



Sapientia

EDUCATION TRUST

SAPIENTIA EDUCATION TRUST

Wymondham College

Golf Links Road, Morley

Norfolk, NR18 9SZ

Candidate Recruitment Pack

DIRECTOR OF SECONDARY STANDARDS

Closing Date | Tuesday 17th March 2026

Interviews | Monday 23rd March 2026

Start | September 2026

A Letter from the CEO and Director of Education/Deputy CEO

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the position of Director of Secondary Standards. This is a tremendous opportunity for the successful candidate to join our executive team, in a growing and highly regarded MAT. This post is available due to the promotion of the current postholder to a CEO post elsewhere in the region.

Sapientia was established in 2016 by Wymondham College and has grown to 22 schools. Our Trust currently consists of 9 secondary and 13 primary phase schools educating close to 9000 pupils. We have a deliberately diverse range of schools – large and small – urban, rural and urban fringe and also run the largest state boarding school nationally.

Our track record is impressive, but with further to go. Our Primary outcomes – data and Ofsted – have significantly improved with KS2 outcomes now above national levels. We have several high performing secondary schools and others who joined us more recently in challenging circumstances. At Sixth form we are amongst the highest performing MATs nationally in progress terms (2nd nationally in 2024/25) and our GCSE data has seen us consistently above national levels, in attainment and progress terms. Attendance levels are typically above national levels. We are focussed on improving outcomes further in all schools, for all pupils – including for our most vulnerable and disadvantaged.

We are open to the type of background the successful candidate comes from. However, it is highly likely they will have been a successful secondary school headteacher, ideally with extensive MAT involvement/leadership. They will be able to demonstrate a thorough understanding of school improvement issues, with a track-record of impactful school leadership, with successful Ofsted outcome(s) whilst in role. They will understand the complexities of improving standards and have a strong commitment to staff development. They will have excellent current knowledge of the educational landscape, including the Ofsted framework and White Paper proposals. Many of our schools are currently 'strong' and clear ideas of how to move 'strong' schools and staff to become 'exceptional' is crucial, including how to work with staff and Head teachers to ensure day to day standards are consistently strong. Conversely several schools are in the earlier stages of school improvement, so understanding ways to improve schools in challenging contexts is also crucial. Whilst based on common values, we don't naturally adopt a one size fits all approach – our school contexts and communities are often distinctive.

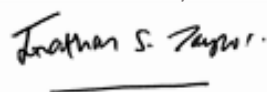
We have a strong, established central team that provides education, HR, estates, finance, governance, IT and health and safety support to our schools. Our education team are hands on and expected to spend a large proportion of their time in our schools and the successful candidate will form part of our Trust central executive team. We will offer opportunities to be involved in strategic decisions about the future of the Trust, extensive networking opportunities, involvement with a range of partners and will invest in your own professional development. This is an ideal stepping-stone for the right candidate to move on to wider MAT leadership in due course and would be an ideal foundation for a future CEO role in a large MAT. You will report directly to Emma Davies, our Deputy CEO/Director of Education.

Our base is 20 minutes outside Norwich and our schools all within a 55-minute drive. The area is fantastic to live in, and Norwich is a vibrant city, London is 90 minutes by train and Cambridge is within an hour. The beautiful Norfolk and Suffolk coasts are also within an hour's drive and roads are uncongested, people friendly and we get the least rain of anywhere in the country! Schools in the area are genuinely of high quality and house prices affordable. Several of our central education team relocated to the area and we are more than happy to discuss the benefits of doing so, with you.

We are happy to discuss the role with you informally, please contact Briony Ridgwell, Executive Assistant, on 01953 609012 if this would be helpful.

We are a strongly values based organisation and the right person fit is important for us. We hope this role excites you and we look forward to welcoming your application.

Best wishes,

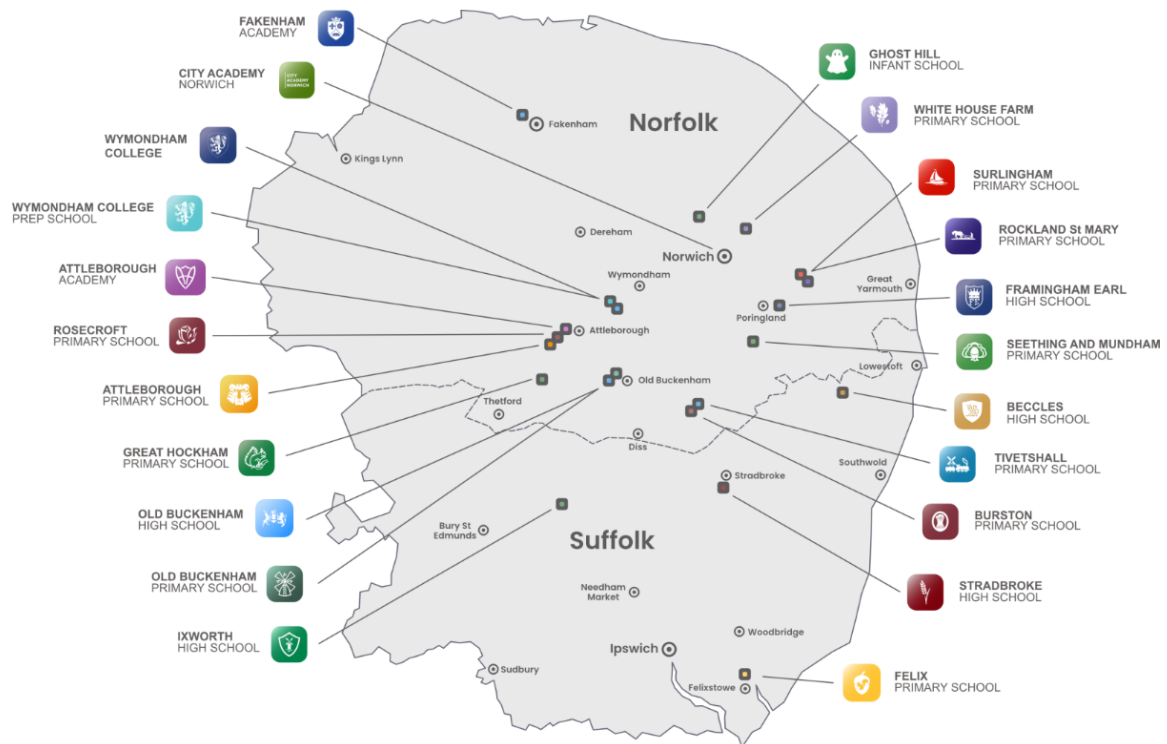


Jonathan Taylor, **CEO** DfE RISE Advisor

Emma Davies **Director of Education/Deputy CEO**



Sapientia Education Trust



Sapientia Education Trust was established by Wymondham College in 2016 with the purpose of bringing like-minded schools together to work in partnership to deliver the highest standards of education to young people in Norfolk and Suffolk. The term 'Sapientia' comes from the motto of Wymondham College and means wisdom. Our vision is to provide a world class education locally, enabling every pupil to flourish.

We are committed to delivering high academic standards in our schools, combined with a view of education that is child-centred and holistic.

Our schools have a strong commitment to personal development and extra-curricular activities are strongly promoted.

Our work is cross phase and involves a strong commitment to staff development and ongoing professional learning for all staff in our schools. We believe that collaboration and partnership work helps raise standards and we work with a range of schools within and beyond the Trust. This includes engaging with other MATs, RISE work and Ofsted inspection activity.

The Trust provides a range of services to support our schools. This includes established HR, Finance, IT, Health and Safety and Estate teams. In addition,

we have a central education team providing specialist support to help raise standards further.

Our philosophy is to work to support school leaders, so that more of their time can be spent on the core business of delivering a world class education, locally.

Our Schools

Attleborough High School
Attleborough Primary School
Beccles High School
Fakenham High School
Framingham Earl High School
Ghost Hill Infant and Nursery School
Great Hockham Nursery & Primary School
Ixworth High School
Old Buckenham High School

Old Buckenham Primary School
Rockland St Mary Primary School
Rosecroft Burston Primary School
Seething & Mundham Primary School
Stradbroke High School
Surlingham Primary School
Tivetshall Primary School
White House Farm Primary School
Wymondham College
Wymondham College Prep School



Job Description

We are seeking to appoint a Director of Secondary Standards to join our Executive Leadership team. You will work directly to our Director of Education to ensure that our secondary schools benefit from belonging to our Trust through fostering a culture of networking, collaboration, professional learning and sharing best practice, whilst ensuring robust systems of self-review, quality assurance and school improvement planning.

Whilst the work will be varied, the common focus of our work is to provide our pupils with a world class education, locally.

You will help to inspire teams across our academies, driving school improvement and working with senior school-based staff and Head teachers to improve their schools further.

Crucially you will join our Executive team – setting the strategy for our trust work. The team consists of the CEO; Director of Education; Director of Secondary; CFO; COO; HR Director and Director of operations. This will provide a hands on opportunity to shape the future of Sapientia.



Person Specification

The personal competencies expected of all Trust support staff are:

The ability to communicate clearly and tactfully using appropriate methods, high attention to detail and an awareness of the impact of your own communication on others;

Able to maintain positive relationships with all and able to work as an effective and flexible part of a team; willing to change methods of work and routines to benefit the team;

Willingness to accept responsibility for your own actions; the ability to prioritise effectively, meet deadlines and accept challenges.

Qualifications

Qualified Teacher Status, including relevant degree	Essential
Evidence of appropriate professional development	Essential
Masters Level Qualification	Desirable
Willingness to continue professional development	Essential
Hold a full driving license	Essential
Experience as an Ofsted Inspector or a willingness to train as an Ofsted Inspector	Desirable

Knowledge and Understanding

Ability to use comparative data, benchmarking and target setting data	Essential
Ability to effectively evaluate and plan for improvement	Essential
Knowledge of effective teaching, learning and assessment methods covering secondary contexts	Essential
Understanding of effective leadership	Essential
Knowledge of new technologies and MIS systems	Desirable
Knowledge / experience of tracking progress and attainment	Essential
Knowledge and understanding of effective QA processes	Essential
Knowledge of the current Ofsted framework	Essential
Knowledge of Safeguarding procedures	Essential
Understanding of the current education landscape – including the role of the DfE, White Paper proposals, Ofsted and RISE	Essential

Experience and Personal Qualities

Highly successful Headship experience in a secondary school with outcomes that are at least 'above average' as defined by the DfE or evidence of improvement in outcomes in a School led by the applicant. Likely to have had a minimum of 4 years headship experience in the UK.	Essential
Leadership of a school that secured, at least, a strong Ofsted 'Good' or equivalent	Essential
Experience of leading collaborative school improvement networks and/or school improvement projects	Essential
Experience of coaching/mentoring and leading CPD	Essential
Experience of leading cross school collaborative CPD ideally in a MAT context	Desirable
Experience of school to school support work, audit and evaluation	Desirable
Clear evidence of leading teams to accelerate progress	Essential
Evidence of working in partnership with other stakeholders – MATs/LAs/DfE etc.	Desirable
Experience of working with different levels within a school: Senior/Middle leaders and teaching staff	Essential
Ability to manage change	Essential
Ability to develop effective relationships and teams	Essential
Strong communication skills	Essential
Excellent organisational skills	Essential
Strong interpersonal skills	Essential
Ability to prioritise, meet deadlines and work under pressure	Essential
Strategic vision for raising standards	Essential
Understanding of the benefits of working in a MAT	Essential
Ability to motivate colleagues and students	Essential
Experience of raising academic standards	Essential
Experience of monitoring classroom performance	Essential
Evidence of the impact of coaching / support for individuals	Essential
Positive and optimistic	Essential
Sense of accountability	Essential
Good sense of humour	Essential
A constant drive for improvement	Essential
A strong commitment to inclusivity	Essential

Terms and Conditions

This post is offered on a full-time, permanent basis, with an office base at Wymondham College.

Remuneration

Competitive - on the leadership spine, appropriate to the seniority of the role and the skills and experience of the post holder.

All payments are payable under the Teachers' Pension Scheme.

The Trust provides a benefits package to all staff.



Pre-employment checks

All applicants must be prepared to undergo several compliance checks to confirm their suitability to work with children and young people in line with "Keeping children safe in education".

The Trust reserves the right to withdraw offers of employment where checks or references are deemed to be unsatisfactory.

Interview process

Dates	Interview process
17 th March 2026	Closing date for application
18 th March 2026	Candidates will be shortlisted Psychometric tests will be sent for completion References will be requested
19 th March 2026	Deadline for Psychometric tests to be completed
23 rd March 2026	Assessment interview day will include: - A presentation and follow up discussion with the Director of Education and members of the education team

	- Safeguarding and inclusion discussions - A desktop exercise based around school improvement planning - A values based interview based around the results of your psychometric test results - An informal meeting a selection of Secondary Headteachers - Lunch will be provided for all candidates - Formal presentation and panel interview
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How to apply

To apply please visit our vacancies page on our website www.se-trust.org and complete the application form, along with a supporting letter of no more than 800 words, detailing how your educational vision equips you for the post and what you would bring to us.

The closing date for applications is: Tuesday 17th March 2026

Interviews will be held in March – Monday 23rd March 2026

Applications are considered on receipt; therefore, early applications are encouraged. We reserve the right to interview before the application closing date, should we receive a sufficient number of applications.



The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children; therefore all applicants must be prepared to undergo several checks to confirm their suitability to work with children and young people. The Trust welcomes applications from all sectors of the community.

In accordance with the Department of Education's "Keeping Children Safe in Education", references will be sought on all short-listed candidates before interview.

Sapientia Education Trust is an equal opportunities employer. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and expect all staff to share this commitment



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