

CEO Briefing

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Happy New Year, one and all! I hope you all managed to have a restful festive season, though I know a number of you spent at least some of that time resting because of COVID-19. It's been a challenging start to the spring term with so many of our workforce absent due to having coronavirus, which is a reflection of the national picture in schools. I'm really grateful for how our class teams have pulled together to try and minimise disruption for our pupils and we're all braced for a bumpy ride over the coming weeks. School leaders continue to astound me with how compassionate and calm they are in managing such high pressure demands: we couldn't ask for any more.

As is always the case at Nexus MAT, the new term has started with lots of exciting developments, despite the challenges of the pandemic.

We are currently consulting with our Trade Union partners on enhancements to our lowest salary grades to ensure we continue to meet our commitment to be a Real Living Wage employer. The consultation period ends on 31 January and I'm hopeful I can share some further good news from there on how we will raise our bottom-line to ensure our lowest paid staff earn more than the Government's national living wage. The Real Living has been set at a minimum level of £9.90 from May 2022.

We have also adopted a policy change which will ensure that Teachers' pensions aren't disproportionately, negatively impacted in years when there is a public sector pay freeze. It's a minor change that will have a big impact for a number of our teachers. The same issue doesn't apply to our non-teaching staff.

Our collective commitment to be an ethical Trust is also reflected in our adoption of the Care Leaver Covenant. This is a national inclusion programme that supports care leavers aged 16-25 to live independently. My signing of the covenant means we agree to create meaningful opportunities for care leavers in five key areas and support care leavers to access those opportunities. I think this is a fantastic way to help us be a better, more supportive employer. Especially when outcomes for care leavers are so much poorer compared to those who haven't been in care.

Over the next few weeks we will be commencing recruitment to jobs at our soon-to-be-opening new special school in Sheffield, Discovery Academy. The school is on course to open in September 2022 and we're really excited about the new opportunities we'll be advertising over the coming weeks. Watch this space!

Finally, it is with much sadness that I end this briefing on a terribly sad note, as I share the news of the death of Amanda Armer, a member of the North Ridge workforce and Nexus MAT family. Amanda lost her short battle with cancer on 28 December. Our thoughts and prayers are with Amanda's family, and I am grateful for the lives Amanda changed for the better in her all-too-short time with us.


Warren Carratt