
CANDIDATE PACK

Principal Great Academy Ashton



A VERY WARM WELCOME TO GREAT ACADEMIES EDUCATION TRUST!

I am delighted that you are interested in this important opportunity with our Trust. We are seeking a Principal for Great Academy Ashton, to lead our founding and flagship academy and work with the Local Governing Committee and Trust central team in securing Great Academy Ashton's status as a good school – for the first time in its history.

We know from our own qualitative evidence and objective reviews and from an Ofsted monitoring visit in November this year, that Great Academy Ashton continues to improve. If you share the drive, determination and ambition we have for our students, then we would like to hear from you.

We are a small multi-academy trust which crosses the local authority boundaries of Tameside and Rochdale, with three 11-16 academies and one primary academy. Our academies are all unique, although all serve communities that face challenges. We have three other academies and a DfE accredited SCITT all graded as Ofsted good, and we are on the cusp of achieving this with Great Academy Ashton. We are doing great work and see real educational improvement for our students and want to see that continued through rapid improvement in all of our Academies.

Great Academies Ashton was our founding flagship academy. It was formed as New Charter Academy in 2008, replacing two of Tameside's lowest performing secondary schools. In 2017, with the inception of the Great Academies MAT, it relaunched as Great Academy Ashton. In its last two graded inspections in 2019 and 2023, the academy was graded as Requires Improvement. It has made significant progress and improvement since 2019 and is due to be graded again before November 2025. This is a fantastic opportunity to lead a great academy into the next stage of its development.

My job is to help you do your job; to support and develop you, as you help us transform our trust and our academies with your expertise and acumen. We are genuine in all that we do, so come and join us in a truly GREAT team effort.

I look forward welcoming you to Great Academies Education Trust and to Great Academy Ashton.

Brendan Loughran
Chief Executive Officer



STAFF BENEFITS



Health protection



Westfield rewards



Chartered College Teaching



CPD opportunities



On-site parking



Well-being services

Principal

Salary: Within the range £109,275 to £126,517 (ISR L33-L39)

RESPONSIBLE TO CEO

Responsible for: All staff at GAA.

Location: Broadoak Rd, Ashton-under-Lyne, OL6 8RF

Start date: September 2025 or earlier should the preferred candidate be able to start at any time from Easter 2025.

This is a fantastic opportunity to take responsibility for an academy that is becoming a very good school within a strong trust with a recent track record of rapid school improvement. It is our founding and 'flagship' academy where our GREAT values are real and tangible in the lived experience of staff and students.

GAA has never been judged a good school and we are determined to change this history. The LGC and staff are talented, dedicated and committed and share our intent. GAA serves a diverse catchment area, including some areas of very high levels of poverty and social deprivation, as indicated by IDACI. We are an inclusive trust and adopt Local Authority admissions policy without any selective adaptations. According to Sutton Trust data 2019-2022, GAA has FSM levels 8.32% higher than its catchment area. It is popular and has been over-subscribed for four years, and we project it will comfortably achieve PAN again in 2025.

The post arises as a result of promotion to an executive leadership role in another multi-academy trust.



JOB DESCRIPTION

Purpose

The Principal will be responsible for the development of all strategies and action plans for the improvement of educational standards and governance at Great Academy Ashton (GAA); to be the 'standard bearer' of the visions and values of GAA as part of Great Academies Education Trust and to ensure the communication of these externally, as well as to all staff, to secure educational success through effective strategic planning and execution.

Through inspirational leadership and rigorous policy development the principal will create a culture of constant improvement, implementing effective systems of organisation and control and high levels of professional standards to secure the highest possible achievement for all in every aspect of the school's provision.

Principal Accountabilities.

The Principal will, in executing all of the functions and responsibilities of the Headteacher;

- Work with the Chief Executive to achieve a clear vision for GAA.
- Work with the Chief Executive, the Local Governing Committee (LGC) at GAA and the Trustees of GAET and staff in the school to define and deliver the Trust's vision, aims and objectives through inspirational and motivational leadership, clear strategic direction, and demanding and measurable targets.
- Secure the realisation of the educational vision of GAA and GAET and act as an ambassador inspiring and empowering others, whilst maintaining a high standard of personal integrity and professional conduct
- Create a simple, clear narrative for what GAA is trying to achieve.
- Put systems in place for communicating effectively with trustees, governors, leaders, staff, parents and pupils.
- Be able to persuade through vision and by modelling collaborative behaviour.
- Encourage and listen to feedback.
- Ensure GAA is run efficiently, effectively and in compliance with statutory and regulatory frameworks; ensuring effective systems are in place for the management and monitoring of the academy budget; maximising financial resources, exploring opportunities for increasing levels of external funding, and securing value for money in all operations. This includes student and staff recruitment.
- Ensure the strategic development plan is underpinned by sound financial advice and business planning in accordance with development priorities and targets to deliver well-resourced provision to facilitate constant improvement.
- Enable GAA to deliver and sustain educational excellence by leading and supporting the implementation of school improvement strategies and demanding outstanding academic progress, achievement and success through the development of confident learners within a culture of inclusiveness.
- Lead on developing partnership work for GAA within the Trust; developing opportunities through the Trust and other partnerships, maintaining open, transparent and constructive relationships between parents/carers, the local community and other key stakeholders including health and social care; and with those local authorities who commission SEND placements.
- Develop strong relationships with educational partners and others to enhance educational provision to create the optimum educational opportunities for all students.

Teaching & Learning

The Principal will work with senior leaders to:

- Determine and implement demanding curriculum provision and related assessment that meets statutory requirements and the academy's and Trust's education vision for the pupils within GAET
- Promote excellence in teaching and learning and ensure a continuous and consistent focus on pupils' achievement using data and benchmarks to monitor progress, within a culture of challenge, support and excellence.
- Maximise the performance of all students through high quality teaching and learning which motivates, challenges and empowers.
- Empower students to be active participants in their learning and take personal responsibility for improving their life chances through their education experience.
- Have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school in order to continue to raise standards.
- Ensure that the development of teaching and thus learning is at the centre of strategic planning and resource management for the school.
- Develop high motivation and aspirations for all students so that they attain the highest possible level of achievement; ensuring that GAA promotes an inclusive and supportive approach so that every pupil feels welcome, valued and secure.
- Ensure curriculum models are appropriate, affordable and effective in each key stage.
- Ensure that school performance issues are identified and analysed and that prioritised, costed solutions to secure improvements are implemented.
- Know where performance is strong and have systems for deploying expertise in support of GAET and partner schools.
- Integrate formal professional development linked to classroom coaching model(s) in support of the wider Trust.
- Facilitate senior/middle leaders to lead joint professional development projects – linked to GAET priorities and an evaluation/impact model (as appropriate)
- Encourage networking opportunities and ways for staff to learn from and celebrate each other's efforts.
- Provide regular reports on the school's educational performance to the Chief Executive, the Board of Trustees and/or their representatives.

Leadership & Strategy

The Principal - in partnership with senior leaders will:

- Provide dynamic, consistent and motivational leadership; inspire and lead their teams, informed by the GREAT values.
- Have a clear distribution of leadership roles and accountabilities and deployment of senior leadership expertise.
- Develop a strong "can do" "no excuses" team culture with senior leaders and fostering ethos which is in pursuit of excellence.
- Identify emerging talent and create systems for emerging leaders over time to have leadership experience and roles within the school and across GAET.
- Develop the organisation's leadership structures and succession planning.
- Evaluate critically overall performance of GAA.
- Oversee implementation of the Trust's appraisal policy to ensure staff are motivated and enabled to carry out their respective roles to the highest standard.
- Ensure staffing structures and organisational structures as agreed by the GAA LGC are fit for purpose and facilitate continuous improvement.
- Ensure that communication across the school is effective so that all members of staff receive the relevant information to carry out their professional duties.
- Ensure structures deliver strong pupil progress and raise attainment.
- Ensure that the assessment and progress measures within the school are accurate and consistent.
- Ensure that GAA is fully compliant with current safeguarding procedures and legislation.

Performance & Human Resources

The Principal will:

- Work within the GAET policy framework to motivate staff and in setting clear and aspirational goals in order to ensure the effective operation of school and to achieve its objectives.
- Secure robust self-evaluation and quality assurance procedures to ensure continuous self-evaluation of provision and performance; and ensure effective communication of same to facilitate improvement.
- Establish mechanisms for reporting to all stakeholders within an agreed timetable.
- Strengthen GAA's position in the wider community and with all stakeholders and support senior and middle leaders in developing a strong working relationship with the local community and across GAET.
- Act as main contact within the school in the event of a serious incident.
- Ensure that school promotes effective partnerships with all parents and carers, to support and improve pupils' achievement and personal development.
- Collaborate with other agencies to ensure pupil and community needs are met.
- Develop an ethos which enables everyone to work collaboratively, share knowledge and understanding and celebrate success and accept responsibility for outcomes.
- Reflect on personal contribution to GAA and GAET achievements, taking account of feedback from others.
- Develop and implement school strategies and policies in line with statutory requirements and models of best practice.

Accountability

The Principal will:

- Continue to develop the organisation and ethos of the school so that all staff individually and collectively recognise that they are accountable for its success.
- Provide information, objective advice and support to the LGC and Trust Board to enable them to meet responsibilities for securing effective teaching and learning and improved standards of achievement, and for achieving efficiency and value for money.
- Present a coherent and accurate account of the school's performance to a range of audiences, including Governors, the local community, OFSTED and others.
- Develop and implement clear and transparent mechanisms which inform parents/carers and pupils about the curriculum, attainment and progress as well as the contribution they can make in supporting their child's learning and achieving the school's target for improvement.
- Serve as a key member of GAET, representing the Trust, where appropriate, to a variety of audiences and supporting all necessary functions for school management and success
- Carry out any such duties as may be reasonably required by the Trust Board
- Ensure all legislative and statutory requirements for academies are met and are compliant with the Academy Trust Handbook and other Department for Education guidance.

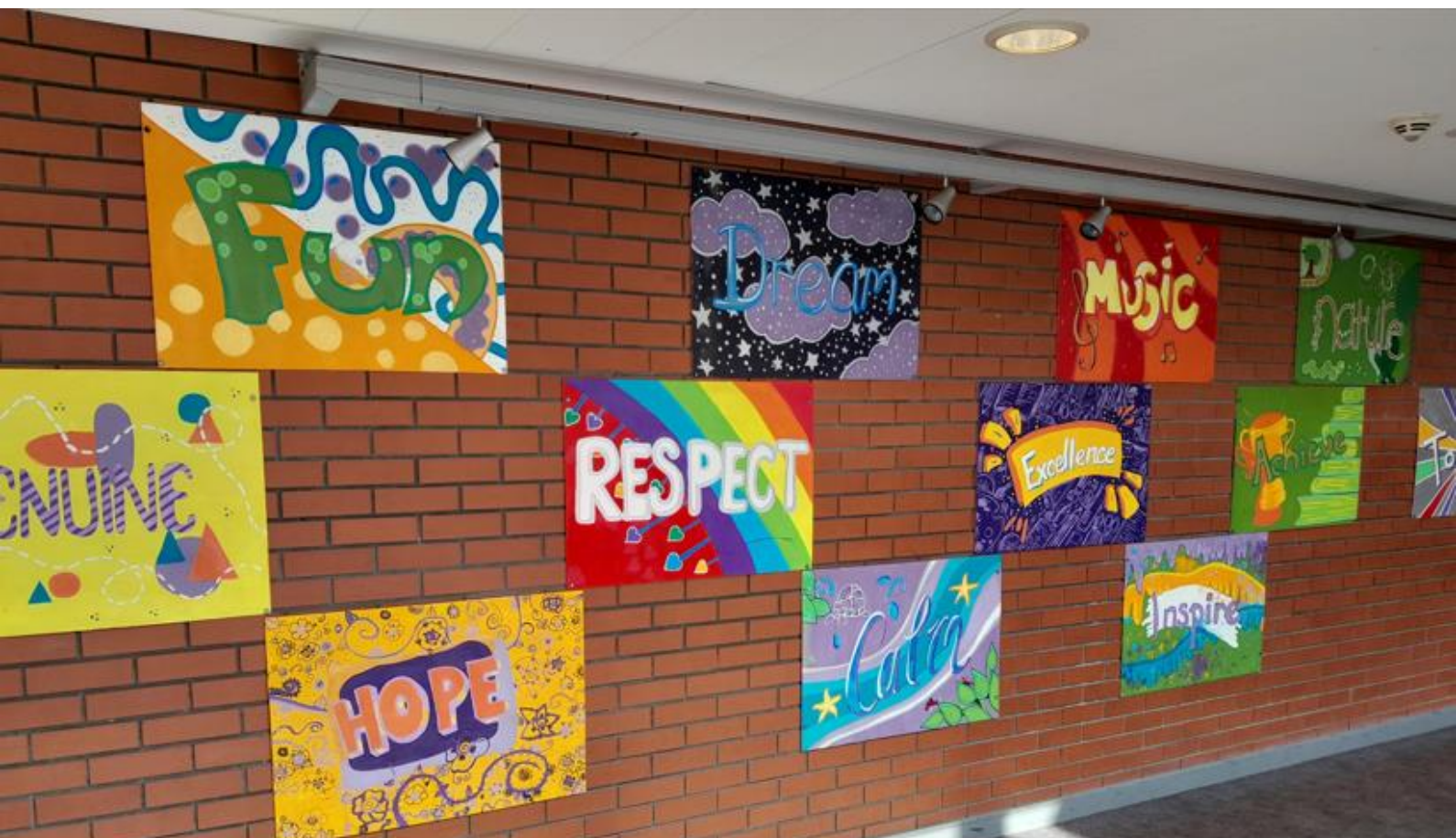
Safeguarding

The Principal will:

- Promote the school's commitment to safeguarding and the welfare of children and young people.
- Ensure that the policies and procedures relating to safeguarding and safer recruitment are fully implemented and followed by all staff.
- Ensure that sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the appropriate designated person and other staff to discharge their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.
- Ensure all staff / volunteers / parents / carers / pupils feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practices with regard to children and young people, and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle blowing practices.

Equality & Diversity

- Support and secure delivery of excellent teaching and learning through the promotion of high-level professional standards, and rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching quality and pupil achievements; challenging educational under-achievement and inspiring children to reach their full potential.
- Work with the Chief Executive, the Trustees and LGC of GAA to ensure robust governance structures are in place and actively adding value to the work of the school and GAET.
- Work with other principals and senior colleagues to build effective teams to support collaborative approaches to provision and foster respect and encourage openness and sharing of ideas; create a supportive learning culture across GAET promoting a culture of common accountability in all staff for pupil performance and attainment.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Principal – Great Academy Ashton			
		Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	Level 7 qualification e.g. Masters level qualification in a related academic area with extensive experience in the relevant specialist areas of work, or a wider range of areas Or Evidence of the equivalent level of knowledge gained through work experience in complex organisations	✓	
Experience	Proven track record of Headship/Deputy Headship or equivalent in a MAT, managing change within a school and improving student outcomes	✓	
	Significant senior management experience at Head/Deputy Head Level of a successful educational establishment	✓	
	Knowledge and understanding of current educational landscape including issues relating to academies and MATs	✓	
	Experience of using assessment data to inform decision-making	✓	
	Experience of school improvement planning, delivery, impact and evaluation	✓	
	Experience of statutory assessment and OfSTED inspections	✓	
	Experience of managing and motivating teams of people, building effective relationships at all levels within an organisation	✓	
	Experience of success working with all stakeholders, including governors and parents	✓	
	Experience of developing high quality curriculum continuity and progression		✓
Thinking Ability	A strategic thinker who can analyse and process complex information and data quickly and rigorously in order to make effective decisions	✓	
	Can think analytically to undertake complex tasks in a systematic way	✓	
	Thinks creatively and imaginatively to solve problems and identify opportunities	✓	
	Able to articulate and live our values and promote a clear vision for the future	✓	
	Able to demonstrate having planned appropriately for future success	✓	

		Essential	Desirable
Personal Effectiveness	Visible and approachable, empathetic and enjoys engaging with students, staff, parents and the wider community	✓	
	Able to be resilient and robust whilst also showing compassion in dealing with issues and is calm under pressure	✓	
	Natural networker able to engage effectively with the wider community		✓
	Able to demonstrate sound judgement and prioritise issues / risk effectively	✓	
	Can negotiate and consult effectively with the capacity to influence others	✓	
	Able to inspire high levels of performance in children and staff	✓	
Interpersonal Relationships	Demonstrates a variety of leadership styles and management approaches	✓	
	Ability to establish positive and productive working relationships with a wide range of stakeholders at all levels	✓	
	Effectively engage and communicate at all levels, including listening to and inspiring children, staff, parents and the wider community, as well as having a personal presence.	✓	
	Shows concerns for impact – identifies the most important concerns and issues of others – modifies own behaviour to achieve the required outcomes	✓	
	Goes out of the way to establish contacts and use the GREAT values to achieve business objectives	✓	
	Able to bring presence and gravitas to the role whilst remaining approachable and professional at all times	✓	

Great Academies Education Trust is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children as its number one priority. This commitment to robust recruitment, selection and induction procedures includes an enhanced DBS disclosure.

HOW TO APPLY

Applicants must have relevant qualifications and experience, please ensure that you meet the person specification before applying.

We are committed to equality of opportunity for all staff and applications from individuals are encouraged regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and marriage and civil partnerships.

The trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. Appointment is subject to references and a satisfactory enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

You should apply by submitting a fully completed application form with covering letter, outlining how your experience, skills and knowledge make you a suitable candidate for the role.

Great Academies Education Trust is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children, therefore, you will be required to:

- **Apply for an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service if you are offered the position**

Applications must be submitted by:

Friday 31st January 2025 at midday to hr@gaet.co.uk

Interviews will take place week commencing

10th February 2025





**Great Academies
Education Trust**

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