PA Primary Advantage Federation

Executive Principal Application Pack

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Equal Opportunities Statement:

Primary Advantage and its schools strive to be diverse and inclusive communities, places where we can ALL be ourselves without prejudice or bias. We welcome applicants from all cultures and backgrounds to reflect the community we serve and we continue to positively advocate for diverse representation.

Safeguarding Statement:

Everyone in the Primary Advantage Federation and its schools who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding. School staff are particularly important in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as we are in a position to identify concerns early and to provide help for children. Our school staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children to prevent concerns escalating. We work with the Children and Families Service, the police, health services and other relevant agencies to support and promote the welfare of children and to protect them from harm. We work in line with statutory guidance for schools and colleagues: Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025).

Welcome

Dear Prospective Candidate,

On behalf of the Governing Board, I would like to extend a warm welcome and thank you for your interest in the Executive Principal position at our federation of schools. I hope this pack supports you in finding out more about Primary Advantage and starting your application. We are keen to meet you and welcome visits to our schools.

About Our Federation

Primary Advantage is a federation of seven schools and serves a multi-cultural community in the London Borough of Hackney. We have four Church of England schools and three Community schools. Our schools are exciting places to work, with high expectations which promote innovation, forward thinking and excellence. We also offer the unique opportunity to be part of a community of teachers who regularly share best practice and learn from each other.

Vision and Values

- Every teacher is a great teacher; every school is a great school. We aim to move incrementally towards excellence in all aspects of our work.
- All pupils will make good or better progress and will be properly equipped for the next stage of their schooling.
- Learning environments are of high quality where pupils feel safe and secure, known and valued and motivated to learn.
- Curriculum provision is bespoke, broadens horizons and inspires our pupils to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.
- Our learning community provides opportunities for growth for pupils, staff and families.

Key Responsibilities of the Executive Principal

The Executive Principal will play a pivotal role in:

- Providing strategic leadership across our federation of schools
- Driving improvements in educational outcomes for all pupils
- Supporting and developing staff at every level
- Building strong, effective partnerships with governors, families and the wider community

What We Are Looking For

We are seeking a candidate who can demonstrate:

- Proven, successful leadership in education
- Experience working across primary schools
- Strong engagement with a wide range of stakeholders
- A steadfast commitment to safeguarding and inclusion

Welcome

Next Steps

- We encourage you to read the recruitment pack for further details about background information about the federation, information about the application process and the job description.
- The closing date for this application is: 26th April 2026 at 23:59. Please ensure your application is submitted by this date. Interviews for shortlisted candidates will take place on Thursday 7th and Friday 8th May 2026.

Contact and Further Information

- If you have any questions or would like an informal discussion about the role or our federation, you are warmly invited to get in touch via governors@primaryadvantage.hackney.sch.uk
- More information about each school can be found on the schools' websites
- If you would like to arrange a visit, please contact Venessa Williams on 0207 254 1010 ext 6 or email enquiries to recruitment@primaryadvantage.hackney.sch.uk

Thank you once again for your interest. We look forward to receiving your application and learning more about how you can contribute to our Federation's success.

Kind regards,

John Clark
Chair of Governors
Primary Advantage Federation

Application Process

01

Welcome

Please read the application pack thoroughly

02

Application Form

Complete all details of the application form; CVs will not be accepted

03

Personal Specification

Ensure you address the criteria outlined in the person specification.

04

References

Candidates are advised that when completing the references section on the application form to ensure that:

- Your first referee is your current or most recent employer
- Your second referee must be from a senior person with appropriate authority

05

Send Application Form

Completed application forms must be received by 26th April at 23:59 and emailed to recruitment@primaryadvantage.hackney.sch.uk

If you would like to arrange a visit or you have any queries, please email and the recruitment team will book this on your behalf. For more details about the timeline, please see the recruitment timeline page.
If you are shortlisted, you will need to complete a Self-Declaration form to share any relevant information regarding convictions, including spent convictions that are not 'protected' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (with amendments in 2013 & 2020). This will be discussed and considered during the interview. Any information given will be treated in strict confidence and managed in line with relevant data protection and guidance. An online search will be conducted and we will request details in regards to your social presences online

Candidates must ensure that if they are successful at interview, that they are able to provide evidence of their Right to Work and Remain in the UK. The Federation is not able to employ any person who cannot validate their Right to Work and Remain in the UK in line with the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.
Successful candidates will be required to apply for an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check, including children's barred list information. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our children and expect all members of staff to share this commitment.
All qualifications and references will be verified.

Our Schools

We would encourage you to visit our websites to find out more about individual schools and the federation. The schools are well-positioned within Hackney with access to a range of facilities and transport links.

St John & St James is a one-form entry Church of England Primary School based in Hackney Central. The Headteacher is Grace Gladstone. Our School's motto is to "Learn together, journey together, pray together." For more information about our school, please visit our website: www.johnjames.hackney.sch.uk

Holy Trinity is a one-form entry Church of England Primary School located in Dalston. The Headteacher is Rebecca Mackenzie. Our school motto is "Every child: Empowered. Inspired. Prepared." For more information about our school, please visit our website: www.holytrinity.hackney.sch.uk

Springfield is a one-form entry Community Primary School located close to the borders of Hackney and Haringey. The Headteacher is Jack Sloan. "Learn together, grow together" is our school motto and is expressed in every aspect of our work. For more information about our school, please visit our website: www.springfield.hackney.sch.uk

St Matthias is a one-form entry Church of England School located in Stoke Newington. The Headteacher is Lucy Blewett. Our school motto is "Dream-Believe-Achieve." For more information about our school, please visit our website: www.st-matthias.hackney.sch.uk

St John the Baptist is a two-form entry Church of England Primary School located in Hoxton. The Headteacher is Toni Mason. Our School motto is "We Achieve We Believe." For more information about our school, please visit our website: www.st-john.hackney.sch.uk

Morningside is a two-form entry Community Primary School located in Hackney Central. The Co-Headteachers are Jo Stonehouse and Rachel Smith. Our School motto is "Achieving and Aspiring Together." For more information about our school, please visit our website: www.morningside.hackney.sch.uk

Gainsborough is a one-form entry Community Primary School located in Hackney Wick. The Executive Headteacher is Jenna Clark. Our School motto is "Learn Together." For more information about our school, please visit our website: www.gainsborough.hackney.sch.uk

Our Background

Our schools gain significant benefits from working collaboratively, we strongly believe that schools can achieve more by working together. We have made a commitment to a shared responsibility to the wider education community, the provision of a high quality education and the improvement of life chances for pupils in the community beyond that of our own schools.

Our journey started in 2000 when St John & St James CE Primary School opened as a Fresh Start School. Since then we have worked alongside many different schools in Hackney, across London and in many different parts of the country and have grown into a Federation of seven schools. We work collaboratively towards a shared vision and agreed commitments but our schools are individual, serving the needs of different communities in creative and innovative ways.

Our Commitments

Every teacher is a great teacher; every school is a great school. We aim to move incrementally towards excellence in all aspects of our work.

All pupils will make good or better progress and will be properly equipped for the next stage of their schooling.

Learning environments are of high quality where pupils feel **safe and secure, known and valued and motivated to learn.**

Curriculum provision is bespoke, broadens horizons and inspires our pupils to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.

Our learning community provides opportunities for growth for pupils, staff and families.

Expectation

We believe passionately in improving the life chances for all our pupils. We have the highest possible standards and will use our resources and expertise to unlock learning in all its facets for all our children. No barrier is too great; no learner is left behind. Skilled teachers use the most effective teaching methods to motivate learners and raise aspirations. Our schools are special places to work. We want to attract and retain staff at all levels that are willing to think flexibly, work with rigour and precision, and go the extra mile.

Partnership

We work in partnership, pooling our expertise and resources in order to achieve collectively what we may not be able to achieve individually.
We promote a collaborative approach whilst developing the capacity of each school to serve its own community and retain its distinct identity.
We have developed approaches which we know make the most significant impact on pupil outcomes. These are well considered systems, approaches or policies which can be implemented in a range of settings with the appropriate levels of support.

Leadership

Our leadership structure aims to make the most of our shared resources, maintain high expectations and secure high standards.
We build leadership sustainability by spotting talent and creating opportunities for all staff at all levels to receive high quality training and leadership experiences.
We recognise the importance of individuality, spontaneity and creativity in developing innovation.
We seek to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of each school by capitalising on centralised services and sharing systems and procedures.

Growth

Through the work of the Primary Advantage Learning, Development and Partnership service, we are able to offer excellent professional development for current practitioners, leaders and future recruits to the profession.
Teachers have many opportunities for professional growth through our development and masters programmes.
Staff, pupils and families have opportunities for growth though links with our partners, schools and a wide range of enrichment activities.

PRIMARY ADVANTAGE
SCHOOLS ACHIEVING MORE TOGETHER

Learning, Development and Partnerships

PRIMARY ADVANTAGE FEDERATION

For many years Primary Advantage has delivered high quality Initial Teacher Training and Professional Development to new and experienced teachers, along with curriculum and leadership support, to schools across Hackney, London and around the country. Our PA Maths Programme, developed by our own teachers, has been used by hundreds of schools across the country.

The strength of Primary Advantage lies in the support and expertise shared by all seven schools. We work closely in partnership with Hackney Education, UCL Institute of Education our regional Maths Hub, English hub, STEM Learning, our regional Teaching Schools Hub and many others.

We work collaboratively to support each other to drive up standards in schools and improve the life chances of children both within our group of schools and beyond.

Previously accredited by the DfE as a group of National Teaching Schools, at PA we are committed to developing your skills and knowledge as a teacher or leader and providing opportunities for you to grow.

As a teacher with PA you will have access to:

- High-quality training and professional development for new and experienced staff
- Rich collaboration and shared learning events with your peers through our Teacher Learning Communities (TLCs), subject leader networks and Federation learning festivals
- Career progression opportunities through a range of leadership programmes

Reading & SEND INSET - January 2026

Our schools are full of wonderful children from a diverse range of backgrounds and with a wide range of abilities, experiences and needs. Every child is valued and we want every child to succeed and reach their potential. In this, our tenth, annual festival of education, our teachers and teaching assistants were given the opportunity to deepen our practice, share expertise across the federation, and renew our collective commitment to giving every child the transformative power of reading. Reading is also one of the most powerful tools for equity and opportunity. By strengthening early language, embedding high-quality phonics through Read Write Inc (RWI) and Success For All (SFA), and developing rich reading cultures informed by the work of Christopher Such, we are opening the door to opportunity for every pupil.

Job Description

Job Title: Executive Principal

Salary: L37-L43

Location: Primary Advantage Federation (7 Primary Schools)

Responsible To: The Governing Board of the Primary Advantage Federation; constituted in accordance with the governance framework of the London Diocesan Board for Schools (LDBS)

Accountable To: The Governing Board of the Federation; the relevant Local Authority; and, in respect to the Church of England schools within the Federation, the London Diocesan Board for Schools

Responsible For: The strategic leadership and performance of all schools within the federation and all staff employed by the federation

Context of the Role

Primary Advantage Federation comprises seven primary schools, four of which are Church of England schools within the Diocese of London and three of which are community schools. The federation operates under a single governing board rooted in the principles and governance structures of the London Diocesan Board for Schools (LDBS)

The Executive Principal is appointed to the federation centrally and provides strategic leadership across all seven schools, including pupils in pre-school provision, Children Centres and Additional Resourced Provision (ARP). The postholder will ensure that each school retains its distinct character and statutory status while contribution to a coherent federation-wide vision, culture and strategy that secures continuous improvement and high standards for all pupils.

The Executive Principal will operation at system level, delegating operational leadership to Headteachers or other senior leaders appropriate.

Job Purpose

To provide strategic and executive leadership for Primary Advantage Federation, securing sustained educational excellence, strong Christian distinctiveness in the Church schools, robust governance, financial sustainability and high standards of safeguarding and compliance across all seven schools.

The Executive Principal will ensure that every child, in every school within the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document and the National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers.

Key Responsibilities

1. Strategic Leadership of the Federation
    - Develop and implement a clear, ambitious and sustainable federation-wide strategic aligned with the federation's vision and values.
    - Articulate and communicate a compelling shared vision that inspires pupils, staff governors and the wider community.
    - Ensure alignment and consistency of core policies, systems and standards across all schools.
    - Establish and lead an effective Federation Executive Team.
    - Monitor variation in performance across schools and deploy timely intervention where required.
    - Ensure that the federation's long-term strategy secures educational excellence, financial sustainability and workforce stability.
    - Maintain an oversight and take effective action in response to any educational changes - nationally and locally

2. Educational Standards and School Improvement
   - Ensure high standards of teaching, learning and pupil achievement across all schools.
   - Ensure strong leadership for pupils with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and promote inclusive practice.
   - Lead a robust federation-wide quality assurance and self-evaluation framework.
   - Use performance data, benchmarking and evidence-informed practice to drive improvement.
   - Oversee Ofsted readiness across all schools.
   - Commission, coordinate and evaluate improvement support where required.
   - Ensure consistent high standards of behaviour, attendance and inclusion.
   - Promote curriculum coherence and excellence while respecting the statutory character of individual schools.

3. Christian Distinctiveness and Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS for Church Schools)
   - Uphold and develop the Christian foundation and vision of the Church of England schools within the federation.
   - Ensure that Church schools meet statutory requirements for Religious Education and Collective Worship.
   - Ensure effective preparation for SIAMS inspections.
   - Work closely with the London Diocesan Board for Schools to ensure compliance, leadership development and governance effectiveness in Church schools.
   - Support Foundation Governors in fulfilling their statutory responsibilities.

In leading a mixed federation, the Executive Principal will ensure that the distinct character of both Church and community schools is respected while fostering shared values of dignity, aspiration, inclusion and service across the federation.

4. Governance and Accountability
   - Be legally and contractually accountable to the Governing Board for the performance and conduct of all federation schools.
   - Provide accurate, timely and transparent reporting to governors, Local Authority, LDBS and other stakeholders.
   - Ensure statutory compliance across all schools.
   - Develop governance capacity through effective communication, strategic planning and policy implementation.
   - Ensure individual and collective accountability through robust performance management systems.

5. Safeguarding and Compliance
   - Ensure safeguarding is effective, consistent and robust across all schools.
   - Ensure all staff and volunteers are fully inducted and trained in safeguarding procedures.
   - Oversee and quality assure the work of Designated Safeguarding Leads in each school.
   - Ensure safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented consistently.
   - Maintain oversight of serious incidents and statutory reporting requirements.

6. Organisational and Financial Leadership
   - Develop and oversee a sustainable long-term financial strategy for the federation.
   - Ensure strong internal financial controls and effective risk management.
   - Identify and secure economies of scale across the federation.
   - Lead strategic workforce planning.
   - Ensure effective management and deployment of resources to secure best value.
   - Oversee estates strategy, capital projects and health and safety compliance.
   - Ensure that accommodation across the federation supports high-quality education.

7. Educational Standards and School Improvement
    - Develop a federation-wide workforce development strategy.
    - Lead succession planning and talent development across all schools.
    - Line manage Headteachers and designated senior leaders.
    - Establish clear performance expectations and address underperformance appropriately.
    - Foster a collaborative professional culture across the federation.
    - Promote staff wellbeing and support appropriate work/life balance.
    - Act as a role model for the highest professional standards.

8. Community and External Partnerships
    - Represent the federation locally, regionally and nationally.
    - Build strategic partnerships with the Local Authority, LDBS, churches and other educational institutions.
    - Strengthen relationships between the Church and community schools within the federation.
    - Promote inclusive engagement with families and the wider community.
    - Ensure learning is connected to local, national and global contexts.
    - Promote equality, diversity and inclusion and challenge all forms of prejudice and discrimination.

Professional Responsibilities

In addition to responsibilities above, the Executive Principal will:

- Lead federation self-evaluation processes.
- Oversee assessment and standards across all schools.
- Be responsible for the performance management of senior leaders and teaching staff.
- Regularly evaluate their own performance and engage in continued professional development.
- Undertake any other duties reasonably commensurate with the seniority of the role.

Christian Commitment

As the Executive Principal leads a federation that includes Church of England schools under LDBS governance, the postholder must demonstrate a clear commitment to supporting and developing the Christian ethos and distinctiveness of the Church schools within the federation, while leading inclusively across Church and community contexts.

Summary of the Role

The Executive Principal is the strategic leader of Primary Advantage Federation, accountable for ensuring:

- Sustained high educational standards across all seven schools
- Strong Christian distinctiveness in the Church schools
- Respect for the statutory character of community schools
- Effective governance and regulatory compliance
- Financial sustainability and operational excellence
- A collaborative, values-driven federation culture

Primary Advantage Personal Specification

Qualifications & Professional Status	Governance, Compliance & Strategy
Essential	**Essential**
Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)	Clear understanding of statutory responsibilities in maintained schools
Substantial senior leadership experience across more than one school	Strong understanding of safeguarding legislation and practice
Evidence of sustained professional development	Experience of accountability to external bodies (Ofsted, Local Authority)
Successful experience of leading school improvement	Experience of managing risk and ensuring compliance
Desirable	**Desirable**
National Professional Qualification for Executive Leadership (NPQEL) or NPQH	Understanding of SIAMS framework
Experience of working within a Church of England context	Experience of working in mixed Church and community contexts
Leadership Experience	**Christian Distinctiveness & Ethos**
Essential	**Essential**
Proven track record of improving outcomes for pupils across a whole school or multiple schools	Demonstrable commitment to supporting and developing the Christian ethos and distinctiveness of Church of England schools
Successful leadership of senior teams	Ability to lead inclusively across a mixed federation of Church and community schools
Experience of strategic planning and implementation	Understanding of the role of Foundation Governors in Church schools
Experience of leading safeguarding effectively	**Desirable**
Experience of working successfully with governing bodies	Knowledge of SIAMS inspection requirements
Strong financial oversight experience, including budget management at scale	Experience of leading collective worship and RE strategy in a Church school
Evidence of developing staff and building leadership capacity	
Experience of preparing for and leading Ofsted inspections	**Strategic & Personal Qualities**
Desirable	**Essential**
Experience of working within diocesan governance structures	Visionary and strategic thinker
	Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion
Educational Expertise	Commitment to staff wellbeing and sustainable leadership
Essential	High levels of integrity and professional credibility
Deep understanding of high-quality teaching and learning	Resilient and emotionally intelligent
Strong knowledge of curriculum design and assessment	Strong communicator able to inspire diverse stakeholders
Data-informed approach to school improvement	Skilled at building collaborative cultures
Secure understanding of inclusion, SEND and disadvantaged pupil provision	Strong analytical and evaluative skills
Experience of improving behaviour and attendance	
Experience of developing curriculum coherence across multiple schools	
Experience of moderation and peer review systems across schools	

Primary Advantage Professional Behaviours

Category of Behaviour	Description
Managing self and personal skills	Being aware of own behaviour and how it impacts on others
	Enhancing personal skills to adapt professional practice to business needs
	Being aware of and honest about own areas of strength and development needs
	Taking responsibility for own mistakes and sharing team success
Delivering excellent service	Providing the best experience to pupils, parents and colleagues
	Building strong and trusting working relationships to improve team's delivery
	Ensuring all one's internal and external written communications demonstrate a high level of professionality (eg. spelling, punctuation, grammar and appropriate language)
Finding solutions	Seeing beyond own area of work to understand departmental or school goals
	Engaging enthusiastically in the purpose of the whole organisation
	Recognising the importance of individuality and creativity in innovating
Working flexibly	Being open to new ideas and ways of working
	Adjusting to unfamiliar situations and shifting demands/needs by thinking flexibly and giving new things a try
	Working with rigour and going the extra mile
Maximising efficiency and effectiveness	Capitalising on centralised services and systems and procedures for sharing resources and practice
	Being mindful of sustainability and reduction of physical waste
	Managing own time effectively to complete directed tasks and activities
	Allocating appropriate time and resources when directing others and setting achievable deadlines
Committing to the organisation	Developing an understanding of the education context in which we work
	Showing commitment to the federation and school's vision and values
	Positively representing the organisation by speaking highly of it inside and outside the workplace
Developing self and others	Showing commitment to own ongoing professional development
	Supporting others to feel safe, secure, known, valued and motivated to reach their full potential
	Spotting talent and creating opportunities for staff at all levels to receive high quality training and leadership experiences
Working together	Working collaboratively with others to achieve organisational goals
	Recognising and valuing the different lived experiences that people contribute to a shared project or activity
	Pooling expertise and resources to achieve collectively what may not be achievable individually
Getting results	Taking personal responsibility for getting things done
	Consistently meeting objectives and success criteria
	Moving incrementally towards excellence in all aspects of one's work

Contact Details

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% Holy Trinity Primary School
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John Clark
Chair of the Central Governing Board