

# **Aspirational Futures Multi Academy Trust**



**Headteacher**

**Candidate Pack**

**Walton le Dale High School**

October 2024

Dear candidate,

On behalf of Aspirational Futures and Walton le Dale's Local Governing Board, we would like to thank you for your interest in the post of headteacher at Walton le Dale High School, an 11 - 16 mixed comprehensive with 732 pupils on roll. This is an exciting time to join our school, and we are seeking a strong, ambitious, inspiring and committed individual to continue our improvement journey. The new headteacher will take over from the outgoing headteacher, Vicky Ardern, who has led the school through rapid improvement since her appointment at Easter 2023.

As headteacher, you will promote a relentless focus on the quality of education and delivery of an ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all our pupils. Following reviews of the curriculum and of our SEND provision, the new headteacher will be able to build upon improvements made so that overall outcomes improve. We recognise that the required improvements will take time to embed; the two poor Ofsted judgements had a negative impact on staff and pupil morale, but there have been significant changes across the whole school since Easter 2023 which are resulting in *green shoots* of optimism.

Walton le Dale was matched with Aspirational Futures Multi Academy Trust by the Regional Director for the North West and officially joined our trust in June 2024. We are now seeking an exceptional individual to continue to drive improvements throughout the school.

The workforce at the school are hard-working, talented, and motivated with an ambition to succeed. They want a strong leader who is able to inspire them to make the necessary changes, someone who will listen, empathise, support and challenge, so that our pupils leave the school as well-rounded, well-grounded young adults who can make a positive contribution to our global society.

The successful candidate will join our newly established trust which is based in Chorley, Lancashire. Our initial phase of growth was completed in September 2024, when we became a family of 5 schools with around 2,700 pupils and almost 400 employees:

- Balshaw Lane Primary School
- Gillibrand Primary School
- Highfield Community Primary School
- Parklands High School
- Walton le Dale High School

You will be supported in the role by our trust's Executive Leadership Team in addition to colleagues in our wider team. We are an outward facing trust, with strong links and collaborative relationships with many schools in the Chorley and South Ribble areas. Furthermore, you will have the opportunity of working with an experienced headteacher who is also a practising Ofsted inspector.

The pupils and staff at Walton le Dale need a strong leader with vision, passion, and experience of raising standards. If this is you, you will be able to make a difference and have a lasting impact on the school.



Thank you once again for your interest in our school. We welcome enquiries and visits to the school, should you be interested in applying. These will be arranged by Lorraine Hodgson, PA to the headteacher, by phone on 01772 335726 or email ([lhodgson@wldhigh.co.uk](mailto:lhodgson@wldhigh.co.uk)). For more information or an initial informal and confidential conversation, please contact us by email ([admin@aspirationalfutures.co.uk](mailto:admin@aspirationalfutures.co.uk)).

**How to apply:**

Please complete the application form and an accompanying letter (no more than 3 sides of A4 at font size 12) to [hr@aspirationalfutures.co.uk](mailto:hr@aspirationalfutures.co.uk). In your letter please outline your reasons for applying for the post, your relevant experience and skills, and your vision for the school, if appointed.

Kind regards,



Steve Mitchell  
CEO



Keith Fielding  
Chair of Trustees

# Our school.

- Progress 8 -0.8 (provisional)
- 38% pupils are eligible for the pupil premium
- 20% of pupils have special educational needs

Amongst many other initiatives, we have recently:

- had an external review of the curriculum by an Ofsted inspector
- also had an external SEND review
- re-structured and added capacity to the Senior Leadership Team
- created a Teaching & Learning Team
- established a House system with vertical tutoring and non-teaching pastoral support staff known as House Achievement Leaders (HALs)
- implemented a new behaviour curriculum
- seen our whole-school daily reading programme enter its second year
- seen many successes with our structured phonics programme which takes place every day
- launched Character Education with a focus on character development and virtues

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 many times since. We currently have Flagship status for the Inclusion Mark, and this reflects the importance of this to our ethos.

We aim 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. A great education is more than exam results and we 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 from both the Blackburn and the Preston areas, which means we have a large number of feeder schools. We are a truly comprehensive school with a mixed ability intake. 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 as part of our current school improvement plan.

There is a strong 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 HALs responsible for our Houses across the school. We have a team of 10 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 strong focus 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.

The school really does have a family feel, with a very supportive staff team and has great capacity for further improvement. This is a school where you can make a real difference and have a significant impact. If you believe you have the energy and drive to help us improve our provision further, we would love to hear from you.



# Our trust vision.

- Advance education by providing a holistic, all-through education to ensure our learners are well-prepared and ready to meet the challenges of the next stage in their education, training or employment.
- Instil the character traits necessary to ensure all our learners can successfully contribute to a global society by focusing on an evidence-based approach to Character Education and Personal Development from Reception through to Year 11.
- Offer rich and varied opportunities to promote spiritual, moral, cultural and social development, from primary through to secondary.
- Aim to ensure no child, regardless of their educational needs or background, is left behind due to our inclusive approach.
- Ensure our learners can contribute economically to the local and surrounding communities through our deep understanding of careers and economic education, and the local, regional and national labour markets.



# Our family of schools.

All the schools in the trust family are well established and well known in their communities and we all work together to achieve the common aim of ensuring all our young people are well educated and well prepared for the challenges that life after school will bring.

## **Balshaw Lane Primary School, Euxton, Chorley.**

[Balshaw Lane Primary School](#) converted to an academy in April 2024 and is a founder school in the trust. It is a two-form entry primary school with 385 pupils on roll and has an Ofsted rating of OUTSTANDING (November 2011).

## **Gillibrand Primary School, Chorley.**

[Gillibrand Primary School](#) converted to an academy in March 2024 and was the third primary school to apply to join our trust but was the first to actually join us! It has 210 pupils on roll and has an Ofsted rating of OUTSTANDING (July 2022).

## **Highfield Community Primary School, Chorley.**

[Highfield Community Primary School](#) converted to an academy on 1st September 2024 and is also a founder school in our trust. This conversion was much delayed due to building and land issues. The school has 246 pupils on roll and has an Ofsted rating of GOOD (October 2019).

## **Parklands High School, Chorley.**

[Parklands High School](#) is an 11 - 16 mixed comprehensive school in Chorley, Lancashire. There are 1,107 pupils on roll and has an Ofsted rating of GOOD (June 2023). Parklands is a founder school in the trust, having converted to academy status in 2012. Chief Executive Officer, Steve Mitchell, is the former headteacher of the school.

## **Walton le Dale High School, Bamber Bridge.**

[Walton le Dale High School](#), which joined our trust in June 2024, is an 11 - 16 mixed comprehensive school in Bamber Bridge, Lancashire. It has 732 pupils on roll and has an Ofsted rating of REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT (June 2022). This is our first sponsor school, which we have been supporting since Easter 2023.

# The benefits of working with us.

In our trust we place emphasis on wellbeing, collaboration and professional development for our staff, underpinned by research. Our aim is to ensure our students finish their education with us as well-rounded, well-grounded individuals who will make a positive contribution to society, which is partly achieved by ensuring our workforce is supported and professionally challenged, underpinned by comprehensive CPD programmes and wellbeing initiatives. We offer the following benefits, designed to promote your wellbeing and make your role enjoyable and rewarding.

- Salary: L28 - L32 on the national teachers' Leadership scale with automatic percentage increase as negotiated nationally.
- Paid leave: maternity/paternity leave, statutory adoption leave, shared parental leave, parental bereavement leave.
- A culture that actively promotes a positive work-life balance and wellbeing initiatives.
- Professional development: full and part-funded training courses (including higher cost courses such as Masters, PhD) plus a wide range of external and in-house learning opportunities available to all.
- Access to UK Healthcare (<https://www.ukhealthcare.org.uk/>) helping staff with the cost of everyday health expenses such as visiting the opticians, paying for glasses, dental treatment and even paying for prescriptions, up to agreed policy limits. Employees can also claim an allowance for hospital admissions, whether NHS or private, access telephone counselling services and receive a discount on gym membership to keep them fit and motivated for work.
- Employee assistance programme.
- CycleSolutions: facility to purchase bicycles and equipment at reduced cost through payroll.