



The Rivers  
C.of E. Academy Trust

Deputy Headteacher  
Recruitment Pack

# Unity Academy

Primary-phase  
Alternative Provision

'An extraordinary education for every pupil'





# Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the role of Deputy Headteacher at Unity Academy, our purpose-built alternative provision (AP) in Kidderminster.

At The Rivers C. of E. Academy Trust, our mission is clear: to create extraordinary futures by empowering extraordinary people to provide an extraordinary education for every pupil. We are proud of our nurturing ethos, our high expectations, and our focus on quality-first teaching and inclusive practice.

Unity Academy, as our specialist alternative provision, is an integral part of our collaborative learning community and stands as a beacon of hope and opportunity for children and families across the Wyre Forest District and beyond.

We are seeking a visionary, compassionate, calm and resilient leader who is committed to equity of opportunity and excellent outcomes for all, especially the most vulnerable pupils. This appointment is not only about supporting the leadership of a school — it is about championing a community.

The successful candidate will play a pivotal role in shaping the culture and ethos of Unity, working closely with the Headteacher to ensure it remains a safe and aspirational environment for pupils who require a bespoke and nurturing approach to education. A key part of the role will be to support the continued growth of Unity's reputation and impact across the wider system.

If you share our vision and are ready to lead with passion and purpose, we encourage you to apply and become part of our journey.

With best wishes,

**Sally Philpotts**  
Rivers Director of Inclusion

**Gemma Willetts**  
Unity Academy Headteacher

# Job Advert

## Deputy Headteacher – Unity Academy

**Lead, Inspire, Transform:** Shape the future of inclusive education

**Salary Range:** Leadership scale: 8 to 12 (£61,534 - £67,898)

*Starting point on scale TBC and dependent upon experience*

**Contract:** Full-time, permanent contract

**Start date:** Start of the summer term 2026 or as soon as possible

Are you ready to lead within a purpose-built alternative provision at the heart of the Wyre Forest community? Do you want to make a genuine difference to the most vulnerable learners and underserved pupils?

Unity Academy, part of The Rivers C.of E. Academy Trust, is seeking an inspirational, experienced and creative deputy headteacher to drive our shared mission of delivering an **extraordinary education** for every pupil. We warmly welcome applications from leaders who are passionate about inclusive education and eager to bring new ideas and expertise.

You will be an experienced and strategic leader who can articulate our mission, vision and values and encourage and empower others to be the best that they can be for our pupils.

**The responsibilities of the role will be designed to suit the successful candidate either with a SEND and inclusion focus and/or a curriculum focus.**

We are looking for a visionary leader who:

- Believes every child has the right to an extraordinary education and deserves a second chance to succeed.
- Understands inclusion, SEND and SEMH.
- Thrives on challenge, creativity and collaboration.



## Our school

Unity Academy is a purpose-built primary-phase alternative provision (AP) serving the Wyre Forest District and surrounding areas.

As part of The Rivers C .of E. Academy Trust, Unity Academy provides specialist support for children with complex needs, including Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs.

We operate as a central hub and work closely with mainstream primary schools within the Wyre Forest area. Our collaborative outreach, training and intervention services are designed to promote inclusion and provide support and continuity for pupils who have faced permanent exclusions or who are at risk of exclusion.

Our exceptional building has eight classrooms, a large school hall, a design and technology room and various break out spaces including intervention rooms, a nurture room and an immersive space.

We also have a commercial spec kitchen, multi-use games area (MUGA) and a well-maintained forest school area with wildflower planting to improve biodiversity, bug hotels and several bat and bird boxes.

Children are at the heart of everything we do. We place great emphasis on high expectations and quality first teaching to ensure that no child gets left behind.



## What makes Unity Academy special?

Since opening our doors in September 2023, Unity Academy has been a beacon of hope for primary schools in the Wyre Forest area, offering expert knowledge, support and guidance. Our outreach model is grounded in partnership and collaboration, reflecting our commitment to inclusive education and community engagement.

Unity Academy has a nurturing ethos and a commitment to holistic development. By placing children at the heart of every decision and fostering a culture of high expectations and quality-first teaching, our staff have the privilege of working collaboratively to reignite a love of learning in disengaged and vulnerable learners.

We take pride in celebrating the successes of all the children who attend our academy, embracing everyone's unique qualities to promote a sense of achievement and positive attitude in tackling every challenge, no matter how small.

## What makes Unity Academy unique?

Unity Academy mirrors the structure of a mainstream school wherever possible. The academy maintains high expectations and values, following a curriculum that reflects mainstream education whilst tailoring lessons to meet individual needs. This approach ensures that pupils are not only engaged but also prepared to transition back to mainstream schools.

Unity Academy accepts children via a range of different pathways. Placements include short-stay behaviour courses, provision for pupils that have been Permanently Excluded and Local Authority commissioned assessment places.

During the last academic year, Unity Academy has also worked closely with the Local Authority and remains committed to a role within the local area partnership's strategy (or Local Offer), admitting pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) who require more intensive medium-term support before transitioning back into a mainstream setting.

**Unity Academy is more than just a school: it is a lifeline for children in need, offering them a chance to succeed and thrive in mainstream education.**



## Our trust

The Rivers C.of E. Academy Trust, founded in 2014, is a primary-specialist trust with a strong track record of improving schools and a collaborative yet singular purpose of providing an **extraordinary education** for every pupil.



**16 Schools**



**5,500 pupils**



**850 Staff**



Our community of sixteen schools has over 5,500 pupils and more than 850 staff. We are one of the largest primary multi-academy trusts in the West Midlands with a geographical reach across Worcestershire, Sandwell, and Dudley.

We pride ourselves on being front-line focused and our team of **extraordinary people** work passionately on our shared mission. Our ambition for each school remains a priority, with 100% of our schools rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted, several of which have improved from weaker predecessor judgements.

Education provision across our family of schools is closely matched to the specific needs of our learners, particularly the most vulnerable and their families. We have high hopes for every child, whatever their background, need or prior attainment, and we empower our pupils to see their limitless potential so they can contribute positively to society and to their **extraordinary futures**.

# Mission

Our mission embraces the character, purpose and future direction of our trust. It defines what we do and why we do it:

**Extraordinary Education**  
**Extraordinary People**  
**Extraordinary Futures**

# Vision

Through an **extraordinary** education, we empower pupils to be life-long learners and see their limitless potential. Respectful relationships and an unwavering focus on discovering talents and interests enable pupils to flourish and be **extraordinary** people. Together, we spark aspiration and drive achievement, so that pupils contribute positively to society and to their **extraordinary** futures in an ever-changing world.

# Ethos and Values

We are a family of schools with a Christian ethos. We have church of England and community schools, welcoming families from all faiths and no faith, but together we are guided by our mission, vision and values. Whilst each school's unique character and local community are celebrated, we are united through our shared mission, vision and our **STARS** values. These are the characteristics and behaviours that we ALL share.



# 2030 Strategy

Whilst acknowledging and celebrating our many successes, we are not complacent and continue to strive for excellence in everything we do. Our 2030 strategy sets out our three key themes, and the three 'anchors' within each theme, which outline our areas of focus as we move into our second decade.

## Extraordinary Education

- Excellent teaching and provision
- High-quality support for vulnerable pupils
- Exceptional enrichment

## Extraordinary People

- Empowered and valued employees
- Clear professional learning pathways
- High-quality collaboration and networks

## Extraordinary Futures

- Purposeful environments
- Digital innovation and efficiency
- Thriving growth and partnerships

# Extraordinary People

The Rivers C.of E. Academy Trust is a mission-driven connected learning community committed to transforming lives by providing an **extraordinary education** for every pupil.

We believe that **extraordinary people** create **extraordinary futures**. Together, through shared values and a commitment to excellence, we empower each other to grow, achieve, and make a lasting impact for our pupils.

Our people are the heart of our success. We have built a strong, supportive community where collaboration, growth and best practice thrive. We invest in every team member through coaching, mentorship, collaboration and a wealth of learning opportunities – within the trust and beyond.

## Staff Benefits: Our Commitment to You



In 2024, to mark our 10th anniversary, we launched Rivers' **“10 for 10”** initiative by introducing 10 brand-new staff benefits to thank our **extraordinary people**.

These benefits have been created to support staff wellbeing, growth, and work-life balance.

Click here to [Find out more about our staff benefits](#)

# Job Description

## Deputy Headteacher – Unity Academy

<b>Salary range:</b>	Leadership scale: 8 to 12 (£61,534 - £67,898)
<b>Contract:</b>	Full time, permanent
<b>Line of responsibility:</b>	Responsible to the Headteacher
<b>Start Date:</b>	Start of the summer term or as soon as possible

You will be an experienced and strategic leader who can articulate our mission, vision and values and encourage and empower others to be the best that they can be for our pupils.

**The role will be designed to suit the successful candidate either with a SEND and inclusion focus and/or a curriculum focus.**

### Key purpose:

#### Extraordinary education:

Identify and address any barriers to ensure that all pupils have access to high-quality education and support.

#### Extraordinary people:

Create a supportive and inclusive environment that fosters a trust-wide culture of respect and supports Unity to thrive, as well as other pupils and schools in the local system. Empower others to be the best that they can be.

#### Extraordinary futures:

Maintain a strong and resolute focus on the frontline to ensure that pupils, families and staff receive the very best expertise and resources to do extraordinary things with their futures.

In line with strategic priorities, support the future growth and direction of Unity by maintaining and developing partnerships with key community stakeholders and external partners.

### Key accountabilities:

#### Strategic thinking and outcomes:

In line with the trust's mission and vision, ensure that Unity achieves strong outcomes for underserved pupils and in Ofsted inspections.

#### Consistency and collaboration:

Lead, develop, oversee and quality assure robust strategies and approaches for SEMH, education, SEND, safeguarding and inclusion.

#### Outward facing:

Work in partnership with communities, external agencies, partners and local authorities to promote community cohesion, developing links and collaborative networks to support pupils with SEMH.

**Coaching and staff development:** Provide strategic leadership, champion best practice and provide expert professional advice, support and guidance to leaders, staff and families.

## Key responsibilities:

### Values, Vision and Leadership

- Support the Headteacher in ensuring the vision for the academy and trust is clearly articulated, shared, understood and acted upon effectively by all.
- Motivate and work with others to help create a shared culture and positive climate across the academy.
- Promote creativity, innovation and the effective use of appropriate new technologies to support excellence.
- Contribute to strategic planning so that it reflects the diversity, values and experience of the academy and its community
- Lead own areas of responsibility with clarity, purpose and ambition for all pupils and staff.

### Securing Accountability

- Support the Headteacher in ensuring staff accountabilities are clearly defined and subject to regular review and evaluation.
- Lead and support the effective use of assessment, recording and reporting systems to track progress and raise attainment.
- Ensure that all pupils are supported to make strong progress in their learning through the universal offer and through targeted support.
- Use technology and data effectively to inform decision-making and contribute to school improvement.
- Regularly review own practice and work with the Headteacher and Director of Inclusion to meet objectives.

### Safeguarding

- Take a leading role (Deputy DSL) in safeguarding and child protection across the academy, ensuring statutory requirements are met and a strong culture of vigilance is maintained.
- Advise and support staff on safeguarding and child welfare concerns, promoting professional curiosity and timely action.
- Lead and participate in strategy discussions, case conferences and multi-agency meetings, ensuring effective communication with safeguarding partners and external agencies.
- Contribute to the assessment and ongoing monitoring of pupils so that safeguarding concerns are identified early and addressed appropriately.
- Maintain up-to-date safeguarding training, including Prevent, in line with statutory guidance and support staff to understand and fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Promote safeguarding as a key priority across all aspects of academy life, including recruitment, curriculum, pastoral care and staff development.

## Key responsibilities:

### Leadership

- Support the overall leadership of provision, either with a SEND and inclusion focus (SENCO) and/or with a curriculum focus.
- Champion a culture of high expectations and high standards, alongside challenge and support, so that all pupils are engaged in their learning, experience success and are empowered to achieve.
- Lead on the development of adaptive teaching and learning strategies that enable all pupils, including those with SEND, to flourish and make strong progress.
- Support the development of strategies that improve pupil attendance, engagement and readiness to learn, particularly for vulnerable pupils and those with SEMH needs.
- Work closely with the Headteacher and trust education team to support the implementation of research-informed practice to support the unique SEMH context of the academy.
- Ensure the curriculum remains appropriate, meets the needs of SEMH pupils and aligns with the academy's improvement priorities.
- Support the development of curriculum enrichment opportunities, including therapeutic and vocational activities.
- Contribute to the oversight of effective assessment systems to track pupil progress accurately and inform next steps.
- Promote restorative practices to enhance pupil motivation, engagement and behaviour
- Promote high expectations for behaviour, engagement and relationships, ensuring that pupils are supported and challenged to succeed.
- Use data and benchmarks to help evaluate pupil progress and wider school performance.
- Ensure learning remains central to day-to-day leadership, strategic priorities and the effective use of resources.
- Encourage continuous professional development and the sharing of best practice.
- Support the use of new technologies to enhance and extend learning opportunities.
- Contribute to the development and implementation of the school improvement plan and self-evaluation processes linked to teaching and learning.
- Build strong trusting partnerships with parents/carers, external agencies and the wider community to support pupils' learning, wellbeing and outcomes.
- Help maintain strong working relationships with local authorities and other partners, particularly where this supports inclusion, pupil placement, outreach or commissioned provision.

## Additional Responsibilities

- To carry out any such duties as may be reasonably required by the Headteacher.
- To undertake any further training as required.
- To be aware of and observe all policies, procedures, working practices and regulations. In particular:
  - a. Employees must comply with the provisions of 'The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974' and must take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions whilst at work. Employees are also required to cooperate with their employer to enable them to perform or comply with any statutory provisions. The trust's efforts to promote a safe and healthy working environment can only succeed with the full co-operation of its employees.
  - b. To understand, comply with and promote the trust's safeguarding policy and procedures. It is the responsibility of all employees to make the working environment safe and secure for all.
  - c. It is the responsibility of all staff to comply with the trust's equal opportunities policy. The key responsibilities for staff under this policy are set out in the trust's code of conduct. The duties described in this job description must be carried out in a manner which promotes equality of opportunity, dignity and due respect for all employees and service users.
  - d. To maintain the confidentiality about pupils, clients, staff and other trust business. The work is of a confidential nature and information gained must not be communicated to other persons except in the recognised course of duty. The post holder must meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act at all times.
  - e. To report to line manager, or other appropriate person, in the event of awareness of bad practice.
  - f. Employees must adhere to the code of conduct and comply with all reasonable management requests. This job description is intended to provide a broad outline of the accountabilities and responsibilities only. The post holder will need to be flexible in developing the role in conjunction with the line manager. The post holder may be asked to carry out any other delegated duty or task that is in line with their post.

The trust reserves the right to alter the content of this job description, after consultation, to reflect changes to the job or services provided, without altering the general character or level of responsibility.

*The Rivers C. of E. Academy trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Successful candidates will be subject to an enhanced DBS check, barred list check, online searches and a medical questionnaire.*

# Person Specification

## Unity Academy – Deputy Headteacher

### Education and qualifications

Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Qualified Teacher Status</li><li>• Degree qualification or equivalent</li><li>• Professional development training in preparation for a leadership role (e.g. NPQ)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Higher degree or equivalent</li><li>• Experience of working in a multi-academy trust or equivalent family of schools</li><li>• Qualified SENCO (NASENCO or NPQ-SENCO)</li></ul>

### Experience

Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At least four years' post qualified teaching experience across a range of year groups</li><li>• Proven track record of leading whole school improvement as SLT member and/or subject leader</li><li>• Involvement in school self-evaluation and development planning</li><li>• Line management experience</li><li>• Experience of contributing to and leading staff development</li><li>• Experience of conducting staff induction, mentoring and performance management</li><li>• Leadership of significant areas of the curriculum</li><li>• Ability to set high and clear expectations, to hold others accountable for performance and the contributions they make to the school community</li><li>• Experience of curriculum monitoring, review and development either in a subject area of learning area</li><li>• Experience of planning for change, development and improvement</li><li>• Experience of curriculum design and timetabling</li><li>• Evidence of good people management skills, including the ability to support, challenge and tackle underperformance</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Experience of working in more than one school within a leadership capacity</li><li>• Experience in professional coaching and mentoring</li><li>• Knowledge of the role of governors</li><li>• Experience working as a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)</li></ul>

# Person Specification - continued

## Skills, knowledge and abilities

Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expert understanding of innovative pedagogy</li><li>• Knowledge and understanding of statutory assessment arrangements at KS1 and KS2</li><li>• Excellent knowledge of monitoring and school self-evaluation as a tool for improvement</li><li>• Secure knowledge and understanding of all curriculum requirements, new accountability frameworks and the national agenda in relation to the curriculum and assessment.</li><li>• Knowledge and understanding of effective strategies to manage the behaviour of pupils</li><li>• Excellent knowledge of SEND and inclusion</li><li>• Excellent understanding of safeguarding especially the safety and welfare of vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In-depth knowledge of the SEND Code of Practice and statutory SEND frameworks</li></ul>



# How to Apply

Application forms can be accessed via the link below:

<https://www.riverscofe.co.uk/work-for-us-1/vacancies>

Your covering letter should demonstrate how your career to date has prepared you for this post and be no longer than two sides of A4.

Please download a copy and email your completed application form to [sjgreen@riverscofe.co.uk](mailto:sjgreen@riverscofe.co.uk) by **11am Monday, 18 May 2026**. Applications received after this date/time will not be accepted.

Please do not submit a curriculum vitae as these will not be included in the shortlisting process.

Shortlisted applicants will be contacted by the end of the day on **Monday, 18 May 2026** with interviews being held on **Wednesday, 20 May 2026**.

Informal tours of Unity Academy are being offered by Sally Philpotts (Director of Inclusion) or Gemma Willetts (Headteacher), on **Monday, 11 May and Thursday, 14 May 2026**. If you would like to arrange a tour on one of these dates or a phone call, then please contact Unity's business manager Sarah-Jane Green at [sjgreen@riverscofe.co.uk](mailto:sjgreen@riverscofe.co.uk) to register your interest and confirm a booking. If these dates are not suitable, please do get in touch and we will do our best to accommodate a different date/time or arrange an informal call.

*The Rivers C of E Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children and expects everyone to share this commitment. The successful applicant will undergo a full enhanced DBS check.*

*The Rivers C.of E. Academy Trust reserves the right to withdraw the vacancy should a suitable candidate be found at any time during the recruitment process.*

To find out more about Rivers, you can visit our [trust website](#).




**The Rivers**  
C.of E. Academy Trust

**Thank you for your interest in working with The Rivers C. of E. Academy Trust.**

**We look forward to receiving your application.**


 **The Rivers C of E Academy Trust**  
School Lane  
Cutnall Green  
Droitwich  
WR9 0PH


 01299 851178

 [info@riverscofe.co.uk](mailto:info@riverscofe.co.uk)

 [www.riverscofe.co.uk](http://www.riverscofe.co.uk)

 @Rivers\_MAT

 The Rivers CofE Academy Trust

 @riverscofetrust