

DIRECTOR OF

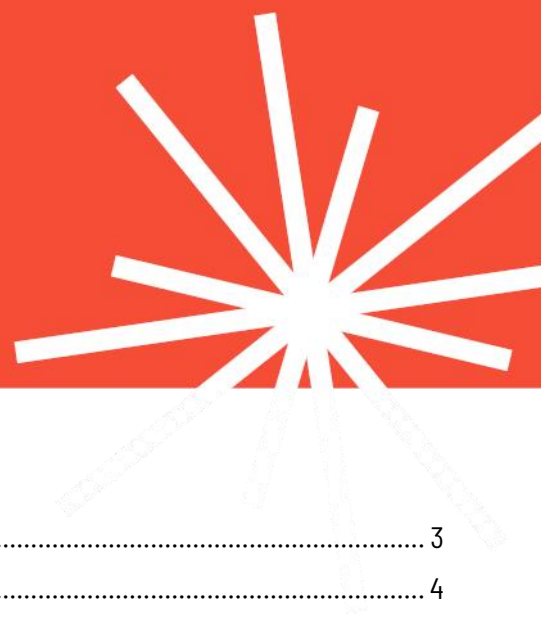
PRIMARY EDUCATION

CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK

Closing Date: 12.00pm, Monday 2nd February 2026



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Welcome from the CEO



Dear Applicant,

I am immensely proud to be Chief Executive of Spark Education Trust. We are a recently merged Trust comprising 4 secondary and 11 primary schools located across the Tees Valley and we provide opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential, whatever their starting point. We know that this is best achieved in encouraging environments where mutual and self-respect is promoted. We want to grow confident young people able to work independently and think creatively in a fast-changing world.

We have high expectations for everyone, aspiring to excellence in teaching and achieving impressive standards in all areas of school life. Success beyond the classroom in sport and the arts are features of life across our Trust.

For our staff we provide positive working environments, a commitment to the highest quality professional development, opportunities to collaborate to create excellence and encouragement to forge career success.

Trustees, governors and leaders collaborate closely to ensure excellence in all aspects of Spark Education Trust. Our core values are mutual respect, hearty collaboration and courageous ambition and these drive our work ensuring that Spark schools are wonderful places to work.

Louise Spellman
Chief Executive Officer



We are very clear about our beliefs of



Mutual respect

we are inclusive of all, and we listen to all perspectives



Hearty Collaboration

we are stronger together, we share, we are collaborative, we are partners



Courageous Ambition

we strive for the best, we have high aspirations, we are positive about the future

Director of Primary Education



Job Title: Director of Primary Education

Location: Spark Education Trust Head Office, at Whinstone Primary School (Ingleby Barwick)

Start Date: September 2026

Actual Salary: £100,540 to £110,892 (Leadership, L28 to L32)

Hours of Work: 1FTE

Contract Type: Permanent

Closing Date: 12.00pm, Monday 2nd February 2026

Interviews: Thursday 12th February and Friday 13th February 2026 (two-day process)

About the Role

This is an exciting opportunity for an ambitious and inspirational Primary Senior Leader who is seeking a new challenge and wishes to join a dynamic and supportive multi-academy trust.

We are seeking an outstanding Director of Primary Education to lead and inspire our group of 11 primary schools. This is a pivotal role within our Trust, offering a unique opportunity to make a significant impact on the lives of thousands of children.

As Director of Primary Education, you will:

- Provide strategic leadership and drive improvement across all primary schools within the Trust.
- Work as part of a dynamic team of Directors of Education, contributing to Trust-wide priorities.
- Lead one of our key cross-phase themes, ensuring consistency and excellence across all schools.
- Champion high standards of teaching, learning, and pupil outcomes.

We are looking for:

- An experienced and inspirational leader with a proven track record of success in primary education.
- Someone who can combine strategic vision with operational excellence.
- A collaborative leader who thrives on working with others to achieve outstanding outcomes for children.





About Us

Spark Education Trust is a newly merged Trust which currently consists of 11 Primary Schools and 4 Secondary Schools. Spark Education Trust can offer you a professional challenge and a rewarding opportunity, working with collaborative schools that are passionate about the progress and development of every student.

What we have:

- A positive and caring ethos and working atmosphere.
- Friendly children, eager to learn and achieve.
- An aspirational curriculum for all students.
- A committed, enthusiastic and supportive staff team.
- Excellent support from our Trust Board, the staff and parents/carers.
- Opportunities for continuous professional development.

If you wish to arrange a phone call to discuss the role further, please contact the HR Team on the below email address.

How to Apply

Please make sure your application form and a covering letter detailing how your experience to date supports your suitability for the role (maximum two sides of A4, font size 11) are completed and returned via email to vacancies@sparkeducation.org.uk, addressed to Louise Spellman, Chief Executive Officer.

Please note that feedback will only be given to shortlisted candidates, if you do not receive an invitation to interview within 30 days of the advert's closing date assume that you have been unsuccessful in your application for this post.

Safeguarding Notice

The Spark Education Trust is committed to safer recruitment practice and pre-employment checks will be undertaken before any appointment is confirmed. This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check. The post you are applying for is exempt from the rehabilitation of offenders act 1974. We will also carry out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online.

Job Description



Job Title	Director of Primary Education
Salary Range	L28 to L32 (£100,540 to £110,892)
Reporting to	Chief Executive Officer and Trust Board
Job Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide strategic leadership and drive improvement across all primary schools within the Trust.• Work as part of a dynamic team of Directors of Education, contributing to Trust-wide priorities.• Lead one of our key cross-phase themes, ensuring consistency and excellence across all schools.• Champion high standards of teaching, learning, and pupil outcomes.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

Strategic Improvement

- Support the Trust Executive Team in delivering the Trust's Strategic Improvement plan.
- Ensure strategies are making a measurable difference to the quality of provision, standards and pupil outcomes.
- To provide strategic leadership of all aspects of Primary School Improvement as part of the team of Directors of Education.
- Contribute to the Trust's strategic development in order to deliver our shared vision and ensure that we achieve ambitious outcomes for all pupils in our primary schools.
- As part of the Trust Executive Team, analyse school performance, diagnose issues, broker support, monitor impact and build outstanding leadership capacity.
- Ensure the CPD programme meets the needs of individual staff and whole school priorities and is an integral part of appraisals and school improvement planning processes.
- Develop a holistic understanding of the needs of the Trust's primaries and provide bespoke and effective support to facilitate continuous improvement.
- Line manage a group of headteachers, driving improvement in educational standards and ensuring the successful achievement of performance objectives.
- Challenge and support primary leaders, holding them to account for the performance of their schools.
- Challenge underperformance, setting clear expectations and supporting headteachers in implementing effective improvement strategies.
- Provide scrutiny of the quality of education and the impact of leaders, feeding back to the Trust Executive Team on performance, highlighting any concerns and making recommendations for solutions where improvement is not rapid enough.
- Help prepare schools in a highly effective way for their next Ofsted inspection, ensuring self-evaluation is accurate and rigorous.
- Provide operational leadership to any Trust primary as may be necessary.
- Facilitate the sharing of best practice across Trust primary schools.
- Develop leadership capacity within headteachers and senior leaders, providing tailored support and fostering a culture of continuous improvement and high expectations.
- Direct and ensure improvements in achievement for disadvantaged pupils (SEND and PP).
- Consider the strategic importance of positive staff well-being in all aspects of your work with the primary schools.
- Work with leaders locally to develop strategies to address any issues raised in the well-being surveys or wider feedback.

Curriculum

- Working with the Trust Executive Team, provide support to primary schools to implement an appropriate, stimulating and challenging curriculum.
- Support Primary Headteachers to ensure the curriculum meets the needs of all children.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

- Support the Trust Executive Team to develop and manage the learning environment, resources and facilities of primaries within the Trust.
- Encourage a culture of high expectations for the quality of teaching and an ethos of challenge and support where all pupils can achieve success and become fully engaged in their learning.
- Support the development of Trust CPD that enhances teaching, learning and assessment.

Quality Assurance

- Ensure each school has a robust and rigorous performance management process in line with Trust policy and that appraisers are consistent and skilled in their approach to performance management.
- Work collaboratively with other Directors of Education to ensure best practice across Trust schools.
- Ensure support is provided for teachers who are not yet effective, and evaluate the impact of the support provided.
- Lead, support and develop quality assurance procedures as part of the Trust Executive Team.
- Ensure that clear quality assurance systems are embedded across the Trust's primaries, driving consistency and improvement in performance.
- Co-ordinate the Primary Peer Review process to support improvements across our schools.
- Work with Campus Tees Schools Alliance to secure the best new teachers entering the profession.
- Ensure the school appoints high quality staff and that the best teachers are retained.
- Support leaders with the Spark Career Development Programme.

Behaviour and Attendance

- Support schools in improving attendance rates, implementing effective strategies to reduce absenteeism and ensure pupils are fully engaged in their learning.
- Provide effective support for Headteachers to enable the needs of all children including those with significant barriers to learning to be met.
- Working with the Trust Executive Team ensure that attendance across the primary phase remains consistently strong.

Trust Accountability and Reporting

- Demonstrate an excellent understanding of educational and leadership issues to ensure the smooth running of the Trust's primary school network.
- Lead arrangements, improvement priorities and assigned work streams that support the work of the Board of Trustees.
- Develop regular and effective reporting to the Chief Executive for each primary school and the progress in all areas associated with each school's strengths, areas for improvement, actions taken and impact to rapidly improve key areas.
- Prepare effective and regular school improvement reporting for the Trust Board and Curriculum and Standards Committee focused on pupil progress, behaviour, attendance, curriculum and areas for improvement in each school.
- Present to Local Governing Committees when required.

Other Responsibilities and Duties

- Uphold the values of Spark Education Trust, modelling exceptional leadership with high expectations for all, deep reflective practice, a focus on improving schools at all levels.
- Create a culture of constant improvement and be an inspirational leader, committed to the highest achievement in all areas of the Trust's work.
- Promote a culture and environment that allows the Trust and its primary schools to achieve excellence.
- Maintain an outward-facing role with the local community on behalf of the Trust to further its external relationships, future growth and development.
- Be an active and effective contributor to the Spark Education Trust Central Team
- Ability to provide leadership to governors, Head Teachers and teachers on raising standards of achievement and improving the quality of teaching, management and leadership in schools.
- Develop effective communication to influence strategic direction and operational objectives.
- Be proactive in ensuring that school plans align with Trust objectives.
- Represent the Trust at meetings with the DfE, RSC and other parties.
- Support the growth and development of the Trust.
- Comply with individual responsibilities, in accordance with the role, for health and safety in the workplace.
- The above duties are neither exclusive nor exhaustive and the post holder may be required to undertake other appropriate duties within the context of the job, skills and grade.
- Regular travel to Trust schools and other sites as and when required.

Safeguarding

- To safeguard and promote the welfare of children for whom you have responsibility for or come into contact with, to include adhering to all specified procedures.

Person Specification



Qualifications	Essential	Desirable
Degree.	✓	
Qualified Teacher Status.	✓	
Recent and relevant senior leadership development training.	✓	
Demonstration of commitment to ongoing development.	✓	
Masters or higher level qualification, such as NPQH.		✓
Qualified Ofsted Inspector.		✓
Experience	Essential	Desirable
A minimum of 3 years in a Headship position or equivalent or senior advisory experience within the Primary Sector.	✓	
Leading and / or providing successful school improvement strategies in a school and / or other schools.	✓	
A track record of successful school improvements as demonstrated by Ofsted judgements and / or student outcomes over time.	✓	
Successfully leading a school through an Ofsted inspection / external scrutiny process.	✓	
Effective development of teams and leaders with an impact on standards.	✓	
Successfully challenged underperforming staff.	✓	
Leadership of innovation / change management with evidence of positive impact.	✓	
Leadership of improvement in quality of teaching, learning and assessment.	✓	
Ongoing work with a range of external agencies to accelerate improvement.		✓
Skills and Knowledge	Essential	Desirable
Outstanding knowledge of primary education.	✓	
A strong knowledge and understanding of EYFS.	✓	
Strong and secure knowledge of proven and sustained school improvement strategies.	✓	
Excellent ability to think and plan strategically and creatively to ensure school improvements.	✓	
Exceptional understanding of all relevant data and the ability to analyse forensically and use analysis to inform improvement planning.	✓	

Skills and Knowledge	Essential	Desirable
Strong and effective line management skills.	✓	
The ability to understand and implement rigorous self-evaluation.	✓	
Excellent understanding of the components which comprise outstanding teaching and learning.	✓	
The ability to hold leaders stringently to account for their performance.	✓	
Excellent written and oral communication skills.	✓	
The ability to engage with a variety of audiences in a range of settings with confidence, accuracy and emotional literacy.	✓	
Awareness of the importance of regular and transparent communication with colleagues.	✓	
The ability to produce high quality, concise and logical written reports.	✓	
A good reputation within the field of work.		✓
Ofsted experience.		✓
Experience of working with professional services staff (e.g. Human Resources, Finance, Estates, Governance and IT) to ensure that school operations are compliant and provide value for money.		✓



Application forms and further details are available on the Trust's website –

sparkeducationtrust.org.uk

Please make sure your application form and a covering letter detailing how your experience to date supports your suitability for the role (maximum two sides of A4, font size 11) are completed and returned via email to vacancies@sparkeducationtrust.org.uk, addressed to Louise Spellman, Chief Executive Officer.

Applications submitted on anything other than the official application form and applications from agencies will not be accepted.

Confidential References

Two referees should be nominated, including one from your current/most recent employer – those from an education setting must provide the CEO or Chair of Governors as one of their references or to be signed and checked by the CEO or Chair of Governors.

Job Description

Details the main responsibilities for this post and the personal and professional qualities required.

Person Specification

Sets out the criteria to be used for the shortlisting process.

Closing date: 12.00pm, Monday 2nd February 2026

Interviews to be held: Thursday 12th February and Friday 13th February 2026 (two-day process)

Employee Benefits



Wellbeing

Free and confidential support. Up to six sessions of structured counselling, if recommended.

Pensions

All eligible staff automatically join either The Teachers Pension Scheme or the Local Government Pension Scheme upon the start of their employment. As members of these schemes, employees have access to the full range of membership benefits including a Death in Service payment is included in the Teacher Pension Plan and Local Government Pension Scheme.

Cycle to work

We also provide a cycle to work scheme, which is a recognised Inland Revenue salary sacrifice scheme through www.greencommuteinitiative.uk which enables staff to access a new bike and bike equipment.

Work Life Balance

As we are supportive of flexible working, we have many staff working on individual working arrangements.

Professional Development

As we believe in supporting and developing our staff, we offer extensive career development opportunities and actively seek to develop and promote staff where possible.