

Having joined the Westfield community in the last few weeks, I firstly want to thank everyone for making me so welcome.

New leadership at Westfield School

As explained in the letter from the Chair of Governors a few weeks ago, the former Headteacher, Andy Ireland, has left Westfield School to pursue other career plans. He and the Governing Body felt that it was the right time for new leadership to be brought into the school.

Silverdale Multi-Academy Trust is now providing leadership support in Westfield – in the form of myself as Executive Headteacher, assisted by Ian Gage, a consultant Headteacher. Both Ian and I have worked in a variety of schools previously. Most recently in Sheffield, I have been Headteacher at Silverdale school and Ian is the former Headteacher of High Storrs school.

We are currently advertising for a Head of School at Westfield, who can permanently take on the day to day running of the school from September. If, as planned, Westfield School officially joins Silverdale Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) at this time, I will continue as Executive Head across both Silverdale and Westfield, providing continued support to the new Head of School.

The Ofsted report from the February 2017 inspection

In summary, the Ofsted report says that the school has made progress since the last Ofsted inspection but that this progress has not been fast enough.

As in previous inspections it rates most areas as requiring improvement. However, this time it singles out the 'effectiveness of leadership and management' as being the one area that is inadequate. Because this one area is so important in driving improvement across all the other areas, Ofsted therefore had to rate the whole school as 'inadequate'.

What is happening to address the issues raised in the Ofsted report?

I believe that Westfield School is on the cusp of becoming a brilliant school. The foundations are there but we need to build upon these and take the next important steps to creating the best school possible for our students.

I have only been in school a few weeks but it is obvious to me that the students have a really positive attitude. I have been out in the corridors talking to them and it is clear that they want to learn. It is my job to ensure that they are given that opportunity and that staff feel equipped to provide the best teaching possible.

As an outstanding school, Silverdale has a wealth of experience and skills that we can draw upon to make this happen. We are also the lead school in the Sheffield Teaching School Alliance, which provides training to teaching staff – from trainee teachers and subject leaders, right through to middle and senior leaders. This means we have the expertise to support staff at Westfield so they can develop and play a key role in pushing Westfield forward.

Westfield already has excellent working relationships with its feeder schools and we will be building on these firm foundations to further improve the school.

I am taking time to get to know Westfield and am drawing up a plan for improvement – which I will of course share with everyone soon.

What will joining Silverdale Multi-Academy Trust mean for Westfield?

If, as planned, Westfield School joins Silverdale MAT officially in September, it will formalise the joint working already in place.

It also means that Westfield students will get access to Silverdale 6th form. They will be treated the same as Silverdale students when applying there next year – meaning that, as long as they meet the admissions criteria, they will be given equal priority to Silverdale students. This will be a great boost to the post-16 provision at Westfield and we will do all we can to ensure that students are able to travel easily to the Silverdale site.

Joining Silverdale MAT will also provide development opportunities for staff at both schools, as they get the chance to work with an even wider range of students and colleagues.

It will also provide economies of scale for schools within the MAT – which is increasingly important in these challenging financial times in education.

I want to reassure all parents, carers, students, staff and everyone in the Westfield community that I am firmly committed to and deeply passionate about providing the very best education for our students – and I will update everyone on our plans for future in the near future”.

Any enquiries should be sent to the Headteacher via the school email address:

enquiries@westfield-admin.co.uk ”