



Fir Vale Academy

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

Briefing Pack for Applicants

Deputy SENDCo

March 2026

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Section 1 - Post Advertisement



Fir Vale Academy
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Job title:	Deputy SENDCo
Location:	Fir Vale Academy, Owler Lane, Sheffield, S4 8GB
Starting salary:	Competitive Teacher Pay Structure, plus TLR2 £3527
Hours of work:	Full-time, 37.5 hours per week, Monday to Friday, Permanent

Fir Vale Academy is seeking to appoint a Deputy SENCO to join their established team. The academy is part of United Learning, a national group of schools and academies. Fir Vale Academy is an 11-16 secondary school located in the north of Sheffield. 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.

The successful post-holder will assist in managing the provision for pupils identified as having Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), including promoting high quality teaching, effective use of resources, and high standards of learning and achievement for all pupils. To also provide focused support to students with complex needs, ensuring no student is left behind.

The academy is part of United Learning, a national group of schools and academies. 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.

The city of Sheffield itself is a vibrant place to live and work with two universities and a range of entertainment opportunities alongside the access to the beautiful Peak District within a 20-minute commute. Quality of life is routinely ranked highly, and it is one of the greenest cities in Europe: [Welcome to Sheffield](#)

We are looking for someone who:

- Is reliable, highly motivated and self-driven
- Shares our moral purpose of ensuring that all our young people receive the best education possible in a supportive environment from people who care about them
- Someone who is resilient, dynamic, and passionate about improving the life chances of all children in our community but also displays humility and a reflective approach to improvement
- A team player with strong communication skills

We will offer you:

- Highly competitive salary
- Excellent facilities and resources
- Access to an outstanding professional development programme
- Polite, respectful and dedicated students who want to learn and fulfil their potential
- A respectful working environment
- Colleagues who are supportive, friendly and who are committed to each other's professional development
- A chance to become part of one of the largest groups of academies in the country

- Opportunities to work collaboratively with colleagues in other schools within the Yorkshire cluster and across United Learning
- Excellent employee benefits which include a highly sought-after pension scheme with high employer contributions
- Access to training through the Apprenticeship Levy
- Westfield benefits platform
- 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.

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: <https://www.firvale.com/our-school/vacancies/> and complete our online application form. Please note that CVs are not accepted.

The closing date for this post is midnight Sunday 12th April 2026. Interviews will take place soon after.

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

Fir Vale 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: Fir Vale Academy, Barnsley Academy, Sheffield Park Academy and Sheffield Springs 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 Perkbox, 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 of Fir Vale Academy



Dear Candidate,

Thank you very much for your interest in joining Fir Vale Academy. I am delighted to introduce you to our school, and I hope this application pack gives you a clear sense of our values, our community, and the exciting opportunity this role presents.

Fir Vale Academy is a diverse and dynamic 11–16 secondary school, proudly serving the North of Sheffield. We are part of the United Learning family of schools, and we work closely with our cluster partners to share best practice and drive improvement. We fully subscribe to the ethos and values of United Learning, which align closely with our own commitment to ambition, opportunity, and determination for every student.

This role – Deputy SENDCo – is a vital and strategic position within our school. With approximately 50% of our students identifying as Roma, predominantly from Slovakia, we are seeking a leader who is passionate about inclusion, cultural understanding, and educational equity. You will have the opportunity to shape provision, build strong relationships with families and communities, and make a lasting impact on the lives of our young people.

You are very welcome to contact me directly for an informal conversation prior to applying, and we would be pleased to arrange a visit so you can experience our school in action.

Thank you again for considering Fir Vale Academy as the next stage in your career. I wish you the very best of luck with your application.

Warm regards,

Danny Bullock
Principal

Section 5 – Job Description



Job Description

Post title	Deputy SENDCo
Salary	Competitive Teacher Pay Structure
Responsible to	SENDCo
Responsible for	Line Management of members of the SEND team.
Role purpose	To assist in managing the provision for pupils identified as having Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND); including promoting high quality teaching, effective use of resources, and high standards of learning and achievement for all pupils. To line manage a number of staff within the SEND team, promoting high expectations, providing support and CPD, and engaging in the performance management process. To also provide focused support to students with complex needs, ensuring no student is left behind.
Relevant qualifications	Qualified Teacher Status with subject specialism related to the learning area. Ability to teach across the full 11-16 age and ability range.

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

Role Summary

Deputise for the SENDCo and assist in managing the provision for pupils identified as having Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Key Responsibilities

Key Accountabilities:

Reporting to the SENCO, this post holder will be accountable for:

- Assisting the SENCO in leading the provision for SEN within the academy

- Direct line management of key staff members within the SEND team; providing regular supervision, promoting high expectations and holding accountability of the team. To deliver regular team meetings and briefings to the department.
- Working with the SENCO to support curriculum areas in ensuring outstanding outcomes for SEND students.
- To contribute to the CPD of all members within your Team including induction, monitoring and support of new staff.
- Developing curriculum resources to ensure that pupils identified as having SEN have the required levels of support.
- Providing guidance to colleagues on teaching pupils with SEN or a disability and advise on the graduated approach to SEN support.
- To development and implement strategies aimed at raising the achievement of SEND students.
- Actively promoting and demonstrating creativity and innovation when searching out new strategies to support our SEND students.
- Leading and monitoring appropriate intervention programmes for SEND students.
- Supporting all curriculum areas to contribute positively to raise the achievement of SEND students.
- Maintaining good quality school documentation pertaining to the Learning Support needs of all students.
- Attending SEND meetings with outside agencies and ensure documents are personalised, robust and include SMART targets aimed at raising the achievement of individual students.
- Deputising for the SENCO in liaising with and co-ordinating the contribution of external agencies such as Educational Psychology and CAMHS.
- Assisting with CPD training for teaching and learning of SEND students.
- Adhering to the C.O.P.
- Promoting and embedding whole school priorities and initiatives as appropriate within the department.
- Assisting the SENCO to evaluate, monitor and communicate department performance priorities and targets.
- Assist the SENCO to develop and embed strategies that maximise the use of technology by students and staff to support teaching and learning and boost outcomes.
- Maintain an accurate SEND register and provision map.
- Support curriculum areas in ensuring accurate record keeping and data for SEND students.
- Analyse assessment data for pupils with SEN and/or a disability and liaise with the SENCO and teaching colleagues to implement appropriate interventions.
- The teaching of literacy and numeracy for SEND students throughout the Academy.

- Line managing, professionally developing, and deploying staff in such a way that they perform at their best.
- Ensuring that all members of staff in the subject area go through the Performance Management cycle in the manner specified in the Academy policy.

Specific Responsibilities:

- To support the provision of SEN, including the allocation of support time and the writing of SEN paperwork.
- To liaise with relevant outside agencies to ensure that individual pupil SEN are met effectively and that the requirements of statements of SEN are met fully.
- Ensuring that accurate and detailed records are kept and stored of meetings and discussions with parents and outside agencies for GDPR compliance.
- Ensuring that staff are kept informed of pupils' SEN and advise on areas to develop
- Working with the SENCO and other staff to ensure that all SEN Pupil Profiles, passports and plans are used to set subject specific targets and match work well to pupils' needs.
- Using data effectively to identify pupils who are seriously underachieving and where necessary create and implement effective plans of action to support those pupils.
- To provide guidance to staff on the choice of appropriate teaching and learning methods to meet the needs of different pupils.
- To work with the SENCO to promote an inclusive curriculum.
- To liaise with and inform parents/carers about the specifics of the SEN provision for their child under the direction of the SENCO.
- To monitor the progress of students with SEN and advise the SENCO.
- To support meetings of SEN staff, communicate information to staff and co-ordinate resulting action.
- To offer advice and support to teaching staff in providing a quality first teaching approach, under the direction of the SENCO.
- To support the process of access arrangements in liaison with the SENCo.
- Maintain and be aware at all times of the SEN Register and profile sheets.
- Update pupil records as appropriate and assist the SENCO with more complex paperwork as when necessary.
- Attend meetings as directed by the SENCO.
- Be aware of and comply with policies and procedures relating to child protection, health, safety, security and confidentiality reporting all concerns to an appropriate person to ensure pupils' wellbeing.

- Contribute to the overall work/aims of the academy and appreciate and support the role of colleagues and other professionals to enable the academy to fulfil its development plans.
- Undertake training and other learning activities and attend relevant meetings as required to ensure your own continuing professional development.
- Keep provision maps for intervention tracking and impact and produce reports when necessary.
- Attend conduct meetings such as Governor Panels and permanent exclusion hearings where pupils have a special educational need or disability.

Culture:

- Contribute to the calm and effective running of the academy by supporting pupils with behavioural needs relating to their SEND.

General

- Develop excellent working relationships with colleagues internally, centrally and externally.
- Be an effective and flexible member of the team.
- Ensure any documentation produced is to a high standard and is in line with the in-house style.
- Participate in training and other learning activities as required.
- Participate in the Performance Management process.
- Provide appropriate guidance and supervision and assist in the training and development of staff as appropriate.
- To represent the academies at events as appropriate.
- To support and promote academy and United Learning's ethos, playing a part in strengthening relationships between academies and with 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 actively participate in continuous professional development and act as a positive role model across the academies and Trust.
- The above duties are not exhaustive, and the post-holder may be required to undertake tasks, roles and responsibilities as may be reasonably assigned to them by the Executive Business Manager and Human Resources.
- This job description will be kept under review and may be amended via consultation with the individual, Executive Business Manager and Human Resources as required.

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	Deputy SENDCo		
Salary	Competitive Teacher Pay Structure		
Education and Qualifications	Essential	Desirable	
Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).	X		
Degree or equivalent academic qualifications.	X		
Evidence of further/higher study.	X		
SEND Qualifications	X		
Experience	Essential	Desirable	
Experience working with SEND individuals	X		
Raising student achievement.	X		
Good teaching at secondary level.	X		
Inspiring staff and students and establishing successful relationships.	X		
The ability and experience to develop a vision and put this into practice.	X		
Establishing and maintaining high standards and expectations.	X		
Appropriate professional development (particularly linked to raising achievement).	X		
Knowledge and Skills	Essential	Desirable	
Evidence of a commitment to continuing professional development.	X		
Willingness to actively participate in professional learning.	X		
Willingness to stay abreast of national developments in education and contribute to developing resources and pedagogy to reflect the changing landscape.	X		
Ability to plan and teach engaging, motivating lessons with clear objectives and student learning outcomes matched to departmental schemes of work.	X		
Ability to teach to Advanced Level, although experience of this is not essential.	X		
Ability to effectively deploy a range of teaching and learning styles to suit the nature of the course content and the ability and attainments of students.	X		
Capacity to manage the learning environment and student behaviour in a manner, which is conducive to productive learning for all students.	X		
Ability to assess student achievements against course objectives and provide outstanding feedback, which enables students to maximise their talents and abilities.	X		
Ability to keep excellent administrative and student achievement records.	X		
Ability to relate well to students, staff and parents in a professional manner.	X		
Ability to use ICT as an integral part of teaching and learning programmes.	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	
The ability to act on advice and be open to coaching.	X	
A commitment to extra-curricular activities.	X	
A continued interest in developments in teaching and learning.	X	
The ability to motivate others.	X	
The ability to establish effective working relationships with individuals, groups and organisations.	X	
The ability to remain calm and diffuse situations.	X	
The demonstration of a concern for excellence in one's professional work and the achievement of students.	X	
A commitment to support the school's aims, vision and ethos.	X	
Adaptability and resilience, with the ability to cope with periods of work pressure with good humour and a sense of proportion.	X	
Energy and commitment to professional responsibilities and to the betterment of all students.	X	
A willingness to contribute to the wider life of the school.	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 Fir Vale Academy



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Fir Vale Academy
Owler Lane
S4 8GB

Website: <https://www.firvale.com>

Email: enquiries@firvale.com

Telephone: 0114 2439391

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