

MEET THE TEAM



Jonathan Johnson - Chief Executive Officer

I live and breathe our Trust's vision and distinction; to succeed in 'Changing Lives Through Learning' by providing each child with an education that will give them a preparation for life that is excelled by no other. I am in no doubt that we can achieve this brave and ambitious aim with your help, your passion, and your expertise.

We welcome anyone who shares that vision and who subscribes to the multiplier effect of genuine partnership that enables continual improvement to teach children in a way that is relevant to the modern age; providing moments of awe and wonder, encouraging and enabling every child to aspire to a future that transcends the cultural and social limitations placed upon them.

We are characterised by autonomy within mutual, partnership-driven principles, aims and objectives, and within them, our individual and collective determination to accept nothing less than the pinnacle of educational provision. We have a shared professional dissatisfaction, that no matter how good we become we are utterly convinced we can be even better.

Our Trust specialises in celebrating, protecting and enhancing the uniqueness of each individual school. If we're all the same, our opportunities to learn will be limited. By remaining different, through everyone involved in our academies, rich collaboration, learning and life-long endeavours can begin.

Our highly experienced and skilled Executive Team support leaders to focus on contextual and localised leadership of curriculum, teaching, learning and the professional development and opportunities of their colleagues. Local governing boards are supported to thrive and contribute to the overall direction and decision making of our Trust.

It is a privilege to lead our Trust and the continual development, support and celebration of, hopefully, yours and our collective contributions and accomplishments. Weaving a fully inclusive, collaborative and purposeful focus on our ever-improving quality of education holds the promise of changing lives through learning; for the children and communities we serve and the adults who work with them.

I sincerely hope you will join us.



Judith Schafer - Deputy Chief Executive Officer

As Deputy CEO, I am part of a creative, strong and effective Executive Team which works tirelessly to safeguard the future of our Trust and everyone that works in it. As Director of One Cumbria Teaching School Hub, I am responsible for working with partners to secure and sustain exceptional training for teachers across Cumbria, at all stages of their careers.

Cumbria's children need the best schools in their own communities. They need aspiring professionals to help them shape their world and our West Lakes MAT vision to change lives through learning supports that noble ambition. It's a great place to work; as a team, we have the creativity and desire to really make a difference to children everywhere.



Lindsey Martin - Executive Assistant

Within my role I am personal assistant to the Chief Executive Officer and I also offer administration support to the One Cumbria team. My background is in Primary teaching; I am passionate about playing the best part I can in helping shape each child's life. Being part of an Executive Team that works together to ensure that the Trust is cohesive, supported and developing is a busy task, but one that makes sure the pupils and staff in our schools are striving for excellence and ensuring each child's journey is the best it can be.



Caroline Stevenson - Governance, Risk and Assurance Director

My role as Governance, Risk and Assurance Director is to facilitate the highest level of teaching and learning by ensuring the protection of the legal entity of the Trust. My key areas of responsibility are managing trust-wide activities relating to governance, risk and data and ensuring the Partnership remains legally compliant. I am the Trust's Company Secretary and Data Protection Officer. I provide leadership to the Trust's Network Support Team whose work includes the network strategy, cybersecurity and development of the Trust's WAN.

I have worked in the education sector for 13 years with over 10 years' experience as a governance professional. I have also worked in the NHS, legal and social housing sectors.



Laura Watson - Finance Director

In my role, I work closely with the members of the central Executive Team and the senior leadership team of each academy to ensure we are financially efficient, leveraging our Trust’s economies of scale and increasing the money available for the benefit of improving teaching and learning.

I am a qualified chartered accountant and before joining West Lakes MAT, I gained experience with a local accountancy firm specialising in external audit.



Tracey Shackley - Operations Director

I have 29 years’ experience working in the education sector and provide strategic and operational leadership for support activities of the Trust.

I play a lead role in designing and implementing new central shared services, structures and systems. I work with the Trustees, Chief Executive Officer and Deputy Chief Executive Officer to formulate the aims and objectives of our Trust and in establishing the policies, systems and procedures through which these can be achieved.

I provide operational leadership for specified support activities of our Trust, including Administration and Business Management, the Facilities Team, Human Resources and PR and Marketing.



Lynette Knibb - Trust HR Manager

My role within the Trust is to support our educational vision by developing and implementing HR strategy and practices that add value and align to our vision and objectives to develop a skilled and diverse workforce who will deliver the very best possible outcomes for our students and communities. We are committed to supporting our employees to perform at their very best and become an employer of choice within Cumbria. I have worked in various HR roles in the education sector for over fifteen years and am a Chartered Member of the CIPD.



Laura Lithgow - Trust PR and Marketing Manager

In my role, I am responsible for publicity and communications for our Trust. I work to ensure that each academy maximises its publicity by overseeing the communication channels between each academy and the wider community including the Trust's websites and social media.