

HOLLAND PARK

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Statement from the Governing Body, 27 May 2022

Following nine months of intensive work, Jane Farrell will finish her term as Chair and Trustee of Holland Park School in the next few days and weeks. Jane will hand over the leadership of the Board to Mr Vic Daniels, a Member of the Trust since October 2021 and who was made Vice Chair and Chair-designate at a meeting today.

Jane was appointed in September 2021 to deal with deep, long-standing issues with governance and leadership. These included significant and well-known matters of financial mismanagement set out in a Notice To Improve received by the school from the Government in November 2021, not least excessive executive pay and novel and contentious expenditure. They also included serious allegations against senior leaders concerning matters of safeguarding, bullying and toxicity in workplace culture. As Chair, Jane led Trustees' response to these issues, strengthening governance, taking action over the allegations and setting a course for the school to stability in September, with a new headteacher and an appropriate middle leadership structure. The new middle leadership structure will ensure that pastoral care is adequate and that subject teachers are not overwhelmed by excessive work.

Jane said to the Governors: "When I took on the role as Chair in September 2021, I did so with a commitment of around three months after the former Chair resigned suddenly and the Local Authority approached the DfE for assistance. My term has lasted far longer than planned because of the need to put right the deep-rooted issues we found. Whilst significant cultural change is very challenging, it was important to effect this and I am proud of the work we have done to establish an inclusive future for the school founded in respect for human dignity and community cohesion. We have listened to those whose experience of Holland Park School was not of an 'Outstanding' institution and have made real progress in putting right the inequalities and social exclusion we found there. I feel now it is the right time to make arrangements for the future. Vic is an experienced leader, in education and other fields, and will provide the School and Governing Body with leadership and wise counsel in this new chapter."

Vic Daniels said: 'I am pleased to have been appointed as Vice Chair and Chair-designate of Holland Park School, taking over at the point at which Jane Farrell decides to stand down. As a Member of the Trust since October, and someone who lives within walking distance of the school, I am very aware of its proud history and the challenges it currently faces. I very much look forward to working with the current Board, the new headteacher, his leadership team and all stakeholders, to ensure that Holland Park School is well positioned for a strong start in September'.

Members of the Governing Body expressed their thanks to Jane for her strong leadership and unwavering commitment to inclusive education. Adrian Percival, on behalf of the Governing Body, said: "We are most grateful to Jane, who has spent so many hours and days each week over the last nine months, solely to secure a better future for the students in Holland Park School. When the time comes for her to stand down, the Governing Body and the school, and will owe her a huge debt".

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