yorkshire at Astrea.

This is a very exciting time to be joining Astrea as a Regional Director. 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 the four secondaries in South Yorkshire and will also strategically lead some key strategic areas across all our secondary academies.

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.'

The position is a great match for someone who shares the Trust's vision for educational excellence and has the focus to 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.

With best wishes,

Richard Tutt,
Director for Secondary Education



About the Trust

The trust has 26 academies across South Yorkshire and Cambridgeshire

We are committed to ensuring that all children in the trust have accelerated opportunities that enable them to learn, thrive, and lead successful lives. Our ambition is to tackle historical educational disadvantage and to play our part in the social regeneration of areas that have experienced poor education opportunities.

The trust has grown rapidly since its creation and now educates around 15,000 students in 26 academies. In Cambridgeshire, the trust comprises four secondary schools and one SEMH special school. In South Yorkshire, the trust works through seventeen primary academies, one all-through school, and three secondary schools.

The trust's Executive Team is led by Rowena Hackwood as Chief Executive Officer. A wider central team supports the work of individual academies in core areas such as academic support, inclusion, governance, finance, HR, estates, and IT. With a 2030 strategy in place, we are clear and specific about our vision for behaviour, curriculum and teaching quality.

All our academies are rated **GOOD** by Ofsted.



Astrea in Numbers

26
ACADEMIES

2,000
MEMBERS
OF
STAFF



£115m
TOTAL
INCOME

100%
RATED 'GOOD'

14,000 PUPILS

£3.9m
REINVESTED
INTO SCHOOLS
TO IMPROVE
FACILITIES AND
INFRASTRUCTURE



Our Vision and Values

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



SCHOLARSHIP:

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



CURIOSITY:

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



TENACITY:

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

Our Academies

PRIMARY



SECONDARY



ALL-THROUGH



SPECIAL



About Astrea Academy Trust

SECONDARY ACADEMIES

Within our secondary academies we have a clear and specific vision for behaviour, curriculum and teaching principles, which is codified and widely shared.

Our shared values are scholarship, curiosity & tenacity. We are unapologetically ambitious for every child, regardless of their background, prior attainment or needs. Our goal is to ensure that all our scholars have the option to attend university or pursue an aspirational alternative. Through quality first teaching, we work tirelessly to remove any barriers to success for all children.

OUR KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Exceptionally high aspirations, with a firm emphasis on academic attainment
- Ambition for every scholar to have the option to attend university or pursue an aspirational alternative
- A knowledge-rich curriculum
- Innovative teaching approaches focusing on direct instruction, means of participation, and developing fluency, greatly influenced by Lemov's 'Teach Like a Champion', Rosenshine, and recent developments in cognitive science
- A commitment to reducing unnecessary tasks through our academy-led Workload Charters
- A belief that our staff are our greatest asset, fostering a developmental environment where everyone can thrive and grow in their role
- A calm and purposeful learning environment that is warm, welcoming, and friendly
- Centralised behaviour systems to further support teacher workload
- A focus on improving reading ability
- A broad range of extra-curricular activities, including sports, music, performing arts, and academic clubs.



About Astrea Academy Trust

A KNOWLEDGE-RICH EDUCATION

By a knowledge-rich education, we mean a rigorous and extensive knowledge-based education, that draws its material and methods from the best and most important work in both the humanities and the sciences.

The aim of a core knowledge education is not primarily to prepare students for a job or career, it is more to transform their minds so that they are able to make reasonable and astute judgments and engage fruitfully in conversation and debate – not just about contemporary issues, but also about the universal questions that have been troubling mankind throughout history.

We want children to leave our schools with the confidence that comes from possessing an essential general knowledge. A knowledge-rich education should not confine itself to the Western canon but should embrace other cultures and traditions. What that canon includes will be subject to review but will always be closely connected to the history and the present nature of the society in which we live, including our international connections.

WHAT ASTREA OFFERS

- Ongoing CPD, career development, and promotion opportunities
- Extensive support and progression opportunities
- Collaborative planning with a developing centralised KS3 curriculum and associated artifacts
- A feedback policy focused on whole-class feedback – no onerous marking policies
- Disruption-free learning and a 'warm/strict' behaviour system
- Highly visible/supportive senior leaders who have your back
- Centralised detentions, including homework detentions - no need to organise, run or chase them
- No formal graded lesson observations – just ongoing 'no-stakes' drop-ins based around instructional coaching for continuous development
- Excellent support from the Astrea Trust Central team and other colleagues in secondary schools

Codifying Culture

‘We are what we repeatedly do.
Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.’

Excellence is a habit



Students rise to meet our high expectations. Maintaining our standards is paramount to establishing strong cultural norms and fostering a culture of excellence.

Warm/Strict (WWF)



We maintain high expectations for students while fostering an environment of warmth, genuine care, and positivity. This nurtures a supportive learning atmosphere which is both disciplined and joyful.

Joy and belonging



Belonging is one of the most powerful human emotions. Our school creates warm, welcoming, and friendly environment that are fully inclusive, ensuring every student feels joy and a sense of belonging.

Kindness & Politeness



These values are essential for a positive school culture. We foster an environment where kindness, politeness, and gratitude are consistently practiced, creating a respectful and supportive community for all students.

Purpose not power



Actions, intentions, and words are guided by purpose, not merely by positions of authority. All colleagues can clearly articulate the rationale behind actions and decision-making processes.

Over communication



We consistently revisit and reinforce our mission, values, and principles. Over-communicating our core purpose ensures everyone remains aligned. Our values are lived not laminated.

Codifying Culture

‘A strong culture is taught not caught’

Praise & Recognition



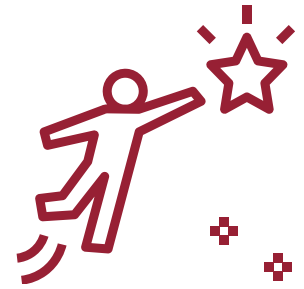
Recognition, praise, and rewards drive positive change. We aim to praise students every lesson, every day. Sanctions are issued when wrong choices are made.

Rowing together



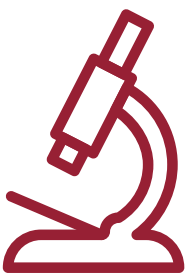
Aligned around our vision and values, all staff row together with relentless consistency. Ignoring issues undermines our culture; instead we collectively row together for the benefit of all.

Aspiration



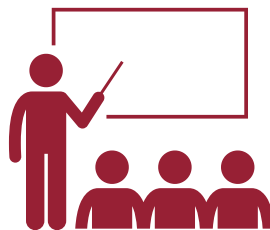
We deliver a knowledge-rich curriculum providing the foundation for excellent outcomes and further opportunities. We believe everyone can succeed. We focus on raising attainment, not just aspirations, turning goals into reality.

Sweat the small stuff



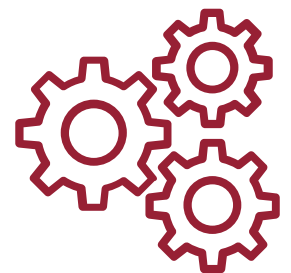
Leaders and staff adopt a meticulous approach, with a relentless drive to ensure fundamental basics are consistently in place and maintained at all times.

Teachers can teach and students can learn



We are committed to fostering an environment where exemplary behaviour is the foundation for disruption free learning. All teachers and support staff can teach and do their jobs free from disruption, no matter their status.

Routines



Universal classroom routines help establish a culture focused on learning. By setting shared expectations and consistent behaviours, we shape the values and norms that define our school community.

About the role

Role Title	Regional Director - Secondary
Responsible to	Director of Secondary Education
Salary	£134,205 to £146,670 (Central Education T&C's)

PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

Under the direction and guidance of the Director of Secondary Education, this role is responsible for:

- Supporting the Director of Secondary Education in driving transformation across our secondary academies, on their journey to excellence.
- Embedding the Astrea vision, mission, values and frameworks in each academy to support rapid and sustained transformation.
- The performance of the South Yorkshire secondary academies.
- The line management of Principals/Executive Principals in a clear Trust accountability structure.
- Driving up standards of pupil attainment and progress across all year groups.
- Challenging and supporting academies to achieve their targets.
- Developing the knowledge and skills of our Principals/Executive Principals and leaders at all levels.
- Delivering Trust-wide improvement projects on time and with a substantive positive impact.

All Regional Directors are asked to take on a specific Trust-wide accountability alongside their oversight of a portfolio of academies and line management of Principals/Executive Principals. This will be defined and agreed based on the skills and leadership experience of the successful candidate. For example, the postholder could have responsibility for the strategic leadership of Standards and Achievement, Behaviour and Attitudes or Teaching and Learning across all secondary academies

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Accountability for the performance of each academy in the portfolio of academies that the Regional Director is responsible for.
- Line management of Principals/Executive Principals.

About the role

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES (CONT.)

- Specific Trust-wide accountability alongside oversight of a portfolio of academies and line management of Principals/Executive Principals. This will be defined and agreed based on the skills and leadership experience of the successful candidate. For example, the postholder could have responsibility for the strategic leadership of Standards and Achievement, Behaviour and Attitudes or Teaching and Learning across all secondary academies.
- Share a sense of collective accountability for the performance of the Trust's academies.
- Work with Principals/Executive Principals and designated leaders across the Trust to transform standards of pupil attainment and achievement.
- Deliver improvement in attendance, behaviour, culture and personal development in each academy.
- Deliver improvement in curriculum and curriculum implementation in our academies by working in partnership with the Director of Curriculum Assessment (Secondary) and National Subject Leads.
- Monitor and evaluate the work of the academies and build their capacity to improve through directing, mentoring, coaching, professional development and performance management as appropriate.
- Monitor and evaluate the work of the academies, providing support and challenge
- Identify best practice from within the Trust and from outstanding external partners and ensure this is shared and embedded consistently within academies and across the Trust.
- Work with the Secondary Director and Regional Director colleagues to ensure that the secondary frameworks and common strategies are implemented where agreed, including the implementation of an outstanding curriculum in every academy.
- Ensure each academy has fit for purpose Academy Improvement Plans, informed by the secondary frameworks.
- Ensure academies achieve their performance targets for all pupils across all key stages and phases.
- Ensuring each leader is able to articulate the vision, mission and 3 year 'improvement journey' of their academy.
- Ensure that each Principal has in place trust strategies for monitoring and evaluating culture, behaviour and attitudes, attendance, inclusion, personal development, safeguarding, the quality of curriculum, curriculum implementation, standards of pupils' achievement, using benchmarks and setting targets for rapid improvement of all pupils, including those in vulnerable groups.
- Ensure that robust assessment data analysis is used to set challenging targets for all groups of pupils.
- Support each academy in ensuring that funding such as the SEN notional budget, Pupil Premium and High Needs funding are used effectively and evidence of impact is clear.
- Ensure each academy meets budget and curriculum led financial planning targets.

About the role

TRUST-LEVEL ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Contributing to the development of the secondary education strategy and the creation of sustainable short; medium and long-term business plans to ensure the attainment of goals and objectives set by Astrea Trustee Board.
- Contributing to the development of broader Trust business plans as directed.
- Ensuring the adherence of the organisation's daily activities and long-term plans with established policies and legal guidelines.
- Devising remedial actions for any identified issues, risks or threats and conduct crisis management when necessary.
- Forging and maintaining relationships of trust with stakeholders; partners and external authorities.
- Developing Astrea's sector presence through media and public engagement where appropriate.
- Expanding Astrea community presence and public awareness of the organisation's mission and service.



Person Specification

QUALIFICATIONS

- Qualified Teacher Status.
- Good Honours Degree.
- NPQH/NPQEL desirable or a commitment to undertaking the relevant level of training.
- Evidence of recent professional development that prepares for this post.
- Further academic qualifications or management training.

EXPERIENCE

- Proven experience as an Executive Principal and/or Principal/headteacher who has an excellent track record of school improvement, transformation and achieving excellence.
- As Principal and/or Executive Principal, you have had an outstanding track record of transforming P8, A8/Basics outcomes and achieving excellent P8, A8/Basics outcomes.
- Rapidly transformed and maintained the academic outcomes of disadvantaged pupils.
- Proven experience of delivering academy improvement and improving pupil outcomes across a number of academies is desirable.
- Proven experience of the Ofsted inspection process and the evidence schools need to demonstrate improvements over time. Experience as an Ofsted inspector desirable, but not essential.
- Evidence of an ability to plan strategically, build and communicate a coherent vision in a range of compelling ways.
- Developed and maintained effective line management relationships.
- Supported and coached different members of staff to improve their own performance and expertise.
- Proven experience of effective development of teams to become high performing.
- Worked effectively with a variety of stakeholders.
- Within your current post you can demonstrate that you can configure and manage expenditure.
- Understanding of, and empathy with, the MAT operating model.

SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE

- Full understanding and alignment to the Astrea Secondary vision, mission, values and frameworks, including the belief that all students should have the option to be able to go to university or aspirational alternative.

Operational success

relies fundamentally
on **the success**
of our people 

Person Specification

SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE (CONT.)

- Proven ability to deliver a collective vision and shared purpose across academies and the Astrea family.
- Ability to not only articulate clearly 'what outstanding/excellence looks like', but the vision, ambition and expertise to deliver it.
- Ability to inspire, challenge, motivate and empower teams and individuals to achieve high performance.
- Collaborative and inspirational leadership skills.
- Proven ability to inspire, lead and participate actively in building and sustaining learning communities and network with others.
- Proven ability to lead an organisation successfully through a period of change.
- Up-to-date, evidence-led knowledge of, and engagement in subject/curriculum, national policy, pedagogy, classroom management strategies, inspection findings and statutory requirements.
- Knowledge of legislation relating to managing a school including Equalities legislation.
- Knowledge, experience and alignment with Teach Like A Champion, Rosenshine's Principles, cognitive science and knowledge rich curriculums.
- Ability to use a range of evidence, including performance data, to support, monitor, evaluate and improve aspects of academy performance and life, including challenging poor performance.
- Ability to engage academy communities in the systematic and rigorous self-evaluation of the work of the academy.
- The ability to understand pupil and academy level performance data for the purposes of target setting, monitoring, targeted intervention, evaluation and strategic influence.
- Understanding and ability to communicate and successfully implement strategies across academies including accountability, learning, curriculum, administration and communication.
- Clear understanding of the ethos and strategies required to establish consistently high standards in outcomes, progress, attitudes and behaviour across academies.
- Excellent organisational skills.
- Well-developed interpersonal and communication skills and ability to use new and emerging technologies to secure impact.
- An understanding of and competent use of ICT including emerging technologies to aid and promote the quality of teaching, learning and administration.
- Demonstrate a personal enthusiasm and commitment to leadership aimed at making a positive difference to children and young people and raising standards.
- Demonstrate personal and professional integrity, including modelling values and vision.
- Evidence of a commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.
- Commitment to promote and support the aims of Astrea.

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.

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



Astrea Academy Trust

LEARN, THRIVE, SUCCEED