

To [name]

I am writing to inform you of developments at Prior Pursglove College which will be of interest to you.

You will be aware that we have been working hard over the last two years to enhance the experience of every student at Prior. We were delighted when Ofsted recognised our achievements, judging the college to be 'Good' across all areas in March 2015.

Following a very successful year, I began to explore arrangements for my retirement with the college's Governing Body. After eleven years at Prior, I will retire from my role as Principal in December 2015.

The work to relentlessly drive further improvements will continue. Over the last two years, part of this work has involved an effective partnership with Stockton Sixth Form College, sharing staff and support services and enabling each college to grow stronger.

Both Prior Pursglove College and Stockton Sixth Form College belong to a sector which has long been recognised as the most successful and highest performing amongst its competitors. Therefore, detailed consideration has been given to enable both colleges to reach the highest standards whilst continuing to make cost savings and, as such, the governing bodies of both colleges have agreed to conduct a consultation around a proposal to merge.

Subject to the outcome of consultation, the intention is that Joanna Bailey, currently Principal at Stockton Sixth Form College, be appointed to the role of Principal of the merged college to oversee the strategic direction of both sites.

Joanna has over 25 years' experience working in sixth form colleges, including almost 10 in college leadership. She has a passion for inspirational teaching and learning and shares the college's vision for providing high quality education which allows students to achieve or exceed their potential. To appoint someone with Joanna's experience would be a huge coup for the college and one which would only serve to benefit students, staff and the wider community in the coming years.

This decision was made prior the government's announcement regarding area-based reviews in July 2015; however we have since engaged with the Sixth Form College and FE Commissioners and the Education Funding Agency, who all advised us to proceed with our plans.

In many ways, the proposal will not impact students' day-to-day routines. They will access the same courses at the same location, just as before. The only change I would expect students to notice is a positive one, in terms of an improved enrichment offer or trips and visits at a lower price.

This forward-thinking approach gives us the opportunity to secure not only local sixth form college provision, but the viability and future prosperity of each college centre for many years to come.

We want to hear your views about this proposal and to this end invite you to a drop-in consultation meeting at Prior Pursglove College on Wednesday 23rd September, 5.00-7.00pm. Please find enclosed a consultation document for your perusal.

Judy Burton,
Principal