

Introducing Chorus Education Trust

As you will already know, the Regional Schools Commissioner has approved the decision of Hope Valley College's Governing Body for the school to join Chorus Education Trust.

This is due to happen on 1st September 2019, but I wanted to take the opportunity now to introduce the Chorus team to you and say how honoured and excited we are to be working more closely with Hope Valley College. This comes after many years of working together, through shared training, as well as collaboration in the recruitment and development of new teachers.

We are holding an Information Evening where you can meet us and ask questions about what happens next. Your new Principal, Mrs Gaynor Jones, will also be there and is keen to meet everyone. In the meantime, I want to assure you that we are a collaborative Trust, committed to ensuring our schools retain their ethos and values.

There is so much to admire in Hope Valley College. It is very much a school at the heart of the local community, committed to providing the very best opportunities for its students. We want to build on that and ensure you have the support and resources you need to further develop.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Dearden for his work at Hope Valley. He retires this year, after many years of dedicated service, including his recent time as Acting Principal. He and his team have ensured the school has solid foundations as it moves to its next stage of development.

I hope this newsletter explains more about our Trust and how our two communities can come together. We will be sending out more information in the coming weeks. In the meantime, if you have any questions please do contact us via email at:

HVCquestions@chorustrust.org

Andy Heap, Chair of the Chorus Board of Trustees

Information Evening for parents & carers

All parents and carers in the school community are invited to an Information Evening, to meet the new Principal, Mrs Jones, and to hear from Chorus Education Trust.

The event takes place on **Tuesday 2 July** in the main hall at Hope Valley College. **There will be two sessions, one starting at 6.30pm and one at 7.30pm.** Please come along to either.

This is a chance to hear about the next stage in the school's development and to ask any questions you may have.

Introducing the new Principal of Hope Valley College



As previously announced, a new Principal will start at Hope Valley, following the retirement of the Acting Principal, Mr Dearden. Mrs Gaynor Jones will start in September in the new academic year. She is currently the Director of the Sheffield Teaching School Alliance (STSA) which is part of Chorus Education Trust.

Mrs Jones has also been a Deputy Head at Silverdale School and joined the profession after a career in the finance sector. She said:

"I am absolutely delighted to be joining Hope Valley College and am looking forward to being part of

the community. It's a real privilege to be given the opportunity to lead the school.

"I started my teaching career in the Peak District and have worked in partnership with many of the local schools, including Hope Valley, during my time as Director of the STSA.

"I will be visiting the school and local community before I start in September, and look forward to meeting and learning more about everyone. I am committed to ensuring that all voices are heard as we take the next important steps to providing an outstanding education for local students."

Who are Chorus and what are their values?

Chorus Education Trust was founded by Silverdale, an Ofsted-rated 'Outstanding' secondary comprehensive school in the south-west of Sheffield.

Like many other schools, we wanted to ensure that we were **part of a local, collaborative group of schools** - rather than joining one of the national chains with a limited understanding of our area. That's why we decided to create our own Trust.

We believe that **every child in our region deserves the best education possible**. We also believe that there is **outstanding expertise** across our region that can be harnessed to make this happen. Collaboration is a key part of our ethos.

We run the Sheffield Teaching School Alliance (STSA) which allows us to work with over 60 schools in South Yorkshire and North Derbyshire. This spirit of collaboration helps ensure that **we are not limited by being part of a Trust**. For instance, through STSA we are running a literacy project across 14 primary and 9 secondary schools locally. It also means we have

access to a wide range of both new and more experienced teachers.

Our ethos is '**Outstanding Achievement for All**'. This means ensuring that every student has the chance to reach their potential. We do this through **excellent teaching and learning, a broad and balanced curriculum**, and by running an efficient organisation that has a secure financial footing.

We want our students to have the very best life chances, whatever their background. We pride ourselves on our **inclusive ethos**, believing that you can be both aspirational **and** inclusive.

Over the past few years our Trust has grown to include Westfield, a secondary comprehensive school in the south-east of Sheffield. They too were looking to join us, before an Ofsted visit meant that they had to join a Trust. We have worked hard with the staff, students, families and the local community to bring about changes to benefit the school. We are keen to work in a similar, collaborative way to achieve the very best for the Hope Valley College community.

How will staff and students benefit from being part of Chorus?

Being part of a Trust provides lots of opportunities that aren't available as a stand-alone school. These include:

- ◆ Priority access to the best new teachers, via our Teaching School.
- ◆ The ability to provide courses in subjects that might not usually be viable due to low student uptake, eg. arts and creative subjects.
- ◆ Access to teachers who are subject specialists and can help support other teachers and share subject resources.
- ◆ The potential to run more trips and activities for students across the schools, including sporting activities, debating competitions and, as is already happening, a joint choir.
- ◆ Increased staff CPD opportunities, including working with colleagues across the Trust, eg. the joint INSET training in September.
- ◆ Access to grants and funding that are only available to Multi-Academy Trusts.
- ◆ Priority access for students to Silverdale Sixth form - consistently in the top 10% nationally for student progress and performance.



Hope Valley College students will have priority access to Silverdale Sixth Form, one of the highest achieving in the country.

- ◆ A new website, and a commitment to improve communications with parents and carers.
- ◆ Improvements to the school building.
- ◆ The chance for schools to share their facilities, eg. outdoor pursuits, performance, and sporting facilities etc.
- ◆ Financial savings, due to bulk purchasing and shared resources across the Trust.