

TRUST PROSPECTUS



ADVANTAGE  
SCHOOLS

**ASPIRATION**  
**RESPECT • HONESTY**

[www.advantageschools.co.uk](http://www.advantageschools.co.uk)



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ASPIRATION · RESPECT · HONESTY

# INTRODUCTION

## ADVANTAGE SCHOOLS

### Welcome to Advantage Schools

Advantage Schools is a high performing School Trust that invests in teachers and leaders to carry out their roles effectively in order to attain excellence in its schools.

Dedicated to improving standards, we are driven to achieve excellence whilst living and breathing our core values of Aspiration, Respect and Honesty.

Within a short timescale, we've had a transformational impact on the education of children in the Bedfordshire area. We are proud to run one of the highest performing schools in the country - right in the centre of Bedford - making a reality of our mantra: "we believe, given the right circumstances, all children are capable of extraordinary things."

To achieve this, we never compromise in ensuring that all pupils receive their entitlement to:

- a focused learning environment free from distractions
- an academic curriculum with very high expectations
- well-qualified, well-trained teachers
- great extra-curricular experiences

We work closely with our families so that children in the schools that join us grow into well-rounded, exceptional young adults, ready to take their place in the community of educated citizens.



WE BELIEVE,  
GIVEN THE RIGHT  
CIRCUMSTANCES,  
ALL CHILDREN  
ARE CAPABLE OF  
EXTRAORDINARY  
THINGS.

# OUR VISION AND VALUES

WHAT WE STRIVE FOR

**We aim for our schools to be the highest quality, serving our families, achieving exceptional standards.**

We work hard to ensure that our pupils are equipped with the knowledge and experiences necessary to be able to fully engage with each subject and what it represents. Each of our pupils is prepared for the highest levels of study and will be well prepared for life in modern Britain, regardless of their background.

To maintain our high standards, we recruit and retain the best colleagues and leaders, fostering their talent through the highest quality of professional learning.

As a result, our network of schools has the finest academic curriculum, and an entitlement to experiences, visits and trips that is first class. Wherever possible we share our insights and aim to influence the wider education system.

WE SUBSCRIBE TO THE NOLAN PRINCIPLES OF STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE AND WE TRY TO SET AN EXAMPLE TO THE SYSTEM BY BEING TRANSPARENT, OPEN, ETHICAL AND FAIR.



# OUR SHARED EXPECTATIONS

FOR INDIVIDUALS & SCHOOLS

**Commit to very high expectations of our pupils**

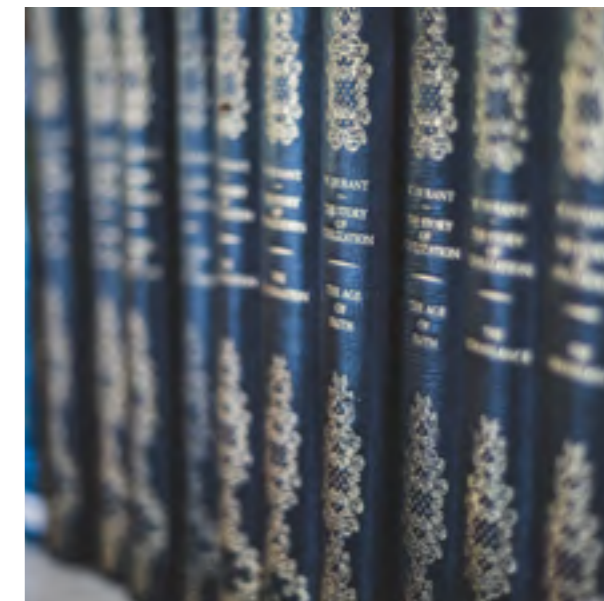
We believe in a broad, balanced academic curriculum. A curriculum is only a curriculum if it is learnt, and while we will not be led by outcomes, we know that a great curriculum will mean that “the score takes care of itself.” (Bill Walsh)

**Leaders who take responsibility**

Our leaders do not pass the buck but instead, they make sure that learning is desirable, demanded and achievable in our schools. Behaviour in our schools is managed by systems that everyone follows and leaders prioritise. Leaders are highly visible and know their staff and pupils. Our leaders look after their staff and prioritise their wellbeing.

**Employ people that do their job, and do it well**

We do not tolerate underperformance. We have professional candour and we support our colleagues to get better. We value colleagues who can achieve a great deal in the time we work.





# COLLABORATION

AT THE HEART OF  
EVERYTHING WE DO

**We believe that it will be the profession itself that grasps and develops the opportunities to transform our education system into one that is the very best and ensures that all children flourish and enjoy an intellectually stimulating life.**

Our country has some of the hardest working teachers. At Advantage Schools, we focus on what matters and has impact. We eliminate working practices that drive unnecessary workload or result in burn out. We believe that if we look after our staff, then our schools will be great!

We also therefore believe that by focusing on academic standards and exceptionally well-trained teachers and leaders, England can have the best education system in the world.

WE BELIEVE  
THAT, THROUGH  
COLLABORATION,  
OUR EDUCATION  
SYSTEM CAN BE  
ONE OF THE BEST



**We work with local and national partners and share liberally. In the last two years we have:**

- had over 300 school leaders visit us, free of charge, to learn from our schools
- contributed to the Early Career Framework which lays out the entitlement of Early Career Teachers to high quality professional learning
- contributed to drafting the new Headteacher standards
- contributed to drafting new standards for National Leaders in Education
- worked with other trusts to share expertise in leadership, including mentoring and coaching
- organised and hosted a School Trust networking event with over 50 attendees and the Regional Schools Commissioner
- had over 40 instances of our staff presenting at conferences such as ResearchEd and Educating Northants
- established partnerships with Ambition Institute, Inspiration Trust, Chiltern Learning Trust and dozens of individual schools across the country





# PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AT OUR CORE

**We want to run the highest performing schools, and we believe that world-class training of our teachers and support staff results in unrivalled experiences for pupils.**

The Trust and each of our schools are in a very healthy financial position and given our commitment to excellence, we invest heavily in staff development.

Therefore, we give the staff in our schools plenty of opportunity to develop their craft, so that they can become exceptional educators. We work to support and develop staff at all stages of their careers, ensuring we tailor professional learning for those who want to move into more senior roles, whilst also valuing, respecting and developing those who want to stay in the classroom becoming incredible teachers.



**Our recent innovations in professional development include:**

- Annual educator conferences attended by up to 250 school teachers, including a focus on curriculum with leading curricular thinker Christine Counsell and cognitive science with 'The Learning Scientists' from Nashville, Rhode Island, New York, and Dundee.

- Access to qualifications including NPQH, funding for teachers to study for a Master's degree part time and training teachers as Fellows in Teacher Education with Ambition Institute.

- The development of a comprehensive training and support package from two professional tutors for our newly qualified teachers, trainees and early career teachers, including early implementation of the Early Career Framework.

- An extensive induction programme to ensure those new to our schools are well supported and remain in our schools, supported by ongoing coaching and professional reading.

- Encouraging the development of subject expertise by protecting time for department-led professional learning, funding membership of subject associations and encouraging teachers to become specialist subject leaders.



# FOCUS ON WHAT IS IMPORTANT

**As a charity, our aim is to develop highly educated young people. We want our Principals and our teachers to be able to achieve this aim. To support this, our central trust team work hard to remove any distractions allowing our school leaders to focus on the most important aspect of their work: pupil learning.**

We employ a central team of specialists who deal with some of the things that might distract a teacher or leader from that core focus, whilst working to enhance, support and challenge teachers and leaders to be the very best.

We currently employ:

- Chief Financial Officer
- Chief Operating Officer
- Director of Education
- Senior Finance Officer
- Facilities Manager
- Website and Marketing Assistant
- HR Assistant
- Director of Mathematics
- Director of English
- Director of Community & Partnerships
- Data Manager

We also have an IT provider who ensures that our IT runs smoothly, and we work with our auditors to ensure that we run the Trust efficiently and effectively while meeting all statutory requirements.

As the Trust grows, we will employ more subject-specialists to support teachers and leaders in delivering the finest possible curriculum. We strive for all our teachers to be subject and/or phase-specialists and to teach to their specialism.

# JOIN US

## WHAT WE HAVE TO OFFER

**Advantage Schools expects its schools to be the best. We therefore do not rest or think our job is ever done. Even in our strongest schools, which are 'outliers' in terms of performance and a beacon to the system, we challenge ourselves to be even better.**

We have a knowledge-rich curriculum that we make better with every iteration, and we strongly believe that this provides the foundations for excellent school performance.

We have a network of professionals that we work with inside our trust and we commission support and challenge from other organisations where this can accelerate our development.

Our Chief Executive, Stuart Lock, has a national profile, having been a very successful secondary headteacher and appointed to the Department for Education groups that wrote the Early Career Framework, the standards for National Leaders of Education and the standards for Headteachers. He is also the editor of a book on research into school leadership.

Our Central Team includes Sallie Stanton as Director of Education. Sallie is one of the country's best thinkers in education and a curriculum specialist. We also have exceptional subject-specialists in each of the core subjects. We have a number of Specialist Leaders in Education, and we share recruitment and staffing, which are huge bonuses for our schools.

The Central Operations team includes a non-practising solicitor, Simon Campbell, as our Chief Operating Officer, and a Chief Financial Officer, Jenny Hill, with an excellent track record. This central team deals with many aspects of HR, marketing, IT, estates management, admissions and finance, leaving schools free to focus on what really matters: leadership, curriculum and teaching.

Our Board of Directors includes world-class educationalists, business people, and school leaders. They set the strategic direction of the Trust and challenge us to meet our aim of ensuring all of our pupils are highly educated.

We are a young family of schools, and we want schools to join us to help shape us as we start this next phase of our journey. We expect that those schools will want to contribute to the life chances of thousands more young people and serve thousands more families as part of a stronger network.

We know that there will be things that we can do better, more of, or more efficiently, as a result of schools joining us. In return, we expect to help each of the schools to be better as well. A key question for us when a school wants to explore joining us is whether we can help make the school significantly better for pupils and families.

Most importantly, we think we can transform education to be so much better, and we are stronger doing this together.

WE HAVE A  
KNOWLEDGE-RICH  
CURRICULUM THAT  
WE MAKE BETTER  
WITH EVERY  
ITERATION,

THERE IS A SUPPORTIVE CULTURE HERE  
UNLIKE ANYWHERE I HAVE WORKED BEFORE.  
TEACHERS ARE RESPECTED AS SUBJECT-  
SPECIALISTS AND THERE ARE CONSTANT  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF TO IMPROVE  
THEIR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE.

Geography teacher – Bedford Free School

THERE IS A FOCUS  
ON PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT.  
WE PRIORITISE  
UNDERSTANDING THE  
SCIENCE OF LEARNING  
AND UNDERSTANDING  
HOW CHILDREN  
DEVELOP

Senior Teacher – Elstow School

AT ADVANTAGE  
SCHOOLS, TEACHERS  
ARE VALUED AS  
PROFESSIONALS.  
WE'RE THE EXPERT  
IN OUR SUBJECTS,  
AND ARE TRUSTED TO  
TEACH IT IN THE WAY  
THAT WE KNOW WORKS.

Professional Tutor - Advantage Schools



If you would find it useful, our executive team and CEO would be delighted to meet with you.

We are also happy to visit individual schools or School Trusts, and always happy to host visits at our schools. We are particularly pleased to collaborate with other schools and School Trusts.

**You can get in touch with our central executive team  
in the following ways:**

**Chief Executive Officer:**

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