

7th September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am delighted to introduce myself as the new Chief Executive Officer of Plymouth CAST. I have worked in the education sector for over 20 years, as a teacher, senior leader, deputy head, headteacher, executive headteacher and most recently as a Multi Academy Trust CEO.

My career experiences have been in both Catholic and Church of England Schools and in rural as well as inner city areas. I attended one of our CAST schools as a child, and whilst there, established the fact that I wanted to become a teacher. Therefore, I am truly excited to have been appointed as your CEO and to be able lead the Trust into its next phase of development, building upon the very good work that has gone before.

My initial focus is to work closely with colleagues to ensure that CAST pupils are well supported as we make a full return to school. I know that I speak for all when I say that we are determined that your children will not be known as 'a lost generation'.

The Trust Gospel values of humility, compassion, kindness, justice, forgiveness, peace and courage will be fundamental in not only continuing to underpin and shape the taught curriculum, enabling pupils to flourish spiritually and academically, but also in providing strength and encouragement, aiding our pupils to become more emotionally resilient in the long term.

A deep commitment to the prospects and well-being of pupils is an unwavering expectation. Every child in our Trust has a right to a good education within a moral framework based on the Gospel. A key priority this year will be enhancing progress and attainment across the Trust, enabling pupils in all our schools to reach their true potential.

My approach to supporting our schools and their leaders will be through access to high quality resources and information, opportunities for collaboration, shared learning, and staff development.

I will be seeking the views of pupils, parents/carers and staff over the forthcoming half term and considering along with the Board, how as a Trust of Catholic schools, we can further develop and enhance your child's educational journey in all its fullness.

I know how hard head teachers, their staff teams and colleagues within the Trust have worked over recent weeks to ensure that our schools are as safe as possible for all concerned as we make a full return to school. As I visit each school over the forthcoming months, it will be fantastic to see the schools fully open, vibrant and the pupils engaged in their learning.

I look forward to getting to know each school community and it's unique context, as well as developing a close working relationship with the Board of Directors and colleagues from the Diocese so that we may further the good work of the Trust. As parents/carers you will be key partners in supporting our aim to provide excellent education for your children; together we will make a positive difference.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Z Batten'.

Zoe Batten
CEO, Plymouth CAST