

# Headteacher Candidate Pack

**Location:** Lowestoft, Suffolk

**Start date:** Easter 2024



THE ASHLEY SCHOOL  
ACADEMY TRUST



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# Welcome from the Trustees

Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in the vital position of Headteacher at The Ashley School Academy Trust (TASAT) on the wonderful Suffolk coast in Lowestoft.

Recently awarded Outstanding by Ofsted (May 2023), following on from the same strong outcome in 2017, The Ashley School Academy Trust is an outward looking and successful special school for pupils with complex and moderate learning difficulties.

The Head's role is challenging but hugely rewarding, fronting a successful and well-respected school, well known across the educational and wider community, where the pupils are always at the forefront of decisions.

Previous heads have always been proud of their achievements whilst in post and we fully expect this will be the same for the new Headteacher. Working at TASAT is rewarding and fulfilling, staff are committed and continually strive for the most positive outcomes for all of our pupils. Our staff are extremely experienced in meeting the needs of individuals and their expertise in maximising the potential of each child has been recognised by consistently outstanding Ofsted reports, of both the academy and residential provision, for the past ten years.

It is the Trustees' aim to continue the development and growth of the academy to enhance the range of experiences available to our pupils and offer them increasing opportunities for personal, social, intellectual, vocational and physical development.

We are looking for an exceptional individual to lead The Ashley School Academy Trust. Excellent interpersonal skills, vision and leadership will need to be matched by political astuteness within the MAT agenda.

Perhaps you are a Deputy Headteacher ready to make the step up into Headship, or you are an experienced Headteacher seeking a new challenge in new surroundings? Whichever you are, it is essential you possess a deep understanding and experience of the SEND landscape with a strong desire to play a significant role in the education of pupils with educational challenges.

Most importantly, are you someone with passion, spirit and strategic vision who would relish the opportunities and challenges presented by the DfE academy landscape and support the Trustees and staff on the next exciting phase of the journey?

Please come to visit our truly unique and wonderful school, in The UK's most easterly town, Lowestoft, on the beautiful Suffolk coast, stretching for 50 miles and renowned as An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Lowestoft is a town undergoing rapid and significant economic regeneration across its Station Quarter, Cultural Quarter, Historic Quarter, the Seafront Vision and the Port Gateway.

Nearby Henham Park is also the home of the renowned Latitude Festival, offering the best in music, dance comedy, poetry, theatre, literature and family activities. The First Light Festival is set amongst the golden sands and lush gardens of Lowestoft's South Beach, marking the first sunrise of the midsummer.

The Ashley School is a fantastic establishment, in a truly picturesque and vibrant region, catering for our amazing pupils, striving to prepare them for life in a wonderfully caring environment, with an incredibly supportive staff and Senior Leadership Team. We'd be delighted to meet you.

Yours sincerely

**Dale Gowen – Chair of Trustees**



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# Why are we Special?

In 2011, as an Outstanding Special School, The Ashley School was invited to convert to an Academy by the Department for Education. We became a Multi-Academy Trust, MAT in 2020 so that when the right opportunities arise, we are ready to grow. TASAT is recognised as a National Support School (NSS) with the recently retired Headteacher a National Leader of Education (NLE); has specialist status for SEN Cognition & Learning; leads the Challenge Partners East Coast Hub; achieved World Class Schools (July 2018); recognised by SSAT for our "exceptional outcomes" (2019); Highly Commended 'Greenest School' Award (July 2019); recognised as a Centre of Excellence – Social Skills (since 2016); School Games Mark – Platinum Award (2022) following five years at Gold Award Standard; Supervision in Education Award (2023).

The Ashley School Academy Trust has been judged Outstanding in all aspects by Ofsted. We currently have 168 pupils aged from 7 to 16 years of age, having increased number by 45 places over the last 9 years. All pupils have moderate learning difficulties, many with additional complex barriers to their learning.

We have recently participated in a national pilot, TEP (Teacher Engagement Platform). The report tells us that our teachers are engaged, feel supported and Leaders look after their workload. Our areas for development from this pilot are positive.

Leaders at TASAT are supported and challenged by national and local partnerships (Challenge Partners; SSAT; FLSE) as a result leaders and staff benefit from access to research, coaching, wellbeing support and quality peer review.

Suffolk County Council support their special headteachers through funding peer supervision.

***"Pupils feel they are part of one big happy family. The Ashley School is a special place where pupils thrive. Pupils say that their school is amazing. They are enthusiastic about what they learn and the friendships they make. Many say that there is not a thing they would change about their school."***

(Ofsted Report, May 2023)



# Working and living in Lowestoft

Located on the most easterly point of the British Isles on the picturesque Suffolk coastline, Lowestoft provides an ideal mix of vibrant sandy beaches, pleasant seaside walks and quality family attractions all set within a traditional seaside town.

With significant government investment awarded through the £3.6bn Towns Fund, Lowestoft is undergoing a major regeneration programme across a number of projects. These include the Station Quarter, Cultural Quarter, Historic Quarter, Seafront Vision and the Port Gateway.

The town is renowned for its beaches on the "Sunrise Coast," with South of Claremont Pier and Kessingland beaches receiving seaside awards. The Suffolk coastline stretches for 50 miles and much of it is within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) providing a fantastic area for a multitude of activities and highly acclaimed by naturalists and wildlife enthusiasts. Renowned festivals are well established such as Latitude, set within the stunning grounds of nearby Henham Park and the First Light Festival is set amongst the golden sands and lush gardens of Lowestoft's South Beach, marking the first sunrise of the midsummer.

The beaches and seafront promenade provide a mix of the old and new, with popular seaside activities, Victorian Seafront Gardens with lots of different attractions.

Lowestoft has a rich maritime heritage, which is told, through a number of the town's museums and heritage walks. For a unique insight into the past life of a Lowestoft fishing trawler, step on board the floating museum 'Mincarlo' on Heritage Quay or visit the Lowestoft & East Suffolk Maritime Museum. Those wishing to taste some of the local delicacies then a trip to a local fishmonger or one of the transition smokehouses in town is a must.

Oulton Broad offers a number of water sports and activities and is a lovely place to relax with spectacular views and sunsets.

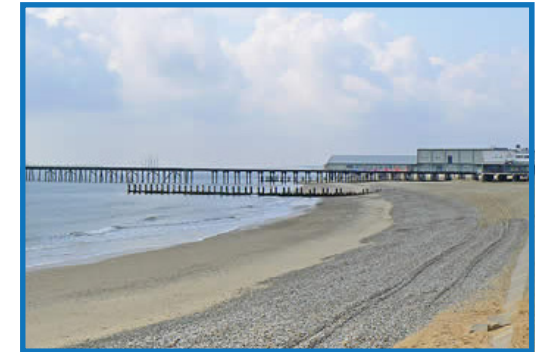
The lovely, picturesque town of Beccles is a short ride (or train journey) away and is definitely worth a visit. Southwold offers beach huts, a fabulous pier and multitude of charming coastal pubs. Aldeburgh is a cultural hotspot, attracting visitors for its art festivals and variety of dining.

Shoppers visiting Lowestoft are well catered for with three unique shopping experiences to sample. The town centre provides all the national high street names, with Kirkley offering a choice of independent stores and the historic High Street providing an opportunity to shop at a number of independent retailers in one of the most historical parts of the town. A number of restaurants to suit all tastes can be found in the town and Oulton Broad with fish and chips on Piers, a theme park, stately homes and other facilities that provide something for everyone.

Lowestoft's new and iconic £145million Gull Wing Bridge is a marvellous feat of engineering and is due for completion later this year. Suffolk County Council say, "The bridge will reduce traffic congestion in the town, regenerate the area and attract new investment for the local economy." It is as aesthetically impressive as it will be effective and is a real landmark, both visually and strategically for the town.

With a mixture of live entertainment and great cinema, the Marina Theatre provides high quality acts throughout the year and is also the eastern residence of the Internationally acclaimed Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, hosting world-class opera and diverse acts. With so much to offer, Lowestoft and the surrounding Suffolk countryside, only two hours from London, is a place many are beginning to view as offering the very best when it comes to lifestyle choice.

For more information, visit [www.thesuffolkcoast.co.uk/suffolk-coast-towns-and-villages/lowestoft](http://www.thesuffolkcoast.co.uk/suffolk-coast-towns-and-villages/lowestoft)





# A unique and amazing opportunity for the right person at our Special Academy Trust

The Trustees of The Ashley School Academy Trust are committed to further developing the role of the school as a centre of excellence. The Academy facilitates a Challenge Partners Hub across Suffolk, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire.

Our staff team is made up of teachers, specialist support staff, administrators, finance team, ICT and premises staff. They are highly skilled and totally committed to achieving the very best possible outcome for every pupil at TASAT. We support local colleges through work placements.

The school has a very successful Pupil and Family Support Team to support the teaching work of the school linking closely with our families and agencies. In addition, there is a specialist Therapy Services Support Team working to maximise the guidance from speech and language therapists and occupational therapists and offering sensory support to a large number of pupils within the school.

We are committed to furthering our understanding of the impact of 'childhood trauma' on learning and therefore strategies to use. 8 staff successfully completed Trauma Informed Schools and were awarded Diplomas in 2019/2020. Additional staff are currently training.

# Working Together to be Outstanding

- Enabling all pupils to fully participate in our community and beyond
- Promoting Positive Relationships
- Achieving successful outcomes and progress for all
- Providing a safe, secure, supportive, empathetic and nurturing environment
- Delivering engaging teaching and developing new skills (SEAL, PLTS, Literacy, Numeracy)
- Providing a broad, balanced, relevant, coherent and participative curriculum which meets the needs of all our pupils



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# Job Description

The professional duties of a headteacher, which the post holder is required to carry out, are set out in Part V111, Section 27-31 of the Teachers' Pay and Conditions Act (1987) and updated each year in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

## Purpose

- To lead and manage within an agreed strategic framework so that the school is effective, self-managing, self-evaluating, and self-improving and with high achieving pupils and staff.

## Accountability

- To be accountable to the Board of Trustees for the overall performance of the school and its strategic operation.

## Relationships

- To establish, develop and maintain professional and productive working relationships with the Board of Trustees, staff, the Local Authority, pupils and their parents/carers, other schools and businesses in the community. The Head and Chair of Trustees have regular contact with Members of the Trust (who have ultimate control).
- Maximise opportunities by developing and maintaining partnerships with other agencies.
- To be responsible for the management and effective supervision of all school staff including residential provision.
- Encourage close parental involvement in the day to day life of the school and ensure that communication between the school and home is effective, particularly in regards to pupil well-being and progress.

## Strategy and Leadership

- With the Board of Trustees and other key stakeholders, to develop an agreed strategic plan for the school that includes short, medium and long term targets and which is based upon secure and robust financial/resources planning.
- To have a clear vision. To lead and analyse data to shape the future direction of The Ashley School Academy Trust.



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# Job Description *continued*

## Teaching and Learning

- To implement and develop the whole curriculum as agreed with the Board of Trustees.
- To develop, monitor, evaluate and improve the quality of teaching for all pupils.
- To ensure achievement is maintained and improved and that challenging and motivating targets are set for individual pupils and the school.

## Staff Management

- To facilitate and support teaching and learning through the maintenance and development of a high quality physical and learning environment which is safe for all.
- To ensure all staff understand the vision and ethos of the school.

## Resources and Management

- To be responsible for the financial management which includes: income generation, integration of financial planning and strategic and curriculum planning; the implementation and maintenance of secure procedures and systems; adherence to all financial regulations.
- To recruit, retain, reward and motivate staff who can achieve the objectives of the school.
- Promote the school buildings and site as a resource for the local community and as a source of generating extra income.

## Interpersonal Skills

- To develop a flexible leadership and management style that is consistent with the ethos and culture of the school.

## Safeguarding

- To take a lead role for the safeguarding of children in the school and residential provision.

## Other

- In consultation with the postholder, this job description is subject to review from time to time.







# Person Specification

## Qualifications

- Qualified teacher status and evidence of continuing professional development.

## Experience

- Successful teaching experience, ideally in a range of environments, of which a significant period has been with pupils with a range of special educational needs including moderate learning difficulties and associated complex needs.
- Evidence of successful leadership and management experience at headship or deputy headship level of a special school.
- Evidence of a track record of working on an inter-agency basis with health and social services and other statutory and voluntary agencies to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties.
- Evidence of an ability to involve the community fully in order to enhance the life changes of all pupils.
- Evidence of a commitment to excellence and to the maximizing of educational and personal achievement for all pupils taking into account their varied abilities and special educational needs.
- An understanding of the practice of cooperative and effective working with mainstream schools including the effective transition of pupils into part-time or full-time mainstream education, where appropriate.
- Commitment to maximizing the opportunities for pupils to progress post-16 to appropriate further education.
- Evidence of having a clear vision about the future development of the school, and the ability to build on its strengths in order to ensure that improvements continue.
- An ability to promote a calm and positive ethos and a well ordered policy of behaviour for learning throughout the school.

## Leadership and Change Management

- Evidence of the strong organisational and intellectual qualities required to set an example of leadership to others and especially in the fields of supporting Professional Training.
  - a. To lead and develop the team of staff for the benefit of the pupils and their families.
  - b. To give direction and guidance on special needs education to the leaders and managers of mainstream schools and other agencies involved in the care of the pupils;
  - c. To coordinate the work of the multi-agency contributions to the school to achieve maximum input for the benefit of the school.
- Evidence of the experience required to introduce and manage major organisational change, together with the requisite skills to deliver this effectively, whilst minimising disruption and maintaining confidence and standards.

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# Person Specification *continued*

## **Educational Developments**

- A thorough knowledge of the current major curriculum issues, as well as of recent educational developments and import legislative changes, together with an understanding of their significance for the management and leadership of the school.

## **Innovation and Creative Service Development**

- Drive and energy to lead a school at the forefront of special education including the development of innovative services.
- Ability to challenge the norm and develop services within regional and national contexts.

## **Teaching and Learning**

- Evidence of specialist knowledge in the area of learning and cognition with special needs pupils and proven success in improving educational and social skills attainment for pupils with moderate learning and associated difficulties.
- A detailed knowledge of differentiated teaching, evaluation processes and multi-agency collaboration to promote the effective learning of pupils with communication and interaction needs.

## **Communications**

- Evidence of contributions to research and/or publications about special needs education.
- The ability to communicate clearly both orally and in writing with pupils, parents, Trustees, educational services, health and social services and other statutory and voluntary sector agencies.
- Ability to work effectively, flexibly and collaboratively with senior management and outside agencies.

## **Business Development and Financial Management**

- Ability to capitalise business opportunities and seek innovative ways to generate further income.
- Evidence of an understanding of finance and budgetary aspects of schools and the ability to manage finance effectively in accordance with the priorities of the school.
- The post holder will be the Responsible Officer for The Academy Trust.

## **Residential Provision**

- Ability to support the residential provision within the school and to stay at least one night a week at the residential premises as the senior member on duty.

## **Safeguarding**

- Commitment to Safeguarding and ability to take lead role for safeguarding in the school and residential provision.



# Members and Trust Board

Members of the Trust x 4

Board of Trustees x 9

Linked Senior Leaders x 4

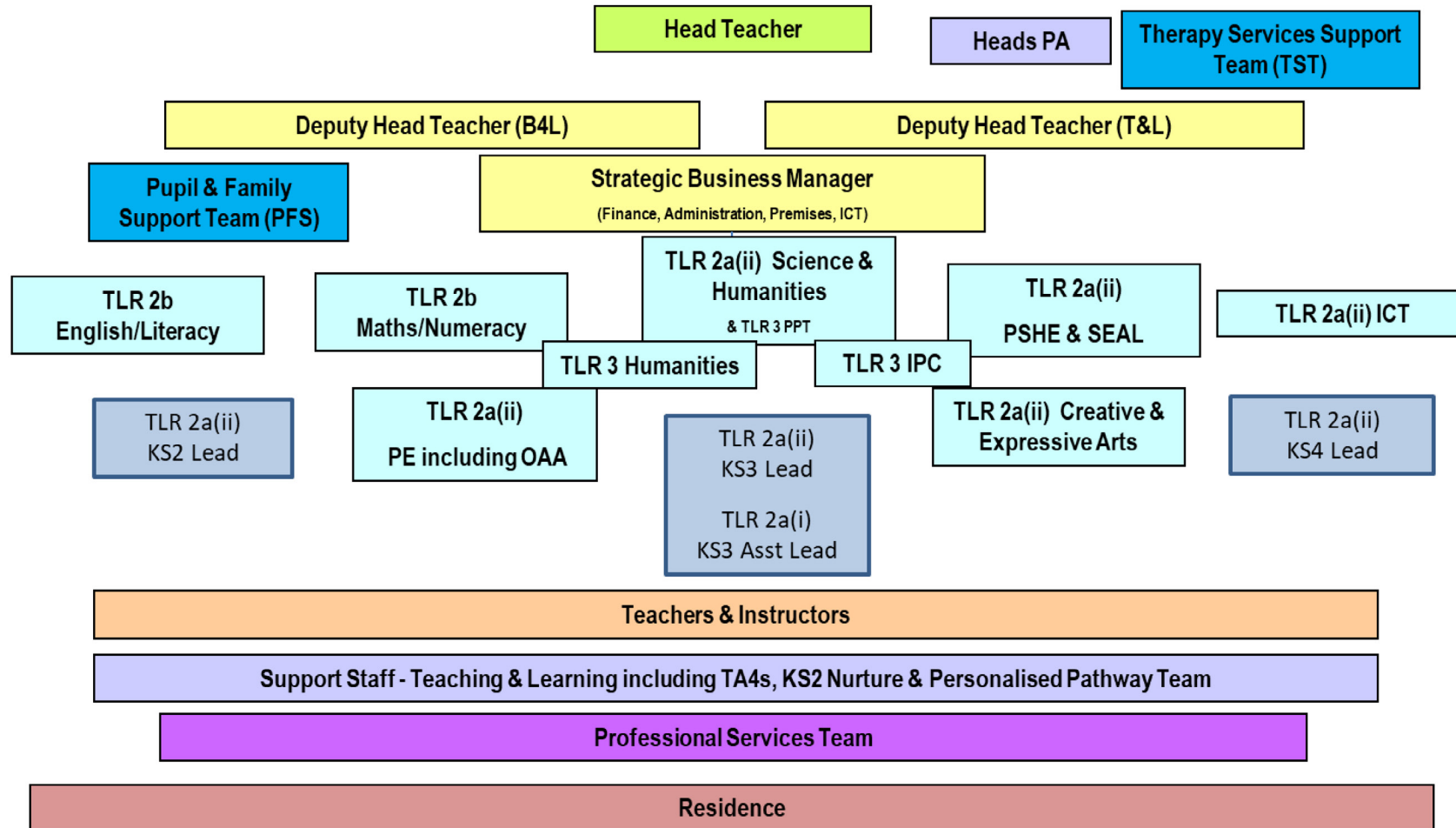
Leadership & Management Committee and Sub-Committees  
and  
Quality of Education Committee

*"The Ashley School is an amazing place. It is always a joy to visit and see how polite and courteous the pupils are, and to see how professional and dedicated the staff are. My child loves attending school there and has made huge progress."*



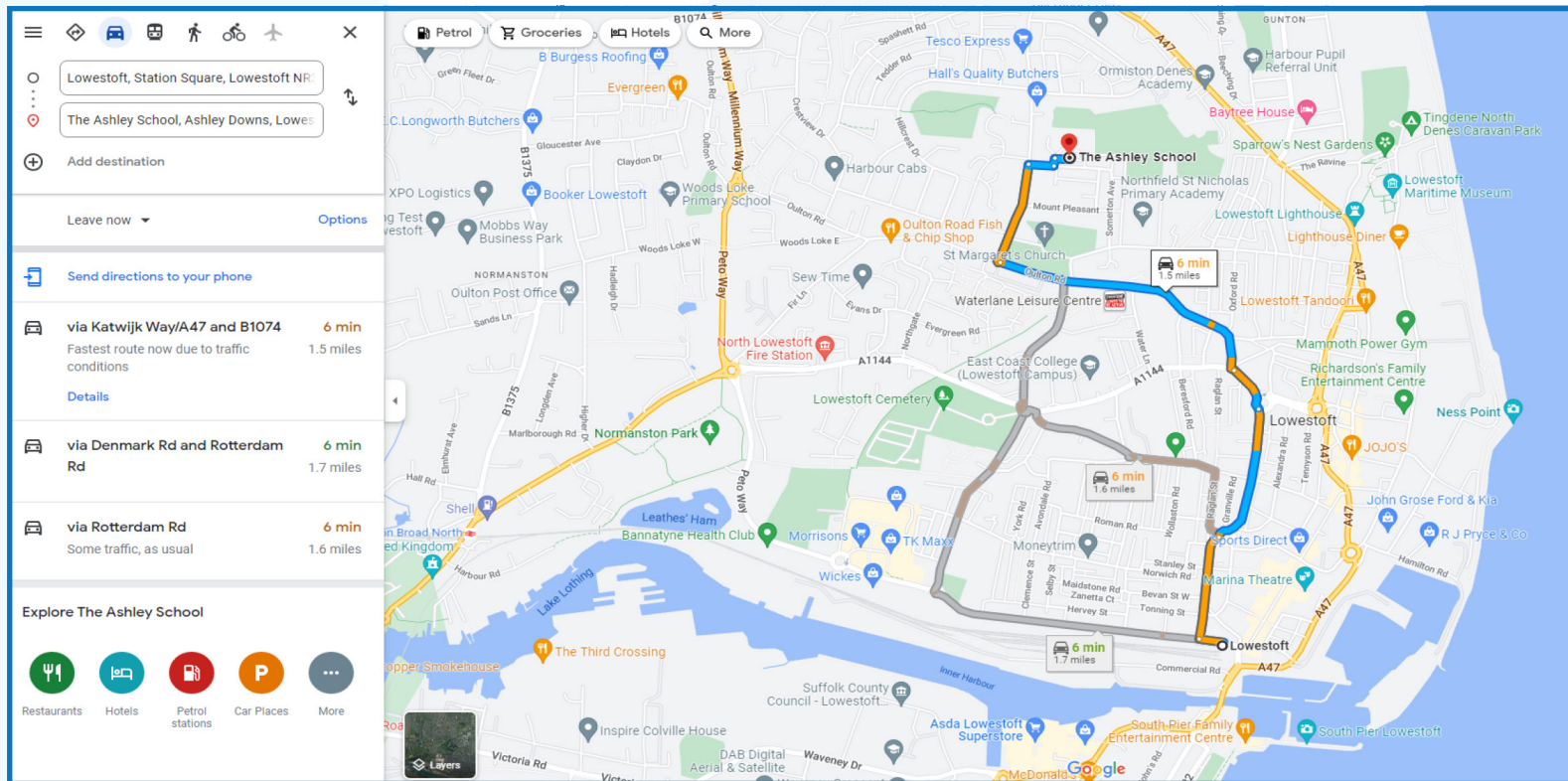
**THE ASHLEY SCHOOL**  
ACADEMY TRUST

# Staffing Structure



# Where we are

The Ashley School Academy Trust • Ashley Downs • Lowestoft • Suffolk • NR32 4EU



## Additional Information

The Ashley School Academy Trust website: [Please click here](#) • Ofsted Report for both school and residential: [Please click here](#)

# Pay and conditions of employment

The Ashley School Academy Trust offers a salary for the Headteacher post on the Leadership Scale. This will be determined within the school range L26-L32. In addition, the school is providing a Non-Residential Headteacher allowance of £9,015 which will require the successful candidate to stay at the school premises, as a Senior on Duty, for at least one night per week.

Candidates should be aware that the starting salary will be determined on the basis of the current (confirmed) pay, experience and performance in the selection process of the successful candidate.

Subsequent salary reviews will be determined by the Head's Panel of the Board of Trustees.



## How to apply:

If you wish to discover more about this exciting opportunity, need any further information or you would like to have an informal discussion, please contact our retained consultant at Academicis: Neil Massie: [nmassie@academicis.co.uk](mailto:nmassie@academicis.co.uk) – 01223 907979/07818 875514.

Please email your application to: Neil Massie – [nmassie@academicis.co.uk](mailto:nmassie@academicis.co.uk)

Closing date: Noon, Tuesday 10th October 2023

Shortlisting date: Wednesday 11th October 2023

Interview dates: Wednesday 18th and Thursday 19th October 2023



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## Details of Selection Process

### Completing your application form

Candidates are asked to complete all the standard information required on the application form and to submit a supporting statement, addressing all of the criteria identified in the Person Specification.

### Safeguarding Children

Prior to appointment, formal checks will be made in accordance with the current statutory requirements relating to safeguarding and child protection.

### Selection Procedure

The selection will be by a panel of Trustees, assisted by an External Consultant and Stakeholder.

Candidates will be notified immediately after shortlisting has taken place. Please would all applicants ensure that their preferred means of urgent contact (phone, mobile phone, email or text) are clearly identifiable from the application form, so that your confidentiality is maintained.

### References

Candidates are advised that references will be taken up immediately after shortlisting. Candidates are asked to ensure that their referees are warned of the need to respond within the timescale set. In all cases, at least one professional reference is required. For candidates who are already headteachers, it is expected that their professional referee will be the Director of Education or equivalent.

The post will be offered subject to satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks.

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