



The best we can be

**Fylde Coast Academy Trust  
are appointing a**

**Headteacher at  
Unity Academy Blackpool**



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- Welcome to our Trust
- Our FCAT Community
- The Headteacher role at Unity
- Why choose FCAT?
- Our Work and Wellbeing Charter
- How to Apply



Welcome to the Fylde Coast Academy Trust (FCAT). FCAT was established in 2012 and is one team of 10 primary, secondary and all through schools, supported by our central services and school improvement teams.

I joined FCAT as Chief Executive Officer because I fundamentally believe in the transformative power of a great education. Having worked in education for 27 years—starting as a PE teacher and serving across Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, and Bradford—I have seen firsthand how strong, mission-driven schools can change the trajectory of a young person's life, keep their aspirations on track and build community resilience.

At FCAT, our core purpose is simple and uncompromising: we exist to ensure that every one of our children grows up with real choice that leads to a happy, successful, and positive future. We want our pupils to leave us proud of where they are from, confident in who they are, and fully equipped with the academic success and personal character needed to pursue university, a high-quality apprenticeship, or a meaningful alternative.

Achieving this requires ambition, sharp focus, and a willingness to do things differently when needed. We are moving into an exciting new era defined by clarity, high standards, and pace. We are focused on what matters most: accelerating academic outcomes, building unshakeable foundations, and broadening horizons so that our academies set the standard for coastal and regional education.

Equally important to what we do is how we work together. Strategy will not be successful if we do not consider our people, and implement with rigour. We are committed to building a trust culture rooted in high standards and genuine care:

- We operate as one trust: We show up for each other, share our collective talent where the need is greatest, and help without being asked.
- We lead with honesty and kindness: We tell the truth about how we are doing, care personally, and challenge directly.
- We protect work-life harmony: We strip away unnecessary bureaucracy, focus on what works, and remove friction so you can focus on making a difference in the classroom.

Whether you are joining an established academy or stepping up to help turn around a school in a challenging context, you will never work in isolation. You will be backed by a supportive, deeply collaborative trust family that values your expertise, invests in your professional fulfilment, and shares the load at every step.

If you are a values-driven professional inspired by the moral imperative of educational equity, who wants to work hard alongside great colleagues and make a profound, lasting impact on the young people of the Fylde Coast, we would love to welcome you to our team.

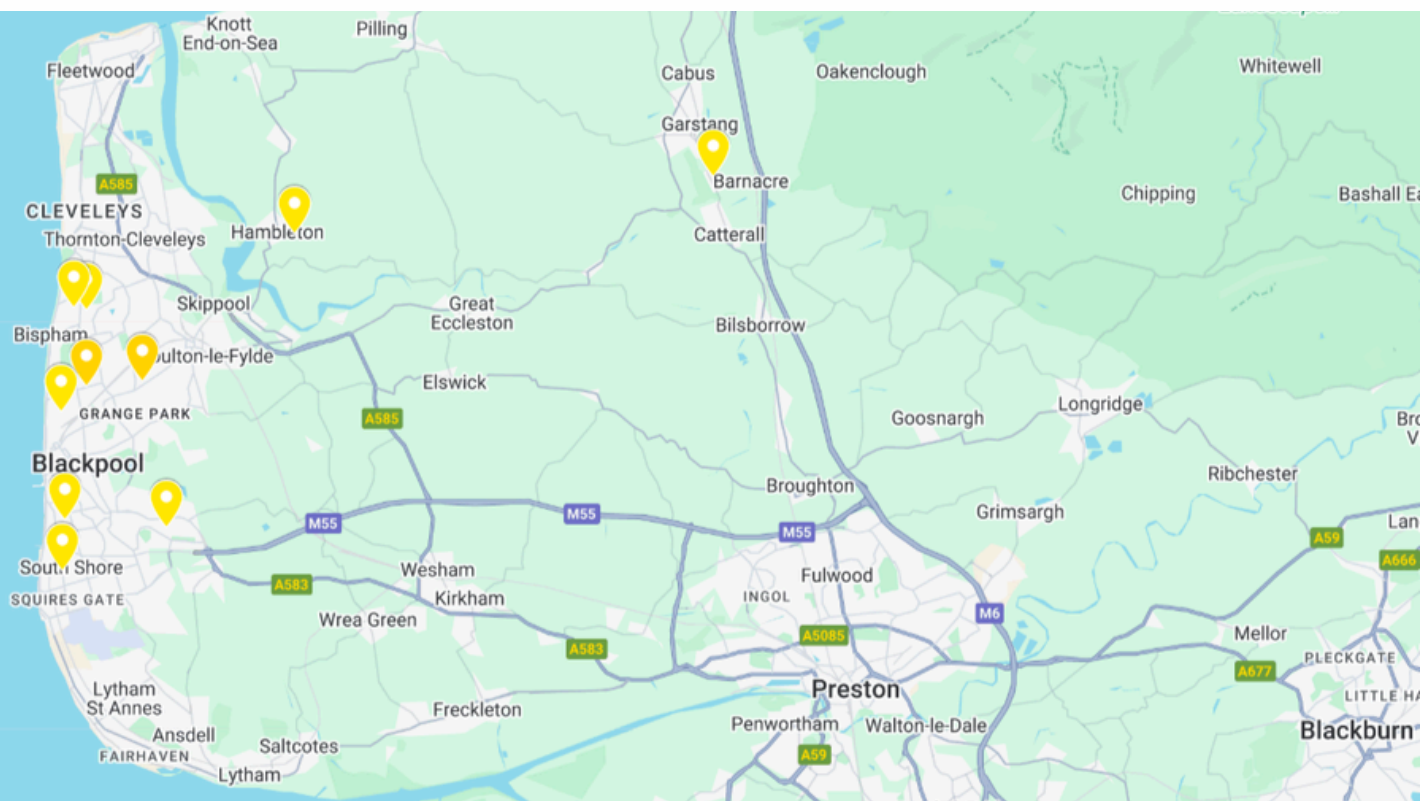
**Mark Harrison, CEO**

Each of our schools has its own distinct identity, though we all share common goals and priorities. This is effective because we operate with high levels of cultural autonomy and mutual accountability.

Our schools encompass a diverse range of communities. This diversity within our trust provides a rich and rewarding experience for colleagues, contributing to the success of schools serving different communities and gaining valuable insights into the varied needs and aspirations of young people across the region.

Blackpool is a vibrant and diverse town, offering a unique blend of urban and coastal living. Our trust operates several schools across the borough, each serving distinct communities. Armfield and Mereside academies are located in the south of the town. Gateway Academy, situated centrally, serves a vibrant and growing community, reflecting the town's diverse cultural tapestry. In the north of Blackpool; Aspire, Westminster, Westcliff, Unity and Montgomery academies each serve unique communities despite their proximity to each other. Garstang Community Academy serves a semi-rural area with a strong sense of local identity. Hambleton Primary Academy provides outstanding education to pupils in a more rural setting. Each school offers distinct learning environments in response to pupils' needs. We have high aspirations of young people and have developed bespoke curriculums such as the curiosity approach and compass curriculum to meet need and raise expectations.

The region boasts excellent transport links, with good road and rail connections to major cities such as Manchester and Liverpool. This makes the Fylde Coast an easily accessible and commutable location. Furthermore, the region offers a range of high-quality housing options, from charming coastal villages to modern developments, catering to diverse preferences.





## A Message from the Leadership Team

Thank you for your interest in leading Unity Academy Blackpool, an all through school for pupils aged 2-16.

This is a pivotal moment for our school and our trust. With a newly appointed Chief Executive Officer supported by an experienced team, we are entering an exciting era defined by injected energy, fresh ambition, and a unified commitment to the young people and families we serve. Everything we do is driven by a single, powerful motivation: ensuring our children receive the transformative education they deserve, and that our community has a school it can be truly proud of. We exist to ensure that every one of our children grows up with real choice that leads to a happy, successful, positive future. Our children will be proud of where they are from, and equipped to go forward as confident, healthy individuals.

We are clear and transparent about our current context: Unity is in special measures, and turning it around for our pupils is our collective priority. Recent moderation visits have shown progress and appropriate action being taken, but we need to continue to push on. Delivering sustainable change requires a deeply mission-focused headteacher—someone who is inspired by the moral imperative of educational equity and determined to expand the life chances of every child in our care. We are looking for an empathetic, confident leader who will act with clarity and pace to keep aspirations on track, champion our pupils, and unite our school community around a shared vision of success. This is a job to be excited about and a rare opportunity to make a difference where it matters most.

You will lead with the full backing of a supportive, collaborative trust family. We operate as one team—treating each other with professionalism, honesty, and kindness, while supporting and challenging one another to achieve excellence for our children. Our role is to clear the path for you: establishing trust-wide clarity on what excellence looks like, removing operational friction, directing resources directly where it impacts pupils most, and nurturing a culture where staff feel valued, fulfilled, and equipped to succeed.

If you are an accountable, values-driven leader who is ready to build a thriving team, unlock the potential of our pupils, and make a profound, lasting impact on this community, we invite you to join us on this journey.

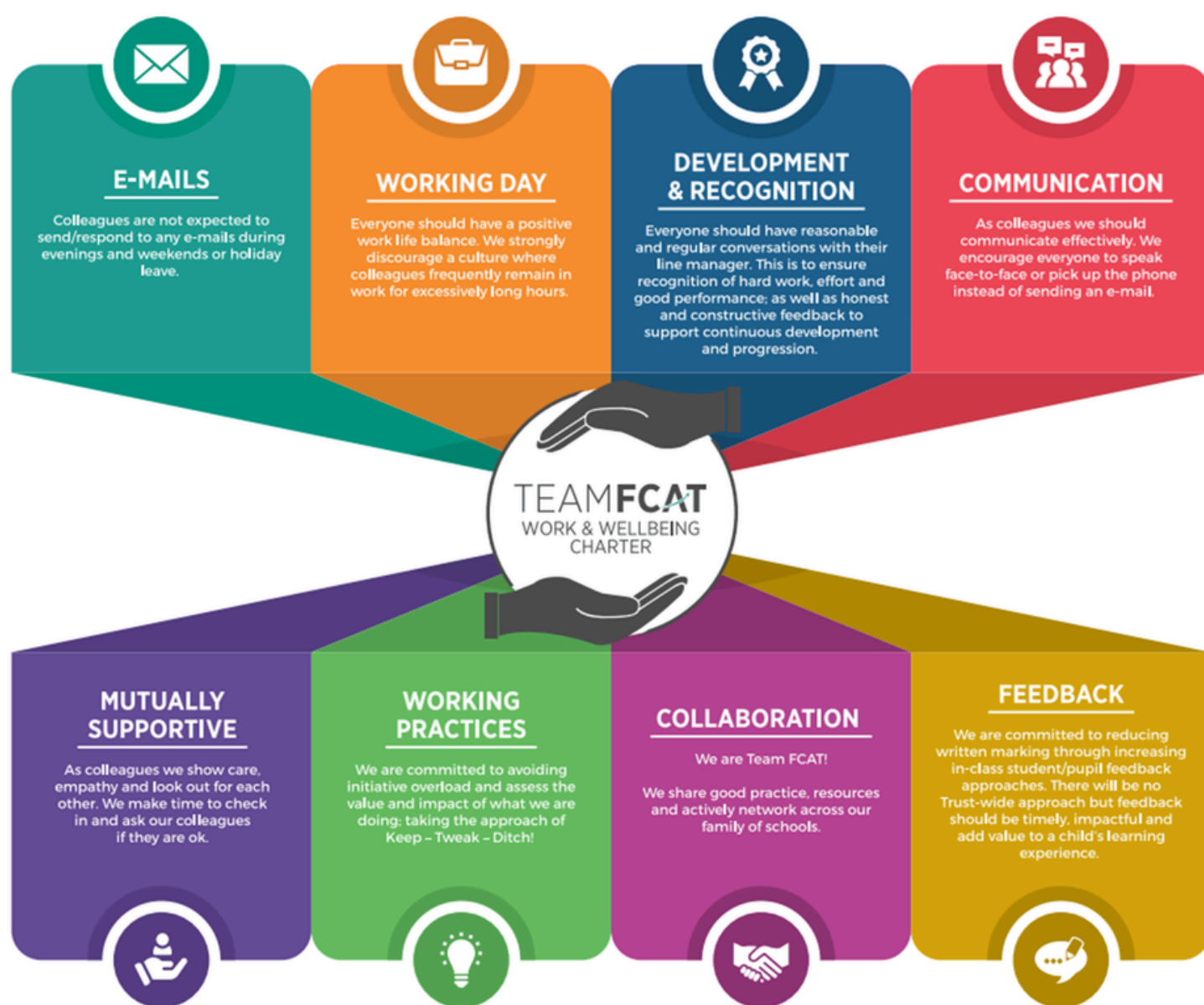
## Next Steps & How to Apply

- **Explore the Opportunity:** Read through this pack to review more information about the role, Unity and our trust.
- **Visit the School:** We strongly encourage prospective candidates to visit Unity, meet our incredible children, dedicated staff and members of our leadership team.

- ✓ A supportive, friendly and welcoming team
- ✓ Leadership Development support opportunities including: leadership coaching, NPQs
- ✓ Automatic annual pay progression for all leaders and teachers
- ✓ Membership of the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS)
- ✓ 24/7 access to free health support services via Smartclinic including physiotherapy, online GP, counselling, CBT and much more.
- ✓ Free annual flu vaccine
- ✓ Free eye tests
- ✓ Childcare voucher scheme
- ✓ Cycle to work scheme
- ✓ 25% discount for FCAT in house Breakfast and After School Club provisions
- ✓ Supportive parental leave and flexible working schemes



Our FCAT Work and Wellbeing Charter. This was developed by colleagues to encourage and remind us to consider and support each other to improve our working practices, wellbeing and work-life balance.



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Closing date for applications is:  
**9.00am on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2026**

The assessment and interview days will take place on:  
**Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> and Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2026.**

For any questions regarding this vacancy, an informal discussion or to arrange to visit Unity Academy Blackpool please contact:  
**Mark Harrison, FCAT Chief Executive Officer.**

@ mark.harrison@fcat.org.uk

www.unity.blackpool.org.uk

www.fcat.org.uk

01253 207 709

The Fylde Coast Academy Trust is committed to equality of opportunity for all as well as safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all learners, staff and visitors. All staff are carefully selected using recruitment and selection procedures that comply with Keeping Children Safe in Education. Following shortlisting this may include an online search and following an offer an enhanced DBS clearance.





|                          |                                                                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Post Title:              | Headteacher                                                              |
| Salary:                  | Leadership Pay Scale, L28 - L34                                          |
| Responsible to:          | Deputy Chief Executive Officer (DCEO) and the Local Governing Body (LGB) |
| Date of Job Description: | Feb 2025                                                                 |

### Main Purpose of the role:

- Employed by the Fylde Coast Academy Trust to lead and manage the school.
- Securing in consultation with the Fylde Coast Academy Trust (FCAT) and the LGB a purposeful, positive and disciplined culture and ethos that ensures a safe and stable school population with strong progress and attainment for pupils. Thereby, ensuring a high quality education for all pupils.
- Ensuring the key elements of achievement, quality of teaching, behaviour, safeguarding and leadership are all of a very high standard ensuring an excellent local reputation and parent choice for the school remains high and over-subscribed.
- Working with the senior team and LGB to ensure staffing and resource management of the school is financially secure and operating effectively.

### Main duties and responsibilities:

- Lead the strategic development of the school with integrity and equity.
- Deliver the main priorities and areas for development.
- Support staff development and be responsible for the performance management of all staff.
- Provide up to date evaluations on the performance of the school to the local governing body and trust leadership team for challenge and support.
- Ensure an effective culture for safeguarding pupils is maintained.
- Build positive and productive relationships with parents and the wider community.

### Main Duties:

Accountable directly to and under the guidance of the Deputy CEO, the main duties of the Headteacher are:

**1. Shaping the future** – work with trust leaders and wider stakeholders to create a shared vision and strategic plan which inspires and motivates pupils, staff and members of the school community. This vision should express core educational values and a moral purpose that is inclusive of stakeholders' values and beliefs. The strategic planning process is critical to sustaining school improvement and ensuring that the school improves for the benefit of its pupils.

#### Actions:

- Ensure the vision for the school is clearly articulated, shared, understood and acted upon effectively by all.
- Work within the school community to translate the vision into agreed objectives and operational plans which will promote and sustain school improvement.
- Demonstrate the vision and values in everyday work and practice.
- Motivate and work with others to create a shared culture and positive climate.
- Ensure creativity, innovation and the use of appropriate new technologies to achieve excellence.
- Ensure that strategic planning takes account of the diversity, values and experience of the school and community at large.

**2. Leading on the quality of teaching** – The Headteacher will have central responsibility for raising the quality of education and for pupils' achievement. This requires the setting of high expectations and monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of learning outcomes. A successful learning culture will support pupils to become effective, enthusiastic, independent learners, committed to life-long learning.

**Actions:**

- Ensure a consistent and continuous school-wide focus on pupils' achievements, using data and benchmarks to evaluate the progress in every child's learning.
- Ensure that learning is at the centre of strategic planning and resource management.
- Establish creative, responsive and effective approaches to learning and teaching.
- Ensure a culture and ethos of equity where all pupils can achieve success and become engaged in their own learning.
- Demonstrate and articulate high expectations in setting goals for the whole school community.
- Implement strategies which secure high standards of behaviour and attendance.
- Determine, organise and implement a curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils.
- Take a strategic role in the development of new and emerging technologies to enhance and extend the learning experience of pupils.
- Monitor, evaluate and review classroom practice and promote improvement strategies.
- Challenge underperformance, ensure effective support is provided and follow up actions.

**3. Developing self and working with others** – The Headteacher will build a professional learning community which enables others to achieve. Through performance management and effective continuing professional development practice, the Headteacher will support all staff to achieve high standards. To equip themselves with the capacity to deal with the complexity of the role and the range of leadership skills and actions required of them, the Headteacher should be committed to their own continuing professional development.

**Actions:**

- Treat people fairly, equitably and with dignity and respect to create and maintain a positive school culture.
- Build a collaborative learning culture within the school and actively engage with our schools to build effective learning communities.
- Develop and maintain effective strategies and procedures for staff induction, professional development and performance review.
- Ensure effective planning, allocation, support and evaluation of work undertaken by teams and individuals, ensuring clear delegation of tasks and accountability for responsibilities.
- Acknowledge the responsibilities and celebrate the achievements of individuals and teams.
- Develop and maintain a culture of high expectations for self and for others and take appropriate action when performance or conduct is unsatisfactory.
- Regularly review your own practice, set personal goals and take responsibility for your own personal development.
- Manage your workload and that of others to allow an appropriate work/life balance.

**4. Managing the Organisation** – The Headteacher will provide effective organisation and management of the school and seek ways of improving organisational structures and functions based on effective self-evaluation. The Headteacher should ensure that the academy and the people and resources within it are structured and managed to provide an efficient, effective and safe learning environment. These management responsibilities imply the examination of the roles and responsibilities of those adults working in the school to build capacity across the workforce and ensure resources are deployed to achieve value for money. The Headteacher should also seek to build a successful organisation through effective collaboration with others and seeking and responding to information, advice and guidance from FCAT's centralised core services e.g. finance, HR, IT, governance, community relations, estates etc.

**Actions:**

- Create an organisational structure which reflects the trust and school's values, and enables the management systems, structures and processes to work effectively in line with legal requirements.
- Produce and implement clear, evidence-based improvement plans and policies for the development of the school and its facilities.
- Ensure that policies and practices take account of trust based, national and local circumstances, policies and initiatives.
- Manage the school's financial and human resources effectively and efficiently to achieve the school's educational goals and priorities.

- Recruit, retain and deploy staff appropriately and support them in managing their workload to achieve the vision and goals of the school.
- Implement successful performance management processes for all staff.
- Manage and organise the school environment efficiently and effectively to ensure that it meets the needs of the curriculum, health and safety regulations and other relevant legislation e.g. employment, financial.
- Ensure that the range, quality and use of all available resources is monitored, evaluated and reviewed to improve the quality of education for all students and provide value for money.
- Use and integrate a range of technologies effectively and efficiently to manage the school.

**5. Securing Accountability** – with values at the heart of their leadership and a commitment to FCAT core policies and procedures, the Headteacher will have a responsibility to the whole school community. In carrying out this responsibility, the Headteacher is accountable to a wide range of groups, particularly pupils, parents/carers, local governors, the Fylde Coast Academy Trust and the Deputy CEO. They are accountable for ensuring that pupils enjoy and benefit from high quality education, for promoting collective responsibility within the whole academy community and for contributing to the education service more widely. The Headteacher is legally and contractually accountable to FCAT for the school, its environment and all its work.

**Actions:**

- Fulfil commitments arising from contractual accountability.
- Develop a school ethos which enables everyone to work collaboratively, share knowledge and understanding, celebrate success and accept responsibility for outcomes.
- Ensure individual staff accountabilities are clearly defined, understood and agreed and are subject to rigorous review and evaluation.
- Work with the trust leadership team to enable the school to meet its responsibilities.
- Develop and present a coherent, understandable and accurate account of the school's performance to a range of audiences including the trust, local governors, parents/ carers.
- Reflect on personal contribution to school achievements and take account of feedback from others.

**6. Strengthening Community** - The Headteacher will commit to engaging with the internal and external school community to secure equity and entitlement. The Headteacher must collaborate with other FCAT academies and other local schools in order to share expertise and bring positive benefits to their own and other schools. They should work collaboratively at both strategic and operational levels with parents and carers and across multiple agencies for the well-being of all children. The Headteacher shall share responsibility for leadership of the wider educational system and should be aware that school improvement and community development are interdependent.

**Actions:**

- Build a school culture and curriculum which takes account of the richness and diversity of the school's communities.
- Create and promote positive strategies for challenging prejudice and discrimination, dealing with any harassment resulting from prejudiced or discriminatory behaviours.
- Ensure learning experiences for pupils are linked into and integrated with the wider community.
- Ensure a range of community-based learning experiences.
- Collaborate with other agencies in providing for the academic, spiritual, moral, social, emotional and cultural well-being of pupils and their families.
- Create and maintain an effective partnership with parents and carers to support and improve pupils' achievement and personal development.
- Seek opportunities to invite carers, community figures, businesses or other organisations into the school to enhance and enrich the school and its value to the wider community.
- Contribute to the development of the education system by, for example, sharing effective practice, working in partnership with other FCAT academies and promoting innovative initiatives.
- Co-operate and work with relevant agencies to protect children.

**7. Customer Care** - To continually review, develop and improve systems, processes and services in support of the academy's pursuit of excellence in service delivery. To recognise the value of its people as a resource.

**8. Valuing Diversity** - To provide a supportive open environment where all employees have the opportunity to reach their full potential. To ensure that all stakeholders are encouraged to share in and reflect these values in their work and actions.

| Personal attributes required based on Job Description<br>Essential requirements are those without which an applicant will not be considered for appointment. | Essential/Desirable |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Qualifications</b>                                                                                                                                        |                     |
| 1. Qualified Teacher Status.                                                                                                                                 | <b>E</b>            |
| 2. Qualified to degree level.                                                                                                                                | <b>E</b>            |
| 3. Relevant post-graduate qualification in education or management.                                                                                          | <b>D</b>            |
| <b>Experience</b>                                                                                                                                            |                     |
| 1. Recent experience as a Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher of a school.                                                                                     | <b>E</b>            |
| 2. Tangible record of developing people, strategic thinking, planning and ethical leadership.                                                                | <b>E</b>            |
| 3. Tangible record of sustained improvements in the quality of education that demonstrate improved outcomes for pupils, staff and parents.                   | <b>E</b>            |
| 4. Experience of implementing a successful school-wide behaviour strategy that has supported learning and achievement.                                       | <b>D</b>            |
| 5. Evidence of implementing and sustaining an effective inclusion strategies that benefit pupils.                                                            | <b>E</b>            |
| 6. Experience of successful budget management and staff accountability.                                                                                      | <b>E</b>            |
| 7. Experience of working in a multi-academy trust environment.                                                                                               | <b>D</b>            |
| <b>Knowledge and Understanding</b>                                                                                                                           |                     |
| 1. Detailed knowledge of the current thinking on the curriculum.                                                                                             | <b>E</b>            |
| 2. Working knowledge of the Education Inspection Framework.                                                                                                  | <b>E</b>            |
| 3. Ability to interpret, analyse and evaluate school performance information to inform planning.                                                             | <b>E</b>            |
| 4. Up to date knowledge of relevant education legislation, research, policy and practice.                                                                    | <b>E</b>            |
| 5. Knowledge and understanding of the role of the Local Governing Body, within a Trust's scheme of delegation                                                | <b>E</b>            |
| 6. Working knowledge of the Academies Handbook.                                                                                                              | <b>D</b>            |
| 7. Understanding of technologies used to support teaching.                                                                                                   | <b>D</b>            |
| <b>Skills and Abilities:</b>                                                                                                                                 |                     |
| 1. Excellent communication skills, with the ability to negotiate and consult effectively.                                                                    | <b>E</b>            |
| 2. Excellent ability to make considered decisions.                                                                                                           | <b>E</b>            |



|                                                                                                                                  |   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| 3.Creative thinker, able to anticipate issues, solve problems and pursue opportunities.                                          | E |
| 4.Ability to operate well in a challenging environment and/or time sensitive way.                                                | E |
| 5.Readiness to seek and respond to advice and guidance.                                                                          | E |
| 6.Understand the significance of collaborative working to perform effectively as part of the Trust.                              | E |
| 7.Hold regular development meetings with leaders to support improvement work and accountability.                                 | E |
| 8.Determination to promote equality of opportunity throughout all aspects of school life.                                        | E |
| 9.Ability to enhance an organisational culture that supports and develops colleagues to be able to do their job better.          | E |
| 10.A record of professional development that supports and improves your leadership expertise.                                    | E |
| 11.Ability to accurately evaluate performance and develop appropriate strategies to improve outcomes.                            | E |
| <b>Other Attributes:</b>                                                                                                         | E |
| 1.Ability to build positive relationships with our stakeholders.                                                                 | E |
| 2.Identify talented colleagues and develop their leadership expertise to build and sustain succession planning across the trust. | E |
| 3.Support and maintain a culture of mutual accountability, engage in professional development and the development of others.     | E |