Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in the permanent post of **Teacher of English** at Walton-le-Dale High School from 1 September, 2021.  I hope that our website [www.waltonledale.lancs.sch.uk](http://www.waltonledale.lancs.sch.uk/) will give you a good overall “flavour” of the school.

Walton-le-Dale is a relatively small school which gives us a distinctive atmosphere. Many visitors comment on the warmth and friendliness of the school.  It is a school where the students and staff know each other well.  Our smaller size allows us to see each child as an individual and to cater for them individually. We are proud to be one of only a few secondary schools in Lancashire with the Inclusion Mark, achieved in 2008 and renewed several times since. We currently have Flagship status for the Inclusion Mark and this reflects the importance of this to our ethos.

This is, and will continue to be, a student-centred school. Everything we do must have the interests of our students at the heart of it.  The strengths of Walton-le-Dale lie in the relationships within the school. Our challenge is to ensure that we make use of these strong relationships to get the best out of our students in terms of achievement. However, a great education is more than exam results and I believe our success is also reflected in the way our students turn out after 5 years at Walton-le-Dale. Everyone in the school works hard to make this happen.

Our students come from a wide catchment area. Around a third of the students come from the Blackburn area, whilst the rest are local or from the Preston area. We have a large number of feeder schools. We are truly a comprehensive school, with a mixed ability intake. It is noticeable that we have a significant number of students who join the school late. These are often vulnerable students with a wide range of educational, social and emotional needs. We believe they are attracted to us because of the quality of care and learning support that we offer.  We place a strong emphasis on trying to deliver a curriculum which is relevant and appropriate to our students.  The school offers Key Stage 4 students a wide variety of options for a relatively small school.   These curriculum developments are matched by a very strong focus on teaching and learning with a great deal of work going on to develop brilliant teaching in an inclusive school – a key focus for our current school improvement plan (<https://www.waltonledale.lancs.sch.uk/about-us/school-improvement>).

There is a highly talented team of staff across the school – all staff, not just teachers. They are incredibly supportive of each other, both in a personal and professional sense. Lesson planning is often shared and cross-department sharing of expertise is also common.  Our team of pastoral and learning support staff is exceptionally strong, with Progress Co-ordinators responsible for the vertical “Sections” of the school from years 8 to 11 and a separate Progress Co-ordinator for Year 7, who also handles transition.  We have a team of 14 teaching assistants at various levels and we are extremely proud of the work that we do to support our students based on need.  Individual continuing staff professional development is a priority for us, underpinned by a core belief that individuals matter and that the strength of any school is based on the quality of its staff. We seek to operate as a community of highly skilled, trusted professionals.

The English department is well established and highly capable.  A talented team of specialist staff has focused on teaching and learning in English and we are looking forward to continued strong outcomes over the coming years.  We are seeking a strong English teacher, focused on brilliant teaching and learning with excellent pedagogical and subject knowledge. English has a high profile in the school and the department is well-liked and respected by students.

Ofsted found that our school "requires improvement" having been "good" for a decade.  As you will see from our website we have taken this judgement to heart and we are absolutely focused on ensuring that consistently brilliant teaching is the cornerstone of our community.  The English department has worked very hard to address issues identified by Ofsted and a recent review of progress was extremely positive.  We care about our school and what we do and we are determined to regain our "good" or better status in the shortest possible timescale. See <https://www.waltonledale.lancs.sch.uk/about-us/school-improvement> for an overview of our direction of travel.

The school was 60 years old in 2017 and we have worked hard to create a high quality learning environment for our students.

You will receive high quality support and encouragement from Governors, myself, the senior leadership team and leaders within the English department. If you feel you are up to this challenge and believe you have the same educational philosophy as us we would welcome an application.   If not, I wish you good luck in your future career.

Closing Date: Friday 9th April 2021

Interview Date: Wednesday 21st April 2021



James Harris

Headteacher