



# Assistant Headteacher Teaching and Learning

Permanent  
Full Time

**Closing Date** 9.00am Thursday 29 February



Dear Candidate

Thank you for your interest in our College. I hope that you find the enclosed information useful in deciding if this is a role and a school that is right for you.

This post is really important to us, both in terms of its remit and in the capacity that it brings to the senior team. Teaching and learning must sit at the heart of all we do and we are committed to building a school that genuinely demonstrates this. We try to avoid gimmicks and knee-jerk reactions, instead placing great value on research and common sense. The successful applicant will subscribe to this view and will be able to develop an evidence-informed professional learning programme to ensure that all staff can progress and thrive here. This, in turn, will ensure our students get the very best education possible.



The successful candidate will be a successful and experienced teacher in their subject specialism and will have experience of being a successful middle or senior leader. They will have demonstrated excellent leadership and communication skills in their current role. Intelligence, high standards and a capacity for hard work will have been at the core of their success. They will be a creative thinker with an ability and determination to secure excellent outcomes for all students. They will have an up-to-date knowledge and understanding of pedagogical research and will be able to evidence having used this to improve their own practice and that of others.

This post holder will need to be dedicated, creative and talented, with the ability to inspire others whilst also holding them to account. It is imperative that they can take others with them. This is achieved, to an extent, through being an articulate, skilled presenter and communicator but really can only be done by building credibility through every action, every day. Attention to detail and a meticulous approach are essential to this.

I am very lucky to have the senior leadership team that I do. Their hard work and loyalty have shaped Unity College. I am looking to appoint someone who will show the same dedication to our students and our staff. As a community of professionals, every member of staff plays an important role in the success of the College. Everyone commits to working hard to provide our students with the best possible opportunities in life, driven by moral and ethical values and our decisions are always rooted in integrity.

I have been the Headteacher at Unity College since September 2022. Unity College has a very positive, friendly atmosphere. The staff care passionately about the well-being of our children and students are vibrant, enthusiastic and affable. Although Unity College is a large school, we strive to maintain a 'family feel' and a powerful sense of community in which every member of our community feels that they belong, are valued, and contributes positively to College life.

I hope this gives you a sense of our values as a College. If you share these, and are excited by the opportunities this post brings, then we would love to hear from you.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'J. Richardson'.

**Jane Richardson**  
Headteacher

## The College

Unity College is a co-educational, 11-16 college. By September 2025, we will be one of the largest 11-16 secondary school in Lancashire, with 1500 students on roll.

Unity College lies within the beautiful grounds of Towneley Park with breath taking views of the local countryside. The College was part of the Building Schools for the Future project. Our main building opened in September 2010. Due to the huge demand for places at Unity College there is large expansion programme which has included a new build of 19 classrooms and some internal structural changes. The new building opened in April 2022. The College's roll has grown significantly in the last three years and continues to do so. In 2021, there were 1244 students on roll, in 2022 there were 1299 students and in 2023 there were 1380. The College roll will continue to grow until there are 1500 students on roll (September 2025). This is a very exciting, but challenging, time for the College as we work hard to ensure that such rapid expansion does not detract from our core business of offering the very best possible education for every student at the same time as knowing our children and families really well.

The College's intake is diverse, with its catchment area comprising some of the most disadvantaged and most affluent areas of Burnley. In 2022/2023, 67.3% of Unity College students came from areas with E/E\* overall multiple deprivation indices; 68.8% of students came from IDACI Bands A-F. The school location deprivation indicator is in quintile 4 (more deprived) of all schools. The pupil base is in quintile 5 (most deprived) of all schools in terms of deprivation. In 2022/2023 21.5% of students were identified as having Special Educational Needs, compared with 12.9% in Lancashire and 16.8% nationally. The challenges of this context are manifest in the College and this is one of the reasons that we place such emphasis on excellent teaching to remove barriers to achievement for all students.

At Unity College, we are united by a desire for our students to be happy. Academic progress is obviously vital but we also place a high value on the provision of enrichment opportunities that help our students to grow into responsible, confident, considerate, happy young adults. Underpinning all of this are excellent standards of pastoral support and care that enable children to feel safe and valued. At Unity College, we are proud of the extensive and expert support systems that we have in place for our students. These comprise a wide range of people and processes (both within college and involving outside agencies). We currently have 11 DSLs trained and operational at Unity College.

We believe that our children need to be challenged to think hard, work hard and behave well but we always seek to challenge with compassion: every student will be given the opportunity to achieve academic success in an inclusive, supportive, creative environment. Every adult at We are committed to ensuring that every student at Unity College experiences a sense of belonging at the same time as creating a culture and ethos that is utterly committed to achievement.

## The Role

The **Assistant Headteacher for Teaching and Learning** is a crucial post within the College's leadership structure. The successful candidate will work closely with other members of the Senior Leadership Team and with curriculum leaders to ensure that our students experience and engage in high quality teaching and learning across all areas of the College.

The core purpose of this role is to ensure that the College's practice allows all students to learn effectively and achieve good outcomes. The post holder will lead on professional development for staff, ensuring that all staff have an accurate understanding of their own development needs and that our professional learning offer is equipped to meet these needs, is being accessed appropriately, and has impact. The post holder will also support staff to explore research evidence and collect evidence from their own practice to deepen their understanding of highly effective pedagogy and, in doing so, to continually improve their practice. I firmly believe that enforcing a highly prescriptive, single approach to teaching prevents the very best teachers from excelling. This role is not, then, about compliance but will, rather, focus on how educational research can equip teachers to make decisions about their planning, teaching and assessment that are grounded in evidence, and that work for them, for their students and for their subject.

Specific priorities will change over time, but these will always be based on evidence and rigorous self-evaluation. The successful candidate will lead on improvement strategies that are evidence-led, and will manage the implementation of these so that improvements are thoroughly embedded and have genuine, sustained impact.

The Assistant Headteacher will play a pivotal role in helping to set the tone and ethos of the College and positively promote the College to all stakeholders. As a member of the senior leadership team, they will also take on other, whole-college responsibilities. These will be decided based on the skills and experience of the successful candidate but will include being visible and proactive at all times to ensure we maintain an effective learning environment. The role will also include those responsibilities common to all members of the senior leadership team, such as line management of departments and year groups, reporting to governors, supporting children and parents, and ensuring the effective day-to-day operation of the College.

We are looking for someone with proven success in middle or senior leadership, who has both the skills and the credibility to line manage Heads of Department and Heads of Year. They will represent the College and the senior team in all that they say and do, and so must hold, and insist upon, the highest possible standards for themselves and for others. Our senior leaders are very visible around the College to ensure that every member of our community feels supported.

Successful candidates will be confident to challenge and be challenged in strategic decision making, but must always support the College's position in the public domain. A vital aspect of every senior role is effective communication with parents and carers, and the successful candidates must demonstrate the ability to manage challenging situations and conversations, building trust and confidence.

The absolutely essential requirement of this post, however, is to be a really good teacher. All members of the senior leadership team teach, and we consider it the most important part of our role. Being able to model excellence in the classroom is fundamental to being a credible school leader. Applicants can have any subject specialism from within the College curriculum.

## Why work at Unity College?

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*Every Headteacher will say good things about their own school and so we asked our staff to contribute to this brochure to give you an honest view 'from the chalkface'. Furthermore, interviews always provide opportunities for candidates to talk frankly with a range of staff.*

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"I feel so proud and privileged to have worked with so many amazing children over the years. There is nothing more satisfying than seeing children who deserve to achieve great results do so. The fact that we, at Unity College in Burnley, can help students achieve high grades of 8s and 9s shows the true value and quality of our teaching and curriculum. It gives me joy to know our students from Burnley can not only rival the grades achieved by children at grammar schools/private schools but beat them too. (It also makes me feel quietly smug!) We have, and continue to have, a positive impact on the life chances of young people across our community in Burnley."

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"I genuinely enjoy coming to work and love what I do. I enjoy teaching and being part of such an amazing team who are more than just work colleagues but are genuine friends. I have worked in a few schools but none of them have ever felt like home in the way that this school does. Here are just a few reasons why I love teaching at Unity College.

1. Many students here at Unity College come from challenging backgrounds, but I feel that I make a difference in their lives by working here. I love working with the dedicated team of staff in our department.
  2. This school has a sense of community where students, staff and our parents and carers work together to look after each other.
  3. We have access to incredible facilities that allow us to offer our students a broad curriculum that is not only engaging but also provides fun experiences that no other local school can genuinely match. As a result, we can offer students of all abilities access to opportunities to lead an active, healthy lifestyle.
  4. I feel proud to be a member of the Unity College family because we have an excellent reputation for the quality of our teaching and excellent behaviour of our students."
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"I believe that Unity College has a genuine desire to do the best for all the students. The staff within the department are a good team who work together and the staff have an excellent spirit. When I first came to the school, the staff and pupils were warm and welcoming and accepting of new staff and pupils. I feel as I can discuss any issues with any other member of staff (SLT or class teacher) and will not be judged or questioned but supported to find a solution that is best for everyone."

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"I have worked at Unity for six years now and commute here every day from Yorkshire. One of the many reasons I am still here is the excellent working relationships I have with other members of the mathematics department. There is a very friendly feel to the department, and everyone just "gets on" with each other. I have worked in several other schools where there was not the same cordial atmosphere in the staffroom. As for the students I have found that they take a little bit of getting used to but once you have gained their respect, they are a great bunch of young people to work with. The diverse range of student backgrounds makes it a very rewarding job where you can feel that you are really making a difference to the lives of the students in your care."

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"Unity College is a modern, successful, and well-respected school with great facilities based in beautiful surroundings – but none of that to me is truly important. The reason I work at Unity College is because I love the great team dynamic in the supportive, professional department that I'm part of; it was also immediately obvious when I interviewed here that the whole of the college really cares about the future of our children. The fact that the school is within easy reach of a variety of vibrant places to live doesn't hurt matters either!"

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"There are so many reasons why I love working at Unity College. Here are just a few:

1. There is a whole school approach to behaviour management: staff are supported by Heads of Department and SLT to maintain a positive learning environment.
2. Teachers are respected as professionals.
3. Although some students face real challenges outside of school, when they see that you as a teacher are staying here and not giving up on them, they behave well and work hard. I find this one of the most rewarding things about working here.
4. We have such a range of students from different backgrounds.

There is never, ever a dull day!"

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"You really should choose to work at Unity College because it is a school where staff are valued and made to feel welcome, truly act as part of a team, and are encouraged to develop themselves as practitioners. As the College expands and grows, it is an exciting time to join to help shape the future of more young people in Burnley and make a difference to their lives every day."

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"I have travelled 6121 miles from my home town and have taught for half my life at Unity College. I absolutely love being part of the 'Unity' family. It is one of the most rewarding experiences playing a part in educating young people in Burnley, watching them grow in confidence, develop a love for Mathematics and achieve success."

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## Why work in Burnley?

**A big warm Northern welcome to Burnley. After all, we weren't voted the friendliest town in Britain without good reason! From world-renowned, cutting-edge brands to affordable living and housing and spectacular countryside to explore, we truly believe we have it all in Burnley.**

Burnley is conveniently located on the uncongested M65, providing easy access to the M62, M66, M6 and beyond. There are three international airports within an hour's drive, as well as Manchester, Leeds, Preston, Blackpool, The Lake District and Liverpool being a short drive away.



Burnley offers affordable housing: the mean house price in Burnley is £106,199, which is 36% of the national average. Not only does your money go further when you live in Burnley, but there is a wide-range of properties at your fingertips. From quality modern newbuilds and contemporary apartments to quaint cottages and impressive Victorian terraces, there's something for everyone's budget and taste. 80% of Burnley rural, making it the ideal place to wind down and explore.



## Job Description

<b>Dates</b>	Apply by <b>9.00am Thursday 29 February</b> - To start on 1 September 2024
<b>Accountable to:</b>	Headteacher
<b>Salary</b>	LPR 13-18 (£63,430 - £71,729)
<b>Contract Type</b>	Permanent

### Introduction

This job description outlines the purpose and key tasks required to indicate the level of responsibility. It is not a comprehensive or exclusive list and duties / specific tasks may be varied from time to time, without changing the general character of the job or the level of responsibility entailed. This will allow flexibility for the College to respond to changing priorities and also support and enhance individual professional development. It is the practice of the College to examine job descriptions periodically, update them and ensure that they relate to the job performed, or incorporate any proposed changes. This procedure will be conducted by the Headteacher in consultation with the post holder.

### Overall Purpose and Accountability

- To assist the Headteacher in the leadership and management of the College and in all aspects of college improvement
- To take responsibility for leading and managing significant aspects of the College, under the direction of the Headteacher and Deputy Headteachers
- To meet the requirements of the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document and to support students in attaining at the highest levels.
- To support and uphold the ethos, principles, policies and rules of the College in all respects and at all times.

### Role

The Assistant Headteacher will be a model professional, setting an excellent example to teaching and support staff. They will work in close partnership with the Headteacher and Deputy Headteachers to ensure the continuous improvement and effective operation of the College.

The post-holder will be a member of the College's Senior Leadership Team (SLT), and will share strategic leadership responsibilities, as directed by the Headteacher, with their SLT colleagues. This will include the line management of the Extended Leadership Team (ELT) and other college employees.

All members of the SLT have collective responsibility for ensuring a positive ethos and effective learning environment throughout the College, which leads to high rates of student progress and the achievement of high standards.

Every member of the Senior Leadership Team will be allocated post-specific responsibilities through discussion with the Headteacher. They will include:

- Leadership of specified areas of the College's work, ensuring that all practice in these areas is effective; that all necessary policies, provisions and systems are in place; that they are used effectively and that their impact is evaluated.



- Supporting all staff in their work in these areas of responsibility and ensuring that all staff receive high quality training if appropriate.
- Oversight of associated budgets and ensuring value for money.
- Responsibility for the strategic leadership of delegated strands of the College Improvement Plan

#### **As Assistant Headteacher (Teaching and Learning) you will:**

- Lead on further improving the quality of teaching and learning across the College to eliminate variance in the quality of teaching so that it is consistently very good within and across departments
- Ensure that all teachers have very good subject knowledge and share this with both clarity and passion with their students
- Ensure that all teachers' lesson planning is based on their secure understanding of students' needs and how children learn
- Support teachers to explore research evidence and collect evidence from their own practice to deepen their understanding of highly effective pedagogy and, in doing so, to continually improve their practice
- Lead on professional development for staff, ensuring that all staff have an accurate understanding of their own development needs and that our professional learning offer is equipped to meet these needs, is being accessed appropriately, and has impact
- Support and develop Heads of Department to plan, deliver and evaluate the effectiveness of Continuing Professional Development in their subject areas

#### **Responsibilities common to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)**

These are based on the Headteachers' Standards and are common to all Senior Leaders at the College.

#### **College Culture**

- To assist the Headteacher to establish and sustain the College's ethos, culture and strategic direction in partnership with those responsible for governance and through consultation with the College community
- To play a significant role in creating a culture where students experience a positive and enriching College life
- To uphold ambitious educational standards which prepare students from all backgrounds for their next phase of education and life
- To actively promote positive and respectful relationships across the College community and a safe, orderly and inclusive environment
- To ensure a culture of staff professionalism

#### **Teaching**

- To ensure high-quality, expert teaching across all subjects, built on an evidence-informed understanding of effective teaching and how students learn
- To ensure teaching is underpinned by high levels of subject expertise and approaches which respect the distinct nature of subject disciplines

## **Curriculum and Assessment**

- To ensure a broad, structured and coherent curriculum entitlement which sets out the knowledge, skills and values that will be taught
- To assist the Headteacher to establish effective curricular leadership, developing subject leaders with high levels of relevant expertise with access to professional networks and communities
- To ensure valid, reliable and proportionate approaches are used when assessing students' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum
- To ensure effective use is made of all forms of assessment

## **Behaviour**

- To play a significant role in establishing and sustaining high expectations of behaviour for all students, built upon relationships, rules and routines, which are understood clearly by all staff and students
- To ensure high standards of student behaviour and courteous conduct in accordance with the College's behaviour policy
- To support the Headteacher in implementing consistent, fair and respectful approaches to managing behaviour
- To ensure that adults within the College model and teach the behaviour of a good citizen

## **Additional and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

- To assist the Headteacher to ensure the College holds ambitious expectations for all students with additional and special educational needs and disabilities
- To assist the Headteacher to establish and sustain culture and practices that enable students to access the curriculum and learn effectively
- To assist the Headteacher to ensure the College works effectively in partnership with parents, carers and professionals, to identify the additional needs and special educational needs and disabilities of students, providing support and adaptation where appropriate
- To assist the Headteacher to ensure the College fulfils its statutory duties with regard to the SEND code of practice

## **Professional Development**

- To ensure staff have access to high-quality, sustained professional development opportunities, aligned to balance the priorities of whole-College improvement, team and individual needs
- To prioritise the professional development of staff, ensuring effective planning, delivery and evaluation which is consistent with the approaches laid out in the standard for teachers' professional development
- To assist the Headteacher to ensure that professional development opportunities draw on expert provision from beyond the College, as well as within it, including nationally recognised career and professional frameworks and programmes to build capacity and support succession planning

## Organisational Management

- To ensure the protection and safety of students and staff through effective approaches to safeguarding, as part of the duty of care
- To assist the Headteacher to prioritise and allocate financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and probity in the use of public funds
- To assist the Headteacher to ensure staff are deployed and managed well with due attention paid to workload
- To establish and oversee systems, processes and policies that enable the College to operate effectively and efficiently, as determined by the Headteacher
- To ensure rigorous approaches to identifying, managing and mitigating risk

## Continuous College Improvement

- To play a significant role in using processes of evaluation to identify and analyse complex or persistent problems and barriers which limit College effectiveness, and identify priority areas for improvement
- To develop appropriate evidence-informed strategies for improvement as part of well-targeted plans which are realistic, timely, appropriately sequenced and suited to the College's context
- To ensure careful and effective implementation of improvement strategies, which lead to sustained College improvement over time

## Working in Partnership

- To forge constructive relationships beyond the College, working in partnership with parents, carers and the local community
- To work successfully with other schools and organisations in a climate of mutual challenge and support
- To establish and maintain working relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues across other public services to improve educational outcomes for all students

## Governance and Accountability

- To assist the Headteacher to uphold their obligation to give account to governors
- To establish and sustain professional working relationships with those responsible for governance
- To assist the Headteacher to ensure that staff know and understand their professional responsibilities and are held to account
- To assist the Headteacher to ensure the College effectively and efficiently operates within the required regulatory frameworks and meets all statutory duties

**Unity College is committed to safeguarding and promotion the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All posts are subject to safer recruitment scrutiny including an enhanced DBS disclosure with barred list information.**

## Person Specification

		Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	A good honours degree	✓	
	A teaching qualification and QTS	✓	
	An appropriate leadership qualification, e.g., NPQSL		✓
Professional Experience and Knowledge	You have substantial teaching experience	✓	
	You have a proven track record of school improvement at middle or senior leadership level in a secondary school	✓	
	You have experience of leading change in schools	✓	
	You have significant experience of leading teams and raising standards	✓	
	You have experience of curriculum development	✓	
	You have knowledge of cognitive science and how children learn	✓	
	You have expert knowledge and understanding of the principles and practices of high-quality teaching and learning.	✓	
	You have experience of developing inclusivity	✓	
	You have experience of using evidence to inform actions	✓	
	You have experience of using self-evaluation to drive school-improvement	✓	
	You have experience of developing the work of colleagues at various professional stages	✓	
	You are able to show how you have used performance management and accountability systems to improve performance		✓
	You have experience of working with and presenting to governors		✓
	You have an up to date knowledge of the current issues in education and school leadership and a record of appropriate CPD	✓	
	You have thorough knowledge of the statutory requirements and relevant legislation relating to school leadership and management, including health and safety, child protection and safeguarding		✓



		Essential	Desirable
	You are an excellent practitioner in the classroom	✓	
	You have a proven ability to drive sustained improvements in teaching and learning	✓	
	You have a proven ability to build capacity in colleagues through coaching or mentoring and brokering or delivering INSET	✓	
	You are able to develop, embed and maintain systems and processes to ensure excellent outcomes are delivered	✓	
	You are able to empower, challenge and motivate staff to become high performing as individuals and as teams	✓	
	You are able to work under pressure and prioritise according to need	✓	
	You are a skilled presenter, able to engage and inspire others	✓	
	You have excellent behaviour management skills	✓	
	You are able to lead a team, motivate others to work effectively and hold them to account	✓	
	You are able to inspire high levels of student performance	✓	
	You are a skilled communicator, both orally and in writing	✓	
	You have excellent literacy and numeracy skills	✓	
	You are able to think creatively to solve problems, pioneering new approaches as well as understanding which prior methods have been effective	✓	
	You are able to work on your own initiative	✓	
	You are able to communicate vision and the actions required to realise this confidently, clearly and passionately in a variety of formats	✓	
	You are able to build and develop effective partnerships		✓
Personal Qualities	You pay close attention to detail and adopt a meticulous approach to record keeping	✓	
	You are determined and committed with an exceptional capacity for productive work	✓	
	You have a sense of personal drive and ambition	✓	

	You have high levels of energy and enthusiasm	✓	
	You enjoy being highly visible and meeting with a range of audiences	✓	
	You are approachable, open and always act with integrity	✓	
	You have a strong belief in inclusivity	✓	
	You are committed to raising aspirations in the College and believe in the potential of all young people to achieve highly	✓	

## How to apply



Please complete an application form **and** write a letter of application of no more than three sides of A4 (please use font size 11 or 12 for this). The letter of application is a really important part of the selection process and we weigh it heavily in our short-listing process. Please use it to show how you have the skills, knowledge and experience to carry out the role for which you are applying to a high standard. You are advised to evidence the extent to which you meet the person specification for this role. Although every member of the senior team has a specific remit, we all work very closely together and share a detailed understanding of all aspects of the College. All senior leaders here are appointed based on their individual strengths and attributes, and this means that every member of the team can move across to lead on different areas as required. I am therefore seeking to appoint a talented leader. Finding 'the right person' is more important than whether they have direct experience of aspects of the specific role.

The application form can be downloaded from our website and should be returned to Joanne Lever, the College's HR Manager, by **9.00am** on **Thursday 29 February**, preferably by email to [j.lever@unity.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:j.lever@unity.lancs.sch.uk). Please note that a CV is not required and will not be accepted as a replacement for a fully completed application form.

If you do not receive an acknowledgement of your application by the deadline, please contact the College.

**Interviews will be held during the week commencing Monday 4 March.**

If you would like to arrange a visit or have an informal, confidential discussion, please contact the College's HR Manager via the email above or telephone number below.

**Unity College**  
**Towneley Holmes**  
**Burnley**  
**Lancashire**  
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