



**Horizons Specialist Academy Trust**  
*Providing infinite opportunities*

**Chief Executive**

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**Rebecca Whelan**

Principal

Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Dear parents and carers,

As we come towards the end of what can only be described as a year we will never forget, I thought it would be helpful to update you with regards to arrangements for September.

Over the next couple of weeks, I will do my best to share with you our proposed plans to ensure as many children and young people as possible can access the site come the new academic year, as well as student groupings and the formal timetables for 2020-2021. However, to begin with, I thought it would be helpful to explain some staff changes.

In September, we welcome back Rebecca Batey from maternity leave. Rebecca oversees our co-located provision based in North Shore Academy. Whilst Rebecca has been on leave, Jane O'Connell has been covering, and will now return to her role as our Food Technology and Textiles Teacher, as well as Tutor for 11JO'C. This means that Laura Daniel's supply role will also come to an end. However, I am sure we will see Laura again, as she has played a vital role within school over the last year.

At the end of this academic year, we also say a fond farewell to two of our most long-standing members of staff. Both John Youdale and Valda Bowen have made the decision to retire and we wish them the very best of luck for a long and happy retirement. They will be greatly missed, having worked at the academy for many, many years!

The good news is we have managed to recruit two wonderful teachers to replace them. Emma Pink, will be taking on John's role, and has already been in school finding out about the young people and is now busily planning for the year ahead.

Amanda Burns, will be relocating in order to join the academy. Having been waiting for the right job to come along, she spotted our advert and applied. And we are so grateful she did, as Amanda comes with a wealth of experience in SEND and we look forward to welcoming her in the Autumn Term. Amanda will be taking on Valda's role.

Other exciting developments include, the establishment of a new provision for children and young people with autism. As a Multi-Academy Trust we have been in conversation with Middlesbrough Local Education Authority, and have agreed to establish a provision for children with autism in the lower ground floor of the existing Hollis Academy site. We welcome a new class of Year 7 students in September. Andy Pearson



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(Tutor and Teacher of Computing) has agreed to lead this provision with the support of Sarah O'Donnell. We are currently looking at arrangements to cover Andy's role within school. This is a very exciting development for us, as it means we have increased capacity to support children and young people with autism in the Tees Valley. More information about this provision will be made available via our website soon.

Last but not least, Sue Rowney, Speech and Language Therapist has also made the difficult decision to retire. Sue has played a huge role in the development of staff skills over the year and she is a vital part of the team. For that reason we have managed to persuade her to remain during the Autumn Term, to work alongside Kate Reader (our other SaLT). Kate will then increase her days of working so that we still offer the same number of hours of SaLT support.

I am sure you will join us in wishing all of the above members of staff well in their exciting new futures.

For those students who might potentially have new tutors due to some internal changes, we will endeavour to let you know in the next couple of weeks. Please note, there are very few of these changes being made.

If you have any concerns or queries regarding anything covered in this letter then please speak to us about this.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Whelan'.

Rebecca Whelan  
Principal