

Executive Principal

Aldridge Executive Principal North and Substantive
Principal of Darwen Vale High School

Introduction

Welcome from Jane Fletcher, CEO and Rupert Nichols, Chair of the Aldridge Education Board of Trustees

Aldridge Education is a norms-led organisation committed to providing an equitable and high-quality education for all. Sponsored by Sir Rod Aldridge, we have a strong desire to be entrepreneurial in approach and to provide our students with all they need to leave compulsory education with genuine choices available to them about their futures.

The trustees of Aldridge Education are both proud of the work being done across the Trust and keen to continue that work as we continue to pursue our mission, build towards excellence and broaden our scope.

Together, we are looking for an individual with integrity, high standards and a bias for action to join part of our team. Who you are and your approach to your work is as important to us as what you know – we're genuinely in the work together at Aldridge Education and so we're looking for someone who wants to be a part of the team.



Jane Fletcher

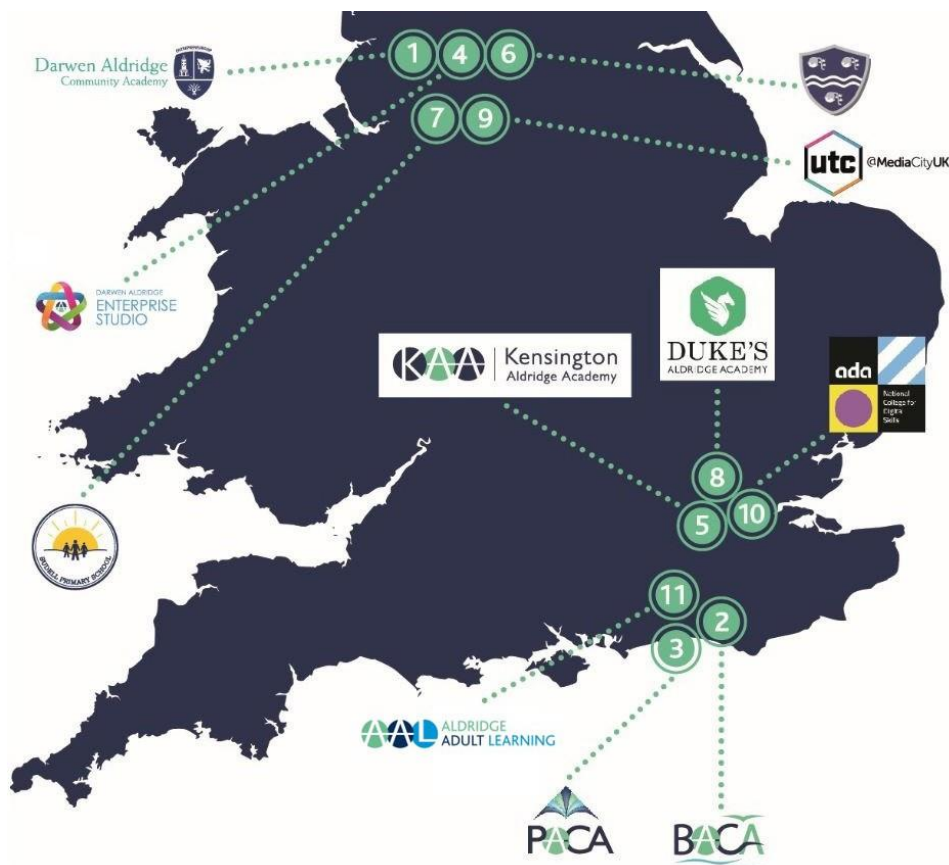
Aldridge Education, CEO

Rupert Nichols

Chair of Aldridge Education

Aldridge Education

Aldridge Education is a semi-national multi-academy trust with schools located in West Sussex, London, Salford and Lancashire. We also have family links with Ada, the National College for Digital Skills and we are the lead sponsor for Kensington Aldridge Academy, secondary school of the year in 2018.



Our mission

Our mission is to bring true equity to education through academic rigour and whole-learner development; supporting aspiration for all and leaving no one behind.

Everyone working for Aldridge Education is asked to commit to these norms and to being open to improving our practice as we see ways to better embody both our norms and our mission.

We are Aldridge Education

We all own the name, the right to speak, the reward and the responsibility. We believe the best of each other, speak positively and act with thought and purpose in order to find solutions and to do good work.

The standard is excellence

Excellence is our bar - it's what we aim for together, nothing less - so we support each other to get better faster.

We champion equality

Inclusion and equality are central to our mission. We aim to leave no-one behind and we are fiercely anti-discrimination.

We are in the work together

We each stand by our missions and we act with transparency and clarity. Because we share accountability, we both give and receive feedback. We celebrate honest support that makes us collectively better.

We behave with integrity

Professionalism, honesty and humanity underpin every word and action. Truth and kindness work hand in hand.

We lead by example

We own our responsibility to live our norms. We expect to be role models to those around us in matters both small and large.

We use time well

Time is precious so we work smart. We select actions and tools that provide the most benefit from time invested. We avoid creating unnecessary work for others.

About Aldridge Education

Aldridge Education is a national multi-academy trust which was established in 2016. Our patron is Sir Rod Aldridge, who founded the Capita Group in 1984; under his leadership, Capita grew from a small start-up to a FTSE 100 company.

Imbued with this entrepreneurial spirit, Aldridge now looks after eight schools across the country (with a cluster in the Northwest of England, one school in London and two in Brighton). We also have an adult learning provision, also based in Brighton. Our academies are a mixture of typical and atypical provisions, and another University Technical College (UTC) is about to join us, which specialises in STEM subjects and complements our more creatively focused UTC, based in Media City.

The two key missions which drive our work - to bring learning to life, and leave no one behind - ensure our focus on putting equity into education. We aim to equip every single Aldridge learner with the skills and mindset to achieve and thrive in their next steps after school. We have a range of unique USPs which help us to provide our students with varied opportunities for learning and growth: there's our world-class Cricket and Football Academies in Brighton; our strong network of businesses and employers that supports our T Level courses; our new, collaborative sixth form in Darwen; our thriving and busy Growing Together professional development arm, which gives our staff the tools they need to excel in the classroom.

Guided by our operating norms – which highlight our high standards of both work and behaviour – Aldridge Education seeks to give our learners, families, staff and communities the best possible experience in every Aldridge school. That's a bit about our story – and you could be part of it too.

For more information, please view our website: www.aldridgeeducation.org



About DVHS

Darwen Vale High School (DVHS) is an 11-18 academy, with a newly evolving sixth form which sits as part of collaboration with the two other Aldridge Education schools in the town: DACA and DAES. The school's students are drawn not only from Darwen, but also from neighbouring Blackburn, and around 30% of students qualify for free school meals.

DVHS opened in redesigned and refurbished buildings in September 2012, and has grown from year groups of 150 to 240. It is widely recognised as a school which has seen rapid improvements in recent years: student achievement has improved significantly and as a result, the school has been oversubscribed for the past several years.

In addition, following a recent Ofsted inspection, Darwen Vale has been given a 'Good' rating in all areas; a great achievement, and one which Aldridge and the whole DVHS team are very proud of. The school's motto - We aim high. We work hard. We care. We are Vale. - embodies the commitment of the community of staff, students and parents to ensuring the school continues to go from strength to strength.



**DARWEN
VALE**

An Aldridge Community Academy



Job description

Role: Aldridge Executive Principal North and Substantive Principal of Darwen Vale High School

Salary type: Competitive salary

Contract: Permanent (6-month probationary period), 35 days annual leave, TPS, employee benefits platform, cycle to work scheme.

Specific responsibilities

About the post

Aldridge Education has two overarching priorities to its work, as detailed in its strategic plan, namely:

- Leaving no-one behind
- Bringing learning to life

Within the context of these strategic priorities, this post seeks to achieve four things:

1. School oversight
2. Alignment
3. High standards
4. Capacity

Above all else, Aldridge Education will thrive and grow if each of its schools is performing at a high standard for all of its students, finding ways to engage the most disengaged and ensuring the quality of provision remains consistently high and designed to meet the needs of all.

These are the drivers that release our ability to innovate, grow and develop. By adding this post to our structure, we intend to ensure stability through the ups and downs of life in the education sector which will allow us to support alignment and secure high standards. That in turn will allow us to grow and develop.

The postholder will be an experienced school leader who has a consistent record of strong performance as detailed in this job pack. The postholder will be the substantive principal of Darwen Vale High School, with the aim of building on the strong work of the school to demonstrate excellent outcomes for learners and using the school as a base for training up new school leaders of the future – heads of school and principals. As this is achieved, the postholder will have more scope and capacity to engage in the wider remit of this job description.

As the postholder develops into role and demonstrates that both they and the school are ready for an expansion of remit, it will become clear that there are a range of varying leadership and management responsibilities associated with this post, including:

Management

- Financial oversight and compliance
- Playbook expertise and implementation
- Alignment to Trust practice and priorities
- Securing high outcomes
- Ofsted readiness and excellence

Leadership

- (Executive) leadership of own school
- Identification and development of potential new leaders
- Team member for development of leadership pathway content
- Executive leadership when required
- Line management of school leaders
- Exploration and pursuit of Trust strategic priorities
- Participation in exploration of Trust growth



Job description

Key responsibilities

School oversight

1. Undertake the full role of substantive Principal at Darwen Vale High School until such a time as the Trust is ready to amend leadership structures, allowing this role to become an executive one.
2. Work with the CEO to identify potential future leaders and engage in the creation of a development package for this leadership pathway.
3. Provide support for new leaders including induction and mentoring.
4. Provide support and challenge for struggling leaders as agreed with the CEO.
5. Ensure that no school fails, working with the CEO to determine the path of action required to keep any vulnerable school safe.
6. Take over as Executive Principal when/if there is no leader available in a northern school building, taking full responsibility for the running of that school for the time required whilst the CEO recruits and appoints.
7. Act as Executive Principal when/if the Trust appoints a Head of School until such a time as they are ready and able to take full responsibility for the school as Principal.

Trust practice

8. Oversight of budgetary compliance across relevant schools.
9. Build proficiency in Playbook levers and key activity. Lead other school leaders to understand, privilege and deploy these levers across their schools.
10. Be a team member in the Reviewing Together process, leading RT visits to schools not within your area.
11. Ensure you are aligned to the priorities and work of Aldridge Education, so that you can endorse, support and prioritise this work; ensuring that local programmes align with collective ambitions.
12. Work collaboratively and promote a team approach across the Trust and particularly for the Darwen team of schools.

Standards

13. Lead Darwen Vale High School rapidly to performance metrics that consistently demonstrate strong outcomes for all groups, with attainment outcomes that increasingly get close to Trust targets and performance measures that show as above (and well above) national outcomes.
14. Through this work, rapidly move towards an IDSR that is consistently positive across all subjects studied.
15. Drive attendance forward to be at least in line with national standards.
16. Ensure an open culture of safeguarding and inclusion where everyone feels safe to raise concerns and to share information appropriately.
17. Use this proven expertise to support other leaders to achieve the same high standards in their schools.

Build capacity

18. Work with the CEO to explore growth opportunities.
19. Sit on steering groups for new joiners and lead educational planning and delivery around due diligence, onboarding and transition support.
20. Work with the CEO to unpick barriers to meeting our strategic priority themes and actions, exploring strands of work and helping us to unblock obstacles to meeting our targets.
21. As requested by the CEO, lead projects or other Trust-wide workstreams.
22. Intentionally take part in Trust leadership opportunities to develop self as an expert coach so that a key mission of the postholder becomes growing new leaders to step into Trust posts.

The postholder will develop into the full breadth of this post over time, focusing first entirely on Darwen Vale High School and ensuring its capacity of leadership and excellence of standards before picking up wider duties included within this job pack.

Person specifications

Qualifications	Essential	Desirable
QTS	✓	
NPQH	✓	
NPQEL		✓

Experience, knowledge and skills	Essential	Desirable
Experienced school leader who has led transformation	✓	
Record of P8 consistently above national standards (eg 0.3+)	✓	
Experience of working in areas of disadvantage	✓	
Strong Ofsted track record	✓	
Evidence of consistently strong IDSR reports	✓	
Acutely mindful of safeguarding and building a safe and inclusive culture	✓	
Evidence of raising attendance and reducing suspensions	✓	
Mature, calm, professional and humane leadership approach	✓	
Experience of working as part of a multi-academy Trust		✓
Experience of supporting people outside of own building		✓
Experience of successfully growing own leaders		✓

Personal qualities	Essential	Desirable
Fully committed to the Trust's Operating Norms	✓	
Highly organised	✓	
Strong common sense	✓	
Strong communicator who understands that leadership is a team business	✓	
Reputable, full of integrity and honest	✓	
A strong ambassador for the Trust	✓	
Team player	✓	

Aldridge Education is committed to:

- Exemplary safer recruitment practice
- Equity in recruitment which goes above and beyond to ensure that all are included and have an equal chance to prove themselves ready for a post being advertised
- Ensuring our learners of all backgrounds see themselves in leadership roles in our Trust and know they belong in any and all offices.
- Growing leaders from within

Application process

Application Process

If after reading the details you would like to apply for this post then, as part of our safer recruitment practice, you will be required to complete an application form in full online via the Trust's Every HR Applicant Tracking System: [Every Candidate Portal - View Job Details](#)

- Closing date for applications: Thursday 27th March 2025
- Shortlisting is planned for: Friday 28th March 2025
- Interviews are planned for: Wednesday 2nd & Thursday 3rd April.

Selection process

Interviews for this post will take place on 2nd & 3rd April 2025

Candidates wishing to view the school in advance of submitting an application should contact Kathy Shaw Kathy.shaw@aldridgeeducation.org. Short-listing will take place at the end of the day one and successful candidates will be invited back on the second day for the final activities.

Proposed activities: conversation with the CEO and Chair of Trustees and then a formal presentation and panel interview.

Safeguarding Statement

Aldridge Education is committed to working together to safeguard children 2023 providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge. We expect all employees and volunteers to share this commitment. Where the role for which you are applying involves engaging in regulated activity, it is an offence to apply for the role if you are barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.

A copy of Aldridge Education's Child Protection policy is available on our website at www.aldridgeeducation.org

Following successful shortlisting, Aldridge Education will carry out the necessary prohibition checks for all teaching staff, as well as for all candidates undertaking regulated activity. If you are shortlisted for the position you are applying for, you will be required to complete a Declaration giving details of any relevant criminal offences and other relevant information relating to our safeguarding duty. Further information will be provided on that form.

Any offer of employment will be made conditional upon a satisfactory enhanced DBS check and other safer recruitment checks.

If you are shortlisted for the position you are applying for, **Aldridge Education will undertake online searches** (including social media) in accordance with KCSIE 2024.

This post is considered exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendment to the Exceptions Order 1975.

