



Waltham Toll Bar Academy

18th August, 2026

Media release

Academy's new principal

With picture

A new Principal has been appointed at Waltham Toll Bar Academy to strengthen its leadership team, build on recent successes and highlight its sixth form offer.

Joe Hermiston has led the high-performing Louth Academy for the past two years and is relishing his new challenge.

Lincolnshire Gateway Academies Trust's Executive Principal Philip Dickinson, responsible for considerable improvement at Waltham Toll Bar, will provide continuity, overseeing the New Waltham and Louth schools.

Mr Hermiston said: "Outcomes at Waltham Toll Bar Academy improved last year and we are expecting further progress when GCSE results are announced this week.

"Numbers into Year 7 in September have gone up, reflecting the positive changes the community has seen at the academy.

"My role is to ensure that forward momentum continues.

"I'm also determined to increase numbers into Toll Bar Sixth Form. My message to Year 11s across the area is that it is never too late to choose our sixth form and enrolment starts this week.

"It offers a distinctive, supportive and welcoming environment, with first class pastoral and careers support."

"Our A-level results last week saw the vast majority of students achieve their first choice destinations.

"Mr Dickinson has put together a support package for every Year 12 student who joins the sixth form in September, including a new iPad and book vouchers.

"With GCSE results day this week, a priority is to highlight our offer. Year 11s who join our sixth form from other local schools find a welcoming community and enjoy considerable successes."



Proud to be part of the
Lincolnshire Gateway
Academies Trust

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Executive Principal: Philip Dickinson



He was proud to be rejoining Waltham Toll Bar where, like Mr Dickinson, he taught in the sixth form as well as the main school.

“It’s a privilege to lead this academy, work with some outstanding practitioners and build on the successes of the past couple of years.”

Mr Dickinson welcomed Mr Hermiston to the role.

“He knows the school and brings a considerable amount of leadership experience to the role,” he said. “I’m looking forward to supporting him to drive the continued improvement the community deserves.

“From a personal perspective, I’m delighted that I’ll be able to focus full-time on the Executive Principal role.

“I’ve loved the day-to-day responsibility at Waltham Toll Bar but know, as he did at Louth, Mr Hermiston will do a fantastic job.”

Mr Hermiston’s role at Louth Academy will be taken by Jake Bailey, who switches from being Principal at Somercotes Academy.

The vacancy there will be filled by Katy Black, an additional member of the Trust’s senior leadership team when she was appointed an Associate Principal in December.

Chief Executive Officer Martin Brown said the moves strengthened the Trust’s senior leadership team.

“We needed additional leadership capacity at Waltham Toll Bar and Mr Hermiston will bring that,” he said.

“He will be remembered as an outstanding teacher at the school who has gone on to become a highly successful senior leader.

“Mr Dickinson will continue to have overall responsibility so there will be continuity and the impact he has had on Waltham Toll Bar over the last 18 months or so will not be lost.

“Previously, he was at Louth and responsible for its turnaround, momentum that was picked up by Mr Hermiston.

“Mr Bailey and Ms Black will report to Mr Dickinson, giving them additional support when needed.”

Mr Dickinson will also line manage the Principals at the Trust’s other secondaries, Cleethorpes Academy and Kirton Academy.

Chair of Governors at Waltham Toll Bar and the Board of Trustees, Philip Bond, said: “Mr Dickinson will be available to provide support at any secondary academy and play a full role as Executive Principal within the CEO’s central team.



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“Mr Hermiston has had an extremely successful period at Louth Academy where his work has been recognised by not just the Trust but by the DfE and other parties.

“Mr Dickinson will retain a base at Waltham Toll Bar and ensure that recent progress is maintained.

“Mr Bailey has had a very successful period at Somercotes Academy where he has overseen improvements in all aspects and worked closely with Mr Dickinson, Andy Collins, our Director of School Improvement, as well as with the CEO.”

Mr Bond went on: “Ms Black, the new Somercotes Principal, has worked closely with Mr Dickinson at Waltham Toll Bar. He has been very impressed with her leadership.

“She has a strong track record of school improvement from a highly successful trust in Lincoln.

“In effect, the changes taking place will enhance and strengthen leadership at all our Academies.”

Year 11s can apply to join Toll Bar Sixth Form at www.tollbarmatsixthform.co.uk/enrolmentform/

Any queries about applying or any questions about further study in general can be directed to the Sixth Form Team via (01472) 500505.

Caption

New Principal at Waltham Toll Bar Academy, Mr Hermiston.