Dear applicant,

Thank you very much for your interest in this role. You will know just how challenging work in this sector has become, and our work at Oak has very much been to restore the fulfilment we feel in removing barriers to learning – enabling all members of our community to 'think big' and experience success.

"Leaders are committed to providing the best possible experiences and life opportunities for pupils in their care. Staff prepare students well for the next stage of their education or training"

Oak Academy has undergone significant change since I arrived as Principal in 2016 and, supported by AAT over the last 3 years, we are well on our way as the community school of choice our students and families deserve. Ofsted said we were 'unrecognisable' in our last inspection, and our judgement of 'Good' for Leadership and Management very much validates the work of all staff and the commitment given to raise standards and enable Oak students to be the best they can be.

The Academy serves a highly deprived area which is in the top 20% nationally for disadvantage. A true comprehensive, we are extremely experienced in educating and supporting the community that we serve and have a thorough induction and training programme for all new colleagues joining us.

The most important thing at Oak is that all pupils are happy and safe, educated by subject specialists and offered a curriculum that has rigorous academic and vocational qualifications that enable all young people to have a clear route into their chosen future career.

High quality learning is absolutely at the heart of what we do at Oak Academy. We have a very clear teaching style across all subjects, which ensures our pupils are supported and challenged academically in an engaging and creative environment. Working within a medium sized multi-academy trust, subject staff and leaders are supported with regular forum and moderation meetings – opportunities to share best practice that benefits outcomes and well-being of both students and staff alike.

We know that for many of our pupils, ensuring that our teaching meets their learning needs is crucial to their future success and breaking the cycle of disadvantage within the local community. Our curriculum is equally balanced between academic study and opportunities for personal development, with dedicated time given to our 'Learning for Life' programme.

We have worked hard to embed all of the Gatsby benchmarks, have appointed our own careers advisor and are already fully SRE compliant. There is an established work experience programme in Year 10. In addition, all students have a structured calendar of interactions and opportunities to meet local businesses, employers and have access to local undergraduate mentors. We are linked to schools in China and in 2018-19 travelled over 12,000 miles on all of our combined trips and visits.

At Oak we truly believe that 'background' does not determine 'future' and actively encourage all members of our community to 'think big' in pursuit of their goals.

"Teachers are highly aware of pupils' health and emotional well-being, particularly around issues of mental health."

All schools have experienced a significant increase in the number of students suffering as a result of poor mental health and Oak is no exception. Students identified with an SEMH need are the largest proportion of our SEN cohort. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and regular CPD for all staff ensures that, supported by our Inclusion team, you will feel confident and empowered in providing timely support.

Our Inclusion team work with a range of agencies to support our most vulnerable students, in addition to the pastoral programme all subject teachers and pastoral tutors provide. As part of this successful team, you will be someone who is emotionally intelligent, patient and have the resilience to champion the underdog - becoming a trusted adult to individual students in your care.

"Senior leaders have created a calm environment. Pupils' conduct around the site contributes to a welcoming atmosphere."

Oak Academy has a stable roll of around 430 students and 80 staff. Working with the local authority, plans are in place to grow provision to 900 students in the next 3 years. Our site has capacity for 1500 learners and with most class sizes below 30, we have plenty of space to foster a calm and unhurried approach in all things. At Oak we make space and time to do things right.

Our staff well-being and professional development is crucial to our success and I am very mindful that supporting everyone in all their roles is a key element of our improvement strategy.

At Oak Academy, we have led on workforce reform over the last two years and have embedded:

- Directed time that is well below 1265.
- Meetings for subject teachers only twice each half term.
- Collaborative planning across the Trust with departments in different academies able to share resources and moderation linked by Microsoft Teams.
- Reporting to parents only three times a year and no requirement for written comments.
- Clear and fully supported behaviour management system.
- No formally graded lesson observations – the emphasis is on coaching and sharing practice.
- A performance management process that is focused on three targets only: Subject knowledge, teaching and learning and either a departmental or whole school responsibility target regardless of your level of responsibility.
- Very flexible child-care arrangements - we are a very family friendly academy and really do understand how hard it can be juggling family life and work at times.
- Very visible and approachable senior leadership team who are well established and experienced within the academy having been part of the improvement journey since 2016.
- Real opportunities for career progression – our culture is very much to 'promote from within'.

If you are truly driven by the moral purpose of education, would like to work in an academy that is on an upward trajectory of further improvement and you have high standards, resilience and a strong work ethic I would very much like to hear from you.

Our mantra is 'High Expectations lead to High Achievers'- I very much hope that you will join us and enable our vision to continue to be enacted.

Yours faithfully,



Richard Burgas
Principal