



Meet Andrew Cowan

Principal of Hilton Primary Academy

What job do you do?

I am Principal of a large primary academy in Newcastle.

How did you get into your role?

After leaving school I studied for my A levels while working in a hotel, I then achieved a B.Ed degree while also working as a bin man. I became a teacher while also working as a private tutor. I was then promoted to Assistant Headteacher while I also ran a signs and graphics business before becoming Vice Principal and now Principal for the Northern Education Trust.

Tell us a little bit about your working day

After a 32 mile commute, I oversee teaching and learning, staffing which includes timetables, recruitment and HR and I also work with other school leaders to develop and share best practice.

I manage attendance, behaviour and welfare of all of the 470 children in the Academy from our 2 year old provision through to the Year 6 children preparing for their SATs.

I do the boring bits, such as budget meetings, but I also have the privilege of being able to dress up for things like World Book Day as Farmer Duck and I even took a real duck to work. I have pizza with the children celebrating progress with test scores, deliver whole school assemblies making parents so proud they cry and enjoying busy, challenging and rewarding days.

My days vary so much from excluding a child to going on an amazing residential, dealing with tricky parents to reading emails/letters of high praise, having to explain and justify Academy data trends to enjoying 13 weeks holiday – I've never really left school.

What advice would you give to one of our students who is interested in your field of work?

Stay focused and work hard; you'll reap what you sew. Good things come to those who work for it.

