

# Chief Executive Officer Candidate Information Pack



Inclusion

Progression

Excellence



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## Welcome from the Chair of the Academy Trust Board

Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chief Executive Officer at New College Durham Academies Trust.

As Chair, I am immensely proud of the Trust and of the service we provide to our children and the wider community. The Trust currently consists of two Secondary Academies located in Stanley and Consett. Both Academies have fantastic purpose-built modern facilities that inspire students and colleagues to achieve all that they can.

As Chief Executive Officer we expect you to have the confidence and capacity to lead the Trust into the next phase of its journey. You will be supported in these efforts by myself, the Trust Board, the Academies dedicated staff and the local communities. In driving this ambitious agenda forward, we expect you will be happy to innovate and be comfortable taking well considered risks, but always basing decisions on evidence, thought and the contributions of others. While you are comfortable taking ultimate responsibility for the decisions under your control, and can act with the minimum of direction, you have a clear political awareness and an understanding of when to involve others.

The successful candidate will have proven leadership skills in several roles and your colleagues will value your strong sense of duty, your empathy and your ability to build relationships at all levels. You will have worked hard to build a climate of openness, respect and trust in your present role so that staff at all levels feel comfortable raising issues knowing they will get a fair hearing and be heard and valued. Equality and diversity are part of your core values based on your respect for people.

You will be able to demonstrate that you care fundamentally about students, about staff and about the role of education and because you understand the vital impact that education has. You will always drive for high standards in all areas and have the experience, skills, drive and energy to enable others to have the same ambition.



You will be leading a Trust which is financially very strong and has an excellent internal Corporate Services team. As Accounting Officer of the Trust, you will be responsible for the Trust's financial resources and ensure regularity, propriety and value for money. You will need to be financially aware and ensure that the Trust's financial position remains strong and that any proposed changes make commercial sense as well as being the right thing to do from an educational point of view.

You will be a great ambassador for the Trust. You will or have the capacity to be seen as an expert by the leaders in the Trust and are at ease in promoting the Trust.

I recognise this is an ambitious role with high expectations, but it will be an exciting and immensely rewarding role, in which you will build on the current good practices in the Academies to meet the challenges for the Trust ahead. This will include clear lines of leadership and a strategic school improvement model with a coherent and consistent Trust vision, which focuses on 'students first'.

I do recognise that whilst the securing of either Academy to a higher Ofsted judgement may be delayed due to the current pandemic, we need to be ready to act to demonstrate and evidence the improvement in our academic performance. You will be required to '*scan the horizon*', see potential as it emerges and begin to plan and build capacity in advance of an opportunity to attract additional schools into the Trust. We are keen to grow the Trust and the Chief Executive Officer will be supported by the Trust Board in these efforts.

If you would like to have an informal discussion about the role or the information provided in this pack, please contact my administration support Diane Watson, who will be happy to arrange a mutually convenient time, via telephone on 0191 375 4503 or email [Diane.Watson01@newdur.ac.uk](mailto:Diane.Watson01@newdur.ac.uk)

I very much look forward to hearing from you and to receiving your application.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Karl Fairley'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a light-colored background.

Karl Fairley, Chair of New College Durham Academies Trust

## Vision and Ethos

Our Academies are at the heart of their local communities and strive to deliver on our founding principles of **Inclusion**, **Progression** and **Excellence** which supports a central vision of '**Students First**'.



The principle of **Inclusion** provides opportunities for students of all abilities, aspirations and backgrounds and involving staff, governors, students and the wider community in determining the direction of our Trust. Our curriculums are broad and challenging, with the academic success of students at the heart of what we do.

To encourage **Progression**, the Academy provides effective advice and guidance. This enables learners to make informed and appropriate decisions for future study and employment, encouraging them to take on new challenges and reach higher levels of achievement.

The focus on **Excellence** underpins all we do whether in learning areas; working in the community of governing and leading the Academy.

### Our Aims are:

- To ensure our Academies are centres of excellence with a focus on the nurture and achievement of all their members;
- To promote mutual support, encouragement and benefit between our academies;
- To develop, as the core foundation of academic achievement, a strong culture of professional development amongst our staff;
- To celebrate and maintain the unique identity of communities we serve with each Academy/School at the heart of its community;
- To recognise and enable all those who often remain invisible, through ethnic or cultural disadvantage, or through disability or poverty to achieve their full potential.

## Contextual information and background

New College Durham Academies Trust was established in 2011 as a multi-academy trust with New College Durham as the lead sponsor and co-sponsor Durham County Council. The Trust currently operates two academies in North West Durham:

- North Durham Academy in Stanley opened in September 2011 and two years later moved into a new, purpose built £30 million campus.
- Consett Academy opened in January 2012 and in September 2015 moved into a new £45 million shared use campus with Consett Leisure Centre.



The facilities at both academies are state of the art and provide the very best environment for learning. Facilities are open to the community during out of school hours (under normal circumstances), hiring out all our sports areas and fully equipped theatres. The Trust pursues all opportunities for income generation.



The Trust is in a strong financial position and benefits significantly from the support of a central Corporate Services Team of highly qualified staff established by the Trust to support the two academies. The central teams work closely with external partners and advisers to provide services and to improve support to our Academies. Finance, HR, IT, Estates and Data processes and procedures are embedded and policies set out clear direction. Our finance procedures and practices have been recognized by the DfE as examples of good practice.

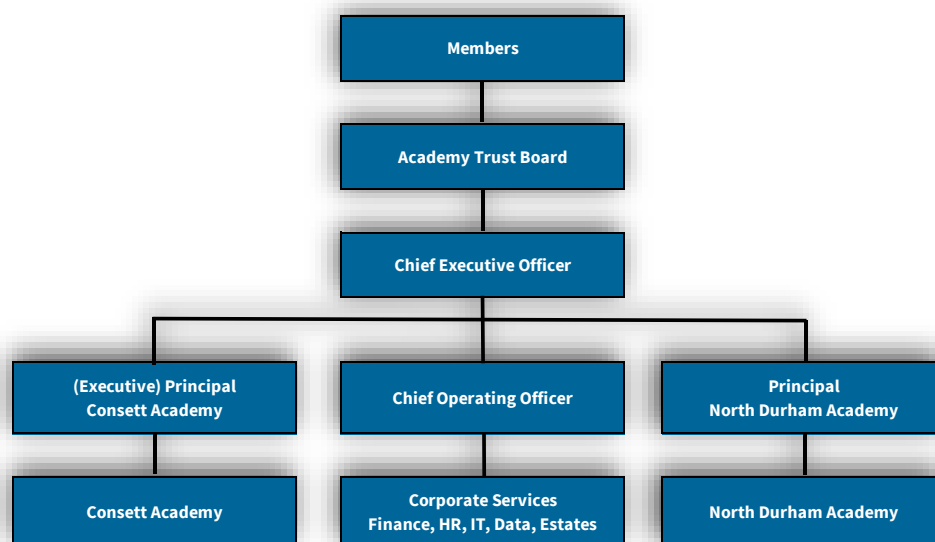


Fig 1

The Academies Trust Board recognises that, based on Ofsted judgements and historical results, there is a clear need for improvement in the existing academies academic performance. We recognise that, if the Trust is to have credibility and grow as an educational influencer, it needs to change and requires clear lines of leadership and a strategic school improvement model with a coherent and consistent vision.

Whilst the two academies currently have their own School Improvement Plans, there is no effective academy trust wide school improvement strategy or effective pooling of resources to meet the considerable challenges of improving school performance. The senior structure for the Trust has undergone several iterations.

Despite concerted efforts, these structures have yet to produce the rapid and sustained improvements to the quality of education which has impacted on the overall effectiveness of the academies. Following a recent review of the leadership structure and school improvement arrangements, the Trust has revised the MAT structure (see Fig 1) and decided to appoint a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) with strategic leadership responsibilities across the Trust and a remit to build on the achievements and improvements already made. Additionally, the Trust has identified a school improvement budget under the direct control of the CEO.



## Consett Academy



***"It was a pleasure to visit Consett Academy! The visit was well organised, the staff were all excellent and the students were brilliant."***

**Mr P Wilson (prospective parent))**



**Consett Academy** is an over-subscribed larger than average 11-18 Academy with over 1400 on roll in years 7-11 (PAN 1500) and a sixth form of over 100. The Academy draws students from Consett town centre and the surrounding area. It successfully works with 11 partner primary schools but takes students from at least another 10 faith/non-faith primary schools in the area.

The proportion of disadvantaged students who attend Consett Academy and are supported by the pupil premium funding is above the national average (30%). The proportion of students who have an EHCP is below the national average. The Academy currently has 15 Looked After Students on roll who are from a number of different authorities. The attainment on entry is generally above average in most year groups.



Visit us at: <http://www.consett-academy.org.uk>



## North Durham Academy

**North Durham Academy** is a broadly average-sized 11-18 Academy with approximately 1000 students on roll but with the capacity to grow to 1500. The Academy is served by a range of both high performing and improving primary schools and student admissions are healthy, increasing year on year. The sixth form is small and currently subject to review.

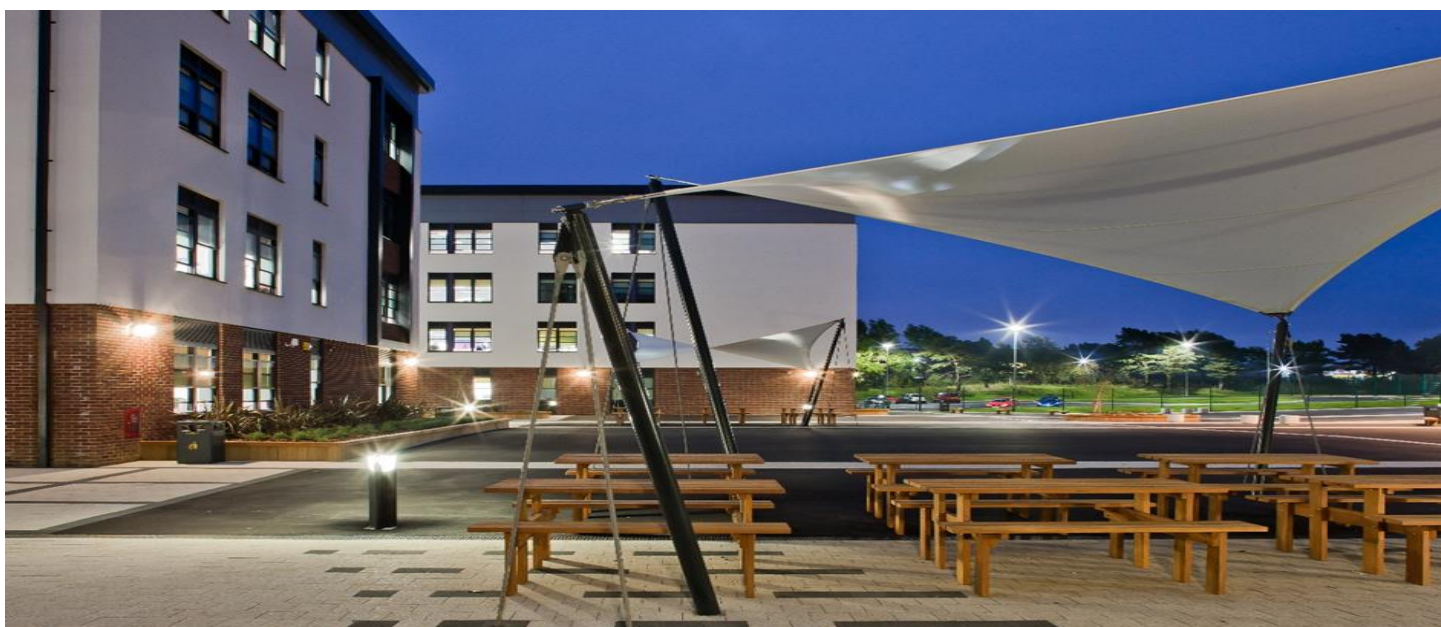
The Academy is situated on the main High Street in Stanley, a former mining town which is continuously developing. The catchment area encompasses students from a wide range of backgrounds, some of which present a number of social challenges. The proportion of disadvantaged students who attend North Durham Academy and are supported by the pupil premium funding is well above the national average (52%). The proportion of students who have an EHCP is also above average. The Academy currently has 4 Looked After Students on roll. Levels on entry range from the most able students to those where everyday school life presents regular challenges.

*"I have worked at the academy for 6 years now in various roles, starting as an Associate Teacher of Music, then trainee teacher, NQT and working my way up to head of department. NDA has given me plenty of opportunities to develop my teaching practice, from personalised CPD sessions to my current role of 'aspiring leader' where I have been encouraged to gain leadership and management experience by creating and leading on my own whole school project. The staff at NDA are incredibly supportive and there's a real sense of 'teamwork' across the directorates. Working at NDA is a challenging but rewarding experience where you can certainly make a difference to the lives of the young people in our care".*

Bethany Robson – Sport and Performing Arts



Visit us at: <https://www.northdurhamacademy.co.uk>



### **Chief Executive Officer      from September 2021 or earlier      £120k - £145k pa**

New College Durham Academies Trust (NCDAT) is seeking to appoint an exceptional, highly aspirational, dynamic leader with a strong, proven track record of sustained school improvement to join us as our Chief Executive Officer (CEO). We currently have two secondary Academies housed in state-of-the-art facilities in our Trust, where everyone matters equally. We are very aspirational and will encourage you to ‘*scan the horizon*’, see potential as it emerges and begin to plan and build capacity in advance of an opportunity to attract additional schools into the Trust. We are keen to grow the Trust and the Chief Executive Officer will be supported by the Trust Board in these efforts.

Our Trust is defined by our core values of **Inclusion**, **Progression** and **Excellence** in all that we do. This is a rare leadership opportunity for someone to make their mark and contribute to securing NCDAT as an educational influencer both regionally and nationally.

As an experienced professional, you will be able to demonstrate strategic leadership and excellent people management skills, together with a proven track record of success in raising standards. Your track record will be such that it gains the immediate respect of staff and leaders currently within the Trust, who will then see you as an ‘expert’ in leading and promoting the Trust and a driving force for innovation. You will be able to demonstrate extensive staff development experience and expertise. Most importantly, you will have a passion for education and student’s learning, with the determination to make a positive difference and commitment to continuous improvement across the Trust.

We recognise that an immediate priority will be addressing school improvement to make rapid developments in academic performance across both academies. A critical focus of the role will be to ensure that once secured, this improvement is sustained and provides a foundation that enables the Trust to progress towards its future aspirations to grow.

As an exceptional leader, you will be able to deliver and lead on the NCDAT vision and strategy. You will have the support of a committed Trust Board and be leading a passionate team of senior leaders across both academies and corporate functions to secure the best aspirations for our students.

You will be an excellent ambassador with a proven ability to form productive partnerships that support the long-term future of our highly ambitious MAT.

The Chief Executive Officer is a new role for NCDAT. We are looking for an outstanding individual to lead us into the next phase of our development. Emphasis on staff wellbeing is an integral part of our culture and we provide an outstanding working environment. The post is permanent and full time.

Due to the current national restrictions on site visits are not possible. However, Directors would encourage you to arrange an informal and confidential conversation / virtual meeting to discuss the post in more detail with the Chair of the Trust, Karl Fairley prior to applying.

To arrange an informal and confidential conversation / virtual meeting about this post with Karl, please email [Diane.Watson01@newdur.ac.uk](mailto:Diane.Watson01@newdur.ac.uk) or tel: 0191 375 4503, to arrange a mutually convenient time.

If you wish to be part of our fantastic Learning Community, please download and submit your completed application form **to our HR Manager, Wendy Nichol via email to [w.nichol@ncdat.org.uk](mailto:w.nichol@ncdat.org.uk)**

<b>Closing date for applications is:</b>	<b>Midday, Monday 22 February 2021</b>
<b>Shortlisting will take place on:</b>	<b>Wednesday 24 February 2021</b>
<b>Interviews will be held week beginning:</b>	<b>1 March 2021</b>

*New College Durham Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that the highest priority is given to following guidance and regulations to safeguard children and young people. The successful candidate will be required to undergo an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).*



## Job Description

<b>Job title:</b>	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
<b>Salary:</b>	CEO grade - £120k - £145k pa
<b>Contract type:</b>	Full time, permanent
<b>Reporting to:</b>	The Board of Directors of New College Durham Academies Trust
<b>Responsible for:</b>	Principals of each Academy, the Chief Operating Officer

## Main Purpose

### **The CEO will be accountable to the Academy Trust Board for:**

- Providing strong strategic leadership towards the Trust's vision and goals
- Implementing and monitoring of strategic, well co-ordinated and sustained school improvement across each of the Trust's Academies
- Leading and overseeing the efficient, effective and compliant management of the Trust and its academies
- Developing and securing the Trust's long-term future, including opportunities for Trust growth

### **The CEO is also the Trust's Accounting Officer, responsible for:**

- Ensuring the Trust fulfils the statutory and regulatory responsibilities set out in the Academies Financial Handbook
- Ensuring the responsible and appropriate use of public funds
- Planning, implementing and monitoring the Trust's internal and external financial reporting.

## Duties and Responsibilities

### **Strategic Educational Leadership and Development of the Trust**

The CEO will be accountable for providing strong and effective strategic leadership and direction for the Trust and its academies to meet the vision and aims set by the Academy Trust Board, in line with the Trust's core values of Inclusion, Progression and Excellence. The CEO will also ensure the Trust meets its local and national objectives, developing the Trust's long-term future, including Trust growth.

### **The CEO will:**

- Lead the formulation, implementation and delivery of the Trust Strategic Development Plan, the Business Plan and self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- Provide strong and effective leadership, vision and strategic direction to Trust staff to achieve the highest levels of performance and ensure a culture of continuous improvement.
- Ensure that the quality of educational provision offered by each school in the Trust meets the standards set by the Trust and Ofsted and that a culture of continuous improvement exists that is focused foremost on raising educational standards and outcomes.

- Develop and nurture a professional climate that is focused on “**students first**”.
- Develop an ethos which enables everyone to work collaboratively, share knowledge and understanding and celebrate success and accept responsibility for outcomes.
- Provide executive leadership to the Principals of each school and the Chief Operating Officer in the Trust providing challenge, coaching, support and robust accountability.
- Ensure that robust and effective performance management and wider administrative and governance arrangements are in place to ensure the effective implementation of the Trust’s strategic and business plans.
- Develop and maintain effective relationships with the Education and Skills Funding Agency, Department for Education, Local Authorities, and other Schools and Trusts to seek new ways of raising performance.
- Ensure robust but sustainable self-evaluation and accountability systems that support schools to improve and provide accurate and up to date information for the Trustees.
- Work with the Academy Trust Board and other senior leaders to ensure proactive, robust and appropriate risk management for the Trust and its academies.
- Lead the growth and development of the Trust, including due diligence and supporting converting schools.
- Maintain an outward-facing role on behalf of the Trust and its academies to support future growth and development.
- Have an up to date knowledge and understanding of the education system in order to ensure the Trust is able to plan strategically and is able to respond effectively to new legislation, policy and practice affecting it.

## **Leadership and Management**

The CEO will be accountable for all Trust operations, both directly and through the management of the agreed organisational structure.

### **The CEO will:**

- Provide dynamic, motivational and inspirational leadership at all levels of the organisation.
- Develop a Trust wide strategy for building leadership capacity across the Trust.
- Line and performance manage Academy Principals and the Chief Operating Officer.
- Model the Trust’s commitment to collaborative working, continuous improvement and high achievement across all areas of its work.
- Develop, implement and review Trust-level policies to ensure the achievement of the Trust’s aims.
- Ensure the Trust’s management and organisational structures, and operational models, are fit for purpose and facilitate continuous improvement.
- Communicate effectively with Academy Principals, Chief Operating Officer, teachers, pupils, parents, governors, Directors and represent the Trust effectively to key external partners, the media and the public on a national platform.
- Develop and maintain effective relationships with the Department for Education (DfE), Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs), local authorities, head teachers and governing bodies, collaborating with them to secure and extend the reputation, values and vision of the Trust.
- Develop and effectively manage the Trust’s resources and facilities, including overseeing major capital projects.



- Ensure the Trust effectively manages its talent through appropriate and effective CPD and succession planning, including developing and empowering senior staff, appointing consultants where appropriate, and supporting recruitment and CPD at academy-level.
- Take responsibility for guiding the Trust through changes to education sector initiatives and practice, such as curriculum changes or changes to Ofsted and accountability frameworks.
- Ensure that local communities served by the Trust are actively engaged with its work and have confidence in the quality of its provision.
- In collaboration with Senior Leaders across the Trust, ensure that the Trust has an effective strategy for building educational and leadership capacity enabling it to achieve its goals.

## **Quality of Education and Pupil Outcomes**

The CEO will hold Senior Leaders to account for all aspects of teaching and learning across the Trust, upholding high standards for academic and non-academic pupil outcomes and ensuring achievement of the Trust's educational vision.

### **The CEO will:**

- Develop and lead the Trust's improvement processes, including identifying and analysing academy improvement needs, prioritising appropriately resourced solutions and evaluating the impact of improvement strategies basing decisions on best practice, evidence, thoughts and the contribution of others.
- Provide quality assurance and accountability through a rigorous and robust system of target setting.
- Provide strategic direction and leadership for teaching and learning across the Trust, especially in response to sector changes or changes to government policy.
- Oversee school-to-school support across the Trust.
- Commission external support for Trust and academy improvement and assess the effectiveness and impact of the support provided.

## **Safeguarding and Compliance**

The CEO will be accountable for the Trust, and its academies, meeting its legal and statutory responsibilities.

### **The CEO will:**

- Ensure that the Trust, and each school within it, meets its safeguarding responsibilities in line with current legislation.
- Ensure that the Trust meets requirements related to health and safety and data protection.
- Ensure the Trust meets requirements set out by Companies House, the Charity Commission, the Department for Education, and the Education and Skills Funding Agency.
- Embed Trust-wide accountability and quality assurance procedures to achieve compliance.
- Act as a designated safeguarding lead for the Trust.

## Finance and Procurement

The CEO will be accountable for the financial propriety and sustainability of the Trust.

### The CEO will:

- Act as Accounting Officer for the Trust, ensuring that its educational and financial performance is effectively managed and it meets all its statutory and regulatory obligations working to the standards set out in the Academies Financial Handbook.
- Work closely with the Trust's finance lead to establish and oversee effective financial monitoring systems, take appropriate action to address financial risks, problems and irregularities, and present Trustees with accurate and timely financial reports.
- Develop and oversee the Trust's income generation strategies, including grant applications and other fundraising.
- Oversee resource allocation and budget-setting and approval for the Trust and its academies, and ensure budgetary targets are met.
- Work closely with the Trust's finance lead to establish effective procurement procedures in order to achieve financial efficiencies.
- To build capacity and identify opportunities to widen the Trust's provision for the benefit of the local communities and deliver appropriate transitional arrangements for academies new to NCDAT.
- To ensure the Trust's financial viability is secure, firmly based on accurate analysis, the optimum use of resources and the generation of a yearly surplus, in line with Trust KPIs, to meet the development needs across the Trust.

### Variation in Role

As the Trust's work develops, there may be a need for adjustments to the role and responsibilities of the post. The duties specified above are, therefore, not to be regarded as either exclusive or exhaustive.

### Equality and Diversity

The Trust is committed to Equality and Diversity for all members of society. This will require leaders such as yourself to both set an example and support the Trust's initiatives.

### Commitment to Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups

New College Durham Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, as well as vulnerable adults, and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This postholder must ensure that the highest priority is given to following guidance and regulations to safeguard children and young people.

This job description is subject to annual review.

**Chair of Academy Trust Board's signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Postholder's signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



## Person Specification

	CRITERIA	Essential / Desirable		Where assessed
		E	D	
<b>A</b>	<b>Education and Qualifications</b>			
1	A good honours degree.	√		A
2	Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).	√		A
3	Professional/management qualification relevant to the role or relevant higher degree and / or NPQH.		√	A
4	Evidence of continuing professional development at Head Teacher level in preparation for Executive leadership role.		√	A
5	Safeguarding/Designated Person Training.		√	A
<b>B</b>	<b>Professional Qualities, Knowledge and Experience</b>			
6	Substantial experience of teaching in secondary education.	√		A
7	Substantial strategic leadership experience as a Head Teacher to achieve rapid and sustained improvement in a secondary school(s).	√		A, I, R
8	Successful experience of leading teams across a MAT and on multiple sites.		√	A
9	Successful track record of achievements and successfully meeting performance objectives in current role.	√		A, I, R
10	Able to plan strategically and operationally with the Executive Team, allocate resources effectively and evaluate impact.	√		A, I, R
11	Knowledge of what constitutes quality in educational provision, the characteristics of effective schools and strategies for raising standards and the achievement of all students.	√		A, I, R
12	Strong knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning in primary schools.		√	A, I, R
13	Ability to articulate and share a vision of education and evidence of having successfully translated vision into reality at whole-school level.	√		A, I, R
14	Evidence of successful strategies for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating school improvement.	√		A, I, R
15	Proven track record in successfully leading change and resource management and an understanding of substantial change management programmes.	√		A, I, R
16	Ability to analyse data, develop strategic plans, set targets to raise standards and monitor/evaluate progress towards these.	√		A, I, R
17	Understanding of the strategic role of the Academy Trust Board and Local Governing Body and evidence of successful collaboration.	√		A, I, R
18	Able to advise the Directors on the future strategic development of the Trust.	√		I
19	Experience in leading Corporate Services functions.		√	A, I
20	Knowledge and understanding of statutory requirements and experience of Child Protection, Safer Recruitment, Safeguarding procedures and Prevent.	√		I
21	Knowledge and understanding of the key legal issues relating to the leadership of a Trust and the schools within it, including: equal opportunities, race relations, disability, employment, health and safety and public relations.	√		I
22	Experience of leading collaborative partnerships outside of school in the local community, working closely with external partners e.g. primary schools.	√		A, I, R
23	Experience of collaboration with teaching school alliances, business and employers.		√	A, I
24	Strong financial, commercial and business acumen.		√	I

## Person Specification (cont'd.)

	CRITERIA	Essential / Desirable		Where assessed
		E	D	
<b>C</b>	<b>Students and Staff</b>			
25	Outstanding classroom practitioner with an excellent understanding of how students learn and the core features of successful classroom practice.	√		A, I, R
26	Provide inspirational leadership which challenges, motivates and empowers students, staff, and parents to carry the Trust's vision forward.	√		I, R
27	Successful experience of curriculum development and assessment to maximise student outcomes and provide a personalised curriculum.	√		A, I
28	A clear understanding of the implications of Government Education Policy for a Trust such as NCDAT.	√		A, I
29	Appreciate the importance of a work life balance for all staff and self and develop them through continuing professional development.	√		A, I, R
<b>D</b>	<b>Accountability</b>			
30	Experience and evidence of highly developed skills of robust appraisal and performance management of direct staff and systems for all staff, recognising high performance and tackling underperformance to resolution.	√		A, I
31	Experience of effective strategic financial and resource management to achieve educational priorities and ensure efficiency and value for money.	√		A, I, R
32	Proven successful experience of systematic, rigorous school self-evaluation, to inform school improvement planning and raise educational standards.	√		A, I
33	Able to combine the outcomes of regular school self-review with external evaluations in order to develop the schools further.	√		A, I
<b>E</b>	<b>Personal Qualities, Skills and Attributes</b>			
33	Ability to embrace and promote the core concept of 'students first' and the Trust's core values of Inclusion Progression and Excellence.	√		I
34	Works to the Nolan Principles of Public Life.	√		I
35	Inspirational leader, determined with sound judgement and strong negotiation/advocacy skills.			I
36	Be able to relate empathetically to parents/carers, students, staff, Governors, Directors, stakeholders and the wider community.	√		I
37	Approachable with outstanding communication and interpersonal skills across all media and with a range of audiences.	√		I
38	Able to build and maintain good, respectful relationships and promote unity across the Trust's Academies.	√		I, R
39	Able to organise work, prioritise tasks, make decisions and manage time effectively.	√		I, R
40	Excellent listening skills, consults and values the contribution of others.	√		I
41	Has stamina, resilience, tenacity, is able to remain positive and enthusiastic whilst working under pressure.	√		I
42	A passion for continual personal and professional development.	√		I
<b>A</b>	<b>Application form</b>	<b>I Interview and assessment tasks</b>		<b>R References</b>



## Living and working in the North East



We have some of the most stunning landscape in the country on our doorstep. From the Northumberland Coast to the North Pennines, Kielder Forest and Park, to Durham Heritage Coast and Hadrian's Wall, to Whitley Bay, there are some beautiful places to spend your leisure time. Travel south and within an hour you can be in the North Yorkshire Moors or due North are the wilds of Northumberland – now officially a 'dark sky' national park. There are plenty of places to explore. If you enjoy a stroll on the beach with the dogs; a hike with the camera, or even something a bit more adventurous, you can find it all in the North East.

When people think of the North East, most picture mining, steel and football. But there are plenty of museums and galleries here to rival those in other areas.

There's the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, the Sage, Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (mima), Beamish Museum, The National Glass Centre, and many, many more. Plus, there are hundreds of historical sites and museums to visit, from Hadrian's Wall to Alnwick Castle and Gardens.

If food and drink is your thing, the region has a diverse and vibrant nightlife and you are spoilt for choice for places to eat from quality street food to Michelin star restaurants.

Our rugged coastline has idyllic beaches and quaint seaside towns. You can travel out by boat to the Farne Islands to see the wildlife, or drive over the causeway to Lindisfarne when the tide is out. To the East you have the beaches of Roker, Seaburn and Tynemouth as well as the beautiful Northumberland coast line.

One of the best things about living in the North East is how easy it is to access other places. You can travel anywhere in the region in less than two hours, plus we have Yorkshire, the Lake District and Scotland on our



doorstep. The excellent rail and air links are in close proximity and provide a platform from where you can travel further afield.

The North East of England has housing that caters to all budgets, whether you prefer the urban bright lights of city living or a slower pace within a rural village and everything in between; it has some of the cheapest property to be found anywhere in the UK. Whilst often overlooked by people in other parts of the country, the North East of England is a brilliant, welcoming and diverse place to work, rest and play.