



Northgate High School and Dereham Sixth Form College
Cemetery Road
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NR19 2EU

Unity Education Trust
Crown Road
Dereham
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27th March 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

Director of School Improvement – Leadership of Northgate High School and Dereham Sixth Form College

We write to update you on exciting new developments and partnership arrangements.

School Improvement lies at the heart of all we do and aspire to achieve.

At a school level this is reflected in the objectives set out in our School Improvement and Development Plans. Northgate High School and Dereham Sixth Form College are rated “good” by Ofsted (2017). The 2018 GCSE results (Grade 4 or above in English and Maths) place Northgate in the top 20% of Norfolk schools, while the measures of progress made by students since they joined the school are in the top one-third nationally. At the Sixth Form 81% of students achieved grades A*-C in 2018 and a quarter of those gained A-A* grades. This success has been led by an experienced senior leadership team with a wide range of skills and great depth of knowledge; and delivered by dedicated teachers and associate staff.

For Unity Education Trust the drive for school improvement is central to our Strategic Plan. We take pride in the successes of our schools to date and will always strive to achieve more for the benefit of all our students. UET’s core offer is built around the individual needs of our schools and is achieved by deploying a central team of outstanding practitioners to work with every school to develop and share consistent best practice. The responsibility for delivering the strategy rests with the CEO, Glyn Hambling.

One of the Trust’s objectives has been to appoint a Director of School Improvement: a person with a successful track record who can work with Headteachers/Heads of Schools to develop and disseminate best practice, sharing responsibility for delivery of these key objectives with the CEO. Our aspiration to make such an appointment was included in the Trust’s recent successful application to become an academy sponsor and was encouraged by the Regional Schools Commissioner and Headteacher Board in their approval of that application.

We are pleased that circumstances are now such that we are able to make the appointment.

- In 2018 UET was approached by the Regional Schools Commissioner and The Engage Trust (which runs the short stay schools for Norfolk) with a request to support the Engage Trust. Specifically, the request was for the half-time secondment of Glyn Hambling as Interim CEO of Engage. UET Trustees agreed to this, initially for a two-term secondment. Following a review by both Trust Boards the secondment has been extended to August 2020. This longer timeframe

presented an opportunity for UET to use the funds from the buyout of Glyn Hambling's time for a school improvement post.

- The link with The Engage Trust has led to discussions about other ways in which the two Trusts might collaborate. Engage themselves identified the need to strengthen their school improvement offer. Therefore, it has been agreed to jointly fund a full-time post to work across both Trusts, to run concurrently with the CEO secondment to August 2020 and to be accountable to the Trust Boards through the CEO.
- The final step has been appointing the right person for the post. We are, therefore, delighted to be able to announce that Mr Andy Mason, Head of Northgate and Dereham Sixth Form College, has agreed to accept the appointment of Director of School Improvement and Executive Headteacher as a secondment. He has the necessary personal and professional skills, as well as the experience and track record needed for this important post.

For the period of the secondment to August 2020, Mr Mason will step aside from his responsibilities as Head of School whilst he undertakes his new role. A major part of that role will be to continue to support the school improvement agenda at Northgate High School and Dereham Sixth Form College as well as the other schools within UET and the Engage Trust.

Northgate's two experienced Deputy Headteachers, Mrs Zoë Galley and Dr Duncan Hone, have both been appointed Heads of School to August 2020. This partnership structure is one that some other Trusts have adopted and it has many advantages including:

- ensuring continuity of leadership and maintaining the momentum of all initiatives;
- benefitting from the experience, perspective and energy of two people;
- encouraging creative and collaborative leadership.

The new leadership structure will begin to operate on our return from the Easter break.

The current senior leadership team at Northgate and Dereham Sixth Form College will remain in place and school life will continue as normal for students. Parents, carers, staff or visitors who need to contact the Head of School may be directed either to Mrs Galley or Dr Hone but the line of communication will then remain with that Head of School who will take ownership and see the matter through to completion.

We are extremely proud of all that has been achieved within our Trust and within Northgate High School and Dereham Sixth Form College and we are excited about how the new leadership and school improvement arrangements will be a driving force in continuing to develop the best educational opportunities for the students within our care.

Yours sincerely



Anna Haggith
Chair of Governors
Northgate High School and
Dereham Sixth Form College



Glyn Hambling
Chief Executive Officer
Unity Education Trust



Alan Jones
Chair of Trustees
Unity Education Trust