



**Secondary Headteacher
Bridgwater College Academy
Applicant Information Pack**

Why Bridgwater College Academy? Why now?

Bridgwater College Academy (BCA) is on a demanding and important improvement journey. We are proud of the progress already made, and we are equally clear-eyed about the work that still lies ahead. This role exists because the Academy is at a pivotal moment: the next phase of leadership will determine whether improvement becomes fully embedded, consistent and sustainable.

This is not a role for a leader seeking comfort, stability without challenge, or incremental change. It is an opportunity for a values-driven, resilient and strategically minded senior leader to shape the next chapter of the secondary phase in Somerset's only all-through school, serving a community where education can be genuinely life-changing.

The Secondary Headteacher will be entrusted with leading significant cultural and educational improvement, supported by a Trust with deep experience of working in complex contexts. The journey ahead will be steep at times, but it is purposeful, morally compelling and fully supported.



Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Secondary Headteacher at **Bridgwater College Academy**.

Bridgwater College Academy (BCA) is a school with real potential and a strong sense of purpose. It serves a diverse community and plays an important role in the lives of children and families in Bridgwater. As a former headteacher, I believe deeply that the quality of leadership in a school is the single most important factor in securing great outcomes for young people. Standards matter. Culture matters. Above all, students must be at the heart of everything we do.

Over recent years, the Academy has had several changes in leadership which has not provided the stability that is required. Consequently, we are honest with ourselves and know that standards at BCA are not yet where they need to be. However, you will be fortunate enough to lead a hard-working team of staff and a talented senior leadership team.

This role exists because we are looking for a leader of people with a strong track record of school improvement – someone who can build trust, develop others, and make difficult decisions in the best interests of children.



The next Secondary Headteacher will need to combine compassion with high expectations, and strategic thinking with a willingness to engage in the operational realities of school life.

You will work closely with me and with colleagues across the Trust. You will have professional support, challenge and space to lead – but you will also be expected to set a clear direction, hold others to account and drive improvement at pace where needed. This is a role for someone who understands that sustainable success is built through strong relationships, clear standards and relentless focus on learning.

If you are motivated by the opportunity to make a genuine difference, to lead in a complex and rewarding context, and to leave a lasting legacy for a community, then I would be delighted to hear from you.

If you would like an initial conversation about this opportunity, please contact me directly on 07730 218 898 or to arrange a visit to BCA, please contact Karen Budd, Executive Assistant at karen.budd@btc-trust.org.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'M Thomas'.

Mark Thomas

Chief Executive Officer
Bridgwater & Taunton College Trust

Welcome from Sarah Evans, Primary Headteacher



Thank you for your interest in joining us at Bridgwater College Academy.

I joined the Academy in September 2025 as Headteacher of Primary, bringing with me over 18 years' experience across Somerset and Devon, spanning Early Years through to Key Stage 3. Throughout my career, I have been driven by one core belief: that every child deserves an excellent education, delivered with high expectations, strong pastoral care and a deep understanding of their individual needs.

Since joining BCA, my focus has been clear — securing consistently strong standards, strengthening the quality of teaching and curriculum, and ensuring that the systems and culture within our school enable every pupil to thrive. School improvement is not an abstract concept for us; it is visible in classrooms, reflected in pupil outcomes, and felt in the confidence of our staff and families.

As a leader with a strong safeguarding and early help background, I am deeply committed to ensuring that inclusion and high standards go hand in hand. I am currently completing the NPQSEN qualification to further develop our inclusive practice, ensuring that all children — particularly those with additional needs — are supported to achieve their very best.

Our through-school structure provides a unique and powerful opportunity. Close collaboration between primary and secondary phases is essential if we are to build a seamless educational journey for our young people.



We are looking for a Secondary Headteacher who shares our ambition: someone who will champion high expectations, strengthen teaching and learning, and work in true partnership across phases to secure exceptional outcomes for every student.

This is an exciting moment in our improvement journey. If you are motivated by the opportunity to make a tangible difference, to lead with integrity and clarity, and to build a culture where standards and care are equally strong, we very much look forward to hearing from you.

S L Evans

Sarah Evans

Headteacher – Primary Phase
Bridgwater College Academy

Bridgwater College Academy



Bridgwater College Academy (BCA) sits at the heart of the Sydenham community on the eastern side of Bridgwater. It is a large, all-through campus providing education from early years to GCSE, and serves approximately 1,500 pupils across nursery, primary and secondary phases.

As Somerset's only all-through school, BCA offers a unique model of education. Children benefit from continuity of care, learning and relationships across phases, with fewer barriers caused by transition between schools. This enables a coherent curriculum journey, stronger pastoral understanding and a more holistic view of

each child's progress, wellbeing and potential.

The Academy also hosts a specialist base provision for pupils with additional needs, including autism and language and communication difficulties, reinforcing its inclusive ethos and commitment to meeting the needs of a diverse community.

The Sydenham community

BCA serves a community with significant social and economic challenges, but also strong pride, resilience and aspiration. Many families have historically experienced barriers to educational success, making the work of the Academy both demanding and deeply meaningful.



Staff invest heavily in relationships with pupils and families. The Academy plays a central role in community life, offering stability, opportunity and a sense of belonging for children and young people. For leaders, teachers and all support staff, this context provides the opportunity to make a genuine and lasting difference to life chances.

Leadership structure

BCA operates through a strong all-through leadership model, with clear leadership across phases and a shared strategic direction. The holder of this role will work closely with the Headteacher of the Primary phase and be supported by the Secondary Academy Leadership Team inclusive of a Senior Deputy, Deputies and Assistant Headteachers each with a portfolio area of responsibility for school operations and improvement.

This structure supports both phase expertise and whole-school coherence, enabling leaders to work collaboratively on curriculum, culture and improvement priorities.

Inspection and performance context

In its most recent inspection in 2023, the Academy achieved Good judgements for Behaviour and Attitudes, Personal Development, Leadership and Management, and Early Years. It also received a Requires Improvement judgement for Quality of Education, resulting in an overall judgement of *Requires Improvement*.



Since that inspection, the Academy has not had the stability of leadership that it requires and therefore outcomes in both phases remain a key strategic priority, with a clear focus on improving consistency of curriculum implementation, pupil engagement, behaviour and assessment practice.

Why work at Bridgwater College Academy?

BCA offers a rare and compelling professional opportunity.

For leaders, it is a chance to:

- Lead in a genuinely all-through environment
- Work alongside our Primary Headteacher to shape long-term improvement from early years to GCSE
- Develop leadership capacity across the Secondary phase
- Work within a strong Trust that provides support, challenge and system expertise

Above all, BCA is a school where people come because they want their work to mean something. It is a place for professionals who believe in high standards, social mobility and the power of education to change lives.

The improvement journey

We believe that strong leaders are attracted by honesty, clarity and purpose. This role is about embedding and accelerating improvement, not starting from scratch.

What has already been secured

- Review and development of systems to promote a culture of positive behaviour and inclusion
- Improved leadership alignment and clearer lines of accountability
- Strengthened teaching and learning expectations
- Increased professional collaboration and shared practice
- Strong Trust involvement and system support

What the next phase requires

- Strengthened systems and collective accountability to secure sustained improvement in behaviour, inclusion and attendance
- Greater consistency in the quality of teaching across all phases
- Continued improvement in outcomes for disadvantaged and vulnerable learners
- Further development of middle and senior leadership capacity
- Sharper use of assessment and feedback to drive learning
- Embedding high expectations as the everyday norm



What success will look like

In the next 2–3 years, under strong executive leadership, BCA will be:

- A place where students feel safe and cared for
- Consistently at 'Expected Standard' across all inspection areas

- A school where curriculum intent is clearly translated into classroom practice; where teaching is accessible and challenging for all
- A setting with confident, stable and highly effective leadership at all levels
- A community-trusted school known for both care and outcomes
- A contributor of leadership capacity and expertise across the Trust

The support you will have

- Close professional partnership with the Trust CEO and Director of School Improvement, Director of Inclusion and Executive Leads for Curriculum, Teaching & Learning and Behaviour & Attendance
- Direct access to the Trust's central school improvement function, including professionals qualified in Speech and Language Therapy, SEND practice and counselling.
- Executive coaching and leadership development
- Peer collaboration with experienced leaders across the Trust, joining a network of 7 other Headteachers.
- Additional capacity during key improvement or inspection phases

To find out more about the Academy, visit the website at:

www.bridgwatercollegeacademy.org

About the Bridgwater & Taunton College Trust

The Bridgwater & Taunton College Trust (BTC Trust) is a dynamic and ambitious multi-academy trust dedicated to transforming lives through education. We exist with one clear legal and moral purpose: **to ensure every child achieves.**

Formed in 2012 with the creation of Bridgwater College Academy and the support of our sponsor, University Centre Somerset College Group (known then as Bridgwater & Taunton College), the Trust was founded on a belief that education has the power to change communities. Being the first school, BCA brought together three predecessor schools that had struggled historically, and through a radical redesign of provision, strong leadership and shared moral purpose, became Somerset's only all-through school.



Over the past decade, the Trust has grown to serve over 4,500 students across multiple schools and phases, from early years through to post-16. We are proud to work in diverse and vibrant communities across Somerset, including areas of significant deprivation as well as rural and coastal contexts. This diversity is a strength, shaping our understanding of inclusion, equity and opportunity.

Our Mission: Every Child Achieves



At BTC Trust, our mission is simple but uncompromising: **Every Child Achieves.**

This reflects our unwavering belief that every learner has the right to a high-quality education and the opportunity to fulfil their potential, regardless of background or circumstance. Whether through outstanding teaching, targeted support for those who need it most, or the creation of inclusive cultures that celebrate individuality, we are committed to ensuring that no child is left behind.

Every decision we make, every policy we implement and every action we take is driven by this mission. We work relentlessly to remove barriers to success and to create meaningful pathways for achievement, aspiration and wellbeing for all our students.

Our Vision and Values

Our vision is to deliver education that **inspires, includes and equips young people for lifelong success**. This is realised through our three core values:



Ambitious



Collaborative



Inclusive

Ambitious

We set high expectations for our students, our staff and our schools. We believe in the power of education to change lives and we are determined to make a meaningful difference for all our learners.

Collaborative

We work as one team. We share openly, learn from one another and believe that improvement is strongest when it is collective. No school in our Trust works in isolation; we succeed and improve together.

Inclusive

We embrace and celebrate diversity. We are committed to equity and to ensuring that every child and colleague feels valued, supported and able to succeed. We actively work to remove barriers to achievement and to create opportunity for all.

These values are not aspirational slogans; they are lived daily across our schools and underpin our approach to leadership, improvement and partnership.

Our Schools and Communities

BTC Trust schools reflect the rich and varied contexts of Somerset. From market towns to rural villages, our schools serve students with a wide range of talents, aspirations and challenges.

Our schools are not simply places of learning – they are **hubs of support, belonging and opportunity**. We work closely with families, employers, local authorities and community organisations to provide a holistic education that goes beyond academic outcomes, supporting young people to thrive socially, emotionally and personally.

A Commitment to Excellence

We believe that every child deserves an exceptional education. Our staff are passionate, skilled and deeply committed to ensuring that students are nurtured, challenged and inspired every day.

Through high-quality teaching, evidence-informed practice and a relentless focus on improvement, we strive to deliver strong outcomes for all students while also developing creativity, resilience and critical thinking. We place particular emphasis on supporting disadvantaged learners, pupils with SEND and those at risk of disengagement.

A Partner in the Community

BTC Trust sees itself as an anchor organisation within Somerset. We work collaboratively with civic partners, health services and employers to address challenges such as disadvantage, rural isolation and access to opportunity.

Our schools contribute not only to educational outcomes, but to the wider social and economic wellbeing of the communities we serve.

Looking to the Future

We are proud of what we have achieved, but we are not complacent. We remain ambitious for our schools, our colleagues and our communities and are currently working with other Trusts in the Somerset area in order to develop strong partnership working links for knowledge and resource sharing.

With a continued focus on leadership development, innovation, inclusion and sustainability, we are building a Trust that is resilient, principled and outward-facing.

By joining BTC Trust, you become part of a system that believes in the power of education to **transform lives, strengthen communities and create lasting social impact.**

The opportunity

The role of Secondary Headteacher at Bridgwater College Academy is a significant and professionally meaningful opportunity for an experienced and values-driven leader. This is a system leadership role with real depth:



leading a large, all-through school serving a diverse community, at a point where strong foundations are in place and the next phase of improvement is both necessary and achievable.

At its core, this role is about leading people and culture. You will be responsible for shaping the strategic direction of the Academy, developing leadership capacity at all levels, and ensuring that high expectations for behaviour,

attendance, teaching and learning are consistently realised in practice. This is not a remote or purely strategic post – it requires visible, relational leadership and a willingness to engage with the realities of school life.

What makes this an exciting opportunity?

Bridgwater College Academy is at a pivotal point in its journey. The Academy is in the early stages of strengthening culture, improving behaviour and clarifying expectations around teaching and leadership. There is a clear improvement plan, strong Trust support and a committed leadership team in place. The next stage is about embedding consistency, accelerating progress and securing sustained excellence across all phases.

For the right leader, this is an opportunity to:

- shape long-term improvement
- build a confident, high-performing leadership team
- develop a culture of professional accountability and collaboration
- and leave a lasting legacy for a whole community



You will be working within a Trust that values honesty, professional trust and collective responsibility. You will have autonomy to lead, alongside strong challenge and support, and access to system-wide expertise in school improvement.

What will the role involve?

As Secondary Headteacher, you will:

- Lead the Academy Leadership Team and set clear strategic direction.
- Be accountable for behaviour, attendance, outcomes and quality of education.
- Develop senior and middle leaders, building sustainable leadership capacity.
- Ensure that curriculum intent is translated into strong classroom practice.
- Work closely with the Trust, governors and community partners.
- Champion the Trust values of ambition, collaboration and inclusion in everything you do.

This is a role that requires sound judgement, resilience and the ability to make difficult decisions in the best interests of children, while maintaining strong relationships and a positive professional culture.



Who is this role for?

We are seeking a leader who:

- Has a strong track record of school improvement.
- Is credible, visible and trusted by staff.
- Enjoys working in complex, diverse contexts.
- Is motivated by purpose rather than prestige.
- Believes that leadership is about service, not status.

This role will suit someone who wants to build something meaningful, not simply inherit something finished; someone who understands that sustainable success comes from developing people, embedding high expectations and staying relentlessly focused on what matters most: children's learning and wellbeing.

Why this role matters

The Secondary Headteacher at Bridgwater College Academy will shape the life chances of hundreds of young people every year. The impact of this role will be felt not only in inspection outcomes and data, but in confidence, aspiration, behaviour and opportunity for a whole community.

This is a role for a leader who believes that education is a moral endeavour – and who wants their leadership to make a real, lasting difference.

Benefits of Joining BTC Trust

At BTC Trust, we prioritise your wellbeing, professional growth, and work-life balance. Our staff enjoy access to an **Employee Assistance Programme**, **BTC TrustEd Rewards** for discounts at thousands of retailers, and **discounted gym memberships** at Bridgwater College Academy, Stanchester Academy, and West Somerset College. Financial benefits include access to the **TPS pension scheme** with generous a minimum of 28.68% in employer contributions and **Cycle to Work schemes**.

We offer a **generous annual leave entitlement** for year-round staff, **Occupational Health support**, and **mental health first aiders** at every site. Flexible working opportunities are available from day one, and we provide targeted **training and leadership development programmes** alongside regular chances to share views through **Staff Forums** and surveys.

At BTC Trust, we are committed to supporting you as part of a positive and inclusive team dedicated to transforming lives through education.

Why Somerset is the Perfect Place to Live and Work

Somerset is a stunning county in the heart of the South West, offering a perfect balance between vibrant towns, picturesque villages, and breathtaking countryside. Famous for its rolling hills, such as the Mendips and Quantocks, as well as the iconic Glastonbury Tor, Somerset is a haven for outdoor enthusiasts. The county boasts a rich cultural heritage, with historic landmarks like Wells Cathedral and Cheddar Gorge, alongside a thriving arts and festival scene, including the world-renowned Glastonbury Festival. Somerset offers excellent transport links, with the M5 providing easy access to Bristol, Exeter, and beyond, while the peaceful surroundings make it ideal for families and those seeking a slower pace of life. With outstanding schools, welcoming communities, and an affordable cost of living compared to neighbouring areas, Somerset is not just a beautiful place to visit—it's an inspiring and rewarding place to call home.



The role



Secondary Headteacher – Bridgwater College Academy

The success of the Bridgwater and Taunton College Trust will be underpinned by two fundamental beliefs:

Students come first: First and foremost, the purpose of the Trust is to enable students to achieve their potential, and it is this principle that drives how we make decisions and how we act. It is expected that anyone who joins or forms part of the Trust shares this philosophy.

We are team players: Whilst every colleague has a specific role to fulfil, we expect all staff to communicate with compassion, treat others with positive regard, collaborate and behave with professionalism. In our colleagues we seek energy, passion, initiative and cooperation, as well as acting in a way that promotes a positive image of the Trust in the wider community.

Our values

We are ambitious, collaborative and inclusive.

We believe that every role contributes to our students achieving. We are a values driven organisation and strongly feel a shared sense of purpose. We behave in a way that puts our students at the forefront of our actions and decision making, we champion equality of opportunity and respect our colleagues, our students and our community. We believe passionately that all individuals are entitled to learn and should be encouraged to do so.

Core Purpose

The Secondary Headteacher is accountable for the strategic and operational leadership of the Secondary phase at Bridgwater College Academy, including direct leadership of senior and middle leaders responsible for standards, curriculum, behaviour and pastoral provision.

The core purpose of the role is to secure sustained and measurable improvement in pupil outcomes, quality of education and leadership capacity across Key Stages 3 and 4, ensuring that all pupils achieve highly, regardless of starting point.

Working in strategic partnership with the Primary Headteacher and in collaboration with the Trust Executive Leadership Team, the role is responsible for translating Trust and Academy priorities into clear, deliverable actions, driving accountability at all levels and ensuring that agreed strategic objectives are achieved.

The postholder will embed a culture of high expectations, professional integrity and continuous improvement so that the Academy consistently aspires to and achieves the highest standards for pupils and staff.

Main Responsibilities

The responsibilities of this role could vary as a result of new legislation, changes in technology or policy changes. This job description is not an exhaustive list of tasks of the role

Strategic Leadership of the Secondary Phase

- Lead the design, implementation and annual review of a robust Secondary Phase Improvement Plan aligned to the Academy Development Plan and Trust strategy, with clearly defined success criteria, milestones and named leadership accountability.
- In partnership with the Primary Headteacher, secure demonstrable curriculum continuity, transition quality and pastoral alignment between phases, evidenced through improved transition data, pupil feedback and reduced Year 7 variation in outcomes.
- Develop and maintain rigorous performance data covering attainment, progress, attendance, behaviour, exclusions, safeguarding trends and staff development, ensuring timely intervention where indicators fall below agreed thresholds.
- Set ambitious but realistic performance targets for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, ensuring year-on-year improvement in headline measures including Progress 8, attainment, entries and pass rates, attendance and persistent absence.
- Lead regular reviews with senior and middle leaders, ensuring underperformance is identified early and addressed through clear action planning.
- Contribute actively to Trust strategic planning, ensuring secondary priorities influence and align with Trust-wide improvement and resource decisions.

- Model visible, values-led leadership that builds trust, clarity and professional confidence across the Secondary Phase.

Leadership of Standards and School Improvement

- Secure measurable improvement in pupil progress and attainment across subjects and key groups, with clear intervention strategies where outcomes are below national or Trust benchmarks.
- Hold senior and middle leaders to account through structured performance management processes, regular impact reviews and agreed improvement milestones.
- Ensure subject and pastoral leaders have clear role definitions, performance indicators and access to high-quality professional development and networks.
- Lead regular quality assurance activity (lesson visits, work scrutiny, curriculum reviews, pupil voice, data analysis), ensuring findings translate into tangible improvement actions.
- Embed a culture of professional learning where evidence-informed practice leads to improved teaching consistency across departments.
- Reduce variation in outcomes between subjects and pupil groups year on year.

Teaching, Curriculum and Inclusion

- Ensure the Secondary curriculum is coherently sequenced from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 (and beyond), with clear curriculum intent, implementation and impact documentation in every subject.
- Secure consistently high-quality teaching, evidenced through internal quality assurance, pupil outcomes and staff feedback.
- Ensure assessment systems are valid, reliable and proportionate, enabling accurate tracking of pupil progress and timely intervention.
- Increase attendance and reduce persistent absence through targeted strategy and robust monitoring systems.
- Reduce behaviour incidents, suspensions and exclusions through consistent implementation of behaviour systems and proactive pastoral leadership.
- Ensure disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND and other vulnerable groups make progress in line with or exceeding national averages.
- Oversee effective transition arrangements so that Year 7 pupils demonstrate strong engagement, attendance and early progress indicators.

Operational and Resource Leadership

- Manage delegated Secondary Phase budgets effectively, ensuring expenditure is demonstrably linked to school improvement priorities and delivers value for money.
- Ensure staffing structures are aligned to curriculum delivery and improvement needs, with clear succession planning in place.

- Lead robust performance management processes, ensuring all staff have clear objectives linked to pupil outcomes and professional standards.
- Monitor staff workload and wellbeing indicators, taking action where patterns of concern emerge.
- Ensure full compliance with safeguarding, health and safety and statutory requirements, with no material breaches.
- Contribute to Trust policy development and ensure consistent implementation across the Secondary Phase.

Governance, Accountability and Reporting

- Provide termly written and verbal reports to the Local Governing Body and Trust Board on standards, behaviour, attendance, safeguarding, staffing and financial performance.
- Present clear evaluation of progress against improvement priorities, including risk analysis and mitigation strategies.
- Support governors in understanding performance data and improvement strategies within the Secondary Phase

Safeguarding, Welfare and Culture

- Maintain a strong safeguarding culture evidenced through compliance audits, staff training completion rates and effective case management.
- Ensure safeguarding concerns are acted upon promptly and appropriately, with effective liaison with external agencies.
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion, ensuring no systemic disadvantage for any pupil group.
- Model professional conduct, integrity and collaborative leadership at all times.

Other Duties

- To attend mandatory training courses, e.g., Child Protection, Equal Opportunities and Health and Safety related courses
- To promote and celebrate an approach of equality, diversity and inclusion for all colleagues, students and external stakeholders.
- Responsible for the health and safety of themselves and others
- Responsible for the safeguarding of and promotion of wellbeing for both children and colleagues
- To be a team player and contribute towards the vision, culture and ethos of the Trust
- From time to time you may be required to carry out other duties commensurate with the role.

Person specification

Area to be assessed	Essential criteria	Desirable criteria
Safeguarding	Must be able to demonstrate a commitment to the safeguarding and well-being of children and young people.	
Qualifications/Experience	<p>Bachelor's Degree</p> <p>Qualified Teacher Status</p> <p>Substantial continued professional development in relevant management areas</p> <p>Experience in senior leadership role ideally in more than one school.</p> <p>Evidence of raising achievement and standards.</p> <p>Excellent classroom teaching skills and knowledge of current best practice in teaching.</p> <p>Successful leadership of diverse teams.</p> <p>Significant whole school responsibility.</p> <p>Successful experience of developing, planning and implementing change programmes.</p> <p>Excellent knowledge and understanding of Every Child Matters priorities.</p> <p>Success in fostering parental support for students' learning, attendance and behaviour.</p> <p>Experience of developing intrinsic student motivation.</p>	<p>NPQH (achieved or in progress)</p> <p>Master's degree or higher professional qualification.</p> <p>Leadership, line management and professional development of staff.</p> <p>Experience of promoting school activities within a community.</p>
Knowledge/Skills	Excellent knowledge and understanding of diversity and equality requirements.	

	<p>A clear vision and understanding of current educational developments.</p> <p>Ability to engage, motivate and inspire others.</p> <p>Ability to use data to set targets and track student progress.</p> <p>ICT skills to manage the requirements of the post with confidence.</p> <p>Awareness of the way in which developing technologies can impact upon teaching, learning, leadership and management</p>	
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