

Dear parents/carers,

It is with great pleasure that I write to you, as the new Head Teacher of Aston Hall J&I. It is a role I am both excited and humbled by because I know that the school means so much to so many people. I'm very conscious that I've been to school a few times now during this last week, having had the pleasure of meeting your wonderful children, but with the exception of a few people I have passed in the yard or said hello to on the gate, I am yet to meet you all or introduce myself. Therefore, I wanted to reach out to you all in advance of any further visits to do so. Despite it only being a few weeks ago, it feels much longer since I was appointed as the new head at your child's school from September. Under normal circumstances, COVID restrictions playing a part, I would like to have spent even more time in school, getting to know you all and the children and staff. So, hopefully the remainder of this letter will give you a little insight into me as a person and Head Teacher of the school, prior to formally joining the Aston Hall team.

Firstly, I feel extremely privileged to have been appointed as the new head at your child's school, and I'm determined to continue to take the school forward and build on its existing strengths and positive developments led by the existing senior leadership team and staff over recent years. On a personal note, I'm originally from and grew up on the outskirts of Chesterfield, so not too far away, but have lived locally for the past 10 years with my family consisting of my wife and two young boys. We love nothing more than getting out and about exploring new places and going on our 'adventures', sampling as many new restaurants as we can find. As a household, we share a love of ice hockey and support our local team (Sheffield Steelers) at the arena whenever we can. During my career in education, I've taught across the whole primary phase and have been a school leader, currently Head Teacher, in a range of contrasting settings, from affluent areas of Doncaster, having taught in Warmsworth for several years, to Rotherham in Rawmarsh where there are significant levels of deprivation. I have also worked for the local authority within Rotherham as an Associate Leader for education, supporting a range of trust and maintained schools in leadership and teaching & learning.

I've been at my current school for 9 years, and whilst sad to be leaving, I equally recognise that the time to embrace another school is upon me and Aston Hall made such an impact on me when I visited, that I wanted to be part of it! Being the leader of a school is an immense privilege and my personal belief is that the children are at the heart of everything we do. They are all amazing in their own, individual way and as such, I feel a sense of duty to ensure they are; inspired, motivated and engaged at school and this is how I will approach my role at Aston Hall. I'm a firm believer, and have a passion for ensuring, that any decision made in school focuses on a child first approach, where the children are at the heart of these decisions and that it is for their benefit, thus being a driving force for progress and success on the school's journey of improvement. I am very much looking forward to working with the whole community in moving Aston Hall forward to being the best it can be. I'm thrilled to be joining such a committed group of professionals, and by working together, building stronger community links and enhancing communication, we can ensure the children get the quality education and experiences as young children that they deserve, make strong progress and leave us prepared for life.

I very much look forward to meeting and getting to know you all in September, with hopefully some further reduction in COVID-19 restrictions / protective measures, as I'll often be out on the playground / at the gate each day. In the meantime, if you do need to contact me, please contact the school who will happily pass on details so that I can be in touch.

Many thanks,
Mr S Holmes

