



Pent Valley
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achievement for all

20th April 2015

Dear Parents and Carers

As you may be aware I have been appointed by the Governing Body of Pent Valley and also by Kent County Council to take on the responsibility of overall leadership of Pent Valley. This is in the capacity of Executive Head Teacher.

Executive Head Teachers are appointed to support schools which have experienced difficulties and they provide clear direction to schools in the areas of leadership and management, quality of teaching, student achievement and acceptable standards of behaviour and safety. The role is different to that of a day to day Head Teacher in so far as the role is more to do with developing the culture and conditions for success and less to do with the day to day operational business of the school.

As to my background, I am an experienced school leader and practicing Ofsted Inspector. I lead Swale Academies Trust which is a growing family of successful schools in Kent. I have had significant experience of working with Kent secondary schools and I am looking forward to using that experience to help improve Pent Valley.

I was hoping to be able to start my work here today as Executive Head Teacher with Mr Citro, Mr Osborne and Mr Kelly, working alongside them to begin to address the issues the school faces. Sadly from my point of view, Mr Citro, Mr Osborne and Mr Kelly have decided that they no longer wish to work at Pent Valley and have not returned after the Easter break.

I am disappointed that they have chosen not to remain, despite a significant amount of effort on my part and that of others to encourage them to stay. I had hoped that they would have at least stayed until the end of the school year to see through the current Year 11 and Sixth Form students. Sadly, neither myself or Governors were able to persuade them to remain. Whilst this is disappointing news we need to move forward and secure better outcomes for the students in the future despite their absence.

I intend to be in Pent Valley for the majority of the working week between now and the end of the summer term and in all likelihood beyond that. During the course of this week my priorities are as follows;

1. To gain a good working understanding of the school through discussions with both students and staff.



2. To gain a working understanding of the quality of teaching and the quality of student progress in their classes.
3. To put in place a clear set of behaviour management expectations that are clear to all and non-negotiable.

I am joined in this process by Mr Phil Leyland who is also a highly experienced school leader who will be here with me for the foreseeable future. Phil brings with him a wealth of experience and insight that will prove critical in moving the school further forward.

Clearly parents will have a range of questions that they will want to ask me about where the school is and how it is to move forward. To facilitate this I intend to hold an Open Parental Meeting on Monday 27th April in the main school hall. There will be two meetings, one at 5.30pm and the second at 7.30pm. Each meeting will last for around an hour and a half. After a short introduction from myself there will be an opportunity for parents and carers to ask me any questions they wish to raise. By that stage I should have a clearer specific understanding as to where the school is and what it needs to do to improve.

I am happy for as many parents and carers who wish to attend to come along, however I would be grateful if you could contact the school reception to inform us as to which time you would prefer so that we can plan accordingly.

In the meantime my intention is to get to know the school as well as I can to identify the things it does well and to identify the things it needs to do better.

Yours sincerely

Jon Whitcombe
Executive Head Teacher