



Head of Education Candidate Pack



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Welcome from our CEO

Thank you for your interest in joining Affinity Learning Partnership as our next Head of Education.

This is an exceptionally exciting opportunity to join our central team at a pivotal point in our Trust's development. Over the last few years, our trust has developed a strong offer of evidence informed practice, high quality professional learning, and an unwavering commitment to educational excellence. Stepping into this role means you will be inheriting a remarkably strong foundation, a highly collaborative culture, and the opportunity to work alongside a talented team of dedicated school leaders across Staffordshire and Derbyshire.

At the heart of everything we do is a clear and uncompromising purpose: to cultivate a Trust where everyone **belongs, progresses, and thrives**. As Head of Education, you will hold strategic oversight of our educational vision, ensuring our curriculum, teaching, and learning standards remain exemplary while continuing to drive positive educational change.

We are seeking an articulate, visionary, and compassionate leader; someone with strategic clarity, high standards, and their own distinct voice to lead our Education team through our next chapter. Our central support model is designed to remove unnecessary barriers, enabling our leaders to lead, our teachers to teach, and our pupils to learn and flourish.

If you share our ethos, bring a deep commitment to pedagogical excellence, and have the ambition to empower our staff and pupils to achieve their potential, we would be delighted to receive your application.

I hope this pack gives you a clear sense of who we are and where we are heading. If you would like an informal discussion about the role prior to applying, please do not hesitate to reach out. I would strongly encourage informal conversations prior to application.



Graeme Smith

Graeme Smith

Chief Executive Officer
Affinity Learning Partnership



About Affinity Learning Partnership

We are a Multi-Academy Trust with seven schools based in Staffordshire and Derbyshire. We educate more than 5,500 children and young people between the ages of 3 and 19 and employ 650 members of staff.

In 2024, we embarked on an exciting journey to explore our strengths and to understand how we can put ourselves in the best position to embrace the opportunities that await us. As part of that, we came together as a community to redefine our identity.

The definition of Affinity is 'a natural liking for and understanding of someone or something.' This struck everyone at the Trust as reflecting the real and genuine commitment that we have to building a partnership, drawn together by a shared ethos and a commitment to academic excellence.

This is an exciting time to consider joining our Trust as we enter the next phase of our journey and continue implementing our Trust-wide strategy.



Our Purpose

Where everyone belongs, progresses and thrives.

These are more than just words. They are the framework for how we hold ourselves, and each other, to account and ensure that we thrive as a community. The three elements of our purpose, known as our pillars, each have their own separate meaning, rationale and identity.

Belongs

We advocate and nurture inclusivity, connectedness and wellbeing by creating opportunities for all and forging a sense of community.

This ensures our pupils are safe and prepared for the wider world outside of education, our staff feel empowered, our governors excel in their roles and our partnerships flourish.

Progresses

We are an exemplary provider of education, upholding and developing high standards of attainment and progress for all pupils.

All of our schools deliver quality teaching and learning, underpinned by our aspirational and enriching curriculum. This is enabled by skilled support and business professionals.

Thrives

We are outward facing, shaping and leading positive change within education for the benefit of all. We empower staff, pupils and our wider communities to be agents of change both now and in the future.

We actively seek to grow our Trust where it supports all in our community to achieve, grow and develop.

Head of Education Job Description

Post Title: Head of Education

Grade: Leadership L28 - L32

Accountable to: Chief Executive Officer

Key Relationships:

Chief Executive Officer, Central Leadership Team, Principals, Trust Education Team, DfE Regional Directors and Ofsted

Role Overview:

The Head of Education provides strategic leadership and oversight for educational standards, curriculum quality, and academy improvement across all Affinity Learning Partnership schools. Acting with the authority of the CEO, the postholder deputises on educational matters, ensures alignment with the Trust's vision and Scheme of Delegation, and, alongside the CEO and schools works to ensure rapid and sustained pupil progress across all key stages.



The role will work closely with the Chief Executive Officer, specifically:

- To create a sense of belonging to the wider Trust.
- To deputise for, advise, serve and assist the Chief Executive Officer throughout the Trust for educational matters.
- To be responsible and accountable for the planning and delivery of the strategy for all-through education across all academies to ensure there is continuity, consistency and progression across all key stages and phases of education.
- To direct, advise, guide and support Principals with their responsibilities as set out in the Scheme of Delegation; ensuring that they are aligned to the organisation's vision and ethos and have effective consistent strategies in place for securing rapid and sustained educational progress.
- To support the CEO in assuring the board through effective reporting and evidence of improvement, statutory compliance and gaining organisational alignment in the Trust's approaches.
- To play a lead role in the Trust Leadership Team, working with the Central Leadership Team and Principals to ensure that the Trust offer is fit for purpose and focused on enabling education.

Key Accountabilities

Championing the vision of the trust

- To be a champion of the vision of the Trust.
- To direct, advise, guide and support Principals with the authority of the Chief Executive Officer in promoting the role of each academy in community transformation.
- To work with the Chief Executive Officer for community partnerships in order to ensure integration of the Trust work at all levels.
- To attend key events in the life of the Trust and its academies as the Trust representative to include Local Governing Board meetings.
- To directly support the Chief Executive Officer in the Trust working as a systems leader with the DfE.
- To attend Trust Leadership Team meetings, Trust Board meetings (as required) and any other meetings at the request of the Chief Executive Officer.



Education Development

- To direct, advise, guide and support the Principals and the Education team with the authority of the Chief Executive Officer in all aspects of academy improvement.
- To be directly involved in strategic and tactical issues providing capacity and support for the Chief Executive Officer.
- To lead educational onboarding and due diligence for new academies
- To support the promotion of new academies in the Trust and oversee their development with the Chief Executive Officer and Central Leadership Team.
- To be responsible for refining, implementing and rolling out academy improvement/development systems.
- To liaise with DfE Regional Directors and the local authorities across the Trust and assist the Chief Executive Officer to develop all strategic partnerships that will further support the work and effectiveness of the academies.
- To ensure appropriate presentation and reporting to the Chief Executive Officer and the Trust Board on the progress of key accountabilities, particularly in terms of pupil outcomes and staff development.
- To work in partnership with the Principals and other Trust leaders, in taking accountability for performance, standards achieved and quality of education in the Trust's academies.
- Challenge underperformance, setting clear expectations and supporting Principals and Senior Leaders in implementing effective improvement strategies.

- Strategically lead the delivery of an excellent education for all our learners, using data and evidence to drive improvements in teaching and learning.
- Lead the development of the Trust's education vision, ensuring a high-quality curriculum that is underpinned by agreed teaching and learning principles, a rigorous assessment framework and pedagogy so that all learners make excellent progress, including responsibility for coordination of a subject moderation and subject development timetable.
- To take responsibility for undertaking reviews of AIPs and SEFs and producing action plans leading to sustained improvements.
- To support Principals and other Trust Leaders in the interpretation and use of data at a local, regional and national level in order to raise standards.
- To ensure that the necessary actions needed to bring about improvement are implemented quickly and effectively and to ensure that such actions have the required impact.
- To be involved with observations of teaching and learning, work scrutiny and pupil voice to inform consistent practice and pedagogy.
- To ensure preparation for inspection is thorough, robust and leads to the best possible outcomes.



- To take responsibility for coordination of a continuous professional development system across the Trust, assessing and evaluating the impact.
- Develop leadership capacity within the Trust, providing support and opportunities for professional growth among school leaders. Support a model of distributed leadership of education principles
- Foster collaboration and shared best practices among all schools within the Trust.
- To be proactive in understanding current local, national and international policy, practice and research in relation to schools working in challenging contexts and advise accordingly.

To provide direction, advice, guidance and support for the principals

- Within the target setting process to work with the Chief Executive Officer and other Trust Leaders to set, agree, and monitor challenging and meaningful targets for improved achievement in each academy.
- To support, where required with the Chief Executive Officer, the performance review of some Principals.
- Contribute to Principals' professional growth in partnership with the CEO.
- To assist the Chief Financial Officer in working with Principals to achieve economies of scale across the academies by sharing resources and expertise.
- To be involved in the recruitment process of senior colleagues in each academy, as appropriate.
- To apply for and train to become an Ofsted Inspector (if not one already) and undertake a reasonable amount of inspections each year.

Line Management - Responsibilities to be defined following appointment, potentially could include:

- Trust Safeguarding and Compliance Manager
- Assessment & Performance Lead (Secondary)
- Head of ECT
- Head of Learning Technologies
- Head of Inclusion

Safeguarding

- Champion a Trust-wide culture in which safeguarding, child protection, well-being and health and safety are embedded in all educational practices, across all schools in the Trust.
- Work in line with statutory safeguarding guidance (e.g. Keeping Children Safe in Education, PREVENT, and our safeguarding and child protection policies).
- Work with the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and our Trust Safeguarding and Compliance Manager to promote the best interests of pupils, including sharing concerns where necessary.
- Promote the safeguarding of all pupils.



Corporate Responsibilities

- Show support for and uphold our ethos, value, all policies and procedures.
- Promote high standards in attendance, punctuality and appearance adhering to our Staff Code of Conduct.
- Act with professionalism, integrity at all times, promoting the Trust values.
- Comply with any reasonable request from the Chief Executive Officer to undertake work of a similar level or commensurate with role and level of responsibility that is not specified in this job description e.g Principal/Executive Principal cover.
- Comply with data protection legislation and follow the principles of GDPR.
- Promote a commitment to equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice adhering to the Trust Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Promote a work environment that protects people's health and safety and that promotes welfare, which is in accordance with the Trust Health and Safety Policy and legislation.

Note 1: The content of this job description will be reviewed with the post holder on an annual basis in line with the performance management cycle. Any significant change in level of accountability that could result in a change to the interim grade must be discussed with the post holder and representative where necessary.



Person Specification

Education & Qualifications	Essential	Desirable
• Qualified Teacher Status	✓	
Relevant leadership qualification either:		
• NPQH or equivalent	✓	
• MA (Ed) or equivalent		
• NPQEL (or equivalent)		✓
• Ofsted trained or willingness to undertake training and inspect regularly	✓	
• DSL trained		✓
Experience		
• Extensive senior leadership experience across primary and/or sec-ondary phases	✓	
• Proven track record of driving rapid school improvement resulting in measurably improved pupil outcomes	✓	
• Proven success in developing leadership talent and delivering im-pactful CPD programmes	✓	
• Implementing teaching and learning strategies to improve quality and pupil progress and attainment	✓	
• Experience of leadership of school Improvement/development either as a Senior Leader or as a SIP or equivalent	✓	
• Experience of multi-school systems leadership, advisory work, or Trust-wide improvement	✓	
Skills and Knowledge		
• Expert knowledge of legislation and guidance on curriculum require-ments and key stage delivery	✓	
• Expert knowledge of evidence-informed pedagogy, curriculum de-sign, and adaptive teaching	✓	
• Outstanding classroom practice, constantly showing a positive and resilient approach to pupils and staff	✓	
• Excellent communication and organisational skills	✓	
• Excellent IT skills, including previous use of safeguarding systems	✓	
• Effective communication and interpersonal skills	✓	
• Ability to communicate a vision and inspire others	✓	
• Ability to build effective working relationships with staff and other stakeholders	✓	
• Advanced ability to analyse and interpret complex performance data to drive strategic interventions	✓	
• Strong knowledge and understanding of EYFS, primary school and secondary school data	✓	

Person Specification

Personal Attributes	Essential	Desirable
• Outstanding communication, negotiation, and interpersonal skills; able to inspire, challenge, and support senior colleagues	✓	
• Uncompromising commitment to equity, high expectations, and out-comes for all children	✓	
• Commitment to upholding and promoting the ethos and values of the Trust	✓	
• Commitment always to act with integrity, honesty, loyalty and fair-ness to safeguard the assets, financial integrity and reputation of the Trust	✓	
• Ability to work under pressure and prioritise effectively	✓	
• Outgoing and assertive personality, a cheerful yet firm ambassador for the Trust	✓	
• Commitment to maintaining confidentiality at all times	✓	
• Commitment to equality	✓	
Commitment		
• Committed to the Trust values and aims, acting as role model demonstrating professionalism and consistent high expectations at all times which supports the ethos of the Trust.	✓	
• Recognise and respect difference between individuals and play their part in making the Trust more inclusive, aware of and committed to-wards diversity and equal opportunities.	✓	
• Committed to own continual professional development.	✓	
Other		
• Ability to travel to other Trust sites.	✓	
• Is fluent in the use of the English language.	✓	



How to Apply

If you wish to discover more about this exciting opportunity, need any further information or would like to have an informal discussion, please contact Ross Laird at Academicis, our recruitment partner, on rlaird@academicis.co.uk or by phone on 07901 585959 / 01223 907979.

Closing date: 19th October 2026

Shortlisting date: W/C 19th October 2026

Interviews: W/C 19th October 2026



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