





The Seven Principles of Public Life; Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, Leadership

Chief Executive Welcome

"We change lives."

Thank you for your interest in working at the River Tees Multi-Academy Trust. We are a small but growing Trust in the North East of England serving some of the most disadvantaged communities in the country. We provide the highest quality education for learners who have struggled within the mainstream schooling system. Children and young people are welcomed in to our academies, regardless of their challenges, past history or additional needs. They may have been permanently excluded, are at risk of exclusion, have health needs that prevent them attending their usual school or have additional needs that require a specialist placement.

We use a relational approach with our learners, staff and communities. This helps us build trusting relationships that bring out the best in everyone. All staff are committed to improving the life chances of our learners. We change lives and save lives through our focus on a highly personalised curriculum that provides Currency, builds Character and engages with the Community. Our whole team work together to safeguard our vulnerable learners and give them the confidence to achieve their educational, social, family and career challenges.

We want our learners to gain the skills, knowledge and qualifications they need to move forward but also to enjoy school and develop a love of learning.

The Trust

Academy	Location	Context	Number of Learners	Ofsted Rating
River Tees Primary Academy (Key Stage 2)	Middlesbrough	Alternative Provision	16	Good
River Tees Middle Academy (Key Stage 3)	Middlesbrough	Alternative Provision	40	Good
River Tees High Academy (Key Stage 4)	Middlesbrough	Alternative Provision	40	Good
River Tees Home and Hospital Teaching (5 – 18)	Middlesbrough	Home and Hospital Teaching	59	Good (inspected under other academies)
River Tyne Academy Gateshead (Secondary)	Gateshead	Alternative Provision	103	Not yet inspected (sponsored)
Tees Valley Special Free School (5-19)	Redcar and Cleveland	Free Special School	100	Opening September 2022

Our Values

When recruiting we are seeking candidates who can demonstrate they hold our core values:

- They are Resilient and Brave: able to approach every day and every situation with a positive attitude, focussing on the needs of our learners. They are brave enough to ask for help, to support others, to champion injustice and to reflect on their practice then try new approaches.
- They show they are Trustworthy and Kind: our teams work closely and can face challenging situations. They need colleagues who they trust and will treat them with kindness. Our learners need us to be kind enough to understand their needs and trustworthy in our dealings with them, especially as they will have experienced breakdowns in trust in the past.
- They must be passionate about Making a positive difference to learners', staff and our wider communities' lives.
- Being Aspirational and Hopeful is essential for helping children and young people to achieve their potential. Our learners need to build confidence in their abilities and have a clear plan for their future.
- Tolerant and Respectful staff understand that every learner, family, community and colleague can be celebrated for their differences. Respect for the differences and challenges others face helps us to work together to change lives.



Our Staff

We understand that our staff are our most important resource. We are committed to recruiting the very best support staff, teachers and leaders to support and nurture our children, families and communities. Once these inspiring members of staff join us, we invest in their career and development so that we can retain and grow the very best professionals.

This investment includes:

- Providing research and evidence-based continuous professional development (CPD) for all our staff informed by the Standards for Teachers' Professional Development and other industry standard frameworks.
- Supporting aspirational non-teaching staff to take the next step to train as a teacher through our Stepping Into Teaching programme.
- Providing high-quality early career support through bespoke training, coaching and mentoring for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) and Recently Qualified Teachers (RQTs) in line with the governments Early Career Framework (ECF) and the requirements of the Appropriate Body.
- Providing recognised pathways of training and support to expert teachers who aspire to be expert practitioners rather than entering leadership roles.
- Supporting aspirational and current school leaders to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills as middle, senior and executive leaders, including facilitating the National Professional Qualifications (NPQs).
- Recognising leadership expertise and the capacity to support leaders beyond their own school. This will involve opportunities to deliver specialist outreach support. The Trust supports the development of staff to become Specialist Leaders in Education (SLEs), National Leaders of Education (NLEs) and National Leaders of Governance (NLGs).
- Funding specialist roles that meet our organisational aims and objectives, including Champions or Leads in various areas outside of the allocation of Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLRs).

- A robust induction process providing them with the immediate skills and knowledge to be successful within their role.
- Wellbeing activities supported by an annual budget allocation.
- Developing personalised packages of CPD to support all development through Frog Courses, professional conversations, instructional coaching and placements within other settings.
- Providing support for all staff. This includes access to specialist counselling, Occupational Health, a generous approach to family support and flexible working.
- Facilitating training and support for mental health, including Mental Health First Aid and access to specialist staff members.
- Proactively working to reduce unnecessary teacher and leader workload, utilising the DfE Reducing Teacher Workload Toolkit.
- Valuing the importance of good industrial relations and fostering positive working relationships with Trade Unions.
- High-quality in-house and external Human Resources support.
- Facilitating training opportunities across all roles to encourage staff to seek promoted posts or work in shortage areas.
- Opportunities to apply for Trust funding for higher level professional development including specialist and post-graduate level.
- Providing internal vacancies to ensure the retention of highly trained staff and give clear opportunities for promotion, while maintaining continuous service.
- Following national guidance on pay increments and give pay awards in line with national recommendations.

Our Approach

Our **intent** is to ensure we offer the highest quality provision for our cohort of learners, taking account of their additional needs, social deprivation and gaps in learning. We do this through an ethical approach that ensures we use public funds to have the greatest impact for every learner. Our **curriculum** focusses on currency, character and community. Together, these themes will give the greatest chance of successful progression to adulthood including skills and qualifications for employment and to become a valued citizen. Our values are rooted in ethical approaches to partnership working and our drive to ensure that disadvantaged learners receive the best possible education. Expansion plans for the Trust are rooted in being able to improve outcomes for learners through our tried and tested approach to improvement

Implementation of our intent is encapsulated in our core approaches:

- High aspirations.
- Effective intervention.
- Removing barriers.
- Outstanding outcomes.

The impact we have on learners is measured using a detailed set of Key Performance Indicators. Our overall measures of the impact of our curriculum are grouped under progress, engagement and enjoyment. We recognise that we need sufficient skilled capacity to enable us to ensure we continue to improve the quality of provision for existing academies while also influencing other education providers and wider society. Investment in our staff is a key commitment. This includes supporting wellbeing by encouraging an appropriate work life balance and offering high quality staff development opportunities. As a Trust we are leaders in the Alternative Provision and Special Educational Needs sectors. Our commitment to the highest quality curriculum and learning offer sets a benchmark for others to reach for.

Our Curriculum

We want every learner to have access to a curriculum that supports them to develop their knowledge, skills and experience in:

- Currency – Learning for your future.
- Character – who you are and who you want to be.
- Community – links to others and the wider world.



Tees Valley Free Special School

Our vision is for a place that improves the lives of children and young people in both the short and longer term. Recent views from children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEND) in the Tees Valley confirmed that they aspire to have jobs, their own homes, friendships and families of their own, make their own decisions, be included in decisions made about them, choose how to spend their time and be involved and listened to (Middlesbrough Preparing for Adulthood, 2019). Our school will help learners achieve these aims through our key themes of Currency, Character and Community, delivered within a highly personalised curriculum, therapeutic and enrichment offer. Staff will be enthusiastic and well prepared to deliver our vision because their own wellbeing and work life commitments are in balance. Structures and processes relating to all areas of school life will be clear and consistent.

What we can offer

Our overall aim is to foster a culture of inclusive professional development within which staff feel valued and treated fairly. We are a learning organisation and we facilitate all staff to use a love and curiosity of learning to improve their practice.

Development

We encourage staff to reflect on Boyatzis self-improvement model. This cycle helps both the organisation and the individual set and achieve targets through reflective practice. This is most effective when coupled with evidence-based research. Together this provides a framework against which to consider the most effective practice and evaluate impact. Through our FROG Courses platform, CPD is in the hands of the individual ensuring they can access what they need when they need it. All staff are supported by mentoring and coaching as needed. This builds a cycle of reflection that focuses on how CPD has had an impact on their role and the progress of our learners rather than just the completion of activities.

Our targeted coaching strategy uses instructional coaching, focussing on specific, targeted areas of practice leading to improvement. This is supported by a peer coaching framework. The framework includes 2 key questions: What was your main insight from this coaching session? What actions will you take? Teachers have an additional 10% PPA time allocated to support peer to peer development.

We encourage the use of technology for reflection and have facilities available for all staff to use video. We are piloting the use of avatars in the classroom as a tool for live coaching without the intrusion of another person in the classroom. Every member of staff is encouraged to use a reflective journal to prompt how their practice evolves through professional development.

Performance Management

Performance management is an opportunity for all staff to demonstrate excellence within their work. Each year a research project will be agreed through which all staff can demonstrate their impact on the progress and outcomes of our learners, staff and communities. Staff will collate a portfolio of evidence throughout the year. Performance Management will start from the assumption that staff are performing well, leading to progression within their salary scale. If there are any concerns about elements of performance, these should be raised throughout the year with a coaching and support plan agreed so improvement can be evidenced. Accountability will be outcome based with a focus on reflection, self-evaluation and ownership of professional practice.

Progression

When recruiting we take account of the fit for the specific role but also the future potential of a candidate or existing employee. Progression pathways are in place to support staff to reach their potential, building on their contribution to the organisation. Progression may take a number of years but this commitment to the organisation is seen as a positive.

Rewards

Pay structures follow national criteria but flexibility within pay scales is delegated to Headteachers. All teaching staff receive an SEN allowance. TLRs are available for specific responsibilities. Regional and specialist roles attract additional salary commensurate with additional responsibilities.

Fairness - Expectations and Accountability

Accountability processes are designed to align with agreed working practices. The Trust assumes that every member of staff is performing well within their role and will offer support if any areas of underperformance are identified. Wherever possible we would hope that our self-evaluation processes would allow staff to identify their own development needs and take appropriate action. Annual performance management discussions are based on mutually agreed and specific objectives and/or research focused investigations to improve personal practice. The most important element of this is demonstrating the impact of the work we do.

Our CPD offer is rooted in self-evaluation so each individual has ownership of their professional development.



Recognition

Staff are regularly recognised for the work they do. Trustees contact key members of staff to share their appreciation for work that has had a significant impact for learners. Staff are put forward for regional and national awards where appropriate. The Trust website is used to showcase our work, in addition to social media and wider coverage.

Moving up and improving yourself

Our progression pathways clearly outline the opportunities for staff at all levels to progress within the organisation. Staff are encouraged to learn and work shadowing is encouraged for those seeking to move in to other roles. Our training roles allow us to work together to develop staff who have shown a commitment to the Trust values, supporting their learning journey through mentoring, coaching and investment in external support and training.


Continuous Professional Development

All staff have access to comprehensive training and development from induction through role specific skills and on to leadership. Staff are encouraged to look beyond their own job role and engage with learning for their next step as well as to ensure they are performing well in their current role. Staff are encouraged to become mentors and coaches to others, at the same time reflecting on their own practice.

Opportunities to become involved in delivering CPD are always available and as part of our outreach offer we work with a range of partners in differing contexts.

Wellbeing

Maintaining staff wellbeing is achieved through our approach to workload reduction, support systems and generous approach to adapting to individual needs. Our teams are inclusive and work within a climate of professional responsibility and trust.

RTMAT WELL-BEING OFFER		RIVER TEES Multi-Academy Trust	
	Complementary tea and coffee making facilities.		Staff social and sporting activities
	A buddy for new staff who join RTMAT.		Flexible and generous approach to family appointments, children's events etc.
	Wellbeing events for all staff		Personal ICT equipment (iPad or Macbook)
	Deadlines well publicised and annual calendar consultation		Opportunities for career development always considered
	Complementary Christmas lunch provided for all staff each year		No student or class data is collected for data's sake
	Measured approach to lesson observation, drop-ins and work scrutiny.		Staff marking & workload group guide and develop policy
	The opportunity to make a real difference to the lives of disadvantaged and vulnerable learners.		Counselling service free to all staff both in house and externally
	On-site free parking where possible		Comprehensive training and development offer
	SLT open door policy at all times		Dedicated classroom wherever possible for all teaching staff
	Greater PPA time than national		Cake, laughter and friendship