

Job Description

Post Title: Principal

Line of Responsibility: The Principal is directly responsible to the Director of Secondary Education and the Local Governing Body.

Job Purpose: The Principal will lead Lancaster Academy strategically and operationally to become the leading education provider in the area. The post-holder will drive forward school-wide improvement and work closely with the Director of Secondary Education to enhance all aspects of learner achievement, experience, teaching, and the overall performance of the academy. They will embody the Trust's vision and values, translating them into the unique context of Lancaster Academy and setting high expectations for the entire school community.

Duties: This job description aligns with the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document and the 2024 National Standards for Headteachers.

Strategic Vision and Core Purpose

- Articulates clear values and moral purpose to lead Lancaster Academy in delivering a first-class education for learners of all backgrounds and abilities
- Communicates and champions the academy's vision, driving strategic leadership and empowering all learners and staff to achieve excellence
- Builds positive, respectful relationships with learners, parents/carers, governors, and the wider community, acting as a visible and effective role model
- Promotes inclusion and equity through rigorous policy development and consistent implementation
- Creates a safe, ambitious, and inspiring learning environment that nurtures success and wellbeing for all learners

Leadership Teaching and Learning

- Leads school improvement based on evidence-informed practice and promotes a strong culture of continuous professional development for all staff
- Secures high-quality teaching and learning, monitors standards, and uses data and benchmarking to set and achieve improvement targets
- Develops creative, responsive, and personalised learning opportunities for all learners
- Fosters a culture of high expectations, challenge, and support to enable all learners to succeed
- Implements strategies to promote exemplary behaviour and attendance across the academy

- Designs and delivers a broad, balanced, inclusive, and flexible curriculum supported by an effective assessment framework
- Champions the integration of emerging technologies to enhance learning and teaching
- Monitors classroom practice, addressing underperformance through targeted support and follow-up to secure rapid improvement
- Ensures high standards of safeguarding policy, practice, and training are embedded and consistently applied across the academy

Leadership and Management

- Leads, motivates, develops, and challenges staff to drive continuous improvement
- Builds constructive and effective working relationships across the academy between staff, learners, and stakeholders
- Delegates responsibilities appropriately while ensuring accountability and workload balance for all staff
- Oversees staff development systems, aligning professional growth with improved learner outcomes
- Ensures high-quality support and assessment for trainee and early career teachers in line with national standards

Efficient and Effective Development of Staff and Resources

- Deploys people and resources efficiently to meet academy objectives in line with strategic and financial priorities
- Works with governors and Trust leaders to recruit, retain, and deploy staff effectively, managing workload and wellbeing
- Fosters a collaborative learning culture within and beyond the academy, engaging with other LwLAT schools and the wider education community
- Ensures access to meaningful professional development opportunities for all staff
- Collaborates with senior leaders and the Trust executive team on staffing decisions
- Advises and supports the Governing Body in staffing matters, including performance management and capability procedures
- Manages and develops the academy site to meet curriculum and health and safety requirements
- Ensures the quality, use, and value-for-money of resources, including through the integration of digital systems for school operations

Accountability

- Ensures the efficiency, effectiveness, and impact of the academy, reporting to the Trust Board, Governors, learners, parents, staff, and external partners
- Maintains up-to-date knowledge of statutory frameworks and ensures compliance across the academy
- Reports regularly to the Trust Board and Governing Body on the discharge of leadership responsibilities and school performance
- Develops an organisational culture of shared accountability and continuous improvement
- Defines and reviews individual staff accountabilities and ensures rigorous evaluation of performance
- Uses a broad range of evidence, including performance data, to drive and evaluate school improvement
- Communicates academy performance clearly to a range of audiences, including the community and Ofsted
- Keeps parents and learners well-informed on curriculum, progress, and how they can contribute to improvement
- Reports annually on the performance management of staff in line with the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document

Wider Engagement and Contribution

- Builds an outward-facing academy that works collaboratively with other schools, businesses, and organisations to raise standards
- Develops partnerships with other professionals and public/private services to improve learner outcomes
- Promotes innovation and evidence-based practice to support school self-improvement
- Shapes the current and future quality of teaching through effective professional development
- Inspires others within and beyond education to value and invest in the life-changing power of learning
- Engages proactively with the local community to raise the profile of Lancaster Academy and the Trust

Safeguarding Statement The Principal will be expected to uphold and model the highest standards of safeguarding at all times. They must ensure that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is embedded in all aspects of the academy's work.

Person Specification – Principal

Criteria
Qualifications and Training
An experienced teacher, with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).
A degree level qualification in education, or a related field.
Evidence of recent and relevant training and development at headship level, or in preparation for headship (eg NPQH or equivalent).
Professional Experience and Knowledge
A successful teacher with a proven track record of achieving high standards in teaching and learning.
Demonstrated success in senior leadership, with a strong record of driving school improvement.
Proven ability to lead and manage staff to support successful outcomes for learners of all abilities.
In depth knowledge and understanding of the wider educational agenda, including current national policies and key educational issues.
Evidence of successfully building and developing professional teams, with effective delegation and change management skills.
Experience of working in a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) environment.
Experience in stakeholder engagement, including with parents, governors, local authorities or external agencies.
Strong understanding of school finance, resource management, or safeguarding at leadership level.
Personal Aptitudes, Qualities and Skills
Demonstrates enthusiasm, initiative, and a strong commitment to embedding good practice throughout the academy.
Able to identify priorities and plan strategically to promote and sustain the school's vision, ethos, and values.
Articulate and approachable, with excellent verbal and written communication skills.
Sound decision-maker, with the ability to lead, influence, empower others, and manage change effectively.
A visible and confident leader who demonstrates optimism, emotional resilience, and a balanced, reflective approach.
Able to make and justify difficult decisions, conveying outcomes with sensitivity and a clear commitment to equity and inclusion.
Skilled in building rapport and positive relationships with a range of stakeholders, including parents, carers, governors, and the wider community.
Shaping the Future
Able to promote and nurture a shared ethos that goes beyond academic excellence, underpinning all aspects of academy life.
Proven ability to inspire, challenge, motivate, and empower others in pursuit of a shared vision for school improvement.
A successful track record of leading others to sustained success, fostering a culture of collaboration, knowledge sharing, and celebration of achievement, while taking responsibility for outcomes.

Committed to working collaboratively with the Local Governing Body, Trust Executive Team, Trust Board, and wider stakeholders to develop and realise a shared vision for the academy.

Leading Learning and Teaching

Passionate about learning, with a commitment to creating an inspirational environment where all learners can thrive and make progress.

An outstanding teacher with a strong ability to monitor, evaluate, and improve the quality of teaching to raise standards consistently.

Confident in observing lessons and providing developmental feedback that leads to measurable improvements in teaching practice.

Skilled in implementing strategies that drive sustained improvements in teaching and learning, effectively addressing underachievement.

Experienced in curriculum development, with a clear understanding of curriculum flexibility and choice to enable personalised learning for all pupils.

Proficient in using feedback and data analysis to raise student attainment and enhance teacher effectiveness.

Successful in promoting positive behaviour and attendance through the development of a learner-focused, inclusive school culture.

Embraces educational technology and understands its value in shaping the future of teaching and learning.

Developing Self and Working with Others

Acts as a role model for professional excellence, demonstrating a calm, respectful demeanour that builds trust, confidence, and mutual respect across the school community.

Evidence of successful, harmonious collaboration with a range of people in achieving agreed outcomes.

Demonstrates emotional intelligence and strong interpersonal skills in developing positive, professional relationships with learners and staff at all levels.

Skilled at recognising and nurturing talent, with the ability to inspire, empower, and unite staff to deliver a shared vision for inclusive, aspirational learning.

Committed to advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion across all aspects of academy life, challenging discriminatory practice and promoting the rights and success of every learner.

Values staff and learner wellbeing and models a sustainable, healthy approach to leadership that supports a positive culture and strong staff retention.

Leading and Managing the Organisation

Demonstrates successful leadership of whole-school initiatives that have led to measurable improvements in standards and outcomes.

Well-informed and up to date on curriculum developments, with the ability to interpret national education policy and prioritise relevant government initiatives.

Proven ability to lead performance management effectively — recognising and developing high performance, while addressing underperformance through to resolution.

Successful experience of strategic financial and resource management, ensuring cost-effectiveness, value for money, and alignment with educational priorities.

Deep understanding of current school inspection frameworks (e.g. Ofsted) and the capacity to prepare staff, systems, and evidence to secure strong inspection outcomes.

Skilled in harnessing ICT and digital tools to enhance curriculum delivery, data management, and academy operations.

Experience of leading robust recruitment and retention strategies, with a strong understanding of safer recruitment and safeguarding protocols.

Able to sustain a safe, secure and healthy school environment.

Dedicated to the vision of an inclusive academy, underpinned by equal opportunities, where each learner's academic achievement and personal wellbeing are prioritised.

Securing Accountability

Proven success in leading effective academy self-evaluation and contributing to robust improvement planning and accountability processes.

Demonstrated success in curriculum leadership and the strategic deployment of resources to secure high-quality outcomes and best value.

Understands the importance of maintaining the academy's buildings, grounds, and physical environment to support learning and wellbeing.

Strong knowledge of health and safety legislation, with the ability to ensure statutory compliance and maintain a safe, inclusive learning environment for pupils and staff.

Strengthening Community

Committed to promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion across the academy community, curriculum, and employment practices.

Evidence of building strong, collaborative relationships with parents, carers, external partners, and the wider community to enhance learner outcomes.

Open to listening, reflecting on, and acting upon feedback from the academy community to inform development and improvement.

Demonstrates a clear vision for community engagement and system leadership, contributing to wider educational improvement beyond the academy.

Committed to the development and growth of the Multi Academy Trust, recognising its role as a vehicle for sustained improvement and collaboration across schools.