

# Longsands Academy



Astrea Academy Trust  
INSPIRING BEYOND MEASURE

## Longsands Academy

## Head of Geography

### CANDIDATE PACK

*SCHOLARSHIP*

*TENACITY*

*CURIOSITY*

*RESPONSIBILITY*

*RESPECT*

# Open Letter from our Regional Director

Dear Candidate,

Thank you very much for your interest in becoming Head of Geography at Longsands Academy.

Longsands Academy is on an exciting journey towards excellence. It joined Astrea Academy Trust on the 1st September 2018. The academy has approximately 1396 students on roll in Years 7-11 with a further 329 students attending the Longsands Sixth Form and partner providers of post-16 education including Stageworks. Longsands is brimming with potential, is at the heart of the community and there is much to be celebrated within the academy. For the successful candidate, this position offers a fantastic opportunity to shape and enhance the life chances of our students so that they go on to be successful in their next stage of their educational journey.

To ensure that we continue to excel and strengthen further, we are keen to attract exceptional colleagues to join the staff team and school community to realise the potential evident within Longsands. We are keen to attract the right calibre of professional to work alongside our dedicated team of staff; a colleague who shares our vision and commitment to a knowledge-rich curriculum and a traditional approach to teaching, behaviour and culture, influenced by Lemov's Teach Like A Champion and Tom Bennett.

We believe that schools must teach powerful knowledge, 'the best that has been thought and said' and an 'entitlement curriculum' for all, with an underpinning philosophy that 'education for all should confer the benefits associated with education for the rich' (Michael Young). With careful curriculum design, spaced retrieval practice, detailed assessment and achieving mastery in small steps, rates of progress can increase greatly. We believe in explicit instruction and have been greatly influenced by Lemov's 'Teach Like A Champion', Rosenshine and recent developments in cognitive science. Excellent teaching must sit alongside a carefully considered and sequenced curriculum, implemented successfully and consistently through a culture of deliberate practice and instructional coaching.

We have recently launched the Astrea Behaviour Curriculum, where behaviour expectations and routines are explicitly taught and deliberately practised. The creation of a scholarly culture that is warm and strict, disciplined and joyful, where there is 'purpose not power', ensuring impeccable behaviour, where teachers can focus on teaching and pupils can focus on learning, underpins everything. There needs to be relentless consistency with the implementation of the behaviour policy in every classroom, and overcommunication of the 'why' to all stakeholders, to help ensure impeccable behaviour.

Longsands Academy is part of Astrea Academy Trust and is on a strong improvement journey developing a strong curriculum, good teaching and effective pupil support. We are now looking for a leader who is aligned with our values and will support the Principal in accelerating the school's journey to excellence. The position is a great match for someone who shares the Trust's vision for educational excellence and has the focus to drive improvement at a pace, building on the school's improving foundations. You will be a team builder, able to motivate staff and pupils.

If you are aligned to our mission and values, have a strong track record of improving young people's education and a drive to do more, we very much look forward to hearing from you. We fully recommend that you take the opportunity to make an informal visit to see the school prior to making your application. Please contact Sharon Kontou, [principalspa@astrea-longsands.org](mailto:principalspa@astrea-longsands.org) to arrange this.

With very best wishes,

**Jo Myhill-Johnson**

Regional Director, Astrea Academy Trust

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# Open Letter from our Principal

Dear Candidate,

I am delighted that you are interested in applying for a role at Longsands Academy, part of the Astrea Academy Trust since 1<sup>st</sup> September 2018.

Longsands Academy is a successful, fully-inclusive secondary school at the heart of its community. We pride ourselves on providing an engaging and supportive environment in which our students feel empowered to reach and embrace their full potential with confidence. Our staff are committed to nurturing the abilities of every child with a curriculum which promotes academic excellence and is delivered by subject specialists. The opportunities we provide allow all students to showcase their talents, whether through the traditional school day or as a result of the wealth of extra-curricular activities on offer. Our students are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning both in and out of lessons. We are extremely proud of the achievements of our students that are a result of the high expectations, students' hard work and commitment and the supportive relationships that exist between staff, students and their parents/carers.

The pursuit of academic excellence is at the heart of the Academy. Through high expectations of behaviour, a commitment to great standards of teaching delivering a knowledge-rich curriculum, and positive working relationships with all members of the academy community, all students, regardless of their background or personal circumstances, are encouraged to achieve their academic aspirations. We believe that schools must teach powerful knowledge that takes students beyond their everyday experiences. We believe in a traditional, subject-based approach to teaching in order to create a scholarly culture that is disciplined and joyful. We want to ensure that we open doors for every students' future and develop in them a life-long love of learning.

We are committed to developing our staff to be the very best that they can be by striving to ensure that all of our colleagues can access high-quality Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Our CPD programme is both department-based and in collaboration with academies within the Astrea family and external partners. Wide-ranging opportunities for professional development are available for staff at all stages of their career, including ECTs, experienced classroom teachers, middle and senior leaders and support staff.

Please visit our website for further details on our vibrant and diverse [school](#).

I look forward to receiving your application.

**Dr Catherine Cusick**

**Principal, Longsands Academy**



# Job Description

**JOB TITLE:**

Head of Geography

**REPORTING TO:**

Vice Principal (Academic)

**SALARY RANGE:**

MPS/UPS + TLR1a

**CONTRACT TYPE:**

Permanent

**WORKING PATTERN:**

Full time

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# Role Description

## Reporting to: Vice Principal (Academic)

The Head of Geography works to provide a clear vision for the teaching of geography, ensuring the highest standards of teaching and learning and they will make a significant contribution to the Academy ethos and aims. The postholder will promote the best possible progress of all students, help develop high expectations and standards for behaviour, and create a climate in which teachers and students can work hard, feel valued and thrive.

### • Purpose

- To lead and manage the Geography department's curriculum and teaching.
- To lead developments and improvements in geography in accordance with the Academy Improvement Plan.
- To ensure the highest standards of learning and achievement for all students working in geography and.
- Provide clear and effective leadership of subject staff.

## Main Duties and Responsibilities

### ***Lead the development of teaching and learning***

- take responsibility and be accountable for learning, teaching and standards for particular courses as agreed or set down by the Principal;
- sustain or improve the quality of learning and teaching in all Key Stages;
- provide support for colleagues on classroom management issues and liaise with tutors and student support staff as appropriate;

- monitor and evaluate the work of the Department, including homework setting and feedback;
- ensure that rigorous moderation and standardisation takes place on a regular basis, providing formative feedback to promote effective change;
- ensure trainees are supported and mentored effectively and support the induction of new members of the Department;
- participate in the professional development of the Department using the Academy performance management system effectively;
- ensure that members of the Department are aware of procedures in the case of absence and that appropriate work is set and suitable arrangements made when a member of the Department is absent;
- ensure that staff wellbeing is a priority and promote a positive work/life balance;
- co-ordinate appropriate cover work and support of cover teacher if teaching staff are absent.

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### ***Lead the development of the curriculum***

- provide a clear and coherent vision for the geography curriculum, ensuring planning is well sequenced, is rigorous and have sufficient scope;
- lead on the provision of courses offered to students with the aim of engaging all learners and promoting the best possible progress of students;
- monitor students' progress and plan appropriate interventions, by using assessment and performance data;
- determine setting arrangements for students, by ensuring assessments are completed and by gathering the views of teachers in the team;
- ensure good provision for students with special educational needs and vulnerable students (PP);
- ensure good provision is in place to stretch and challenge all learners;
- complete examination entries by collecting any necessary information from teachers;
- work with the examinations/data managers to ensure accuracy of exam entries;
- ensure that schemes of learning are available for all courses for which responsibility is held;
- lead department self-evaluation in line with the Academy's policy and practice.

### ***Support students and their parents/carers***

- implement Department assessment procedures in line with Academy policy;
- ensure that parents receive information about their daughter/son when appropriate.
- promote regular staff interaction with stakeholders and support where necessary
- monitor and evaluate the work of the Department, including homework setting and feedback;
- ensure that rigorous moderation and standardisation takes place on a regular basis, providing formative feedback to promote effective change;

### ***Lead department meetings***

- hold regular Department team meetings as indicated on the meetings schedule, ensuring that an agenda is circulated in advance and outcomes are published;
- provide opportunities for staff and students to discuss and reflect on teaching and learning;
- ensure that information is communicated to members of the subject team when appropriate;
- use department meetings for the professional development and learning of all staff.

### ***Manage resources including the budget***

- assist in managing the Department's resources efficiently and effectively;
- identify longer term needs and bid for development funding when appropriate.

# Person Specification

## Skills and Experience

- Degree in Geography plus teaching qualification (secondary) .
- Extensive knowledge of the National Curriculum for Geography at Key Stages 3 and 4 and of A level specifications
- Proven track record of outstanding teaching at KS3, 4 and Post-16
- Experience as head of subject(s), 2 i/c or other Geography postholder in a fully comprehensive school
- Demonstrable evidence of raising attainment through successful initial leadership/management experience
- Ability to identify and effectively lead improvements in the Geography curriculum and contribute strongly to the team
- Extensive knowledge and understanding of current issues in Geography education
- Demonstrable understanding of the assessment of students' progress and evidence of successful intervention strategies
- Evidence of a clear vision about the future development of Geography in schools and an ability to embrace and manage change
- Demonstrable understanding and application of a rigorous, challenging and engaging curriculum

## Personal Qualities

- Ability to inspire confidence in and establish excellent relationships with students, teachers and parents
- Excellent time-management skills
- Skills and understanding necessary to support and mentor other teachers and trainees.
- Excellent knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to team building
- Very good/excellent communication, planning and organisational skills
- Evidence of leading staff appraisal and providing practical support to colleagues
- Ability to provide a supportive and nurturing environment where staff wellbeing is a priority
- Creativity, innovation and flexibility

### **This is not exhaustive.**

Astrea Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Posts are subject to enhanced DBS checks. For further details on the recruitment process, please review our Recruitment Pack. This can be found attached to this vacancy.

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# About Astrea Academy Trust

Astrea is an ambitious, dynamic and young trust with a mission to tackle historic educational disadvantage and raise quality standards across all of our schools. Our academies are based across South Yorkshire and Cambridgeshire, often in areas or at schools which have experienced generationally poor educational opportunities. Our role is to change that. We have grown rapidly over the last four years and now educate around 14,000 students in 27 academies and settings. Whilst our educational outcomes have improved over the last 4 years, they are not yet as strong as we would like them to be, nor as strong as our students and communities deserve. With this in mind, we are entering a new period in our development. We are increasingly clear and specific about our vision for behaviour, curriculum and teaching quality.

## Key Characteristics of our academies:

- High aspirations, with a firm emphasis on academic attainment
- A knowledge-rich curriculum that develops a general knowledge of the world not simply for progression for the workplace, but for the love of the acquisition of knowledge
- A calm and purposeful learning environment built on mutual respect and centralised behaviour systems
- Outstanding pastoral care with the provision of specific trust delivered SEMH services where appropriate to the pupil
- Standardised reading and arithmetic catch-up programmes for pupils where this is relevant that are taught by specialists
- Active parental and community involvement
- A broad range of extra-curricular activities including sports, music, performing arts and academic clubs

## Objectives for pupils:

- Encourage all children to be confident, hard-working and ambitious, regardless of background
- Transmit a core body of knowledge to all pupils and the ability to think for themselves in order to be aware of the world around them
- To be active and thoughtful participants in their local community
- To be successful in achieving their qualifications at both GCSE and A Level

## A knowledge-rich education:

- By a knowledge-rich education we mean a rigorous and extensive, knowledge-based education that draws its material and methods from the best and most important work in both the humanities and the sciences.
- The aim of a core-knowledge education is not primarily to prepare pupils for a job or career, it is more to transform their minds so that they are able to make reasonable and astute judgments and engage fruitfully in conversation and debate – not just about contemporary issues, but also about the universal questions that have been troubling mankind throughout history.
- We want children to leave our schools with the confidence that comes from possessing an essential general knowledge. A knowledge-rich education should not confine itself to the Western canon, but should embrace other cultures and traditions. What that canon includes will be subject to review, but will always be closely connected to the history and the present nature of the society in which we live, including our international connections.

View the [Astrea 2025 Strategy here](#)

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Astrea Academy Trust are delighted to be part of such an important movement, which will ensure we have the guidance to challenge attitudes towards disability, tap into wider talent pools and help all individuals across the Trust fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations. As a Disability confident employer we have pledged to promote a culture that ensures there are no barriers to the development and progression of disabled staff.



#### Astrea Talent Programme

*We believe that everyone has talent. At Astrea, we want your career to flourish, nurturing potential through the Astrea Talent Programme. This provides a defined career pathway, with associated personal and professional development way points and opportunities, funded by the Trust, wherever you start on the pathway. From apprentice to senior leader, we are devoted to growth and fulfilment. We want you to realise your ambition plus competence towards a brilliant education for all our pupils, giving them the opportunities they truly deserve.*

