

Dear Candidate,

Welcome to Weston Secondary School (WSS) and thank you for taking the time to read through our application information. We are on an exciting journey to being one of the top four schools in Southampton and we welcome you to join us as we work to secure the best for our young people. There is a *Maori saying*, "society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they will never see'." (Kerr, 2013). Working in schools, you may never see the impact of what you do however know that what you do, what you say and the way you say it, what you share with our students, will shape them forever.

Our vision is of a school characterized by high aspirations, academic excellence, and exemplary conduct. Alongside the highest of expectations, a golden thread of care, encouragement and extra-curricular opportunity runs through WSS. Our young people work hard, they are kind and they take responsibility for their own actions. These very simple values enable them to fulfil every aspect of their potential. We invite you to visit to the school so that you can see for yourself how amazing our school community is and gain a clear picture of our journey and the bright future of WSS.

As a member of the WSS team, we expect you to accept the professional obligation to improve your practice and to be passionate (and humble) about getting better. For us, this is one of the most important aspects of working with young people. Learning doesn't just happen in the classroom, it happens throughout each and every day. The academic learning that takes place within classrooms is what will open doors for our students and allow them to progress to a career of their choice, be that via college, an apprenticeship or university for example. As members of the WSS Team, it is our job to facilitate that. It is our responsibility to teach every single child so that they achieve the highest possible progress in our area of responsibility, regardless of their first language, their prior achievement or any special educational need or disability they may have.

WSS priorities this year are:

1. **Behaviour and Attitudes:** Establishing a strong culture, an ethos of high expectations and consistent setting and maintenance of standards
2. **Leadership and Management:** Establishing and embedding clear systems and structures to ensure, maximum efficiencies to support the safety, wellbeing and development of our young people
3. **Quality of Education:** Establishing a culture of continual improvement of teaching and learning supported by clear classroom expectations

Every student at WSS deserves to have disruption free learning every minute of every lesson.

Please join us on our journey.

With best wishes,



Louisa Paston
Headteacher

Weston Secondary School's Cultural Fit

It is crucial that all of our staff feel comfortable with who we are as a school. As Lemov writes, "[n]o one wants to spend their career at odds with the organization they work for, trying to hide from the training it offers, or watching the philosophy change every year while thinking, *this too shall pass*' (Lemov, 2015). As such, we have developed Weston Secondary School's Cultural Fit.

Working in a school where you are not aligned with the culture is a miserable experience. So we *all* need to have alignment at WSS!

- ✓ We believe that staff come first. Staff need to be able to look after themselves so that they can then look after our young people.
- ✓ We believe that we all have a professional obligation to improve as practitioners.
- ✓ We believe in a culture of the possible, where we can all make progress beyond what anyone, including ourselves, could have imagined.
- ✓ We believe that truly great teaching is that which improves students' progress.
- ✓ We believe an evidence-informed approach to teaching and learning helps us to identify what works best in the classroom.
- ✓ We believe that hard work is what is key to success for staff and students.
- ✓ We believe that you cannot just wish teachers and students to be better – you have to create the conditions for them to grow.
- ✓ We believe basic literacy and numeracy are essential to students making progress.
- ✓ We welcome diverse ideas to solve problems.
- ✓ We believe that feedback should be timely and respond to the needs of the individual so that they can actively engage with the feedback.
- ✓ We value generosity of spirit.
- ✓ We acknowledge that we all make mistakes and that the important lesson is that we learn from our mistakes.