

# Head of School

## Lift Hamford

Candidate information pack



# Lift Schools

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# A message from the CEO

Thank you for your interest in joining Lift Schools. We're one of the largest networks of schools in England with 57 schools, covering all phases, in almost all regions of the country.

Lift Schools exists to be the proof of concept that it is possible to deliver an entitlement to excellence at scale, for every child, regardless of context or family circumstances. Over the recent years, we have transformed our network of schools. This has played out not just in academic results and external inspection outcomes, but also in our culture.

We also went public with an ambitious set of goals which we call 490; asking ourselves what it will take to be the first network at scale - anywhere in the world - to break 90% in four headline metrics:

- Being a secure reader for their age
- Passing the phonics check
- Achieving the expected standard in RWM at Key Stage 2
- Achieving at least grade 4 in English and maths GCSEs

We want to attract the best of this country's talent to realise 490. It requires a level of performance that surpasses anything that has ever been achieved before at scale.

And so we've been thinking hard about school leadership. We have leadership opportunities across all five regions across the country, and to fill these roles we are looking for a new generation of leaders who are next-level ambitious for children and communities. We are looking for individuals who believe that no work is more important or significant in terms of human impact than building excellent schools.

Join Lift Schools and you will receive your own individual development account, with up to £100k allocated for you to invest in your development over the next five years. Based on the best international evidence, and in partnership with Ambition Institute, we have built a framework which will give you choice and agency in how this is spent, depending on your needs and interests.



**Rebecca Boomer-Clark**  
**Chief Executive**

Professional learning and development is one of the most powerful levers to accelerate school improvement and we know that the quality and effectiveness of a school leader can be either an enabling or limiting factor in young people's outcomes. Yet, across the education sector we do not yet resource the learning and development of our leaders anywhere near the level of equivalent professions.

We're determined to change that at Lift Schools.

We're looking for candidates who are self aware, committed to the wider network trust, and intellectually curious.

We have an unapologetic level of ambition for our children and our people. But we know that we will only deliver on our promise of excellence for every child, if we create a culture where everyone can do their very best work, every day.

In joining us, you will be central to this mission, developing and challenging yourself, driving our schools to improve, and contributing to a generational shift in education performance - the likes of which has never been achieved before.

If you're excited by this, get in touch.





# Lift Hamford

Lift Hamford is a welcoming two-form entry school in a picturesque coastal community, currently serving 367 students with a Planned Admission Number (PAN) of 420. We cater to children from early years to key stage 2, with 20% of our students having special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and 32% from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Our school is dedicated to nurturing every child's potential in a stable environment, where most students are white british. Our facilities include a new building for Year 5 and 6, extensive outdoor grounds, a playground, and a wellbeing hub, alongside an autism support centre funded by Essex County Council. Each year group has dedicated teaching assistants and midday support to ensure individual needs are met.

We're now entering an exciting new phase of development, having secured funding to open a brand-new 40-place nursery for 2-4 year olds from January 2026. This expansion will allow us to support families even earlier in their children's learning journey and further strengthen our provision across the early years.

Our team consists of 15 teachers and a leadership team that includes the Executive Principal, Vice Principal, and Phase Leaders for KS1 and KS2. We emphasise hard work and commitment to our students.

As a feeder school for Tendring Technology College, we collaborate closely with partner institutions and engage actively with the community, working with organisations like Tesco and the Rotary Club. Our supportive Parent-Teacher Association and Academy Council promote parental involvement and enhance our school's presence in the community.



In recent years, Hamford has delivered some of the strongest combined Key Stage 2 results in the local area, achieving 77% in 2023. While the 2024 results reflect a dip to 55%, we see this not as a setback, but as a clear opportunity to refocus and accelerate improvement.

As we look ahead, we are excited to welcome a new Head of School who shares our vision and values, and who will play a vital role in enhancing our educational offerings and community impact.

## About Walton-on-the-Naze

Walton-on-the-Naze is a charming coastal town in Essex, known for its beautiful beaches and friendly community. With local shops, cafes, and recreational facilities, it offers a welcoming environment for families and individuals alike.

The town features a stunning beach perfect for family outings and events, along with the iconic Naze Tower, which provides panoramic views of the coastline. Walton-on-the-Naze is well-connected to nearby towns, enhancing access to additional amenities and educational opportunities.

As new housing developments emerge, Walton-on-the-Naze is experiencing growth, making it an exciting place to live and work. The combination of scenic surroundings and a strong community spirit makes it an ideal location for families and educators.



# Take your next leadership step

We know that the best school leaders are looking for purpose, a sense of belonging and to have tangible impact for communities and children.

But too often, school leadership can feel isolating, lonely and difficult.

We want to change that.

We want leaders to join us who are seriously ambitious for children and communities; people who believe that no work is more important or significant in terms of human impact than building excellent schools. We know that this work takes time and commitment - it takes at least five years to embed excellence across every dimension of school life. In return, we will make a serious investment in you, and provide you with the support of a national network, which has localism at its heart.

We're looking for candidates who are:

- Self aware: Those who thrive in a high challenge and high support environment, who want the space and agency to develop their leadership.
- Network minded: Those who believe that the job is not done unless all schools in our network and beyond are serving their communities well.
- Intellectually curious: Those who have the confidence to work in an evidence informed way, with an unrelenting drive to be the best leader they can be.

We are recruiting for potential; we want to identify and cultivate the next generation of exceptional school leaders.

If this sounds like you, we want you on our team. Register your interest today.

## What is the Lift Schools leadership development framework?

Professional learning and development is one of the strongest levers to accelerate school improvement and we know that the quality and effectiveness of a school leader can be either an enabling or limiting factor in school performance.

- Research from the EPI indicates that effective school leadership can have a significant impact on pupil attainment by up to two GCSE grades across all subjects.
- Data released last year showed that 1 in 3 secondary headteachers were leaving their posts within five years of being appointed
- Leadership vacancies have increased vastly post-pandemic, rising by 18 percent from 2020 to 2022

Yet, as a sector we do not resource learning and development to the level of equivalent professions.

Company	Investment	Details
<b>Lift Schools</b>	<b>£100,000 over 5 years</b>	<b>£100,000 over 5 years</b>
NHS	£19,000 per year	12 month leadership programme
McKinsey Consultants	£75,000 over 5 years	Estimated £15,000 per FTE
UK MoD	£3,000 per year	Initial training per person
Executive MBA	£92,000 for two year course	Average of top five UK Business Schools



# Lift Schools leadership development framework

So, our commitment to our leaders is that we will provide the experiences, resources and coaching so that each and every person in our schools can flourish. By accelerating the development and expanding the support we provide to our leaders we will ensure their confidence and capability to lead all aspects of school life and deliver excellence in every classroom, every day.

We have built a leadership development framework, in partnership with Ambition Institute to allow you to seriously invest in your future.

Based on the best international evidence, we have designed our leadership development framework for talented school leaders following a 70-20-10 model.

We will give you the space and agency to champion your own development. If successful, you will receive:

- An individual development account of up to £100,000 over five years
- Experiential learning, including study tours
- High support and high challenge from a Regional Education Director
- One to one executive coaching
- A commitment to evidence informed practice
- A year long induction programme
- And the option of a professional sabbatical after 5 years

## 70%

### Live on the job experience

- A year long induction.
- Challenging stretch assignments leading on regional or network-wide strategy.
- Support and expertise of your Regional Education Director

## 20%

### Exposure to other people

- Both a personal executive coach and peer mentor
- Access to the very best thought leaders in the education sector and beyond
- CEO book club.
- Regular opportunities for national study tours
- Bi-annual international study tour.
- Inspirational speakers programme.

## 10%

### Formal training and development

- The opportunity to undertake a bespoke Lift Schools NPQEL in partnership with Ambition.
- The opportunity to train as an Executive coach.
- Two network leadership residentials.



# What is the Lift Schools leadership development framework?

## **£100,000 individual development account**

We have set up an individual development account with up to £100,000 allocated for you to spend on your professional development over the next five years.

We want our leaders to have agency, confidence and choice. This starts by giving you permission to prioritise your own development. The individual development account puts you in the driving seat. Adopting the 70-20-10 and T-shaped skills model of learning and development, we will work with you to plan your own career pathway and support you to deepen your knowledge, skills and experience. We are committed to achieving excellence together; stretching and empowering you to have the greatest impact in your local community and across our network.

## **Research and development**

You will have access to our exclusive Lift 490 Speakers Programme – a rolling programme of internationally renowned thinkers and leaders who will share their insights and expertise to give you that extra edge and a spark of innovative inspiration when it comes to leadership.

You will be expected to contribute to Project H, with the opportunity to benefit from and feed into this cutting-edge dialogue and research. You can read more about Project H [here](#).

## **Ongoing support and development**

We are a high support, high challenge network. As part of your core offer you will receive peer mentoring, executive coaching and two leadership residencies every year. And you will never feel alone, every Lift Schools principal can call on the support and expertise of their experienced Regional Education Director.

School leadership is rewarding, but demanding work. Staying refreshed and being able to balance work with the wider challenges and priorities of life is important. So, after five years, we also offer the opportunity to take a professional sabbatical for one term.

## **Professional development and our partnership with Ambition Institute**

We have a long-standing partnership with Ambition Institute, a leading professional development charity in England. Ambition work with educators at every stage of their careers, helping them to keep getting better. Their training and professional development is based on the most rigorous research and evidence about what really works.

This partnership has built the professional development framework you will receive as part of a centralised CPD offer which provides networking opportunities for both teaching and leadership development, as well as offers tailored to individuals and schools.

Ambition is the leading provider of Early Career Framework and National Professional Qualification programmes: we expertly facilitate these programmes and tailor them to our network and local contexts.

## **Instructional Excellence Programme**

Our approach to educational excellence is underpinned by our Instructional Excellence Programme, delivered through an exciting and pioneering partnership with One World, a global education nonprofit committed to developing the next generation of instructional leaders.



# About Lift Schools

Lift Schools is a national network of 57 primary, secondary and special schools. We are proud of our diverse and inclusive school communities.

## 490: our vision for educational excellence

At the heart of network strategy is our vision we call 490. 490 aspires to create a world where every child is entitled to excellence, irrespective of their background or circumstance so that, by 2028, 90% of our children

- Are secure readers for their age
- Pass the phonics check
- Achieve the expected standard in RWM at Key Stage 2
- Achieve at least grade 4 in English and maths GCSEs.

## People first

Investing in people is at the centre of our transformation strategy. Since 2021, we have invested:

- Over £2.5million in initial teacher training
- Over £150k on instructional excellence
- Over £650k on apprenticeships

And created a regional model with 10 phase regional education directors across the country.

## Lift maxims

We are proud of our diverse and inclusive school communities. Academic excellence is just one dimension of an entitlement to excellence and our Lift maxims underpin the culture and approach in every school.

Every school subscribes to the six Lift maxims.



## Regional and national support

Lift Schools recognises that every school is unique and that they serve very different communities across the country. But, while our communities may differ, our regional structure and national network are designed to provide our principals with support and community.

As the leader, you will have the opportunity to forge strong relationships within a group of peer principals and benefit from the support of a Regional Education Director.

Our leaders work collaboratively, as not just leaders of their own school, but also as regional and national leaders working to drive a network wide strategy.

**Our commitment is to ensure that every child receives an excellent education, in every classroom, every day.**

## Our mindsets

Our five mindsets influence the behaviours and culture we are striving for across the network. They anchor us in a way of thinking and help to approach challenges and opportunities collaboratively.

### Share ideas early, often and honestly

Being open about ideas to develop them- even in their foundational stages and we don't know whether they will succeed.

### Embrace constructive disagreement

Seeking meaningful discussion, welcoming the fact that we may not always agree.

### Values, ideas and not ego

Encouraging innovative thought and discussion from every individual, not just those who shout the loudest.

### Be curious and open to new ideas

Exploring emerging views from a wide diversity of perspectives.

### Focus on facts and reasons

Understanding the world as it is not how we wish it to be.





# Project H

For decades, education has faced the same persistent and entrenched challenges. The sector faces ongoing challenges in areas ranging from organising the school system, and curriculum reforms, to ensuring teacher efficacy and vocational skills development. Sadly, education policy has too many perpetual problems, and too few lasting, high impact solutions.

Policies come and go, but in an era of rapid change, one thing is a constant – the desire to improve our country's schools and the outcomes of the pupils that attend them. Speak to any teacher, support staff, principal or trust leader across the country: their relentless drive to improve pupil outcomes is the golden thread that binds them together. It's a collective mission and endeavour.

But the unavoidable truth is that in 2024, still only 61% of pupils leave primary school meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

For all the excellent efforts of high-quality research and hard work in practice, the harsh reality is we simply don't know what works in every organisation, every school, in every classroom for every pupil – no matter where they grow up or their circumstances.

The goal is simple – to openly and honestly document Lift Schools' network and individual school improvement journey – the highs, and the lows, warts and all – as a tool to share and learn with others.



Over the last few years, a number of trusts have launched open source platforms and published their resources. We have seen fantastic leadership from the sector to galvanise a new wave of trust-to-trust and school-to-school learning and development. But for collaboration to be made a reality, we need to make a collective shift to not just talking about 'what works', but reflecting openly on what doesn't. We believe in the power of learning from setbacks and embracing failure. Through Project H, teachers and leaders can share their experiences without fear of judgement. Harnessing expertise through an open and collaborative approach, we want to find scalable solutions to the most pressing school improvement issues.

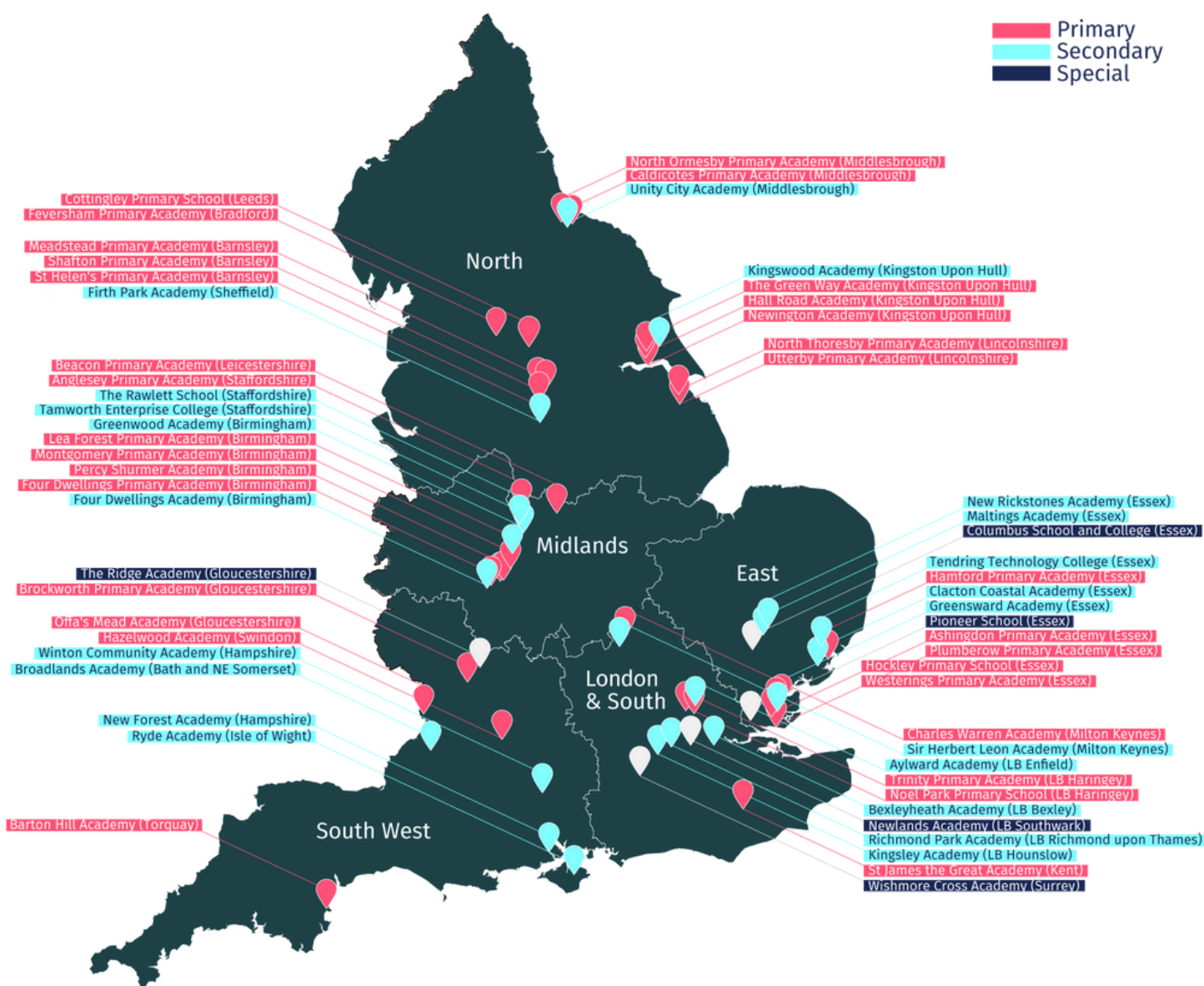
So, this is Lift Schools contribution to that cause. It is what our CEO, Becks Boomer-Clark, means when she talks about 'system generosity' – the ethos that Project H is founded on. Our aim is for Project H to be a shared space to explore the interconnected parts of education so that we can bridge the gap between policy and practice.

As a senior leader within Lift Schools, you'll have the opportunity to benefit from and feed into this cutting-edge dialogue and research.

**To learn more, please visit: [Project H](#)**



# Our schools



## Staff benefits

As a Lift Schools leader, we will offer more support for you and your family

- Electric car scheme
- Employer funded healthcare scheme
- Gym membership scheme
- Cycle to work scheme
- Online bike shop scheme
- Teachers' Pension and Local Government Pension scheme
- Childcare vouchers (applicable if already enrolled pre October 2018)
- Affordable loan scheme
- Employee assistance programme
- Financial advice
- Lifestyle savings
- Home electronics and mobile phone scheme

We have developed a comprehensive staff benefits package with flexible benefits schemes and offers, which you can access through the online platform Vivup.



# Ready for your next challenge?

We're looking for the next generation of tenacious, high-potential school leaders.

Lift Schools exists to be the proof of concept that it is possible to deliver an entitlement to excellence for every child, regardless of context or family circumstances. If you want to serve young people, and especially those who are at a disadvantage - those who aren't yet getting what they deserve - we'd love to hear from you.

We are recruiting for roles in every region at Lift Schools and will match successful candidates to schools. Whether you're an existing or aspiring principal, bring your drive to serve young people, your determination to be the best leader, and your dedication to create lasting change for communities across the country.

We are open to all who think you might be ready to be a principal. We will work with you to determine your readiness, support you to be ready, and contact you about opportunities that we have in the future.

Lift Schools and all of our schools are committed to ensuring the highest levels of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our pupils, and we expect all our staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We adopt a robust, fair, and consistent recruitment process which is inline with Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance. This includes online checks for shortlisted candidates. All offers of employment are subject to an Enhanced DBS check, references, and where applicable, a prohibition from teaching check.

Lift Schools embraces diversity and promotes equality of opportunity. Job share, part time and flexible working opportunities will be considered.

We are a Disability Confident Employer and there is a guaranteed interview scheme for candidates with disabilities who meet the minimum selection criteria.

## Application timeline

### Stage 1 - Initial two-way conversation

After you have registered your interest, one of our team will contact you for an initial conversation to discuss the role.

### Stage 2 - Discovering Lift Schools

Following the initial conversation, we will send you an invite to tell us a little more about yourself and your thinking. We will also send you our application form for you to complete. The closing date for applications is

**Wednesday 24 September 2025, 5pm.**

### Stage 3 - Assessment centre

This one day session will be held in person. You will be invited to the event at Lift Hamford which will take place on **Friday 3 October 2025.**

### Stage 4 - Interview

If successful you will be invited in person to our London office (1 EdCity Walk, EdCity, London, W12 7TF) to meet our Primary Director of Education. This will take place on **Thursday 9 October 2025.**