



WOODLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL AND TINY SEEDS NURSERY

Recruitment Information



From Tiny Seeds Grow Mighty Trees

Proud to be part of Mercia Learning Trust



Mercia
Learning Trust



**STAFF HAVE HIGH
EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL
CHILDREN AND PROVIDE CARE
AND SUPPORT TO HELP CHILDREN
ON THEIR JOURNEY THROUGH
THE SCHOOL.**

OFSTED, 2022



Mr Mark Bennett
Headteacher

From Tiny Seeds Grow Mighty Trees

Welcome to Woodlands Primary School, where tiny seeds grow into mighty trees. We are a school and nursery catering to children aged 2-11, nestled in the heart of a vibrant south Sheffield community, serving around 500 children. At Woodlands, we firmly believe in the potential of every child and are dedicated to their academic success while celebrating their personal achievements.

Our caring and welcoming school is characterised by compassion, enthusiasm, and the expertise of our team. We are here to guide, inspire, and support each child on their unique educational journey.



At Woodlands it is important to adapt the way we work to meet the needs of our pupils; we raise the floor so every child can stand shoulder to shoulder with any child nationally. At our school we want to be renowned for creating a safe space for pupil to explore and investigate and to have deliberate learning in. To do so you need to have

rigorous routines and expectations which are applied and stuck to. This is because routine is our friend; structure helps our pupil thrive. This should underpin everything that we do. Consistency is key to this.



Our approach is based upon research, reflecting on our school context, remaining outward facing and every member of staff seeking to continually improve. Our focus is on delivering a high-quality education to some of the most disadvantaged pupil in Sheffield. We want to drive our outcomes with



the ambition of being at least national in all outcomes.

Every day, our children embark on a journey of wonder, language development and new experiences. Our expert teachers carefully plan and sequence every subject area, always keeping the needs of our children at the heart of every decision. What we can provide for you:

Wonderful children who are polite, courteous, and a joy to teach!

- An outstanding staff profile, including excellent teachers, teaching assistants, and a specialised team dedicated to supporting children needs.
- A caring and child focussed senior leadership team unwaveringly committed to improving outcomes for all children and developing the very best team.
- A curriculum framework and assessment system based on research and a deep understanding of our children.
- High quality continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities, both within our school and across our trust.

We invite you to become a part of the Woodlands family. If you share our belief in high expectations for all children, possess resilience and a strong work ethic, we would love to hear from you. We would love you show you round our inspirational school.



Mr Neil Miley
Chief Executive Officer

Mercia Learning Trust is a great trust with a clear mission, robust schools and effective central functions. We have a strong identity, a positive culture, and an effective model of operation.

Our scale and location enable us to function as a close-knit network and family of schools and professionals. While we are pleased with our current position, our trustees are ambitious for further development and improvement.

Our trust is focused on creating organisational health. This is rooted in ensuring there is clarity for all staff on our purpose. We achieve this through answering a series of simple questions that define our mission and how we will work together to achieve our mission.

The first question we answer is ‘Why do we exist?’

Our answer to this question is simple, yet profound:



‘To empower everyone in our communities, especially the most disadvantaged, to succeed.’

We know that education is the key to a better future for everyone in our communities. It opens doors to employment, improves health and gives young people a sense of purpose.

But for many pupils, there are barriers in their way. Our job, alongside families, is to remove those barriers and provide the support, challenge and guidance children need to achieve.

If we get it right for our pupils, we help to improve our local and national community for everyone.

The second question we answer, is ‘How do we behave?’. This question defines the values we expect everyone in our community to display. These are:

Kindness - showing care and supporting one another

Integrity - doing the right thing and always putting children first

Diligence - overcoming obstacles and having no excuses

These three core values should permeate everything we do. They represent three key areas: how we behave and work with each other – we are kind; our moral compass – we show integrity; and our approach to our work – we are diligent.

We are proud that our schools are inclusive, warm, and welcoming places where all pupils feel happy and safe.

"our schools are inclusive, warm, and welcoming places"

They are schools where exceptional behaviour and kindness are the norm, and where pupils are diligent and succeed. They are also schools where staff are focused on the most vulnerable pupils, ensuring they are empowered to be successful.

The third question we answer is ‘What do we do?’. This might sound like a straightforward question, but it is important we are clear on our approach.

Academic Excellence - equipping every pupil with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed.

Cultural Capital - broadening horizons and providing experiences that enrich and inspire.

Character Development - developing resilience, empathy, integrity and other critical character traits, to prepare pupils for life beyond school.



Through these key areas, we make sure all children have the opportunity to lead successful and happy lives.

Our fourth question is ‘How will we succeed?’. This question defines the areas we all focus on, as a team, to make sure all our schools are successful.

"a culture of purposeful collaboration"

Firstly, we want a **culture of excellence – high standards, shaped by clarity, not control.**

To achieve this, our trust operates within a model we call ‘Aligned Autonomy’. This model recognises each school has its own context and community. We want schools to innovate and drive success for their pupils, but to also share what they develop with other schools. This helps to reduce workload and to improve the education of all our pupils.

Secondly, **we promote a culture of purposeful collaboration.**

We recognise our leaders and staff often face similar challenges, and we ask them to work together to find common and scalable solutions. However, we also don’t want to add unnecessary burden and workload, so only collaborate when the purpose is clear.

Finally, we want all our schools to have a **strong academic focus**, which means empowering all children through an exceptional curriculum.

"empowering all children through an exceptional curriculum"

Our academic focus is the cornerstone of our mission. By delivering an exceptional curriculum, we provide every child with the knowledge, skills, character development and cultural capital they need to succeed. This focus is about creating a love of learning that lasts a lifetime.



To achieve our mission, we employ a diverse and exceptional staff across the full range of teaching, non-teaching, and leadership roles.

We are acutely aware that our staff are our greatest asset. We cannot prosper as schools or a trust, and fulfil our mission for children, unless we can recruit, develop, promote, and retain the very best people.

We also understand the importance of attracting new entrants into teaching.



Therefore, we are a substantial provider of Initial Teacher Training and provide fantastic support for early career teachers.

We understand that working within schools is rewarding and fast moving, but also demanding.

We promote ethical leadership to ensure strong support and professional development, coupled with a commitment to wellbeing and maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

"our staff are our greatest asset"

Working for our trust also offers the opportunity to reside in the vibrant city of Sheffield, renowned for its sports, leisure, and cultural activities. Sheffield boasts more parks, open spaces, and trees than any other city in the UK. Additionally, the picturesque Peak District National Park borders the west of the city.

We welcome applications from those who subscribe to our mission and values, and in turn we commit to being a trust where staff can prosper, flourish and build their career.



OUR CRITICAL QUESTIONS

OUR
CRITICAL
QUESTIONS



WHY DO WE EXIST?

To empower everyone
in our communities,
especially the most
disadvantaged, to succeed.



We are kind

Showing care and supporting each other.

We have integrity

Doing the right thing and always putting children first.

We work with diligence

Overcoming obstacles and having no excuses.



HOW DO WE BEHAVE?

OUR
CRITICAL
QUESTIONS

OUR
CRITICAL
QUESTIONS



WHAT DO WE DO?

We run schools that focus
on academic excellence,
cultural capital and the
development of character.



A culture of excellence

High standards shaped by clarity, not control.

Academic focus

Empowering all children through an exceptional curriculum.

Purposeful collaboration

Relationships built on trust, reducing sub-optimisation
and driving collective success.



HOW WILL WE SUCCEED?

OUR
CRITICAL
QUESTIONS

OUR SCHOOLS



LOCATION





REASONS TO JOIN WOODLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

1 UNIQUENESS

"Working at Woodlands is different from working in other schools. It is so unique, warm, welcoming and everybody is treated fairly and with respect."



2 COMMUNITY

"I have worked at Woodlands for 17 years and see my future here too. It's like a family."



3 INCLUSIVITY

"I love working at Woodlands for many reasons, but mainly because I get to work as part of a team who prioritise inclusion and meeting the needs of every single child."



4 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

"Working at Woodlands Primary School brings a wide range of professional opportunities with a clear commitment to continuous professional development and professional growth. The leadership team are all extremely supportive and invest time in staff."



5 UNITY

"The team at Woodlands are resilient, professional, hardworking and care and look after each other. I couldn't imagine working anywhere else."



6 FORWARD-THINKING

"I have worked for Woodlands Primary School since 2006 and see a strong future here. Our trust and school are outward facing, forward-thinking, research-led, well-informed and work collaboratively."



7 TEAMWORK

"Working as part of a team here is more than just cooperation; it's true camaraderie. The entire staff team prioritises collaboration and supporting one another. We come together to create an environment where every child's needs are met, and this teamwork extends beyond the classroom. The sense of unity among the staff is what makes Woodlands a truly special place to work."

8 WORKLOAD

“Workload at Woodlands Primary School is really manageable. I've been teaching here for several years, and the school's commitment to a balanced workload is truly refreshing. Woodlands makes it possible to give my best to my children whilst maintaining a healthy work-life balance.”



9 COLLABORATION

“Mercia Learning Trust is committed to bringing out the best in everyone. It is such a supportive networking, and we have really valuable opportunities to collaborate with practitioners in other settings across our trust.”



10 CHALLENGE

“I love the challenge of how every day is different at Woodlands. How can you not love a job where there are 30 children who are excited to come to school and work with you every day?”



STAFF ENJOY WORKING

AT THE SCHOOL. THEY ENJOY

THE SUPPORT AND OPEN DIALOGUE

THEY HAVE WITH LEADERS.

STAFF FEEL LISTENED TO AND

APPRECIATE THE MEASURES

LEADERS TAKE TO REDUCE

THEIR WORKLOAD.

OFSTED, 2022

SURVEY RESULTS



"In our school everyone genuinely cares for one another. Our school is very much at the heart of our community, and I feel the benefits of that every day."



"I value the supportive behaviour policy which minimises disruption and maximises learning."



"I work with a great team of people who go above and beyond to provide the best educational experience for pupils who attend our school."



"I really appreciate the community of pupils that attend our school. They make me feel valued and respected, and I feel privileged to be able to have a positive impact on their learning."



JOB SATISFACTION AMONG OUR STAFF IS

14% HIGHER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE.



PUPIL BEHAVIOUR IS RATED

21% BETTER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE.



13% MORE STAFF THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE WOULD

RECOMMEND OUR TRUST AS A GREAT PLACE TO WORK.

Based on results of 76% of our trust surveyed by Edurio in 2025, which is 13% higher than the average response rate. Edurio benchmark results against nearly 70000 other staff nationally.

A woman wearing a black hijab and a maroon uniform stands in front of a whiteboard. The whiteboard contains several mathematical equations written in red and blue ink, including $2e^x - \frac{2}{e^x} = 3$, e^x , $-\frac{2}{y} = -$, $-2 = 3y$, and $\ln e^x = \ln 2$. She is smiling and looking to her right. A white rectangular border frames the image.

JOB SATISFACTION

AMONG OUR STAFF IS

14% HIGHER THAN THE

NATIONAL AVERAGE



WE EXIST TO

EMPOWER EVERYONE

IN OUR COMMUNITIES,

ESPECIALLY THE MOST

DISADVANTAGED,

TO SUCCEED.

BENEFITS OF WORKING FOR MERCIA LEARNING TRUST



MISSION

Shared mission and values.



WELLBEING & WORKLOAD

We value our staff and support them to be happy in their careers. We actively aim to reduce workload. Our staff have access to occupational health, counselling, and physiotherapy.



ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

We are kind – showing care and supporting each other. We have integrity – doing the right thing and always putting children first. We work with diligence - overcoming obstacles and having no excuses.



GREAT SCHOOLS

Our schools excel and continuously improve, with sector-leading expertise and diverse catchments. This provides staff with valuable insights across a range of age groups and educational approaches.



COACHING

We are proud to be a trust promoting the use of coaching to support everyone's development.



IT

Up to date IT equipment, with dedicated support through our centralised team.



INDUCTION

Comprehensive support via a mentor to ensure all new staff (incl. ECTs) can flourish in their role.



EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Cycle to work scheme, reduced Westfield Health rates, Specsavers eye care scheme, childcare vouchers scheme, free optional annual flu vaccination.



CPD & CAREER PROGRESSION

Exceptional CPD from within your school from our trust and outside, including an annual trust conference. There are accelerated progression opportunities within our trust.



FINANCIAL WELLBEING

Access to a secure and flexible Teacher's or Local Government pension scheme.



PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Numerous opportunities to collaborate with colleagues from across our trust on a range of projects.



ENHANCED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Greater flexibility and support for life's unexpected events, with leave options including carers, dependants, career breaks, and life events. Enhanced family leave benefits provide full contractual pay for paternity, neonatal, fertility, and pregnancy loss leave.



STAFF TESTIMONIALS

WHAT IS IT LIKE TO

WORK FOR

OUR TRUST?

**I FEEL LIKE I MATTER TO
MY SCHOOL AND OUR TRUST.**

MERCIA LEARNING TRUST SEES

ITS STAFF AS ITS GREATEST

ASSET, WHICH MAKES ME FEEL

HUGELY APPRECIATED.

THE SECURITY I FEEL IN

MY ROLE IS PRICELESS.

**NIKKI CROOKES, TEACHING ASSISTANT,
TOTLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL**



“The leadership team are so supportive and are always happy to provide guidance and assistance. Behaviour systems that are in place just allow you to teach and focus on what is happening in the classroom.”

Amy Hardie, Assistant Headteacher,
King Ecgbert School



“The ability to tap into a wealth of exceptional talent and expertise across primary and secondary settings has sharpened our practice in so many ways. At the same time, the mantra of ‘aligned autonomy’ allows each school to flourish and display its own character.”

Ben Paxman, Headteacher,
Totley Primary School



“What attracted me to Mercia Learning Trust was the forward thinking approach to education and CPD, and our trust’s willingness to embrace the best new strategies, techniques and educational research to better meet our pupils’ needs.”

Josh Bennett, Teacher,
Nether Edge Primary School



“I decided to work for Mercia Learning Trust because it considers students, as well as staff, as its greatest assets. I get a sense of satisfaction that what I do is recognised and valued by my employer. Our trust aims to secure staff and student wellbeing as a top priority.”

Sharjeel Jalal, Teacher,
King Ecgbert School



“What attracted me to joining our trust was the large and diverse community where there is equal representation.”

Emma Dibie, Teaching Assistant,
Nether Edge Primary School



“Mercia Learning Trust is committed to bringing out the best in everyone, through giving us the tools to build our skills, expertise and knowledge. It is such a supportive network, and we have really valuable opportunities to collaborate with practitioners in other settings across our trust.”

Joe Tremble, Teacher,
Woodlands Primary School



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