

3 March 2021

**To everyone within the STAR MAT Community**

Firstly, I would like to say that over the coming few weeks, we look forward to welcoming back to site our students who have been learning from home. We are all too aware how difficult the ongoing situation has been since the New Year including for our wonderful Trust staff who have been making every possible endeavour to support learning and wellbeing for those on-site and at home. It has been challenging for everyone, but we thank our community for their messages of support as they have helped spur us on in such demanding times, really reinforcing that proud sense of community we have within STAR.

Further to the recent letter sent out to you from Clare Thornton-Eckford, Chair of the Trust Board, I am delighted to be able to continue to serve the community of the STAR Multi-Academy Trust and pledge to cherish the values of the Trust on a daily basis.

It has been a considerably challenging path to tread as Interim CEO since September but despite this we have moved forward in so many ways. Our schools have worked relentlessly to keep our young people, staff and families safe and to develop strategies to allow for pupil wellbeing to be maintained and learning to be progressed as well as we possibly can, given the constraints which have been all too evident.

We are never complacent though and you will know from the detailed school level communications just how exacting our expectations are. We all want the very best for each and every pupil and that is my singular task now appointed to the substantive role of Chief Education Officer for the Trust.

Over the coming weeks and months, we will of course be evolving recovery strategies at school and Trust level and look forward to sharing these with you.

For our Riverside families and staff, it is with an extremely sad heart that in due course I will be stepping away from my long Headship tenure at the school, but do so knowing that we will be able to evolve strong plans to share with you imminently for the short and longer term leadership of Riverside and also of course, that I am not really going very far and will be there at hand to ensure effective 'handover.'

Our Trust prides itself of its new mantra - 'Stronger Together' - we are an open and honest organisation. So, whether you are a parent, student, employee or wider community member, do please feel free to get in contact with me via [ceo@starmat.uk](mailto:ceo@starmat.uk)

Kind regards,  
Ian

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