



Head of School

Candidate Pack



LARKS
HILL

JUNIOR & INFANT
SCHOOL



Welcome from the CEO

Welcome

Dear applicant,

Thank you for your interest in joining Pontefract Academies Trust. I hope the information in this candidate pack will interest you and help you with the application process. Pontefract Academies Trust is a cross-phase Multi Academy Trust comprising of seven primaries and two 11-16 secondary schools. Currently our schools are located within Pontefract and South Kirby, with pupils drawn from the local community including different catchment areas.

The Trust has a growing reputation across the region for school improvement. The turnaround in performance of all our schools sees our primary schools being some of the strongest in the country for attainment and progress. Our secondary provision is consistently above national averages. This performance is supported by school inspections in the last twelve months where Ofsted have graded three of our schools outstanding across the board. Additionally, three schools have received judgments where the evidence gathered suggested that the inspection grades might be outstanding if a graded inspection were carried out. Whilst we are proud of our achievements and the way we serve our communities, we also know there is more to do. Our work beyond Pontefract sees us carry out DFE commissioned school improvement support in the region, and we work closely with a large network of national, regional and local trust and wider stakeholders.

We are seeking to appoint someone who wants to make a difference. Being a leader at the Trust means being achievement focused, inclusive as well as being committed to the wider personal development of all our children and young people. You will marry this with an understanding the importance of the softer skills of leadership such as the ability to communicate well, collaborate and influence a range of internal and external stakeholders. Our school leaders embrace ownership and responsibility superbly and have a passion and a drive to do more for the communities that we serve.

I hope this introduction provides a sense of what we are about. Please take time to browse our Trust and school websites to gain more of a flavour. If the culture and ethos of the Trust resonates with you and you feel ready to join us on the next phase of our journey, we would love to hear from you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julian Appleyard'.

Julian Appleyard OBE
CEO





About Larks Hill Primary School

Larks Hill Junior and Infant School is a proud member of Pontefract Academies Trust. Larks Hill Junior and Infant School is a very popular and much sought after one-form entry primary school and is a high achieving school both locally and nationally. The number of pupils in each year group (Reception to Year 6) is limited to 30 with a capacity of 210 pupils. At Larks Hill we are committed to investing in all our children to prepare and provide them with the education and life skills they will need to be successful in high school and future careers.

The school ethos is based on the notion of mutual respect, and we encourage all those who attend the school, to demonstrate the highest standards of behaviour and personal presentation. The highest standards and expectations are in place for all children regardless of their starting point, as we are fully committed to ensuring the children receive an ambitious and challenging learning experience. This will provide them with every opportunity to realise their potential both inside and outside the classroom.

Our school mantra is for every child 'To be the very best version of themselves'. In 2023 and 2024, the school achieved an impressive 93% in reading, writing, and maths, with 39% of the 2024 cohort reaching greater depth in all three areas. This exceptional performance has earned Larks Hill both local and national recognition, including a place among the top ten highest achieving schools in Yorkshire and a ranking of 121st in the 2024 Times 500 Primary Schools in England list—placing it in the top 3% of primary schools nationwide. In March 2025, Ofsted rated Larks Hill as Outstanding in all five judgement areas, a testament to its unwavering commitment to excellence.

As a school it is vitally important that we are continually adapting our approach so as to ensure we are preparing and equipping our pupils with the very best skills and experiences. This will enable them to access success throughout their educational journey and when they enter the world of employment in the years to come. Our parents and carers are equally ambitious for their children and we pride ourselves on the relationships we build and maintain with the wider school community. The school promotes an 'open door' culture with regards to communication and this is something we are very proud of.

Student Values.

Teamwork

Pupils, staff and parents all work together to ensure that we achieve our goals.

Supportive

We treat everybody as we would expect to be treated ourselves.

Respectful

We respect each other's opinions, differences and talents.

Empowering

We encourage children to be independent learners, to make informed decisions and to assume positions of responsibility.

Resilience and Risk-Taking

We encourage children to challenge themselves, set high expectations for themselves and not fear making mistakes or a sense of failure.

Equality and Diversity

We accept each person for who they are without judgement. We extend a warm welcome to everyone who attends or visits our school.





About the Trust.

Achievement Without Excuses.

We have an unwavering focus on achievement. This is paramount so that all of our children and young people enjoy greater life chances.

We take responsibility for ensuring that they succeed. We own our own performance and do not rest on our laurels or seek to blame others.

Excellence As Standard.

We set high standards. "Good enough" is simply not. We do not accept second best from our students or ourselves.

The Trust aims to be a highly reliable school improvement organisation that is disciplined in its approach to improving performance. A Trust with clear plans and simple and precisely executed systems that not only develop and sustain excellent performance, but never stifle individual flair.

Stronger As One.

We take collective responsibility for each other and the results of all of our children and young people. We enjoy sharing our success as a Trust while recognising the strengths of individuals and each school. To this end, collective accountability is rooted in a "if one fails we all fail" mentality.

As a family of schools we collaborate with each other, challenge each other and share best practice. We do not let competition get in the way of our desire to get the best outcomes for all.

Our Mission.

Running top-quality, high-achieving schools that give our children and young people the chance in life they deserve.

Our Vision.

Where every child and young person makes outstanding progress.

Our People Matter.

We know that our people make a difference to the lives of our 3-16 year olds. We want to make our schools places where great teachers want to teach, lead and build a career. Investment in the recruitment, development and retention of the best people is a top priority.

We aim to provide professional work environments where our people have the support and tools to do a great job and push our children and young people to scale new heights in a safe and secure environment.

Students Come First.

Our schools are run for the benefit of children and young people, not the ease of adults. Their achievement comes first and staff in schools and the central Trust office work to this end.

The Trust aims to keep low priority tasks away from front line teachers and leaders so that they can focus explicitly on our core business of teaching and learning.

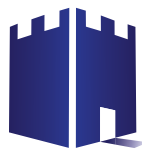
Our Schools.

The Pontefract Academies Trust family includes a range of schools across Pontefract. We provide education from nursery through to primary and then onto secondary.

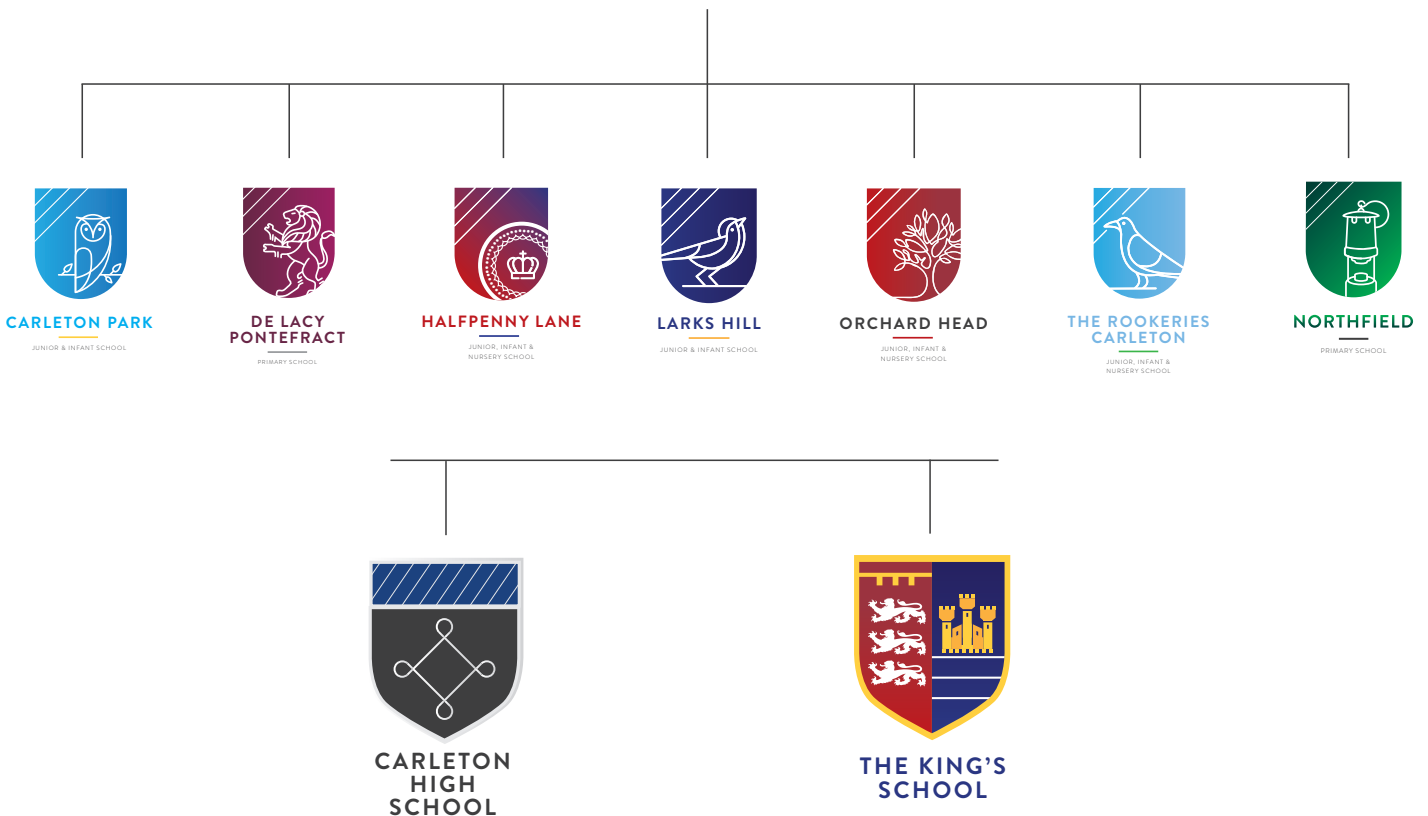
Each school is individual and responds to the needs of its local community to provide the best possible opportunity for its young people. However, being part of a Multi Academy Trust means each school can benefit from shared resources and systems that allow collaboration for the benefit of our children and young people.

9 SCHOOLS

ONE TRUST



PONTEFRACT
ACADEMIES TRUST



Head of School

Reporting to:	Executive Headteacher
Salary:	Leadership Pay Scale Range L13 – L17 £66,917 – £73,818
Term:	Permanent – Full time
School Base:	Larks Hill Primary and Junior School

Job Purpose Summary

The Head of School is responsible for providing an outstanding education for all students. They will work with the staff to establish outstanding teaching and learning and an excellent, nurturing school culture.

Key Responsibilities and Accountabilities

To provide leadership for, and management of, all staff and children and specifically to be accountable for:

- Teaching and learning
- Curriculum and assessment
- Staff and resources
- Behaviour and attitudes
- Personal development and the safeguarding of pupils

The postholder will be expected to promote the vision and values of the Pontefract Academies Trust as being enthusiastic, collaborative and forward-thinking with all stakeholders including Trustees, School Performance Review Board members, colleagues, pupils, parents, visitors and the local and wider community.

Leadership and management

- Work closely with the Executive Headteacher and the School Performance Review Board (SPRB) to develop a strategic view for the school in its community, analyse and plan for future needs and further develop the school within the local and national context;
- Lead and manage staff recruitment to ensure that staff of the highest standards are attracted, selected and retained within the Trust;
- Ensure exemplary professionalism from all staff;
- Instill an ethos of high expectations for behaviour and achievement of all children;
- Lead and manage staff professional development and training;
- Working with the Executive Headteacher lead the strategic development of the school and maintain/communicate this in the Self-Evaluation Form and School Improvement Plan;
- Maintain strong working relationships with the community, agencies and other stakeholders, including parents and the School Performance Review Board;
- Ensure all safeguarding policies and procedures fully meet the latest national guidelines and are published as required; ensure staff are all fully trained and aware of their responsibilities;

Teaching, Learning & Assessment

- Teach and support others in the teaching of engaging and effective lessons that motivate, inspire and improve pupil attainment and progress;
- Use and support others in using regular assessments to monitor progress and set targets, and respond accordingly to the results of such monitoring;
- Ensure that all pupils achieve at chronological age level, or, if well below level, make significant and continuing progress towards achieving at level;
- Maintain regular and productive communication with parents, to report on progress, sanctions and rewards and all other communications;
- Work with all senior leaders across the Trust to develop the school curriculum, teaching and learning policy and associated timetable;

Job description continued on next page

Job description continued

- Ensure that there exists and staff effectively use a robust tracking and target setting system for pupils in line with Pontefract Academies Trust's expectations;
- Ensure that regular and meaningful pupil progress reports are written and shared with both pupils and their families;
- Provide information and analysis of data collected according to the requirements of the self-review process each term (including Pontefract Academies Trust and School Performance Review Board).

Culture and ethos

- Maintain a strong school community, characterised by consistent, orderly behaviour and caring, respectful relationships;
- Maintain a school culture and ethos that is utterly committed to achievement and to developing high aspirations in line with the vision of Pontefract Academies Trust;
- Coach, motivate and mentor staff to build a school culture of commitment, high standards and drive for success;
- Develop and maintain strong partnerships and ensure regular and productive communication with parents.

Coordination and day to day management of estate and facilities

- Oversee school finance, facilities, catering, IT and other resources;
- Ensure robust operational systems;
- Oversee staffing allocation, including support staff, across the school;
- Ensure that the school can function while building work is taking place (if necessary).

Supporting the work of the MAT

- Develop and maintain the ethos of Pontefract Academies Trust so that it is intrinsic and permeates all aspects of the school's life and curriculum;
- Develop strong and positive relationships with colleagues in Pontefract Academies Trust, and contribute to collaborative work across the schools' cross phase.

Other duties and responsibilities

- Promote high standards of personal professional conduct and integrity in accordance with the Trust Employee Code of Conduct;
- Be aware of and comply with Trust policies and procedures including child protection, financial regulations, health and safety, safety and security, confidentiality and data protection;
- Contribute to the overall vision and values of the Trust;
- Appreciate and support the role of other professionals;
- Work effectively as part of a team;
- Attend and participate in relevant meetings as required;
- Be flexible and willing to work between different sites across the Trust as required.

Other reasonable duties commensurate with the grade of the post as directed by the CEO/Executive Headteacher.

These duties and responsibilities highlighted in the Job Description are indicative and may vary over time. Post holders are expected to undertake other duties and responsibilities relevant to the nature, level and scope of the post. The appointment is subject to the terms and conditions outlined in the Pontefract Academies Trust Contract of Employment.

The duties and responsibilities highlighted in this Job Specification are indicative and may vary over time. Post holders are expected to undertake other duties and responsibilities relevant to the nature, level and scope of the post and the grade has been established on this basis.

Person Specification.

No.	Categories	Essential or Desirable	Assessed by	
			Application Form	Interview or Task
Qualifications				
1.	Degree educated.	E	✓	
2.	Qualified Teacher Status.	E	✓	
3.	Evidence of continuous professional development.	E	✓	
4.	Qualified to teach and work in the UK.	E	✓	
Experience and Knowledge				
5.	Successful experience of senior leadership at assistant or deputy headteacher level.	E	✓	✓
6.	An outstanding classroom practitioner with the highest expectations for the welfare and progress of all pupils.	E	✓	✓
7.	Proven experience in the analysis of performance data for the purposes of target setting and evaluation.	E	✓	✓
8.	Experience of monitoring and improving the quality of teaching and learning.	E	✓	✓
9.	Have a thorough understanding of curriculum development.	E	✓	✓
Abilities and Skills				
10.	Knowledge of the professional teaching standards.	E	✓	✓
11.	Comprehensive knowledge of performance management requirements in an educational context.	E	✓	✓
12.	Ability to pursue challenging and rigorous questions and probe explanations.	E	✓	✓
13.	Lead, manage and co-ordinate staff through an effective team based approach.	E	✓	✓
14.	Emotional intelligence.	E	✓	✓
15.	Ability to monitor and evaluate the work of others; to offer support and intervention where necessary.	E	✓	✓
Personal Qualities				
16.	A strong belief in the value of education in developing citizens.	E	✓	✓
17.	Personal resilience, persistence and perseverance.	E	✓	✓
18.	Positive and optimistic.	E	✓	✓
19.	Highly approachable, very grounded and makes sensible judgements.	E	✓	✓
20.	Relishes accountability and takes personal responsibility for their own actions.	E	✓	✓
21.	Able to build trust and mutual respect between pupils, families and staff.	E	✓	✓
22.	Strong interpersonal, written and oral communication skills.	E	✓	✓

Employee Benefits.

We're passionate about employee benefits at Pontefract Academies Trust, offering the following as standard to all:



Exciting career and leadership pathways supported by outstanding CPD opportunities.



Everyday Development (EDD) Framework: A simple, personal and flexible goal-based approach to continuous learning, career growth and wellbeing.



For the 2025/26 academic year, we will be providing staff with three Everyday Development (EDD) Days. These development days will offer you self-directed time away from the workplace to recharge and reflect on your personal and career goals.



Energise and Engage Weeks throughout the year, where no meetings take place. These dedicated weeks prioritise personal professional development, support work-life balance, and allow for an early finish on designated days.



Generous employer pension (Teachers Pension).



Laptop.



Fantastic family friendly policies with a focus on employee work/life balance.



Cycle to work scheme.



Blue Light card.



Discounted gym membership.



Free eyecare via Specsavers.



Childcare vouchers.



Employee wellbeing programme (including physiotherapy, personal or professional concerns on legal, health, finance, wellbeing, and other matters).



Discounts at numerous retailers including O2.



Free flu vaccinations.

Next Steps.

School Visits and Further Information

Interested candidates are encouraged to contact our Chief Executive Officer, Julian Appleyard OBE, for further information or an informal conversation about the role. Potential candidates are welcome to visit our school. This is a great opportunity to explore our facilities, meet our dedicated staff, and get a feel for the vibrant community we have built here. We look forward to welcoming you and answering any questions you may have.

Please email adminsupport@patrust.org.uk or call 01977 232146 to arrange an informal conversation or visit to the school.

Key Dates

Application deadline: **10am, Thursday 19th June 2025**
Interview date: **Monday 30th June and Tuesday 1st July 2025**
Start date: **Monday 5th January 2026 (or as soon as possible)**

Application Process

Please complete an application form via our [website](#).

Important Links

[Pontefract Academies Trust website](#)
[Trust Strategic Plan 2025-2028](#)
[Larks Hill Website](#)

Contact Information

Tel: 01977 232146
Email: adminsupport@patrust.org.uk

We look forward to hearing from you.



PONTEFRACT
ACADEMIES TRUST

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Pontefract Academies Trust are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We will ensure that all our recruitment and selection practices reflect this commitment. All successful candidates will be subject to DBS checks along with other relevant pre-employment checks (including online checks).