



Astrea Academy Trust

INSPIRING BEYOND MEASURE



Secondary Curriculum Team

Information for Candidates

Introduction



Thank you for your interest in joining the Astrea Academy Trust **Secondary Curriculum Team**

This pack is designed to help give you a sense of what it would be like to work with us and help you decide whether you can see yourself joining us on our exciting curriculum adventure.

We are on a shared mission to tackle historic disadvantage and drive deep school improvement. A key driver for us is to do this through a knowledge-rich approach to curriculum and pedagogy. We have been on a school improvement journey over the last 24 months. This means that we have moved from one of nine secondary schools being good or better, to eight out of nine. Simultaneously, we have been writing a common curriculum to provide a step-change in the quality of education we provide.

We believe that schools must teach powerful knowledge, 'the best that has been thought and said' and an 'entitlement curriculum' for all, with an underpinning philosophy that 'education for all should confer the benefits associated with education for the rich' (Michael Young). With careful curriculum design, spaced retrieval practice, detailed assessment and achieving mastery in small steps, rates of progress can increase greatly.

We believe in explicit instruction and have been greatly influenced by Lemov's 'Teach Like A Champion', Rosenshine and recent developments in cognitive science. Excellent teaching must sit alongside a very carefully sequenced curriculum, with a culture of deliberate practice and instructional coaching.

Our Secondary Curriculum Team positions are open to senior leaders, or highly experienced middle leaders with an excellent understanding of curriculum and assessment and proven track record of school improvement. If you are aligned to our mission and values, have a strong track record of improving young people's education and a drive to do more, we very much look forward to hearing from you.

I would strongly encourage you to arrange a conversation prior to the interview date. To arrange a telephone or Teams call, please contact recruitment@astreaacademytrust.org.

With very best wishes,

Matt Carnaby
Director of Curriculum & Assessment





Who are we?

We support schools, leaders, and teachers to give students access to a thorough, rigorous, and robust knowledge-rich curriculum irrespective of their location or starting point. We develop, innovate, and refine this curriculum with and through our subject communities.

We have begun our journey of co-designing a common Astrea Curriculum across our nine secondary schools in Cambridgeshire and South Yorkshire. In 2023/24 we launched Y8 in Personal Development and mathematics and Y7 in geography, English, history and science.

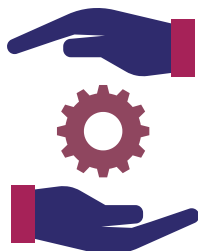
This work will always look to capture the organic conversations of subject disciplines: what should be taught and how it should be brought to life in the classroom. We understand that knowledge on its own is not sufficient to challenge those children entrusted to us. It is our belief that they should understand this knowledge and use it to make sense of their world, but also to challenge and critique it. Giving all pupils access to a high-quality schooling and the best possible opportunities is key to social justice and narrows the achievement gap for our most disadvantaged children.

We are custodians and advocates of our subject communities. These collective enterprises offer space, time and encouragement for effective professional development as well as an opportunity for practitioners to nourish their passion for the subject. This includes half-termly meetings with Heads of Department, Trust-wide Intellectual Preparation and regular visits to schools. We also pride ourselves on our own professional development as subject leads. Our National Leads regularly spend time together, developing and refining our curriculum thinking and understanding.

Our shared manifesto, which you can see below, captures our thinking about how we work with each other and our schools.



Empathetic



Concrete



Communication



**Intellectual
Curiosity**



Teamwork

About Astrea Academy Trust



ASTREA ACADEMY TRUST

Astrea Academy Trust is an ambitious, forward thinking and dynamic Trust on a mission to tackle historic educational disadvantage and raise standards of education and opportunity across all our schools. We strive for excellence, ensuring every child in our 26 academies gets a brilliant education, free from barriers. We champion a scholarly culture, a knowledge-rich curriculum, and a traditional approach to teaching, behaviour, and culture, fostering an environment where children can learn, thrive and lead successful lives.

Our academies are based across South Yorkshire (One all-through, three secondaries and seventeen primaries) and Cambridgeshire (four secondaries and one special school), predominantly in geographical areas or at schools which have experienced generationally poor educational opportunities. Our mission is to change that. We have grown rapidly since being founded in 2015 and now educate around 14,000 students across four local authorities.



About Astrea Academy Trust



SECONDARY ACADEMIES

Within our secondary academies we have a clear and specific vision for behaviour, curriculum and teaching principles, which is codified and widely shared.

Our shared values are scholarship, curiosity & tenacity. We are unapologetically ambitious for every child, regardless of their background, prior attainment or needs. Our goal is to ensure that all our scholars have the option to attend university or pursue an aspirational alternative. Through quality first teaching, we work tirelessly to remove any barriers to success for all children.

OUR KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Exceptionally high aspirations, with a firm emphasis on academic attainment
- Ambition for every scholar to have the option to attend university or pursue an aspirational alternative
- A knowledge-rich curriculum
- Innovative teaching approaches focusing on direct instruction, means of participation, and developing fluency, greatly influenced by Lemov's 'Teach Like a Champion', Rosenshine, and recent developments in cognitive science
- A commitment to reducing unnecessary tasks through our academy-led Workload Charters
- A belief that our staff are our greatest asset, fostering a developmental environment where everyone can thrive and grow in their role
- A calm and purposeful learning environment that is warm, welcoming, and friendly
- Centralised behaviour systems to further support teacher workload
- A focus on improving reading ability
- A broad range of extra-curricular activities, including sports, music, performing arts, and academic clubs.

About Astrea Academy Trust



A KNOWLEDGE-RICH EDUCATION

By a knowledge-rich education, we mean a rigorous and extensive knowledge-based education, that draws its material and methods from the best and most important work in both the humanities and the sciences.

The aim of a core knowledge education is not primarily to prepare students for a job or career, it is more to transform their minds so that they are able to make reasonable and astute judgments and engage fruitfully in conversation and debate – not just about contemporary issues, but also about the universal questions that have been troubling mankind throughout history.

We want children to leave our schools with the confidence that comes from possessing an essential general knowledge. A knowledge-rich education should not confine itself to the Western canon but should embrace other cultures and traditions. What that canon includes will be subject to review but will always be closely connected to the history and the present nature of the society in which we live, including our international connections.

WHAT ASTREA OFFERS

- Ongoing CPD, career development, and promotion opportunities
- Extensive support and progression opportunities
- Collaborative planning with a developing centralised KS3 curriculum and associated artifacts
- A feedback policy focused on whole-class feedback – no onerous marking policies
- Disruption-free learning and a 'warm/strict' behaviour system
- Highly visible/supportive senior leaders who have your back
- Centralised detentions, including homework detentions - no need to organise, run or chase them
- No formal graded lesson observations – just ongoing 'no-stakes' drop-ins based around instructional coaching for continuous development
- Excellent support from the Astrea Trust Central team and other colleagues in secondary schools

Our Secondary Schools



‘All Astrea children will learn, thrive and lead successful lives.’

School	Type of Establishment	Age Range	Local Authority	Number on Roll
Astrea Academy Dearne	Secondary Mainstream	11 - 16	Barnsley	1110
Astrea Academy Sheffield	All-Through Mainstream	3 - 18	Sheffield	1056
Astrea Academy Woodfields	Secondary Mainstream	11 - 16	Doncaster	723
Cottenham Village College	Secondary Mainstream	11 - 16	Cambridgeshire	878
Ernulf Academy	Secondary Mainstream	11 - 16	Cambridgeshire	744
Longsands Academy	Secondary Mainstream	11 - 18	Cambridgeshire	1558
Netherwood Academy	Secondary Mainstream	11 - 16	Barnsley	1275
St Ivo Academy	Secondary Mainstream	11 - 18	Cambridgeshire	1501
The Centre School	Special School	11 - 19	Cambridgeshire	137

Codifying Culture



‘We are what we repeatedly do.
Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.’

Excellence is a habit



Students rise to meet our high expectations. Maintaining our standards is paramount to establishing strong cultural norms and fostering a culture of excellence.

Warm/Strict



We maintain high expectations for students while fostering an environment of warmth, genuine care, and positivity. This nurtures a supportive learning atmosphere which is both disciplined and joyful.

Joy and belonging



Belonging is one of the most powerful human emotions. Our school creates warm, welcoming, and friendly environment that are fully inclusive, ensuring every student feels joy and a sense of belonging.

Kindness & Politeness



These values are essential for a positive school culture. We foster an environment where kindness, politeness, and gratitude are consistently practiced, creating a respectful and supportive community for all students.

Purpose not power



Actions, intentions, and words are guided by purpose, not merely by positions of authority. All colleagues can clearly articulate the rationale behind actions and decision-making processes.

Over communication



We consistently revisit and reinforce our mission, values, and principles. Over-communicating our core purpose ensures everyone remains aligned. Our values are lived not laminated.

Codifying Culture



‘A strong culture is taught not caught’

Praise & Recognition



Recognition, praise, and rewards drive positive change. We aim to praise students every lesson, every day. Sanctions are issued when wrong choices are made.

Rowing together



Aligned around our vision and values, all staff row together with relentless consistency. Ignoring issues undermines our culture; instead we collectively row together for the benefit of all.

Aspiration



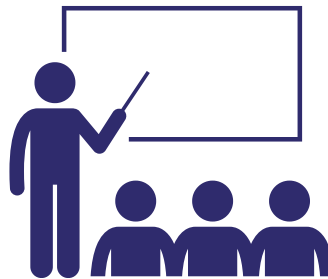
We deliver a knowledge-rich curriculum providing the foundation for excellent outcomes and further opportunities. We believe everyone can succeed. We focus on raising attainment, not just aspirations, turning goals into reality.

Sweat the small stuff



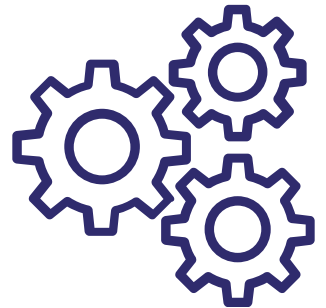
Leaders and staff adopt a meticulous approach, with a relentless drive to ensure fundamental basics are consistently in place and maintained at all times.

Teachers can teach and students can learn



We are committed to fostering an environment where exemplary behaviour is the foundation for disruption free learning. All teachers and support staff can teach and do their jobs free from disruption, no matter their status.

Routines



Universal classroom routines help establish a culture focused on learning. By setting shared expectations and consistent behaviours, we shape the values and norms that define our school community.

Candidate Charter



We want every candidate to have an informed, engaging, and positive experience, and to support this we've created our Candidate Charter which outlines our commitment to you.

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

- Transparency – we will treat you with respect, honesty and fairness.
- Protecting your privacy – we'll ensure your information is secure and handled sensitively.
- Understanding – you will be given everything you need to make informed decisions.
- Showcasing talent – we will provide a good opportunity for you to share your skills, experience and potential.
- Feedback – we will provide constructive feedback professionally and promptly.
- Listening – we welcome feedback and we'll act on what you have to share.
- Inclusivity – our hiring decisions align with our commitment to create a high quality, diverse workforce.

WE WILL:

- Provide you with clear, accurate and timely information.
- Give you the opportunity to ask questions – and we'll ensure you get the answers you need.
- Respond to enquiries promptly and usually within 24 hours during the working week.
- Adopt a fair and consistent assessment process.
- Make sure you have all the documentation and details you need for an interview, well in advance.
- Provide you with real insight about what it's like to be part of our team.
- Ensure all offers are fair and equitable.
- Seek feedback on your experience at every opportunity, so we can continue to improve.

IN RETURN WE ASK THAT YOU:

- Be honest and upfront about your experience, aspirations and motivations.
- Provide open and accurate information when submitting an application.
- Always give yourself the best opportunity to succeed – research who we are and how we work.
- Let us know if situations change in relation to your interest and help us understand why.
- Prepare yourself for interview and let us know how we can support you.

How to apply



Your application

If you like what you've read so far and think you can see yourself as a key member of the Astrea team, it's time to fill in your application.

Your application is an important part of the selection process as it's used to determine whether or not you'll be chosen to have an interview. It's really important that you try to capture all of the relevant information we have asked for on the form so we can get a good feel for who you are and why you're great.

All applications must be submitted through My New Term - the link to our careers page is here:
[Astrea Academy Trust Careers Page Link](#)

Tips for a great application

- Check out the person specification - this highlights the key aspects we're looking for.
- Be yourself. Your personality, values and vision are the most important to us - you must be a great fit!
- Be sure to read this pack and our policies thoroughly to ensure you are fully aligned to our ways of working. If so - tell us about it!
- Make sure you tell us what skills you have that make you perfect for this role. Tell us the impact of your work, don't just list the tasks that you have completed.
- List any formal qualifications on your application. We'll need to see the certificates for your qualifications at interview stage.
- Make sure you include paid work, unpaid work and any work experience in your employment history. Start with your current employment, or if you are currently unemployed, your most recent employment. If there are any gaps in your employment, you must tell us why for safer recruitment purposes.
- At least one of your referees should be your current employer. If you are not currently employed, provide your most recent employer. If you don't have any employment history, think about professional referee's who would best describe your strengths for the role and your suitability to work with children.

How to apply



Astrea Academy Trust are an equal opportunities employer, committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Successful applicants are subject to an enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service check and satisfactory employment references.

As well as verification of identity, we ask all successful candidates to undertake an enhanced DBS disclosure. In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance, we may also conduct an online search about any shortlisted candidates as part of our due diligence to identify any matters that might relate directly to our legal duty to meet safeguarding duties.

DISABILITY CONFIDENT EMPLOYER

Astrea Academy Trust is delighted to be part of such an important movement, which will ensure we have the guidance to challenge attitudes towards disability, tap into wider talent pools and help all individuals across the Trust fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations. As a Disability confident employer, we have pledged to promote a culture that ensures there are no barriers to the development and progression of disabled staff.

Any questions?



Who do I contact if I have any questions about the role?

If you'd like to speak to a colleague ahead of submitting an application, please refer to the job advert and contact the lead person for the specific role. We'd love to answer any questions you may have. Likewise, a phone call or teams meeting may work for you - please reach out and we'll make it happen.

Who should I contact if I have any special requirements?

If you're unable to complete our online application form and need some support, and/or you need our documents in an alternative format, for example, large print, please contact our recruitment team Recruitment@astreaacademytrust.org

How long will it take for you to decide if I've got an interview?

This can vary depending on the number of applications we receive for each vacancy. Generally speaking, we do try our best to make or decision and contact applicants invited for interview within a week of the closing date.

Will I be notified if my application is unsuccessful and will I receive feedback?

We know how much time and effort goes into an application and we really appreciate the time you've taken to apply for a job with us. During the shortlisting stage, you application status will be updated on MyNewTerm & you will receive an automated email from the system. Due to the volume of applications we receive, we're unable to provide feedback to unsuccessful candidates at the shortlisting stage.

