

WELCOME FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Candidate

It is immensely exciting for me to lead the most dynamic, creative and hard-working group of staff and to be part of West Lakes Academy's relentless search for continual improvement. The academy you are applying to is a leader in how to change lives through learning and we are looking forward to finding more visionary, creative experts to join us in that journey.

Visitors to the academy comment on how quiet and purposeful the atmosphere is. Students go about their learning with independence and confidence. Daily routines are clear and student behaviour is exemplary. Staff and students often comment on how friendly and welcoming the school is and how they feel cared for and valued.

The academy has been heavily oversubscribed for the past five years. In September 2020 our number on roll was 1197 including 196 students in Sixth Form. We are firmly established as the school of choice in the local area. One of the reasons we are oversubscribed is our excellent examination results; The recently introduced Progress 8 measure is welcomed by West Lakes Academy and our performance against this measure rates us consistently as above or well above average when compared to national results and one of the best performing schools in the county. Results at post-16 are also strong, consistently placing us in the top 25% in the country for post-16 provision, underlining the high standards we are increasingly known for.

In March 2017 the academy was rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted and this will serve to further reinforce the reputation we have locally for delivering outstanding teaching and supporting students to make outstanding progress.

This is not an academy that stands still however and we are always seeking the next initiative that will help our students with their learning. The introduction of iPads as learning tools for all students in years 7-11 is providing excellent opportunities to reshape what high-impact learning looks like and is being used as a baseline for futures thinking.

Principal: James Jackson
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We are not an inward-looking academy; in 2018 we were awarded Teaching School status; we already host trainees under the Schools Direct scheme through another Teaching School Alliance, and in 2019 we launched our own PGCE course as the lead school in our own School Direct partnership with Durham University. We also provide support to other local schools through our Specialist and National Leaders in Education. In January 2019 we were awarded Associate Research School Status along with another local secondary school. Everything we do is informed by evidence and we feel this is vital to our continued progress and success. Our students represent the Academy at interschool competitions, often showcasing our specialisms in science and the arts. Staff are equally enthusiastic to showcase their skills and share good practice; we regularly compete for national and local awards. There is a big 'Team West Lakes' ethos here.

One of the academy's strengths is its staff; teachers are highly professional and experts in their subject and support staff are well qualified. Staff commitment, performance, attendance and morale are high and turnover is low. We attract, motivate and retain a strong team of individuals and there is plenty of scope for new ideas, innovation and employee development.

Our website provides a wealth of information about the academy, including a promotional video; however, if you would like to know more please don't hesitate to get in touch.

I look forward to meeting you should you either request a visit or if you are called for interview.

James Jackson
Principal

September 2020

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