



5th October 2020

Dear Parents,

Change to Trust leadership

I write to advise you that I will be stepping down as Chief Executive of The Park Academies Trust in the New Year. As someone who has always enjoyed the hustle and bustle of a school and the fact that no two days are ever the same, you can imagine this decision has been something of a wrench. However, after thirty three years in education (and around twenty as a senior leader) I feel the time is now right for me to do something else and hence I have been working with senior Trustees on plans for managing this transition and appointing a new CEO.

I feel extremely privileged to have had such an enjoyable career and can honestly say that I have fulfilled all the ambitions I held on leaving teacher training, along with a great many opportunities that couldn't have been foreseen back then. Undoubtedly, the best decision I ever made was to apply for a job in Swindon which is how, in 2002, I came to be Deputy Head at what was then Greendown Community School. The school had such obvious potential and it is with considerable pride that I can look back and chart how, through harnessing the effort and skill of a great many talented colleagues, it has evolved. Greendown was always a school that looked after its pupils well and that trait is still the first thing many people notice about Lydiard Park Academy. However, as many parents experienced through their children, the school has grown in size, age range, success and reputation. It's so important for a community to have a good secondary school and I hope that West Swindon feels proud of the excellent school and sixth form it now has.

Of course the last four years have brought new opportunities through the Academy programme, with the chance to work across more than one school and see how best to utilise a larger pool of expertise. I like to think that, by turning Isambard Community School into Abbey Park School (again, with a significant rise in results and reputation) we've shown that LPA wasn't a fluke! Most recently, having the chance to work with primary colleagues, with Red Oaks Primary becoming part of our group (The Park Academies Trust) has been another great opportunity, and further proof that schools are much stronger if they collaborate rather than compete.

All three Trust schools have excellent senior leadership teams and I will really miss their collegiality. However, I'm heartened by the knowledge that the approach and enthusiasm we have built together will continue unabated once I'm no longer in charge. The Board of Trustees are undertaking a recruitment process during this month and so I hope to be able to inform you of the outcome in the coming weeks. This will be an exciting time for everyone connected with the Trust



Our Schools:

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and I'm sure that my replacement will bring new skills, approaches and energies that will serve our schools well in the next stage of their journey.

The next stage of my own journey continues my slow drift westwards. Having grown up in North London, then to Oxford and on to Swindon, I'm now moving about as far west as you can get by moving to Pembrokeshire, Wales. This is an area that holds lots of family connections and I'm really looking forward to doing lots more outdoor pursuits as well as a new challenge in running a small business and a few bits of education consultancy. I will, of course, be staying in touch with colleagues and will always be keen to hear how our schools are moving forwards.

Finally, I'd like to thank all the pupils, parents and colleagues that I've worked with over the years. None of this would have been possible without you!

Yours sincerely



Clive Zimmerman
Chief Executive Officer
The Park Academies Trust



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