



Horizons Specialist Academy Trust
Providing infinite opportunities



Principal Recruitment Pack

The Meadows Academy
March 2025

About Horizons Specialist Academy Trust

Providing Infinite Opportunities – Ensuring the best education for our children and young people

Horizons Specialist Academy Trust (HSAT) is a specialist multi-academy trust, underpinned by a single organisational and financial structure led by a Chief Executive.

The Trust comprises Abbey Hill Academy (including Abbey Hill Sixth Form), Archway Academy, Green Gates Academy, Hollis Academy, Meadows Academy, Mo Mowlam Academy, Westlands Academy and Woodlands Academy.

Together, these eight provisions support 1000 children and young people with a range of special educational needs.

Our vision of 'Providing infinite opportunities, ensuring the best education for our children and young people' is a bold one. Our aim 'to do more and to do it better' at every level for our pupils, their families and the wider Trust community is key and is underpinned by our values of providing:

- Opportunities for all
- Opportunities to care
- Opportunities together, and
- Opportunities for life

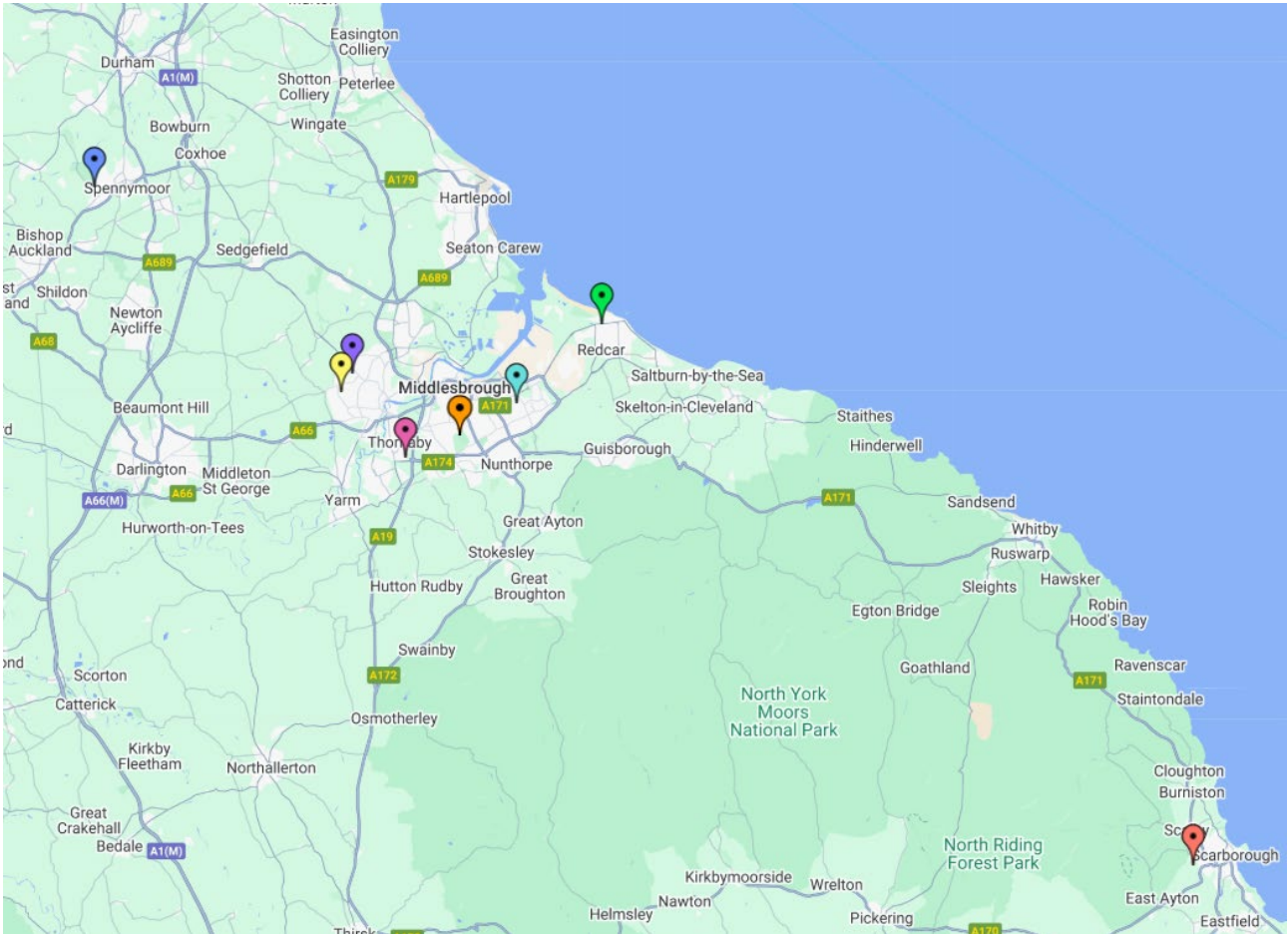
We are a caring, inclusive organisation dedicated to working in partnership as a family of schools where we champion all children and young people, as well as the staff that support them. Working in collaboration with stakeholders and the wider professional and local community demonstrates our commitment to our civic duty and is evidence of our moral purpose.

We have high aspirations for ourselves and others. Our belief that a child's future should be defined by their talents and aspirations, not limited by the challenges that they face, is a key driver in seeking to improve the life chances of all our pupils.

We recognise that ensuring our pupils are safe, receive a high quality and inclusive education, and are confident and prepared to play an active role in society is only possible when we have an effective and strong multi-academy trust.

The shared core values of our Trust remain constant and relevant at all levels and our governance framework helps to drive excellence in all that we do.

Our Academies



Abbey Hill Academy & Sixth Form



Archway Academy



Green Gates Academy



Hollis Academy



Meadows Academy



Mo Mowlam Academy



Westlands Academy



Woodlands Academy



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Our Team



Abbey Hill Academy



Abbey Hill Academy Sixth Form



Archway Academy



Green Gates Academy



Hollis Academy



The Meadows Academy



Mo Mowlam Academy



Westlands Academy



Woodlands Academy

Without exception, everyone is deeply committed to the very highest outcomes, regardless of their role, recognising the strength of collective contribution and effort.

Leaders

Academy leaders, driven by exceptional Principals, focus relentlessly on students and their outcomes. They are restless in their leadership, seeking better ways to improve in a culture of success. They do what it takes to make the difference to the lives of children and young people with SEND.

Central team leaders, motivated by an inspiring Chief Executive, lead high performing teams who add value to our academies by providing the environment in which others thrive. They unburden academy leaders, enabling them to keep a focus on the main thing- strong pupil outcomes.

Governance, for our academies and for the Trust, is robust, rigorous and proportionate, providing professional support and challenge so that leaders strive to do more and do it better with a sharp focus on successful outcomes for students with SEND.

Our leaders never allow the urgent to distract them from the important, navigating a clear route to long-term success.

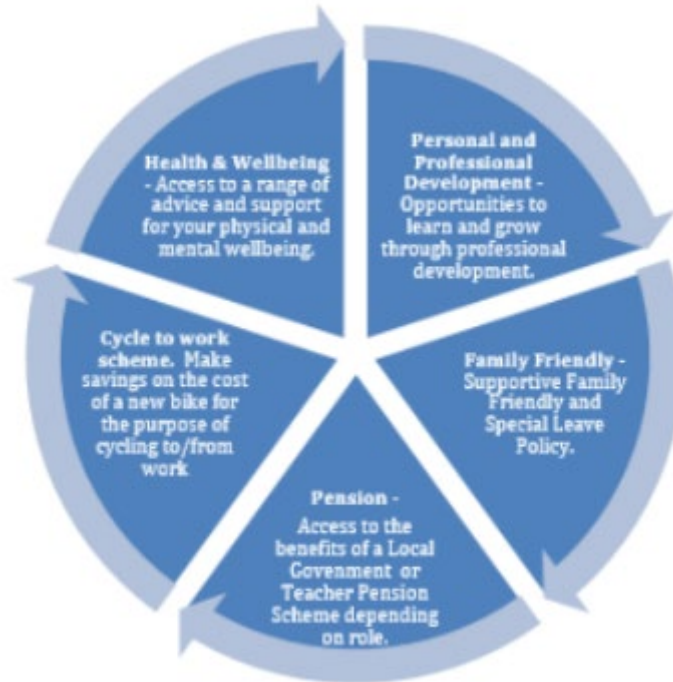
Teachers

Our teachers are highly effective in the classroom, both in the uncompromising quality of their teaching and in the perceptive and individualised attention they give to students. They are passionate about the subjects they teach and dedicated to the children and young people in their care. Our teachers are carefully recruited and expertly supported to make sure they, like our students, are the very best they can be.

Support Staff

Our support staff are the backbone of our organisation and are specialists in their areas of responsibility. Like our teachers, they are well-trained and highly effective at ensuring the smooth operation of our Trust day in and day out.

Why work for HSAT?



At HSAT, we want to be an employer of choice for employees and for that reason we are very proud to be recognised by Investors in People as a Gold organisation.

We believe that the children and young people in our care deserve the very best staff who are highly effective at what they do. We want our employees to take pride and satisfaction in their work. This means that one of our fundamental priorities is to ensure that all our employees feel valued, knowing that the role they fulfil is vital to transforming the life chances of our children and young people.

Comprehensive Induction

When joining HSAT, you will have access to a detailed induction programme which is designed to ensure you feel confident in your new role from your first day with us. This is led by our HR team in partnership with our Professional Learning Leads, and focuses on our culture, safeguarding, site orientation, key people and HSAT expectations, amongst other things. We know the importance of a great start for our children and young people when they join one of our academies, so we place just as much importance on the way new employees' transition into HSAT.

Tailored Training

We believe in giving our children and young people the best daily deal. To this end, all of our employees have access to individualised performance development programmes and tailored training to ensure we continue to do more and do it better.

We work with respected training providers, as well as having our own team of in-house trainers, harnessing a blended training platform of virtual and face-to-face sessions.

Tending the Team

At HSAT, we recognise that working in schools is extremely rewarding, but we haven't lost sight of the fact that it is often challenging and burdensome. All our employees have access to our HSAT

wellbeing offer to promote positive mental and emotional wellness. This centres around a suite of staff provision such as bite-size online wellbeing training to help maintain work-life balance, free access to professional counselling and even a health and wellbeing week each half term, during which all meetings are cancelled. In short, we take care to care.

HSAT Central Team

As an employee at HSAT, you will benefit from our extensive and expert Central Team who are predominantly based at the Abbey Hill site. The Central Team deliver leadership, finance, estates, business operations, Safeguarding, HR, Governance and IT expertise to our academies with the intention of making it easier for others to do their job. Our Central Team work in partnership with our academy leaders to ensure that support is tailored to the needs of each academy.

Furthermore, we follow the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, the National Joint Council guidelines and recognise the continuity of service for all employees joining HSAT to ensure that our employees are looked after well compared with others in different settings.

What do others say about HSAT?

Ofsted Summary Evaluation October 2022

"Trust leaders endeavour to provide pupils with 'infinite opportunities' as outlined in the trust's vision. They speak with purpose about how all adults want the very best for each pupil.

Leaders and staff who have joined the trust recently describe high levels of satisfaction with the process. Staff received regular updates and were supported by the trust to understand clearly any new ways of working and the trust's policies.

There are established, professional development opportunities available to teaching and support staff. Staff actively seek to improve their own practice. Trust leaders willingly support staff to do so. A range of staff across the trust have gained accreditation to support them in their role or gained practical experience which helps them to provide stronger support for pupils.

Staff support effectively those pupils who have a wide range of needs. Some pupils' behaviour can be unpredictable. Staff are steadfast in their resolve to support each pupil as best they can. Staff have the pupil information they need and are trained well to deal with the situations that arise. Leaders provide swift and effective support for staff to manage pupils' behaviour.

Trust leaders are outward facing. They strive to ensure all pupils receive the best education possible to help improve their attitudes to school and learning in general.

Safeguarding was judged to be effective in all inspections completed as part of stage one of this summary evaluation. The trust has appointed safeguarding leaders who are knowledgeable and have the skills and time to support staff and pupils' safeguarding needs. Trust leaders with responsibility for safeguarding know pupils and their families well. They know who the most vulnerable pupils are. In addition, safeguarding leaders know their communities, the localities and the risks pupils may encounter in detail. They provide safeguarding training and regular updates for staff. Staff feel confident and have the skills to support pupils. They have the confidence and expertise to amend the safeguarding curriculum in each school further to ensure it meets the needs of each cohort, should emerging risks be identified".

Investors in People November 2022

“Your people are hugely motivated by the fact that they are making a difference to young people’s lives and life opportunities... There was a lovely working atmosphere at your academies. It was great to arrive at some of your sites at 8.30am and see your staff logging in, full of enthusiasm.

People are very values-driven and a large proportion of people would challenge behaviours that sit outside the Trust values.

Relationships between Teachers and classroom support roles are mutually beneficial and supportive. How you work as a team is a strength, recognising when a team member needs to take a break and walk away from a situation. How you coach people to support each other in this way.

Your Academy model provides an instant network for schools that may have felt more isolated as part of a local authority. There’s a refreshing level of honesty and willingness to admit to mistakes. Due to the nature of the work, you all need to make judgement calls every day and react to situations. There was no sense of a blame culture at all. You drive change through your organisation in a meaningful way; it’s purposeful and it’s given time to ‘bed in’.

Your people engage with CPD and become sought-after experts, developing relationships with external partners that are mutually beneficial to the Trust.”

What do our staff say about HSAT?

“Everyone’s open to new ideas here. Everyone’s ideas are valuable”.

“I just absolutely love it. I never go home thinking ‘thank god that day is over’. I am just so content with the job. Opportunities come up if I am interested. The people I work with are amazing.”

“The training and career opportunities are really good. It was a small school before. I said I would like to progress my career and that’s happened.”

“Professionalism and integrity; it feels like a professional organisation to work for.”

“I love my job and feel very well supported. I couldn’t have asked for anything more as an employee. I am quite overwhelmed by the level of support.”

“We make people feel welcome; new staff and supply teachers; they get the supportive culture immediately. People come on supply and like it, because of the way we are with each other. You don’t get the cliques here like you get in other schools. It comes from the top.”

“I value the team. It’s a really supportive trust, I know people have got my back, there is a lot of responsibility in this role. Here, there is a collective responsibility that I didn’t have in my last job. The Trustees are good at recognising success. They’re challenging though. It’s about ‘How can we do more and do it better?’”

“The staff and the support we give each other is what makes this a good place to work. It’s especially important in a SEMH setting. It can be quite wearing, but everyone empathises.”

“The school itself-It’s the best place I have ever worked in. The leadership tea- I have never worked anywhere before where I wouldn’t jump if someone came in the classroom. Here, I don’t jump.”

“There’s trust and integrity. They trust me to do my job and people are interested in what I am doing. People tell me I am good at my job.”

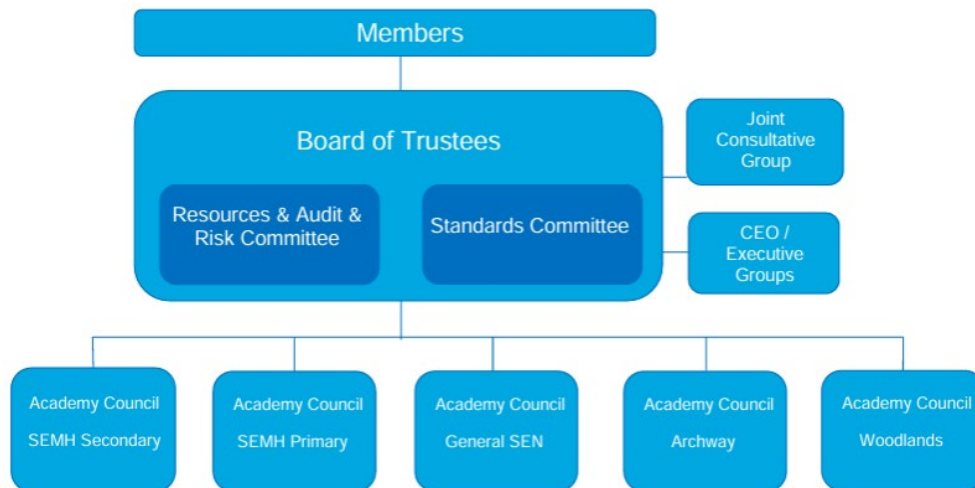
“Seeing the kids happy and seeing them growing up, that’s what matters!”

Our Governance Structure

Our Board of Trustees consists of 10 Trustees (including the CEO). The Board has collective accountability and strategic responsibility for the Trust. It has a focus on ensuring the Trust delivers an excellent education to pupils while maintaining effective financial management and ensuring compliance with the Trust's charitable objects; regulatory, contractual and statutory requirements and the funding agreement.

Trustees monitor progress of our strategic plan and hold executive leaders to account.

Local Governance is achieved through our Academy Councils (one per academy). The Trust's Academy Councils advise the Trust Board, through the Standards Committee, on matters relating to individual academy provision and achievement. The Academy Council meetings hold the Principal and senior leaders to account for delivery of key aspects of the Trust’s strategic plan and academy-level action plans.



Our Academies:

	Age Range	Needs	Local Authority	Number on Roll	Ofsted rating
Abbey Hill (plus Sixth Form)	11-19	MLD, SLD, CLD, PMLD, Autism	Stockton	367	Good
Archway	11-16	PRU	Redcar and Cleveland	89	Good
Green Gates	5-11	SEMHD	Stockton	55	Good
Hollis	11-16	SEMHD	Middlesbrough	89	Good
The Meadows <i>(joined 1/2/25)</i>	11-16	SEMHD	Durham	75	Requires Improvement
Mo Mowlam	5-16	SEMHD	Redcar and Cleveland	102	Good
Westlands	11-16	SEMHD	Stockton	85	Good
Woodlands	2-16	MLD, SLD, CLD, PMLD, Autism	North Yorkshire	138	Good

Key Details

Role	Principal
Location	Spennymoor, County Durham
Closing Date	Noon, 2 nd May 2025
Interviews	TBC
Induction & handover	ASAP, depending on availability of successful candidate
Start Date	September 2025
Salary & Benefits	L21 – L27 £81,441 to £94,332 per annum
Working Hours	You will be expected to work the hours to meet the demands of the post. It is recognised there will be fluctuations with this work especially during school term time.
Holidays	Your holidays coincide with periods of school holidays and public holidays, details of which will be notified to you by the Trust from time to time. You will be paid your normal salary during these closure periods, unless you are receiving less than full salary arising from the application of the sick pay scheme, maternity scheme, etc.

Notice The appointment will be terminable by three months' notice in writing on either side, subject to successful completion of the probation period.

General The successful candidate will be required to complete medical forms and may undergo a full medical examination. The successful candidate will be required to provide proof of eligibility to work in the United Kingdom in accordance with the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, before employment may commence. An enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service will be requested in the event of a successful application.

Please read the information in this pack. If you are interested in any of our job opportunities, please apply by downloading the application form from our website www.horizonstrust.org.uk

Completed application forms should be emailed to HSATHR@horizonstrust.org.uk or posted to:
HR Department
Horizons Specialist Academy Trust
Ketton Road
Stockton on Tees
TS19 8BU

About the Role

Horizons Specialist Academy Trust consists of eight academies and one sixth form across the Tees Valley and North Yorkshire serving a population of approximately 1000 students aged 5 to 19 with a broad range of learning difficulties.

The Meadows Academy is situated in Spennymoor, Durham, and provides education for 75 pupils aged 11 to 16 years who have SEMHD as their identified primary need. The Meadows Academy has only recently joined the Trust in February 2025. Since that time, rapid progress towards improvement has been realised due to the commitment of the staff team, the positive direction of Leaders and the robust support from the Trust's Executive Principal.

The Trust is now looking for an experienced and inspirational senior leader for the post of Principal at The Meadows Academy. The successful candidate will be enthusiastic, dedicated and energetic in leading the academy in its continuing journey of school improvement. The Principal will be responsible for the overall management and leadership of the Academy, supported and challenged by the Executive Principal, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Executive.

Successful candidates will:

- Have significant experience of working with students with special educational needs, in particular SEMHD and associated learning difficulties.
- Be an outstanding and experienced leader and practitioner.
- Provide effective leadership in raising standards of attainment and achievement.
- Work collegiately to build on the strengths of the Academy and Trust.
- Be able to motivate staff that are fully engaged in the goal of achieving excellence in all areas of the Academy both personally and professionally.

The Trust can offer:

- An ambitious and proactive Chief Executive and Board of Trustees.
- An experienced and supportive Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Principal, and collegiate team of Trust Principals.



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- A committed and dedicated team of cross-Trust staff and services including Finance, HR, Admin and IT.
- Excellent systems and structures.
- A warm, friendly academy which provides a positive learning environment.
- Extensive and varied professional learning opportunities.
- A modern learning environment for students with SEMHD.
- Assistance with relocation expenses.

If you feel that you have the skills, vision and drive to lead The Meadows Academy in the next stage of our journey, we would very much like to hear from you. Please apply by downloading the application form from our website www.horizonstrust.org.uk. Completed application forms should be emailed to HSATHR@horizonstrust.org.uk

If you have any questions about the vacancy or would like to visit Horizons Specialist Academy Trust or one of our Academies, please don't hesitate to contact us by emailing HSATHR@horizonstrust.org.uk or by calling **01642 677113** and asking to speak to a member of the HR team.

This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore will be subject to an enhanced DBS check from the Disclosure and Barring Service. Please note – if you are shortlisted, you will be subject to an online search. This is not part of the shortlisting process, and you will have the opportunity at interview to address any issues of concern that come up during the search.

Job Description

Post: Principal - The Meadows Academy
Pay Range: L21 to L27
Responsible to: Executive Principal

Core Purpose:

- To work with the Executive Principal, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Executive to develop the direction of the Trust.
- To lead and manage the day to day efficient organisation of the secondary SEMHD provision at The Meadows Academy and ensure world class educational provision.
- To secure the Trust's mission of establishing leading edge culture within its provisions which is proactive in addressing key national policies and initiatives.
- To act as the Designated Safeguarding Officer for the Academy

Key Functions:

- Realise the full potential of every student by raising the expectations of parents, teachers and the students themselves.
- Ensure that learning and teaching is of the highest quality for students at all stages within the provision.
- Maintain an overview of the quality of teaching and learning; develop baseline measures and specify improvement targets linked to Performance Management arrangements.
- Celebrate the good achievement and performance of all members of the school community whilst also identifying and challenging underperformance.
- Develop policies, systems and activities which promote behaviour and attendance.
- Oversee and implement the performance management system agreed by the Board of Directors to ensure that the quality of learning and teaching improves year on year.
- Sustain effective performance management of staff within the provision and contribute to supporting the wider Trust staff.



- Work collaboratively with the Executive Leaders and key senior colleagues within the Trust to develop and implement a strategic plan which identifies targets and priorities to ensure high standards and an improving quality of education measured by the learning outcomes of students.
- Take responsibility across the Trust for an area of key importance e.g. continuing professional development, data analysis, behaviour management, and quality assurance – as designated by the Executive Principal.
- Develop senior leaders who can contribute to HSAT priorities.
- Ensure that all staff at The Meadows Academy are committed to the aims of the Trust and the specific objectives and targets identified for the secondary provision there.
- Develop and promote excellence across all key stages, building on current initiatives including the use of new technologies.
- Ensure that the management, organisation and administration of the provision at The Meadows Academy supports the vision and aims of the Trust and delivers appropriate outcomes for the students there.
- Ensure effective learning and the highest standards of progress, achievement and behaviour, building on inclusive practice and utilising ICT to ensure that personalised learning is embedded.
- Take a lead role in the Positive Handling policy.
- Coordinate and manage arrangements for internal exclusions with other colleagues.
- Organise and implement the curriculum and its assessment. Ensure through monitoring and development those areas in need of improvement.
- Monitor and evaluate teaching and learning and the progress and achievement of students, including the tracking of pupil progression, in order to set realistic targets for improvement.
- Develop effective links with external agencies including local, regional and national educational communities.
- Lead, motivate, support, challenge and develop the staff team within the provision at The Meadows Academy.
- Ensure clear delegation of tasks and responsibilities.
- Ensure all staff have opportunities for continuing professional and personal development to sustain their own motivation and that of other staff.
- Collaborate with senior colleagues and the Head of Estates and IT to ensure the effective management and organisation of accommodation.
- Monitor and review all available resources to ensure the enhancement of the quality of education and improved achievement and progression.
- Work in partnership with the Head of Finance (CFO) to ensure proper use of resources and best value.
- Work collaboratively with the Trust's Safeguarding Lead to develop policy and practice and to positively contribute to the Trust's Safeguarding Board to ensure effective practice within and beyond The Meadows Academy
- Collect data on achievement and be the lead coordinator of Recognition of Achievement events.
- Any other duties as directed by the Chief Executive commensurate with the role.

Accountability

- Provide reliable and detailed information to the Executive Principal Leaders based on sophisticated data collection and interpretation of student performance.
- Present accurate, up to date data and other information about the performance of the provision at The Meadows Academy in a form that is clearly and easily understood.
- Lead and develop a culture within which staff recognise that they are accountable to the Trust and its provision at The Meadows Academy
- Develop a culture of partnership working with all colleagues within the Trust.
- Contribute to ELT.



- Meet with the Executive Principal, and other Executive Leaders as requested to seek advice and views on a regular basis.
- Contribute to developing the HSAT Improvement Plan which will identify the priorities for service delivery and ensure these are reflected in the academy improvement plan for The Meadows Academy.
- Ensure that parents and students are well informed about the curriculum, attainment, achievement and progress.
- Create and maintain positive and effective partnerships with parents, thus supporting student achievement.
- Take responsibility for the achievement and progress of all students within the provision at The Meadows Academy
- Provide effective management of behaviour to support learning.
- Provide a regular newsletter for parents, the Chief Executive and the Board of Trustees.

Person Specification

Essential Criteria	Stage Identifier
Qualifications & Education:	
E1 - DfE recognised Teaching Qualification	AF/C
E2 - Senior Leadership qualification (NPQH/NPQSL)	AF/C
Experience:	
E3 - Evidence of successful experience as a senior leader, including leading school improvement projects	AF/I/R
E4 - Evidence of successful teaching experience	AF/I/R
E5 - Experience of managing change at a senior leadership level	AF/I/R
E6 - Experience of working in a SEND and/or SEMHD setting at a senior level	AF/I/R
E7 - Experience and evidence of working effectively with children and young people who have special educational needs.	AF/I/R
Leadership Experience:	
E8 - Clear understanding of strategic planning for school improvement	AF/I/R
E9 - Experience of rigorous school self-evaluation leading to school improvements and accounting for school effectiveness to the Board of Directors and stakeholders.	AF/I/R
E10 - Ability to inspire, challenge and motivate others to work towards common goals through establishing, developing and maintaining a culture of co-operation and teamwork	I/R

E11 - Experience of using data analysis to raise attainment	AF/I/R
E12 - Ability to model effective practice in learning and teaching	I/R
E13 - Experience of monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching, learning and the standards achieved by students and using the findings to inform planning in order to raise achievement	AF/I/R
E14 - Experience of leading, challenging and developing staff to secure improvement	AF/I/R
E15 - Ability to build and maintain effective relationships with parents/carers and other stakeholders.	AF/I/R
E16 - Experience of dealing with, and knowledge of the safeguarding arrangements for children demonstrating your commitment to safeguarding.	AF/I/R
E17 - Experience of working in partnership with a range of external organisations and agencies	AF/I/R
Skills:	
E18 - Excellent negotiation and presentation skills (oral and written)	AF/I
E19 - A clear vision and understanding of the needs of students with special needs	AF/I
E20 - Knowledge of the structure and content of the curriculum for post 16 students as well as alternative curricular/vocational opportunities	AF/I/R
E21 - Specialist knowledge of a range of special needs and the impact on inclusion	AF/I
E22 - Able to plan strategically and be decisive	AF/I/R
E23 - Understand how to set targets for improvement and establish action plans to ensure targets are met	AF/I/R
E24 - Knowledge and understanding of the Academy budget, its application and monitoring with the ability to evaluate and review cost effectiveness of financial decisions	AF/I/R

E25 - Knowledge of School Improvement Partnerships and the Inspection Framework.	AF/I/R
E26 - Ability to de-escalate challenging situations and respond appropriately	I/R
Personal Attributes:	
E27 - Ability to inspire, motivate and innovate	AF/I/R
E28 - Presence, integrity, creativity and resilience	I
E29 - Ability to prioritise, plan and organise	AF/I/R
E30 - Ability to communicate clearly and deal sensitively with people	I
E31 - A commitment to equal opportunities, inclusion and multi-cultural education.	AF/I
E32 - Calm and caring nature in dealing with the challenges of the role	I/R
E33 - Capacity to make difficult, but fair and objective, decisions in the interests of children and young people.	AF/I
E34 - A commitment to serving the needs of young people with SEND & SEMHD.	I
Special Requirements:	
E35 - Emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours and attitudes to use of authority and maintaining discipline	I/R

Desirable Criteria	Stage Identifier
Qualifications & Education:	
D1 - Qualification in SEND	AF/C
Experience:	
D2 - Teaching experience at Key Stage 5	AF/I/R

D3 - Experience of leadership in more than one establishment	AF/I
D4 - Experience of working in a Multi-academy Trust.	AF/I
Leadership Experience:	
D5 - Experience of leading and developing transition	AF/I/R
D6 - Experience of developing new opportunities to extend learning	AF/I/R
Skills:	
D7 - Able to attract and use effectively sources of external funding	AF/I/R

NOTE: The person specification is related to the key accountabilities of the post as determined by the job description. Shortlisting is carried out on the basis of how well you meet the requirements of the person specification. You should refer to these requirements when completing your application.

The post is subject to a clear Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Check. Issues arising from references will be taken up at interview; all appointments are subject to satisfactory references.

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



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Abbey Hill Academy



Abbey Hill Academy Sixth
Form



ARCHWAY
ACADEMY
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