



Barnsley Academy
The best in everyone™
Part of United Learning

Briefing Pack for Applicants

Assistant Principal

November 2025



United Learning
The best in everyone™

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Section 1 - Post Advertisement

Job title:	Assistant Principal
Location:	Barnsley Academy, Farm Road, Kendray, Barnsley, S70 3DL
Starting salary:	Competitive Leadership Pay Range + Benefits (United Learning Pay Policy applies)
Contract:	Permanent, Full-time
Start date:	Easter 2026 or as soon as possible

Barnsley Academy is seeking to appoint an **Assistant Principal** as part of an expansion of its Senior Leadership Team. The ideal candidate will be a committed, passionate and knowledgeable individual who can positively and actively contribute to our mission to ensure the young people in our care receive a world-class education.

The recent Ofsted report (January 2025) highlights that “the school is a welcoming and vibrant place”, “is aspirational for what pupils can achieve”, and “has high expectations for pupils’ behaviour.” Inspectors noted that “Leaders know the school well”, “ensure that staff have the support and training that they need”, and that “staff feel supported by the school.” Barnsley Academy is a UNICEF Gold Rights Respecting school, reflecting our commitment to achieving equity for all students, leading to the best possible personal and academic outcomes.

Please watch our Welcome Video to find out how our values of Ambition, Determination and Respect underpin everything that staff and students do here at Barnsley Academy: [Barnsley Academy > Video](#)

The academy is part of United Learning, a national group of schools and academies. Barnsley Academy is an 11-16 secondary. As part of United Learning our aim is to bring out ‘the Best in Everyone’ and we continuously strive to ensure that students and staff have every opportunity to succeed, with their potential developed to the utmost.

United Learning is one of the largest and most successful Trusts in the country who offers unrivalled Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and training, including opportunities for nationwide networking.

Main duties of the role:

- The main strategic responsibilities for this Assistant Principal role will be negotiated and finalised as part of the recruitment process and on appointment.
- They will be based on the strengths and interests of the successful candidate and the needs of the school.
- Duties applicable to all Senior Leaders are outlined in *Section 5 - Job Description*.

We are looking for a Senior Leader who:

- Is a highly-skilled and inspirational classroom practitioner who models effective pedagogical practice.
- Has strategic vision and proven ability to make things happen.
- Has a proven track record of raising standards.
- Has the ability to lead and inspire others and work as part of a team.
- Has personal qualities to motivate, support and challenge others.
- Is fully committed to improving the life chances of our students and supporting them to become well-rounded citizens.

We will offer you:

- Highly competitive pay.
- Excellent facilities and resources in a respectful working environment.
- Access to an outstanding professional development programme.
- Polite, respectful and dedicated students who want to learn and fulfil their potential.
- Colleagues who are supportive, friendly and who are committed to each others' professional development.
- A chance to become part of one of the largest groups of schools in the country with opportunities to work collaboratively with colleagues in schools within the Yorkshire cluster and across United Learning.
- Excellent employee benefits which include a highly sought-after pension scheme with high employer contributions, a paid personal leave day each year, and a generous staff discount scheme.
- Three extra INSET days for planning per year.
- Access to a free and confidential Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) and Health Cash Plan.
- We are open to requests for flexible or part-time working; and we encourage open and regular conversations about work-life balance.

If you possess these qualities and share the academy's vision, then we will be delighted to hear from you. Please refer to the job description and person specification for further details.

How to Apply:

To apply, please click the 'Apply Now' button at the top of the advert on our website using the following link to our vacancies page: [Barnsley Academy > About Us > Vacancies](#) and complete our online application form. Please note that CVs are not accepted.

Closing Date, Shortlisting and Interviews:

The following gives an indication of the planned timescales for the appointment process (*shortlisting and interview dates may be subject to change*):

Application Closing Date	By midnight on Thursday, 11 December
Shortlisting	Friday, 12 December
Interviews	Wednesday, 17 December

If you would like to discuss this exciting opportunity, please contact hr@unitedlearningyorks.org.uk

United Learning is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Employees will, in accordance with statutory guidance, be subject to a comprehensive checking process including references from current and previous employers, health, right to work in the UK, an Enhanced DBS check and a further check against the appropriate barred list.

Section 2 – United Learning

Barnsley Academy is part of United Learning which is a large and growing group of schools aiming to offer a life-changing education to children and young people across England.

Our schools work as a team and achieve more by sharing than any single school could. Our Subject Specialists, Group-wide Intranet, our own curriculum, and online learning portal all help us share knowledge and resource, which supports simplifying work processes and managing workloads for an improved work-life balance.

As a Group we can reward our staff better, we provide good career opportunities, better pay, employee benefits and ultimately, the satisfaction of helping children to succeed. We invest in our staff wellbeing. Our academies each have at least eight INSET/training days per year (with three of those solely dedicated to planning) and an ongoing group-wide wellbeing programme. It is an ethos we call 'the Best in Everyone'.

We are working hard to become a more diverse organisation, which is key to our commitment to bringing out 'the Best in Everyone'. We welcome applications from everyone committed to this ethos and would particularly welcome applications from black and minority ethnic candidates who are currently under-represented in the Group as a whole. We always appoint on merit. We are open to discussing flexible working options.

<https://unitedlearning.org.uk/>

Section 3 – Letter from the Regional Director

Dear Candidate

Thank you very much for your interest in the role within the Yorkshire United Learning Cluster. The cluster itself is a close-knit group of four Secondary Academies: Barnsley Academy, Sheffield Park Academy, Sheffield Springs Academy and Fir Vale Academy, who work alongside a number of local Primary Academies; all from within the United Learning Trust.

The cluster is well-established and has excellent support from locally based cluster central services. These cover Business Management, HR, IT and Site/Estate Facilities. They are led by an Executive Business Manager. This provides our Academies with excellent trained advice and support in these areas; this benefits the leadership and wider staff of every Academy.

United Learning Trust is a national organisation serving Primary and Secondary Academies, all-through Academies, and Independent Schools. Our ethos is, “the Best in Everyone”. This is a useful phrase that sums up the work and focus of the organisation. Every decision taken is done with this aim in mind: for staff, for students and for the community. The Trust values of Respect, Determination and Ambition are driven through the Character Programme, which each Academy has carefully interpreted in their own way. The Trust attributes of Creativity, Confidence and Enthusiasm are demonstrated at every level.

United Learning, and Academies within the Yorkshire Cluster, demonstrate a strong commitment to staff CPD and staff wellbeing. If you join our schools, you will be inducted, supported, and developed in a deliberate way from before you even take up post. Our status as an Academy Trust enables highly competitive rates of pay progression and our employee schemes, such as Westfield, are an attractive feature of employment.

Above everything, we put young people first and seek to recruit adults who share this view. We work with students, parents, and families to provide a structured, supportive experience that enables them to achieve as well as they possibly can and become excellent scholars and rounded individuals. We insist on classrooms and corridors that are respectful, orderly places where everyone is expected to display positive and mature attitudes.

Applying for a new job is a huge investment of time and emotional energy. The recruitment decision has to be right for employee and employer. I would encourage you to seek out any information you need in order to make the important decision to apply, and we welcome visits to our schools in advance of applications wherever this might be helpful.

I do wish you the very best with your application and thank you again for considering us.

Best wishes,

Laura Moore
Regional Director
United Learning

Section 4 – Letter from the Principal

Dear Candidate

Thank you very much for your interest in joining Barnsley Academy. I am extremely proud to call myself Principal of this wonderful school and to lead such a dedicated and highly skilled staff team.

Barnsley Academy is a thriving, inclusive secondary school at the heart of our local community. As part of United Learning, we are committed to delivering an education with character—one that nurtures academic excellence, personal development, and a strong sense of belonging. We serve a diverse student population and are proud of our inclusive ethos, high expectations, and relentless focus on ensuring every child achieves their full potential.

Barnsley Academy is a place where professional growth is supported, and every member of our team plays a vital role in shaping the future of our students and our school. Our staff are passionate, collaborative, and deeply committed to making a difference.

We are an outward-facing school, learning from outstanding schools both within the group and beyond. We are unapologetic about our high standards and unashamedly ambitious for all of our students and we are on a journey to becoming a great school with excellence as standard. As part of this journey, we have created a culture that is warm and strict, disciplined and joyful, and ensures disruption-free classrooms, so that teachers can teach and students can develop both their knowledge and character.

In addition, we are committed to staff wellbeing and have a wide-reaching wellbeing programme in place. We listen to the views of our staff team and strive to make Barnsley Academy a brilliant place to work for all, ensuring workload is considered and carefully balanced to ensure staff have the greatest possible positive impact on the young people of our school.

Location

Our academy is located close to Barnsley town centre, with excellent connections to wider transport networks. The M1 motorway is just minutes away, whilst strong rail links are in place with connections to cities like Sheffield, Leeds and Huddersfield.

If you are aligned with our mission and values, we very much look forward to hearing from you and would be delighted to welcome you for a visit should you wish to have a look round before applying for the post.

Good luck with your application and thank you again for considering Barnsley Academy as the next stage in your career.

Best wishes,

Stephen Pitcher
Principal
Barnsley Academy

Section 5 – Job Description

Job Description	
Post title	Assistant Principal
Salary	Competitive Leadership Pay Range + Benefits (United Learning Pay Policy applies)
Responsible to	Senior Vice Principal or Vice Principal
Responsible for	Allocated Curriculum or Pastoral Leaders
Role purpose	The main strategic responsibilities for this Assistant Principal role will be negotiated and finalised as part of the recruitment process and on appointment. They will be based on the strengths and interests of the successful candidate and the needs of the school.
Relevant Qualifications	Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) Leadership and Management Experience.

The postholder must, at all times, carry out their duties and responsibilities within the spirit of United Learning Trust and school policies and procedures, and within the legislative framework applicable to schools.

Key Responsibilities

Main duties

As part of the senior leadership team and in addition to the requirements of a subject teacher, areas of responsibility and key tasks are as follows:

Along with the Principal to take responsibility for:

- The strategic direction and development for the Academy.
- Promoting and celebrating the ethos of the Academy in accordance with its aims and curriculum policies.
- Taking a leading role in developing a learning culture with high expectations for student progress.
- Anticipating, planning and making provision for future demands.
- Day to day management of the academy.

Along with all members of the Senior Leadership Team to have line management responsibility involving:

- Monitoring standards of achievement through regular meetings with the relevant members of staff and through lesson observations and attendance at meetings; offering advice, support, and challenge.
- Ensuring the implementation of Academy policies.
- Working closely in a coaching role with the staff being line-managed in planning for and implementing improvement.
- Taking a full and active role in the Academy's Performance Management system.

Other Senior Leadership Responsibilities:

- To lead staff by example, being highly visible and promoting good order throughout the Academy.
- Assist in the appointment of staff following Safer Recruitment procedures.
- Assist in the preparation and review of Academy Policy documents.
- To ensure effective communication within the Academy community, including meeting with parents, dealing with complaints, and delivering staff briefings.
- Take assemblies as required.
- Take responsibility for personal professional development.
- 'Pulling together' to support the academy in times of challenge such as adverse weather, high absence etc.

Accountability:

- Advise and report to the Local Governing Body as required.
- Work in accordance with statutory policy.
- Liaise with officers, inspectors and other outside agencies as required.
- Support the Senior Leadership Team in developing good working relationships between the academy and local community.
- Contribute to the process and completion of any self-evaluation processes
- Be accountable for the delivery of key strategic objectives as determined in negotiation with the Principal and Senior Leadership Team in its entirety.

General

- To develop excellent working relationships with colleagues internally, centrally and externally.
- To uphold the Academy policies and procedures at all times.
- Be an effective and flexible member of the staff team.
- Perform daily duties during student social and transition times.
- To ensure any documentation produced is to a high standard and is in line with the in-house style.
- Be aware of and comply with all policies and procedures.
- Participate in training and other learning activities as required.
- Participate in the Academy's Performance Management process.
- To actively participate in continuous professional development and act as a positive role model across the academies and Trust.
- Provide appropriate guidance and supervision and assist in the training and development of staff as appropriate.
- To promote the area of responsibility within the Academy and beyond.
- To represent the Academy at events as appropriate.
- To support and promote the academy and United Learning's ethos, playing a part in strengthening relationships between academies in the cluster and between the cluster and central office.
- To be aware of, and comply with, United Learning's policies and procedures relating to child protection, health, safety and security, confidentiality and data protection, reporting all concerns to an appropriate person.
- To undertake any other duties and responsibilities as required that are covered by the general scope of the post.

Information

This post may require the post-holder to have a degree of flexibility and willingness to work outside of normal working hours.

The information contained above is to help staff understand and appreciate the work content of their post and the role they are to play in the organisation. However, it should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to outline all the duties and responsibilities of the post, a document such as this does not permit every item to be specified in detail. Broad headings have therefore, been used in which case all the usual associated duties are included in this job description.

This job description will be reviewed annually as part of the performance management process and may be subject to amendment or modification at any time after consultation with the post-holder.

Elements of this job description and changes to it may be negotiated at the request of either the post-holder or the incumbent of the post.

I accept my job description and job title as detailed above.

Name (print)	
Sign	
Date	

Section 6 – Person Specification



Person Specification

Post title	Assistant Principal
Salary	Competitive Leadership Pay Range + Benefits (United Learning Pay Policy applies)

Education and Qualifications	Essential	Desirable
Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).	X	
Degree or equivalent academic qualifications.	X	
Evidence of further/higher study.	X	
National Professional Qualification (NPQ) for Senior Leadership (NPQSL).		X
Experience	Essential	Desirable
Raising student achievement.	X	
Excellent teaching at secondary level.	X	
A minimum of two years of middle/senior leadership experience which includes: - Successful leadership at Head of Department, Head of Year, Associate Senior Leader, Assistant Head Teacher (or other significant role, i.e. TLR). - Line management of staff. - A strong track record of success in the areas that you are applying to lead, evidenced by key performance indicators.	X	
Inspiring staff and students and establishing successful relationships.	X	
The ability and experience to develop a vision and put this into practice.	X	
Leading a range of initiatives and projects at a whole-school level.	X	
Establishing and maintaining high standards and expectations.	X	
Appropriate professional development.	X	
Good knowledge and use of a range of data to support the Senior Leadership Team in driving improvement.	X	
Knowledge and Skills	Essential	Desirable
Good skills in staff management and ability to undertake the support and supervision of staff.	X	
Ability to mentor and coach staff in order to develop professional practice.	X	
Knowledge and understanding of current educational issues.	X	
Understand issues that may form barriers to learning and be able to initiate appropriate action to overcome underachievement.	X	

Excellent ICT skills and knowledge of how the use of new technologies can enhance learning and the monitoring of student performance.	X	
Good organisational ability and time management skills.	X	
Ability to manage students firmly, fairly and effectively and to develop strong relationships.	X	
Excellent written and oral communication skills and the ability to communicate across a wide range of audiences.	X	
A willingness to go the 'extra distance'; being committed to give time and support when and how needed to improve the life chances of students.	X	
Ability to work with the Senior Leadership Team in implementing strategies for raising standards and achieving excellence for students, in particular disadvantaged students.	X	
Use appropriate models and principles of effective learning and assessment for learning.	X	
Ensure high standards of behaviour and attendance.	X	
Use performance data effectively to ascertain areas for improvement.	X	
Ability to work with the Senior Leadership Team in implementing strategies for developing effective teachers to ensure the entitlement of all students to effective teaching and learning.	X	
Think strategically by building, communicating and implementing a shared vision of excellence, equity and high standards for every student.	X	
Communicate and model vision and values both within and beyond the academy.	X	
Set and achieve ambitious, challenging goals and targets.	X	
Understand and practice educational inclusion so that all have the opportunity to be the best they can be.	X	
Develop positive interpersonal relationships.	X	
Promote individual and team development and sustain a learning community that impacts on academy improvement.	X	
Share leadership and accountability for goals and standards.	X	
Manage change, conflict and empower individuals and teams.	X	
Collaborate and network effectively with others within and beyond the academy.	X	
Give and receive effective feedback and act to improve personal performance.	X	

Management and Leadership	Essential	Desirable
Leads by example and acts as a role model for professional behaviour and good practice.	X	
Sets the pace for action and demonstrates commitment to achieving stretching goals.	X	
Translates broad strategies into clear objectives and practical action plans.	X	
Actively implements and encourages improvement processes.	X	
A person who is committed to an ethos of high standards, personal fulfilment and academic success.	X	
Teamwork	Essential	Desirable
Recognises the contribution and achievement of colleagues.	X	
Keeps colleagues, stakeholders and/or customers informed of progress.	X	
Treats others fairly, openly and consistently.	X	
Expresses disagreement or challenges views calmly, constructively and tactfully.	X	
Supports and co-operates with colleagues.	X	

Personal Attributes	Essential	Desirable
Maintains confidentiality and discretion.	X	
Able to make connection between their work and the benefits to students.	X	
Good written and verbal communication skills.	X	
Ability to prioritise and manage workload while maintaining a flexible response to urgent requests.	X	
Good interpersonal skills and ability to work with staff and stakeholders at all levels.	X	
Organised and good attention to detail.	X	
High expectations of self.	X	
Ability and willingness to travel to locations within the cluster, attend meetings off-site with agencies, etc.	X	

Section 7 – The Appointment Process

These notes are intended to guide you when making an application.

The Application Form

The application form is accessible via the 'Apply' link on the job advertisement. Please complete the application form neatly, fully, and accurately, including exact dates. You are requested to submit a concise application. **CVs are not accepted.**

Education and Training

State your qualifications and any training you have undertaken relevant to the post.

Present Appointment

Make it clear what your present post is, which establishment you work in and who your employer is.

Previous Appointment

When completing this section, it is important that you offer a continuous record, or an explanation of any gaps to allow full account to be taken of your experience, for example, child raising, voluntary work.

Referees

Suitable referees are people who have direct, recent experience of your work and who are in responsible positions. Reference will be taken if the candidate is successfully short-listed for interview. We may need to contact them at short notice so please be specific with regard to contact addresses including e-mail and telephone numbers.

The Supporting Statement

The supporting statement is regarded as a very important part of your application. You should make statements that demonstrate how your qualifications and experience match the post.

Arrangements for Interview

Shortlisted applicants will be contacted as soon as possible after the closing date. Referees are contacted prior to the interview stage for teaching and support staff posts. We would ask that all shortlisted applicants read the safeguarding information on the school website/s prior to attending the interview.

The Interview

Candidates will be invited to interview at the school during which time they will have the opportunity to meet staff and students and see the school at work.

Feedback

Feedback is offered to those candidates who are shortlisted, interviewed, and not recommended for appointment. It is hoped that this information will help you with future applications.

Section 8 – Visitors/Contacts for Barnsley Academy



Barnsley Academy
Farm Road
Kendray
Barnsley
South Yorkshire
S70 3DL

Website: www.barnsley-academy.org
Email: enquiries@barnsley-academy.org
Telephone: 01226 284606

Barnsley Academy is an 11-16 secondary and is Ofsted rated 'Good'. As part of United Learning our aim is to bring out 'the Best in Everyone' and we continuously strive to ensure that students and staff have every opportunity to succeed, with their potential developed to the utmost.