

9th February 2024

Dear Parents

Update on change to Senior Leadership Team Structure



Over the last few months, Ms Yates has been talking to Trustees about her future. In her own words, Ms Yates is “closer to the end of my teaching career than the start of it” and there is more that she would like to do to help our school continue to go from strength-to-strength.

Trustees have spent some time reflecting on this, and we have decided it would be appropriate to evolve our leadership structure to ensure that we can both continue on the positive trajectory that we are on while also preparing for the future.

Ms Yates will, therefore, continue to be The Blue Coat’s Headteacher, and will be the one who is ultimately accountable for things like educational outcomes and financial stability. Her role will, however, start to have more focus on building greater connections with universities, employers and educational partners to enhance opportunities for our students.

After a robust internal recruitment, it has been decided that Mrs Erin Bakstad will then step up from Deputy Headteacher to a newly created Co-Headteacher role. In this post, Mrs Bakstad will take on more responsibility for the day-to-day operational running of the school.

This will be an interim arrangement that will be in place for the next two years. During this period, Ms Yates will reduce the amount of time she is working in the run up to her retirement. Mrs Bakstad will also have the opportunity to enhance her experience of leading a school like ours, so that when a recruitment process to appoint our new Headteacher starts she has a fair opportunity to apply for it if she so wishes.

We appreciate that this is not the leadership model we have used in the past, but it is one we have been considering and evaluating for quite some time. We firmly believe that this is not only a sensible and pragmatic response to supporting our staff, but also opens the doors for us to find new ways to create opportunities for our staff and students.

This arrangement will begin in September 2024. However, we will start the preparations needed to move to this new model over the coming months. Once the new model is in place parents and students will probably see very little difference in the day-to-day running of the school. This is very much an evolution of our existing structure, rather than a brand-new approach.

If you have any questions, then please do get in touch – we are always here to help.

Kind regards

Prof. Simone Krüger Bridge
Chair of Trustees

Mr Tony O'Brien
Vice Chair of Trustees



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