



Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2016

Dear Parents and Carers,

Happy New Year and welcome back to a new school year! I hope that you and your children have had a really good break over Christmas and are refreshed and ready for a new year.

It has been a real pleasure to meet all the children at the three schools in the Exe Valley Federation this week and to find out about what they enjoy and like about their respective schools. Every one of them has been really welcoming and enthusiastic about what they have been doing. They are all a real credit to you and to their teachers and schools and I am sure that I am going to enjoy working with them enormously.

On Monday all the staff spent the day together at Cheriton Fitzpaine thinking about our vision and values for the next few years and some of the challenges that face schools in the current educational climate of change and uncertainty. We also thought about some of the emerging priorities for the Federation, building on the work I did with Mrs Harris, Mrs Parkes and Mrs Thorne in November on the areas we are going to develop over the next 12 months and also in the longer term. The Non Pupil Day on Monday was hugely positive and exciting and there will be lots of opportunities for parents, carers, governors and children to contribute to the strategic development of the three schools over the coming months as we put together a Five Year Strategic Plan.

Yesterday, Thorverton held a very special Induction Service for me as the new Executive Headteacher of a Church School. It was lovely to see all the children taking part in the service and singing with such enthusiasm. This was a really lovely welcome and commissioning as I start this new role. Newton St Cyres School received a letter from the Minister of State for Schools, Nick Gibb, congratulating the staff and children on the very high standard of performance in last year's SATs tests and I would like to add my thanks to them all for such a great achievement last year. As well as hosting our Vision and Values day on Monday, I have really enjoyed the time that I have spent at Cheriton Fitzpaine this week and have been inspired by the welcome and friendliness of the children. Many thanks too, to Dave Woolacott who has worked so hard over the holidays to get my office ready for me there.

I am planning to divide my time reasonably equally between the three schools in the Exe Valley Federation and hope that it will work out that I am at Thorverton on Monday and Tuesday mornings, Newton St Cyres on Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday all day and then at Cheriton Fitzpaine at the end of the week. No doubt there will be exceptions to this pattern but I am hoping that this is the underlying plan for the way I will spend each week and look forward to meeting as many of you as possible over the coming weeks.

If there are particular matters that you would like to talk to me about, then the best way to contact me is via the office at your child's school and we can work from there to find a time that would work for everyone.

I look forward to working with you in partnership for your child's learning and well-being and getting to know you and your family over the coming months.

With best wishes,

John Jolliffe, Executive Headteacher

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**Executive Headteacher: Mr John Jolliffe**