



# Headteacher and Head of School

## Stage One Recruitment Pack



# Our family of schools

Initially centred in Ipswich, we are a group of Suffolk schools aiming to make a real difference to education in our local area. Bringing together our skills and expertise, as well as learning from the best practice nationwide, our vision is to create a hub of outstanding practice in teaching and learning and real opportunities for the children in Suffolk to achieve the best possible outcomes. We formed our education trust in March 2015 with our three original schools: St Helen's, The Oaks and Whitton (now The Beeches). The Trust expanded in May 2017 when five schools in north-east Suffolk joined: Bungay, Edgar Sewter Halesworth), Holton St Peter, Ilketshall St Lawrence and Wenhampton. In June 2018 the Trust sponsored Stutton Church of England Primary and in September 2018 the Trust sponsored Shotley Community Primary School. In March 2019 Castle Hill Infants and Juniors and Cliff Lane Primary Schools joined from another Trust. In October 2019 Ringshall School joined and in April 2025, Hollesley and Waldringfield schools brought us up to a total of 16 schools.



ASSET continues to develop as a group of high performing schools in the primary phase serving communities across Suffolk. As we have expanded, we have developed a wide range of trust-wide services, and associated key positions, to support schools within the trust. These have been developed around a strategic model for resourcing of the trust as a whole, authentic shared leadership principles, and led by a small central core team of senior leaders. We now have a strong financial base and capacity to invest in our people and schools in order to support our ambition to provide first class educational opportunities and services to the young people and families we serve across our communities.

# Our Vision and Purpose

We seek to equip and empower the next generation of children to create a more compassionate, equitable and sustainable world where they personally and collectively thrive.

As a group of schools working in collaboration as one entity, we focus on achieving high standards and excellent practice across all schools, so that every individual has the skills, knowledge, behaviours, values and support they need in order to be the best they can be and to make their contribution to the benefit of all.

## This means that, together we...

- aim for **excellence** in all areas of school life by envisioning, sharing, researching, developing and innovating together
- build on the **strengths of our people**, growing their confidence and developing their expertise
- take **collective responsibility**, develop partnerships and collaborate at all levels with positivity and resilience
- always look out for and champion the individual and particularly the **vulnerable**
- seek to make a **positive difference** to our communities and promote social justice
- set **no limits** on what we can achieve, are relentless in always striving to improve
- have high **aspirations and ambition** for the future of education and what can be achieved

## Our young people will say...

- I am **well prepared** for the next stage of my education, with a good understanding of literacy and good maths skills
- I have a **positive attitude** to life, skills and learning
- I am **responsible**, able to take constructive feedback, respectful and open to new ideas from other pupils and adults
- I am **confident** and **brave** enough to be able to take new risks
- I am a good **team player** because I listen to others and share ideas, also I am able to work positively when asked to work independently
- I have good thinking, questioning, improving work, and **learning skills**
- I **believe in myself** and I am not afraid to take decisions which involve my learning
- I am **confident** to be able to talk in front of my class/schoolmates without fear of failure
- I want to **achieve well** and I will try my best at all times
- I am keen to accept **opportunities** which will help me in my future life, whether it is at school, college, university or in a place of work

# Leadership at ASSET Education

We believe in strong leaders leading exceptional schools. Our Trust structure has evolved to support Headteachers and Heads of School to focus on advancing teaching and learning to meet the needs of their communities. Each ASSET school has its own unique personality, and our school leaders have the autonomy to lead their schools in the way that will deliver the very best outcomes for their children and families. Our central support services include HR, payroll, Estates and health and safety, finance, IT, catering as well as providing supportive networks across a range of staff roles, enabling our Headteachers to make strategic rather than operational decisions in these areas, and focus on the most important things - the learning, wellbeing and development of their pupils.



Headteachers at ASSET are themselves well networked with other school leaders, and form the trust's Education Improvement Team - able to feed in their ideas, expertise and experience to Trust level strategic direction.

As well as the larger EIT group, Headteachers work in smaller, autonomous peer support groups called School Improvement Circles. Within these circles school leaders conduct peer reviews, supporting each other in school improvement and innovation.

Wellbeing and community is incredibly important to us at ASSET. In 2024 we won the national Wellbeing Trust of the Year Award in the MAT Excellence Awards for our Complete Human Strategy approach to wellbeing. In 2025 we won the Civic Partnerships of the Year Award for our work connecting with other organisations to improve outcomes for children and young people across Suffolk.

# School Leadership positions in ASSET

<b>Job title:</b>	Heads of School and Headteachers
<b>Location:</b>	In ASSET Schools as they arise
<b>Hours:</b>	Full time
<b>Salary/Grade:</b>	L6-L18 depending on role and size of school
<b>Closing Date:</b>	6/2/2025
<b>Interview date:</b>	Stage One interviews will take place during February and March. Candidates successful in Stage One interviews will be invited to a Stage Two interview as vacancies arise at schools they are matched to

## School Leader Recruitment programme

The ASSET Education process for appointments to Head of School and Headteacher positions is open to both internal and external candidates. The programme is widely advertised. In order to be considered for a future position in an ASSET school candidates must have been successful at stage one of the programme.

### Stage One

The first stage is held in a confidential environment. Candidates can apply without the knowledge of their current schools or employers (references are not taken up until stage two) and will go through the following process:

- Opportunity for an initial discussion with the CEO
- Shortlisting based on an initial application form, which includes a written personal statement, against a set of criteria
- An interview day, comprising a variety of tasks which might include:
  - A strengths and competency analysis
  - An exploration and discussion of ASSET values
  - A discussion/meeting with one or more trustees
  - An interview with senior trust staff to assess current levels of understanding, skills and expertise
  - An opportunity to explore intentions, plans and next steps in the candidate's career
  - A final feedback meeting in which potential schools, posts and/or development are discussed

## **Purpose:**

1. To assess whether the candidate has the potential to make a good school leader within an ASSET school and therefore could be considered for appointment to a post when one becomes available
2. To establish gaps in understanding and knowledge that could become areas for development prior to an appointment being suggested
3. To ascertain approach to leadership and school improvement, vision for learning, values, etc, so that they can be matched to a post where their skills can be best utilised and they will thrive

Potential applicants will be advised in the initial conversation with the CEO whether there are currently any likely or suitable job opportunities before they make a decision to apply. However, as this programme is designed to be developmental, applications can be made at any time and will always be encouraged.

## **The applicant pack will include:**

- An application form
- A Job description
- An explanation of the programme and next steps

## **Personal statement (included in the application form) should address:**

- Which schools/localities you would consider a leadership position
- Why are you applying now? Where do you feel your career is heading?
- What kind of school leader do you want to be?
- What key strengths do you have to offer?
- Please summarise three or four key successes in your current job – relate them to evidence based practice where relevant
- Give examples of how your own educational philosophy and approach aligns with the ASSET values and approach

## **Preparation for the Stage One meetings/discussions:**

In the interview candidates will be asked to talk about a leadership or education book that they have read recently and the impact it has had on their thinking or practice. They will also be asked to prepare a presentation on their educational vision.



## Stage Two

Candidates who have been successful at stage one will be considered for school leadership posts across the trust as they arise. When a vacancy becomes available the CEO will review the evidence from stage one and consider a recommendation for appointment - generally this will be one or two suitable candidates that are put forward. The process then becomes a public one, references are taken up, and the stage two appointment process starts. This will generally involve an interview with the team that includes:

- Introductions to other leaders in the trust and an opportunity to talk to them about working for ASSET (this could happen in stage one if the candidate wishes)
- A tour of the school(s) and learning walk with the CEO or other senior leader
- A short interview to ensure safer recruitment procedures are followed (following up references)
- A review and analysis of the planning, self evaluation and improvement documentation and a discussion with the CEO and trust leadership team
- A presentation about their approach to leadership and how they would undertake the role
- A meeting with pupils eg school council
- Leading a workshop with governors or trustees about vision and strategy in the next 3-5 years
- A visit to the candidate's current school (may be possible in stage one)

### Purpose:

1. To assess, from both perspectives, whether the candidate is a good match for the trust
2. To establish the level of trust support needed on appointment in order for the applicant to be successful

References and feedback from stage two will determine whether an appointment can be recommended to the Board by the CEO who will write a short statement detailing the reasons for the recommendation in order to secure the approval of the Board and confirm the appointment subject to the necessary additional checks. In line with the ASSET Education recruitment policy it is likely that an initial probationary style period will be agreed with clear performance targets after which each party can agree if the appointment has been successful.

Developmental feedback will be provided with advice and support followed up for internal candidates.

If you would like to have a confidential discussion about this opportunity prior to application, please email ASSET Education CEO Jacqueline Bircham  
[jacqueline.bircham@asseteducation.co.uk](mailto:jacqueline.bircham@asseteducation.co.uk)