

17 January 2022

Dear Parents/Carers

As you are aware, Mr. Duff was made the Executive Headteacher (EHT) of the Discovery Educational Trust in February 2020. At that time, it was thought that this role could be split with his Headteacher duties at Larchwood. However, due to the urgency of school improvement and the associated increased workload, the EHT role was, temporarily, made full-time during the 2020/21 academic year, this arrangement ultimately, being extended to include the 2021/22 academic year.

During this period, the Trust has made considerable progress and, for this to continue, the Board has now recognised the need for a full-time Chief Executive Officer (CEO). My fellow Trustees and I are delighted to announce that Mr. Duff will assume this role with immediate effect.

However, this means that Mr. Duff will not be returning to his role as Headteacher at Larchwood. Notwithstanding this, he retains joint accountability and responsibility for Larchwood, alongside Mr. Bowsher, which will include regular visits and engagement with stakeholders to ensure that standards and expectations remain high.

I am sure that you will join me in thanking Mr. Duff for everything he has done for Larchwood. He joined the school in 2012 when it needed strong leadership and direction. Graded Inadequate by Ofsted, his relentless drive in school improvement saw the school rated Outstanding in the next full inspection – a feat that not many schools across England have achieved.

Not only have we seen Larchwood go from strength to strength under his leadership, he also succeeded in making Larchwood a school of choice within the local community, which, as one of his main objectives, I know he is very proud of.

In recruiting Mr. Bowsher as his Deputy in 2016, Mr. Duff not only reinforced the Senior Leadership Team, but also enabled a seamless succession plan, which has benefitted the school greatly. Mr. Bowsher and Mr. Duff have worked together for nearly six years and, during this time, have created a shared vision with the children at the heart of everything they do. This partnership has ensured that the Larchwood motto of 'achievement and enjoyment' has never meant more.

I am, therefore, also delighted to announce that, after advertising across all DET schools, and following an internal interview process, Mr. Bowsher has been appointed the permanent Headteacher of Larchwood Primary with immediate effect. I have no doubt that the school will continue to flourish under his leadership.

Yours faithfully



Mrs Helen Witty
Chair of the Trust Board