

Briefing Pack for Applicants Specialist Teaching Assistant Level 3



Dunston Primary & Nursery Academy

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment.

The school will undertake stringent and rigorous checks of identity and qualifications to ensure that we maintain the very highest standards of child protection for our students.

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May we take this opportunity to thank you in anticipation of your application. If, however, you have not heard from us by the proposed date for the interview you should assume that on this occasion your application has not been successful. In that event we wish you every success in any future applications you make.

Section 1: Post Advertisement

Post:	Specialist Teaching Assistant Level 3
Location:	Dunston Primary & Nursery Academy
Salary:	NJC Grade 4, point 7 (27,274) to point 12 (29,542) FTE, pay award pending
Actual Annual Salary:	£23,459.31 to £25,410.10 (under 5 years service)
Contract:	37 hours per week, term time, temporary until 18.12.27, or early return of the post holder.
Start Date:	Monday 30th November 2026

Minerva Learning Trust is a growing multi-academy trust committed to providing an outstanding education for students from a wide variety of backgrounds across Sheffield and Derbyshire. Founded in 2014, Minerva Learning Trust has expanded to a thriving family of schools, including primary, secondary, sixth form, and a unique post-16 provision. We have a strong track record of school improvement, successfully transforming schools from Ofsted ratings of RI and Inadequate to GOOD.

Dunston Primary & Nursery Academy is a large Primary School on the outskirts of Chesterfield, who pride themselves on being an inclusive school for all. We regard all staff and pupils as part of our family and whilst we have really high expectations of everyone, we maintain a caring and supportive ethos. We strongly believe in work life balance and we work with our staff to actively promote and improve wellbeing.

We are seeking to appoint a hard-working and highly organised individual to undertake the important role of a Specialised Teaching Assistant in our Enhanced Resource. Candidates are encouraged to contact the school for an informal discussion about the role with Mrs Louise Parker, Headteacher arrangements for this can be made by contacting Miss Lucy Parkes, via e-mail lparkes@dunston-mlt.co.uk.

The closing date is at 9am on Friday 16th October 2026 and interviews are TBC.

The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and safety of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment, further information can be found in our child protection and safeguarding policy on our statutory information page on our website [Statutory Information - Minerva Learning Trust](#). The successful candidate will be required to complete an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. In line with KCSIE, the trust/school will be carrying out online searches on shortlisted candidates as part of their due diligence. Further information is available by contacting Miss Lucy Parkes via e-mail: lparkes@dunston-mlt.co.uk

Please ensure that you do not fill in a Local Authority application form in respect of this vacancy, *ONLY MINERVA LEARNING TRUST APPLICATION FORMS WILL BE ACCEPTED.* Please provide telephone numbers and email addresses for yourself and referees.

Section 2: Letter from the Chief Executive – Bev Matthews

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in this role within Minerva Learning Trust. Minerva Learning Trust was established in October 2014 with the vision of providing outstanding education for pupils who are from a wide variety of backgrounds. As a Trust our mission, vision and values are central to our work and are the driving force behind all that we do. Our vision of Outstanding Together, Working Together and Learning Together is underpinned by our core values of Inclusion, Independence, Respect and Success.

Through our values we foster an ethos of collegiality, we ensure inclusion is at the heart of all we do and we work hard to ensure that every child succeeds, no matter what their background or circumstance. We resolutely believe that we are stronger together and that each school within the MAT has individual strengths and we celebrate the diverse and unique qualities of each particular school.

We recognise that the commitment and care shown by all our staff is fundamental to the success of our young people. As such, we work hard to ensure that staff are supported, encouraged, developed, respected and listened to within an enjoyable and rewarding working environment. Our culture is one of professional trust, respect, honesty and integrity and we want our staff and students to work and learn within an environment that enables them to flourish and to work at their best.

The professional development of staff, including opportunities for research, is a key priority of Minerva Learning Trust. As such, we seek to enrich employee capability and maximise the strength and contribution of each individual who works with us. The Trust believes in investing in the learning and development of its employees through a range of opportunities which are aligned to the needs of the organisation and its young people.

This is an exciting opportunity and time to join our Trust. If you choose to apply you will be choosing to work alongside a team of dedicated professionals who passionately believe in the power of education to change the life chances of young people

Bev Matthews
Chief Executive Officer

Section 3: Letter from the Headteacher – Louise Parker

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for taking an interest in applying for the post at Dunston Primary & Nursery Academy. I am privileged to be the Headteacher at Dunston Primary & Nursery Academy and extremely honoured to have been entrusted with the job of leading such a great school since September 2023. During my time at Dunston, I have worked hard to establish strong relationships with our staff, young people and their families, and understand what is needed to take the school forward. Dunston Primary & Nursery Academy is an **inclusive school** with our own Enhanced Resource that caters for children with physical disabilities. Our school ensures all students are able to **Be the Best they can Be!** We aim to foster enjoyment in learning, so that each individual has the opportunity to **make good progress and achieve excellence**. We ensure we develop **confident individuals** who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives, whilst also being a responsible and active citizen who will make a **positive contribution** to society. Our strategic priority is for all individual students to achieve and exceed their expected outcomes.

In order to support the strategic aims of the school, we ensure the following;

- High quality teaching and learning experiences both within and outside the classroom by employing an ambitious and forward looking curriculum and assessment system across all key stages.
- A family support structure that ensures every student and their family has the guidance and support tailored to their individual needs.
- A focus on Inclusion, mental health and well being for all.
- A pro-active Pupil Parliament and student leadership structure to inform the decisions made by the School Leadership Team to help students in achieving their potential.
- The opportunities to develop students' moral and social understanding.
- Strong and effective working relationships between staff and our students.
- A warm and welcoming environment.

We have high expectations of everyone, staff, and students alike, and work hard to develop positive relationships to create a firm sense of togetherness. In doing so we promote the following values which are at the **HEART** of all we do: **Hard working, Empathy, Aspirational, Resilience and Together**

Here at Dunston, we are ambitious for both the school and its community and are committed to continued improvement. Our staff are our most valuable asset and we are committed to attracting the best staff to the school and ensuring their personalised professional development, with our core purpose being the improved quality of teaching and learning for all. Our students are approachable and friendly. Please come and see for yourself; we welcome visitors to the school. If you believe you have the necessary skills and experience to join our organisation and help us achieve our mission then we look forward to receiving your application.

We look forward to receiving applications from candidates who would love to join us on our journey to excellence.

Louise Parker
Headteacher

Section 4: About Dunston Primary and Nursery Academy



OUR MISSION

Working together to provide every child with an inclusive, high quality, enjoyable learning experience where success is celebrated and everyone feels valued.

OUR VISION

Our mission is underpinned by our vision which is based upon the principle of: Be the best you can be!

Achieve Success

We recognise all our pupils are unique. We teach our pupils to continue to strive to achieve their goals, set new targets and never stop learning.

We recognise the development of the 'whole child' and celebrate successes achieved both inside and outside of school.

Positive Relationships

We support pupils to develop relationships based on mutual respect, kindness, trust and honesty, which allow us to feel safe and supported in order to learn and grow.

Motivated Learners

We recognise that pupils who are motivated take initiative, show resilience, harness their curiosity, and care for and respect their work. They are equipped to orchestrate their own learning journey.

OUR VALUES

Our values are at the HEART of all of the work that we do and all of the decisions that we make.

Hard Working

We show perseverance and determination and take responsibility for our own learning.

Empathy

We are aware of people's feelings and we treat everyone with kindness, dignity and understanding.

Aspirational

We are ambitious, determined and make the most of every opportunity. We aspire to be the best we can be!

Resilience

We are willing to have a go, take a risk, try again and learn from our mistakes.

Together

We are inclusive and support each other both inside/outside of school.

OUR BELIEFS

- Committed to ensuring our children are happy, safe, confident and well rounded individuals .
 - We are aspirational and believe every child can succeed.
 - The needs of the child are foremost in any decision
 - We believe in building a culture of lifelong learning.
 - We believe in opening doors and widening horizons.
 - We support all our children to build emotional resilience

Section 5: Job Description



Minerva Learning Trust Job Description



Minerva Learning Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

POST TITLE	Specialist Teaching Assistant Level 3
GRADE/SALARY	
HOURS/WEEKS	37 hours per week, term time - 39 weeks TEMPORARY
LOCATION	Dunston Primary & Nursery Academy
RESPONSIBLE TO	ERS Lead
RESPONSIBLE FOR	Not applicable
PURPOSE OF THE JOB	Working within an agreed framework of supervision to complement the professional work of teachers by taking responsibility for agreed learning activities, including planning, preparation and delivery. These activities can be for the individuals/groups or whole classes on a short-term basis including monitoring and assessment, recording and reporting on pupil achievement, progress and development. Responsible for the management and development of a specialist area within the school including delivery of CPD for teaching assistants.
RELEVANT QUALIFICATIONS	Meet teaching assistant standards or equivalent qualification or experience. Excellent numeracy/literacy skills – equivalent to NVQ Level 2 in English and Maths.

SPECIFIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The post-holder, must at all times, carry out his/her duties and responsibilities within the spirit of Minerva Learning Trust and School policies and within the legislative framework applicable to academies.

The post holder will be required to work flexibly as part of the teaching support staff with guidance from the SLT and class teachers to fulfil the following responsibilities:

- Know the effects of specific types of verbal behaviour e.g. proximity, tone and gesture, and non-verbal behaviour e.g. body language, personal space, on pupils' emotional and behavioural responses and how positive examples of these can improve pupils' social responses.
- Know the factors within and outside school which influence the responsiveness to others of pupils with limited social or interpersonal skills.
- Knowledge of specialised techniques and in-house protocols.
- Knowledge of the significance of any psychological and psychiatric disorders affecting the pupils with whom you work with and how they relate to others, including the impact of any medication taken by pupils,
- Support the development of self-care skills.
- The role requires normal physical effort with a mixture of sitting, walking and carrying minor loads in a classroom. Additional physical requirements could be sitting in constrained positions for prolonged periods i.e working at floor level constantly and regular periods of physical effort such as the moving and handling of children with severe physical disabilities.
- Moving and handling could include:
 - Hoisting
 - Rolling of children and young people on changing couches.
 - Moving and changing beds and pushing beds up ramps.
 - Pushing and clamping wheelchairs onto minibuses.
 - Assisting when using a walking frame.
- Carrying out Physio and MOVE programmes.
- Assisting children and young people when using a walking frame.
- Prepare lessons with teachers, contributing to the planning cycle including evaluating and adjusting lessons in response to pupils' needs.
- Teach whole classes as part of PPA provision according to the PPA timetable. Also to provide short-term cover within any age group in response to teacher absence.

- Provide verbal and written feedback on lesson content, pupil responses to learning activities and pupil behaviour, to teachers and pupils in line with school policy.
- Motivate and progress pupils' learning following school policies and guidance from class teachers
- Organise and safely manage the appropriate learning environment and resources.
- Assess pupils' responses to learning tasks and where appropriate, modify methods to meet individual and/or group needs.
- Promote and support the inclusion of all pupils, including those with specific needs, both in the classroom as part of first-quality teaching and through intervention work.
- Use positive behaviour management strategies in line with the school's policy and procedures to contribute to a purposeful learning environment and encourage pupils to interact and work cooperatively with others.
- Provide information relating to pupil progress for parents and carers, teachers and senior leaders upon request and to contribute to assigned pupils' annual reports at the request of the pupils' class teachers and SLT.
- In accordance with arrangements made by the Head of Academy, progress pupils' learning in a range of classroom settings, including working with individuals, small groups and whole classes where the assigned teacher is not present, in line with regulations and guidance under Section 133 of the Education Act 2002 and School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document 2017.
- Support pupils in social and emotional well-being, reporting problems to the teacher as appropriate.
- Adhere to school policies and procedures relating to safeguarding, particularly the Child Protection Policy, Safeguarding Policy. Supporting Children with SEND Policy, Health and Safety Policy and the School Behaviour Policy
- When teaching whole classes, if available deploy teaching assistants and learning support assistants confidently and effectively to best support the academic and behavioural needs of pupils in the class or group
- Attend all briefings, training and development meetings and INSET days, along with sharing good practice with members of staff as part of the commitment to own and others' professional development

TA's in this role may also undertake some or all of the following:

- Record basic pupil data
- Support children's learning through play

- Assist with break-time/lunchtime supervision including facilitating games and activities
- Assist with escorting pupils on educational visits
- Support pupils in using basic ICT
- Assist pupils with eating, dressing and hygiene, as required, whilst encouraging independence

SAFEGUARDING

- To be aware of and work in accordance with the school's child protection policies and procedures in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and to raise any concerns relating to such procedures which may be noted during the course of duty.

OTHER SPECIFIC DUTIES

- To play a full part in the life of the school community, to support its mission and ethos and to encourage staff and students to follow this example.
- To actively promote the school and Trust's policies.
- To be courteous and provide a welcoming environment.

General:

1. To be aware of, and comply with, Trust and school policies and procedures relating to child protection, health, safety and security, confidentiality and data protection, reporting all concerns to an appropriate person.
2. 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 Headteacher and Local Governing Body.
3. This job description will be kept under review and may be amended via consultation with the individual, Headteacher and Local Governing Body as required. Trade Union representatives will be welcome in any such discussions.

Section 6: Person Specification



Minerva Learning Trust

Person Specification

Specialist Teaching Assistant L3 (TA)

Minimum Essential Requirements	Method of Assessment
QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING	
Right to work in the UK	AF/I
Meet higher level teaching assistant standards or equivalent qualification or experience.	AF
To have had experience of working within a primary classroom.	AF/I
Excellent numeracy/literacy skills – equivalent to NVQ Level 2 in English and Maths	AF
Training in the relevant learning strategies e.g. literacy.	AF/I
Specialist skills/training in curriculum or learning area e.g. bi-lingual, sign language, ICT	AF/I
To have led intervention groups	AF/I
To have taught groups in the absence of a teacher e.g. PPA	AF/I
KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE	
Good understanding of child development and learning processes	AF/I
Understanding of policies and procedures relating to SEN and Child Protection.	AF/I
Working knowledge and experience of implementing national/foundation stage curriculum and other relevant learning programmes/strategies	AF/I
Experience of suctioning, Peg/Jej and enteral feeding	AF/I
Experience of administering medicines	AF/I
Experience of moving and handling	AF/I
Experience of supporting SEN and/or disabled children from 3-11 in an educational setting.	AF/I/R
Working from and evaluating pupil progress against individualised targets.	AF/I
Practical experience of implementing and evaluating intervention programmes with SEN groups/individuals.	AF/I
Experience of working in an inclusive environment	AF/I
Using ICT resources to support children's learning effectively	AF/I
The ability to maintain excellent standards of behaviour in school	AF/I/R

Communicate effectively with a range of professionals, including other agencies	AF/I
Understand the commitment to safeguard children	AF/I
Undertaken recent Little Wandle training and delivered phonics teaching	AF/I
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
Evidence of a commitment to continued professional development	AF/I
Willingness to participate in professional development	AF/I
Constantly improve own practice/knowledge through self-evaluation and learning from others	AF
SKILLS	
To be open, approachable and able to work well in a team.	AF/I
Excellent interpersonal skills	AF/I
To liaise with different agencies, parents or carers in a professional manner	AF/I
Confident in the use of ICT and Microsoft to support learning	AF/I
Ability to complete and maintain pupil records	AF/I
Ability to relate well to children and adults and to build positive relationships.	AF/I
Ability to use a range of strategies to support positive behaviour and self-regulation.	AF/I
Has practical and organisational skills to prepare and manage educational resources	AF/I
To have high expectations for the pupils they support.	AF/I
QUALITIES AND ATTRIBUTES	
Ability to relate well to children and adults	AF/I
Can maintain trust and confidentiality where appropriate	AF/I/R
A pleasant disposition and ability to stay calm under pressure.	AF/I
Demonstrate a caring attitude towards pupils, parents and staff and contribute to the positive ethos in school	AF/I
Demonstrate a positive team approach to work.	AF/I
To have a willingness to participate in the whole school approach to mentoring students and play an active role as directed by line manager.	AF/I
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND SAFEGUARDING	
An understanding of safeguarding issues and promoting the welfare of children and young people.	AF/I
A commitment to safeguarding students.	AF/I
Suitability to work with children.	AF/I
A commitment to equal opportunities.	AF/I
Ability to recognise discrimination and willingness to put Equality Policies into practice.	AF/I

Key:

AF = Application form
I = Interview
R = Reference

Section 7: The Appointment Process

These notes are intended to guide you when making an application.

1. The Application Form

You must complete the standard Minerva Learning Trust job application form neatly, fully and accurately, including exact dates. The form may be typed or handwritten but if you do write it by hand please make sure that it is legible and that you use black ink. Indicate clearly on the front page the post you are applying for. You are requested to submit a concise application.

2. Education and Training

State your qualifications and any training you have undertaken relevant to the post.

3. Present Appointment

Make it clear what your present post is, which establishment you work in and who your employer is.

4. 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.

5. Referees

If you are currently working, or have worked before, your first reference must be your present or most recent employer.

- Your second reference should, where possible, be from your second most recent employer or, if that employment was not working with children but you have worked with children in the past, your most recent child-centred employment.
- Employment references must be from a senior person who knew you in a management capacity. If your reference is from an education establishment, the referee must be the Headteacher or equivalent.
- If you are an ECT, your first reference should be the Headteacher of the school in which you completed your main placement; the second should be your ITT provider.
- If you have not previously been employed, then Headteachers, College Lecturers, or other persons who are able to comment authoritatively on your educational background and/or personal qualities, are acceptable as referees.
- Wherever possible, the email addresses given for your referees should be their work email (or equivalent), not their personal email address.

Suitable referees are people who have direct, recent experience of your work and who are in responsible positions. We may need to contact them at short notice so please be specific with regard to contact addresses including e-mail and telephone numbers.

6. The Supporting Statement/Letter of Application

The supporting statement or letter is regarded as a very important part of your application. You should make statements that demonstrate how your qualifications and experience match the post. You should take particular care to demonstrate how you meet the person specification included as part of these details. **Please limit your supporting statement to two sides of A4 in size 11 font.**

7. 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 some support staff posts. We would ask that all shortlisted applicants read the safeguarding information on the school website prior to attending the interview. All shortlisted applicants will be asked to complete and return a criminal records self-disclosure form before interview. You must disclose all convictions, cautions, reprimands, final warnings, binding over or other orders, pending prosecution or criminal investigations that are not 'protected'. This should be returned prior to interview, via email to Miss Lucy Parkes lparkes@dunston-mlt.co.uk.

8. The Interview

Candidates will be invited to spend a day visiting the school during which time they will have the opportunity to meet staff and students and see the school at work. Interviews are likely to take place in the afternoon.

9. Feedback

Feedback is offered to those candidates who are shortlisted and not recommended for appointment. It is hoped that this information will help you with future applications.

10. Selection for Appointment

Selection is made conditional upon the successful candidate meeting the Trust's requirements for health, physical capacity and conduct.

11. Arrangements for Applications

When you have completed your application, the completed form and covering letter should be e-mailed to lparkes@dunston-mlt.co.uk by the closing date.

Section 7: Visitors to Dunston Primary & Nursery Academy

Please use Google Maps for the most up to date travel directions.

The schools address is:
Dunston Primary & Nursery Academy
Dunston Lane,
Dunston,
Chesterfield
S41 8EY