



"Learning together, to be the best we can be"



CEO Briefing

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We're over halfway through summer term 1 and the road map out of COVID-19 lockdown is going to plan so far. Monday 10 May saw zero new COVID-19 related deaths reported in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland, something that wouldn't have been reality without the hard work of so many in following the guidance and keeping others safe. As vaccination levels continue to increase by the minute, I'm really looking forward to the scenes in wider society, that will soon reflect those usually reserved for airport terminals, as family and friends can start hugging again in public. All we need to hope for now is a little less torrential rain so we can all enjoy seeing more of our loved ones in the sunshine!

The Secretary of State for Education recently delivered a speech where he affirmed the Government's commitment to the academies programme and outlined the steps the Government will be taking to encourage more and more of the remaining local authority maintained schools to consider the benefits of joining a MAT. As with any political speech, this statement has had a mixed reaction across the education sector and likely left some people more committed to resisting academisation than explore it. I found some of the headlines covering the speech that schools can "try before they buy" into a MAT as terribly misleading, as it put all the focus on the transactional relationship between a Trust and a school. Nexus MAT was formed - and has grown - because we've used the structure of our Trust to help our schools do more than they could on their own, and the MAT in turn has evolved to meet the opportunities and challenges that this dynamic creates. In this regard, we've bought into one another, and our shared values and ethos is what drives us to be continually better **together**. That's not something that reconciles with a 'try before you buy' headline. Hey ho.

I'd like to use this briefing to congratulate Sam MacDonald on becoming Deputy Head at North Ridge and to welcome Carl Cousins as the new Deputy Head at Pennine View. Sam was already a much valued member of the Nexus MAT family, and Carl will be joining the PV team from September. Great news for all of us! I'd also like to congratulate Jade Soler Alcaraz, who has been appointed as site lead for The Bridge (which I talked about a lot in my last briefing). There's a really tangible, positive buzz around our academies right now with the new initiatives we're generating, and it's been overwhelming to see how competitive the processes have been when we've been recruiting to new roles. We have far more talented staff than we can generate progressive opportunities for right now: though I'm certain more and more chances will be created in the weeks and months ahead, so that we can meet the aspirations of our talented workforce.

On a final note, I'd like to thank Cllr Gordon Watson for his service as Cabinet Member for Children & Young People at Rotherham Council. Gordon wasn't re-elected as a councillor on 6 May, but his service to the children and families of Rotherham shouldn't pass unacknowledged. Thank you Gordon, and all the best for the future.


Warren Carratt