



United Learning
The best in everyone™

Briefing Pack for Applicants

Director of Roma

October 2025

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Section 1 - Post Advertisement



Job title:	Director of Roma
Location:	Fir Vale Academy
Starting salary:	Starting salary from £55,630 FTE (subject to pro rata adjustments), dependent on experience – Actual Salary £48,002.27
Contract:	Permanent, full-time, 37.5 hours per week, term time only (39 working weeks per year).
Start date:	As soon as possible

Fir Vale Academy is a vibrant 11–16 mixed secondary school located in the north of Sheffield. We are proud to serve a richly diverse community, with approximately 50% of our student population identifying as Roma, predominantly from Slovakia. As our school continues to grow and evolve, we are seeking to appoint a dynamic, committed, and inspirational Director of Roma to lead and champion the development, inclusion, and achievement of our Roma students.

The successful candidate will be a passionate individual with strong leadership skills, cultural sensitivity, and a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing Roma communities. They will play a pivotal role in shaping strategic approaches to engagement, pastoral care, curriculum access, and community partnerships, ensuring that our Roma students thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

We will offer you:

- Highly competitive pay above national average.
- Excellent facilities and resources.
- Access to an outstanding professional development programme.
- A respectful working environment.
- Supportive, friendly colleagues who are committed to each other's professional development.
- A chance to become part of United Learning, one of the largest groups of academies in the country.
- Opportunities to work collaboratively with colleagues in each academy across the Cluster and 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.
- Free on-site parking.
- Access to an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).
- We encourage open and regular conversations about work-life balance.

Please see the job description and person specification for further detail.

To apply, please click the 'Apply online' button at the top of the advert on our website using the following link to our vacancies page: [Fir Vale Vacancies](#) and complete our online application form. Alternatively, please email hr@unitedlearningyorks.org.uk to request a Word version of the application form. Please note that CVs are not accepted.

The closing date for this post is midnight on Sunday 02 November 2025. Interviews will take place soon after.

If you have any queries regarding this role, please email 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: Barnsley Academy, Fir Vale 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 Westfields, 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 – Director of Roma – 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	Director of Roma
Salary	Band 5
Responsible to	Vice Principal
Responsible for	Roma Students, Community and Outcomes
Role purpose	The Director of Roma plays a key role in supporting a significant cohort within our school community, break down barriers, addressing patterns of poor behavior, attendance, and punctuality and engagement with learning. By implementing tailored interventions, they help students re-engage with education, leading to improved attendance, academic outcomes, and future opportunities.

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

- To support the Senior Leadership Team and the Pastoral Team in shaping and managing the student experience of our Roma community in our Academy.
- To lead the strategic plan and implementation of community engagement with parents, carers and community members in our local area.
- To lead and coordinate support for students who are difficult to reach and disengaged from education, ensuring specific targeted interventions are implemented to re-engage.
- To establish productive working relationships with students and the community, acting as a trusted member of staff and role model.
- To build strong, collaborative relationships with parents and carers, sharing information to help students make meaningful progress.
- Work closely with the wider Pastoral team to engage students across year groups and break the cycle of repeat suspensions or significant behaviours.
- Take the lead in improving attendance for a specific group of students, ensuring they are actively engaged in the academy and all it has to offer.
- To celebrate the brilliant progress, work and achievements of your cohort through internal and external events and promotions.
- Support the wider safeguarding team by ensuring strong links in your remit and the safeguarding time.

General

- To develop excellent working relationships with colleagues internally, centrally and externally.
- To uphold the Academy policies and procedures at all times.
- To ensure any documentation produced is to a high standard and is in line with the in-house style.
- Be aware and comply with all policies and procedures.
- Participate in training and other learning activities as required.
- Participate in the Academy's Performance Management process.
- 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 ethos at all times.
- 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	Director of Roma
Salary	Band 5

Education and Qualifications	Essential	Desirable
Strong Literacy and numeracy – GCSE Maths and English (grade C or above) or equivalent.		X
Relevant Degree or Qualification – A degree in education, psychology, social work, or a related field would be beneficial. Equivalent experience may also be considered.		X
Pastoral or Behaviour Support Training – Experience or qualifications related to behaviour management, student engagement, and mentoring.	X	
Experience	Essential	Desirable
Experience of working with vulnerable or disengaged students.	X	
Relevant experience working in an educational or pastoral setting.	X	
Knowledge of safeguarding procedures and experience in a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) role with a willingness to undertake further training and qualifications.	X	
Understanding of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and how to support students with additional needs.		X
Significant experience of liaising with external agencies to support student welfare.		X
Knowledge and Skills	Essential	Desirable
Able to speak, write and interpret Roma Slovak	X	
Ability to plan and implement targeted interventions for students struggling with engagement.	X	
Strong interpersonal and communication skills to build relationships with students, parents/carers, and staff	X	
Excellent IT skills, including strengths in Microsoft Excel		X
Flexible and able to accept multitasking.	X	
Ability to maintain efficient record keeping systems	X	
Ability to take personal responsibility for organising day to day targets	X	

Knowledge of strategies for improving attendance and reducing suspensions.	X	
Ability to assess students' learning needs and support staff in addressing them	X	
Strong organizational skills to manage multiple responsibilities effectively	X	
Personal Attributes	Essential	Desirable
Commitment to an ethos of high standards, personal fulfilment and academic success.	X	
Commitment to teamwork.	X	
Ability to maintain complete confidentiality and discretion at all times, combined with a calm personality and sound judgement.	X	
Ability to demonstrate commitment to equal opportunities	X	
A commitment to safeguarding & promoting the welfare of children and young people.	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



Fir Vale Academy
Owler Lane
S4 8BG

Website: <https://www.firvale.com>
Email: enquiries@firvale.com
Telephone: 0114 2439391

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.