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Dear Parents,

The Governing Body are acutely aware that as Harpenden Academy moves into the next chapter of its growth we need certainty and consistency for our incredible teaching team and our wonderful children to achieve their best and for parents to retain and build confidence.

### **Welcome to Mrs Lisa Davies**

To make these a reality we have worked tightly with our incoming Multi-Academy Trust (MAT), the Sir John Lawes Academy Trust, ensuring stability and excellence of leadership for the foreseeable future. We are delighted to welcome Mrs Lisa Davies as the Principal of Harpenden Academy from today. She moves to us from being Head of Primary in the all-through Samuel Ryder Academy (SRA) in St Albans, which has been part of our MAT for several years. Mrs Davies brings her immense talents and passion to Harpenden Academy, and she will remain with us to lead our children and community to the same level of success; helping integrate our school into its new school family.

With widely recognised previous leadership experience Mrs Davies was asked to set up the primary section of SRA. She therefore recognises the journey HA has been on and the challenges of promoting a new school to the community. A strong proponent of 'Growth Mindsets' during her time as a teacher and school leader, Mrs Davies also appreciates and shares the values of our school and the excitement that hands on learning creates for children. She has asked that the children and you should know her as "Mrs Davies" to set a defining level of expectation for her leadership. Please use that as you speak to your child tonight about her arrival.

The parents at SRA nominated Mrs Davies for the Teacher of the Year at the recent Herts Advertiser Schools Awards; she won. Samuel Ryder Primary also won Primary School of the Year the previous year. In both nominations, parents paid tribute to Mrs Davies' leadership and vision. Under her leadership SRA Primary is now oversubscribed.

Last month, Ofsted judged SRA to be 'Good' overall with 'Outstanding' for leadership and management, commenting, 'The head teacher and his senior colleagues have provided exceptionally effective leadership to transform a school at risk of failing into a good school in a short period of time.' Please look up the report. Mrs Davies brings the same enthusiasm and drive to Harpenden Academy and will build on the existing strengths of the school, particularly our amazing staff, to ensure that the education our children receive is of the very highest standard, whilst being



irresistibly fun, and that daily life at school Celebrates Children, Learning and Leading.

### **Mrs Lisa Davies' appointment**

This appointment is an internal transfer within a family of schools; one of the great benefits being part of a small local MAT creates. As such it carries absolute certainty in a way no other appointment process could. It demonstrates to you and the wider community the commitment of the MAT to the success of our school. At a future point, when we, and the world, are more steady there will be a full, nationally advertised, appointment process.

We would also like to take the opportunity to thank Yvonne Waring for her hard work and systematic approach over the last term. Her extensive experience of short interim appointments to consolidate schools has proved valuable. Yvonne very much enjoyed sports day and she was pleased to finish her time with us on such a high. The children will be making her farewell cards in the coming days. We wish her every success in her undoubtedly fascinating future career.

We would also like to thank the staff team at SRA for generously supporting our school with their leader. We look forward to much collaboration.

### **Our children**

The children have all met Mrs Davies today. The September structures are all in place and we will take one more week to ensure we have "taken care" to consider every detail and consequence before we share all this with the children and you. The next two weeks will be a process of careful listening and much compassion to end a tumultuous year with the gentleness this school was built to model and firm security in our future.

I know you will warmly welcome Mrs Davies to our school. Please take a minute to share with her the moments and memories you treasure the most so she can build more of them into the months and years ahead. She will be focussed on our children and their teachers but is available and excited to meet you all before and after school in the playground.

Best wishes,

Ruth Martin

Chair of Governors

On behalf of the Board of Governors for Harpenden Academy