



13th February 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

It is with great excitement and pleasure that I am writing to introduce myself to you all. I visited Bovington just before Christmas when the festive season was in full swing and could see what a wonderful community school you all have. I can't wait to meet you in person, but in the meantime I'm sure you all have many questions about who I am and why I applied to become the Principal of Bovington.

My journey into education started quite late in life, following 10 years working in the derivatives market of London. Deciding that the financial world was not for me, I embarked on a BEd at Southbank University. My experience as a teacher was varied; working in a school for children with severe and complex needs, various primary schools in Kent and inner-city London. The majority of my time was spent at Temple Hill Primary Academy in Dartford where I worked for 12 years. At this school I was a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), Deputy Head Teacher and this is also where I took on my first position as Head of School. I then moved to lead another school within the Multi-Academy Trust I worked for, West Hill Primary Academy (again in Dartford), and by the time I leave I will have been there for just over three years.

For many years I have looked to locate to Dorset but the timing was never right; now feels like the time to make the move and Bovington Academy feels like the perfect school. I recognise that the community has been on a journey and that you have been without a substantive Principal for a while; I am also aware that the school has been graded 'inadequate' by Ofsted. A school is so much more than an Ofsted report, and although improvement is vital, Bovington has many strengths. Along with the staff, leadership team and with the expertise of Kate Redman (CEO), I am confident that by the time Ofsted return the progress will be clear. Following research and meeting the team of Aspirations, I feel lucky to be part of a Trust that genuinely looks to improve life chances for children from the age of 2 – 18; I am really looking forward to their 'no limits curriculum' and giving children relevant skills and knowledge to find out what they enjoy learning and developing their attributes to be part of a fast paced, ever changing world of education and employment.

My notice period at my school means that I am unable to leave until the end of the school year, but I will begin my transition to Bovington with a visit on the 16th March – on this day I will arrange for more dates to visit before my official contract starts in September 2020. I will be trying to visit as often as possible to familiarise myself with staff, systems, standards etc. During these visits, you will hopefully find me on the gates/doors before and after school; please do come and say 'hello' and introduce yourself. I am always available for you to talk to and pride myself in being approachable.

Bovington Academy has been through an unsettling period. I am looking forward to finding out more about the school so that the changes we make in this new chapter of the school's history are supported by the whole school community. From my experience of being a teacher/SENCO/Deputy/Head of School for 20+ years (where has the time gone!), I know that a successful and happy school depends on all of us working together. Being a mother of a teenager, I am very much aware of the responsibility that my staff and I have in ensuring that the highest standard of safety, happiness and teaching/learning is evident in all areas. I lead a school and judge it by whether I would want my son at the school. Parents and carers put so much trust in a school every day when you leave us your children. The least we can do is ensure we treat the children in our care with this in mind.

Bovington is full of potential and possibility – I feel honoured to be part of this!

Best wishes,

Sara White