



## Caldew School Information for Applicants

*Where every student is successful today and prepared for tomorrow*

*Aspire Believe Achieve*

Thank you for your interest in this post. I hope that the details I have provided will help you to decide whether a position at Caldew School is right for you. Having read them, I hope you will apply for the post and if you do, would like to thank you for the time and effort which I know it takes.

As Headteacher I am proud of the school, its students and staff. Together we all work to improve outcomes for our students. We have made large strides forward and I would like you to consider joining us and helping us to continue on that journey.

So what is Caldew like? The school is situated on the northern fringe of the Lake District and is south of Carlisle. On a clear day our location can be truly inspiring with the Lakeland fells rising in the distance, indeed the Cumbrian Way runs through our grounds as it follows the banks of the river Caldew, and Dalston is a very pleasant and thriving village. We have an extensive catchment area that stretches from the Solway Firth in the north, to the flanks of Blencathra in the south, towards Wigton in the west and as far as Armathwaite in the east. As well as serving our own catchment area around 35% of our students come to us from the southern parts of Carlisle. It is this diverse mix within our 1000 students that makes Caldew such a rewarding place to work. We are a rural school yet with many of the issues faced by schools in any city. Around 20% of our students are eligible for Pupil Premium which reflects the variety of our intake, though there is also hidden poverty in rural families where there is a reluctance to claim benefits. Our intake is average in terms of prior attainment.

The school itself is now over 55 years old, with the original buildings linked to newer additions added over the years. The general fabric of the school is well maintained and visitors often comment on how welcoming it feels. That is a reflection on our students' behaviour and the prudent management of the governors. It is a building we seek to develop ever more as a place of high quality learning.

Our Pastoral System is a real strength of the school. Heads of Year are responsible for the progress, behaviour and attendance of their year groups. Students are placed into form groups of about 25 and where possible stay with their tutor for 5 years. Students are generally taught within ability sets and follow mainly GCSE qualifications though we do some vocational courses when appropriate. Our Sixth Form roll is healthy and we offer over 20 A-Levels and achieve excellent results.

We are lucky to have a school farm and small animal unit which is part of the curriculum offered at KS4. Even if not a rural person at heart I challenge anyone not to be fascinated by the latest litter of piglets or newly born lambs that you will inevitably be introduced to! We are also home to one of Cumbria's Strategic Autism Provisions which adds an extra level of diversity to school life. Most of our directed students are fully integrated into the mainstream classes and receive support from our dedicated Learning Centre.

Our aspiration is to be outstanding and there is real energy amongst the staff, students and governors to achieve this. Our Ofsted inspection in June 2018 graded Caldew as 'requires improvement'. However, the inspection team noted that significant improvements had been made over the past two years. This was backed up by our GCSE results in August 2018 when the school achieved its best ever results. Although the results in 2019 were not as strong our Progress 8 score was the highest amongst the city's schools. However we are not complacent and we know that there are areas where we need to do better. Our focus is to continue these improvements so that all our students consistently make expected progress or better in all their subjects. We know results should be better than they currently are and we are determined to make sure standards improve.

We will only ever achieve improving outcomes for students through outstanding teaching and learning. There is a collective willingness to engage in purposeful CPD that is tailored to the needs of the staff so that teaching and learning is always placed at the heart of the work we do. We engage extensively with other schools in the Carlisle area, across our feeder primaries and across Cumbria. We actively work with others to enhance our own skill base but also to share the expertise that we have. We firmly believe in a collaborative system of leadership and that schools should work together to deliver outstanding outcomes for all students in their area.

We believe that education is about developing the whole child as well as achieving qualification. With this in mind we have an extensive programme of experiences outside the classroom that help students develop their confidence, resilience and skills. Large numbers of students complete the Duke of Edinburgh Awards, our Performing Arts department is very active and we achieve enviable sporting success across a wide spectrum of events with our most gifted students being part of national teams. We are a busy school and we look forward at every opportunity for ways to improve

My expectations of our students and staff are high but they would testify that being at Caldew is rewarding. Every member of our school community is challenged to be the best they can be. We do aspire to ever higher standards and that comes about through hard work and a dedication to self-improvement. Moreover it is built around staff who are proud of what they achieve and are motivated to continually improve their own practice so that students maximise their potential.

We encourage you to want to be part of this team and this vision and I hope to receive your application in due course.

Vicki Jackson  
Headteacher