



5 May 2020

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Dear Parents/Carers and Brooke Weston students,

I hope you are all well and finding a new 'normal' in these very challenging times. I want to thank you again for the support you have given to the Brooke Weston team over this period. The thank you messages we have received have been greatly appreciated.

I am writing to say goodbye as Principal of Brooke Weston Academy, having led this wonderful school for four years. I never thought that I would be saying goodbye under these circumstances with the Academy closed and the community working from home!

Having said that, it has only emphasized to me that what makes Brooke Weston Academy so special is not the lovely building or amazing resources, but the people who work, study and learn within it. In lockdown, the characteristics that make Brooke such a unique school continue to shine through, the professionalism and care of its staff and the students demonstrating hard work, resilience and good humour.

Leading Brooke Weston Academy has been an absolute pleasure and will be one of the highlight of my career in education. It's rich and innovative history, fantastic culture of academic excellence and impeccable behaviour, the cutting edge educational practice and its exceptional student outcomes make it a world class school. There are only a handful of schools like Brooke Weston and, in my sixteen years working in education, I have never seen another school like Brooke. The opportunity to lead it and shape its direction has been an enormous privilege.

Academic success has always been at the heart of the Academy. The purpose of Brooke Weston Academy has always been to 'open doors' for its student and provide them with a lifetime of opportunities. Part of that mission is academic success and I was delighted this year to see Brooke Weston Academy recognised for being among the best performing non-selective secondary schools and Sixth Forms in the country, receiving six awards for being in the top 10% nationally for attainment and for being in DfE Band 1 for student progress at key stage 4. The school was also recognised for being in the top 10% nationally for student attainment in academic subjects, for being in the top 20% for attainment in applied general subjects and achieving significantly higher than national average progress in both academic and applied general subjects at Key Stage 5. These are remarkable outcomes and testament to the incredible commitment of the staff, students and parents. I have often said that leading Brooke is on the 'shoulders of giants' like its founder Sir Gareth Newman and my predecessor Miss Stringer. I feel incredibly proud that we have built on their amazing success and I hand the leadership baton over with the Academy in an excellent position and ready for the next leap in success.

Brooke Weston Academy is so much more than just academic success. Recently I commissioned a film called 'More than an education' to highlight this. Brooke Weston Academy has a rich and creative side that is sometimes overlooked. I have been so proud of the Performing Arts team and the annual whole school productions, the PE team for their unrivalled success at all sports, the beautiful Art and Design showcases and the endless food tastings I have been asked to do which have added pounds to my waist! This culture of academic excellence and a desire to find the talents in every student help make Brooke exceptional.

I want to thank the whole staff team at Brooke Weston Academy for the amazing work they do every day to ensure your children are safe, thriving and successful. They are a remarkable team, both teaching and support, who care

deeply about the Academy and its community. They have embraced the changes I introduced and I have felt deeply supported by them all. I leave with many fond memories.

I want to thank the Brooke Weston parents and carers who have offered me unwavering support and kindness over my headship. It has been lovely getting to know many of you and sharing with you the successes and talents of your children in the good times and, I hope, supporting you in the more challenging ones. I have really appreciated your messages since it was announced that I was leaving.

Last, but by no means least, I want to say thank you to the students. Being a Principal comes with a few challenges and stresses, but it is rarely the students who add to my grey hairs! I have loved seeing them embrace the changes we have introduced, been grateful for their forgiveness when I have got something wrong and hearing about their dreams, celebrating their successes and listening to their endless laughter has been an absolute pleasure.

I am moving on to be a Senior Education Advisor for the Greenwood Academies Trust, supporting three schools directly in Corby and Nottingham. In addition, I will be working to raise outcomes across all nine of the Trust's secondary schools. I know that many of the lessons I have learnt at Brooke Weston Academy will come with me to this new role. I am handing over Headship to my fantastic Senior Vice Principal Mr Strydom. He has spent his entire career at Brooke and has been critical to the success of the Academy over the last four years. I have complete faith in him and I know that the future of the Academy is in safe hands. He loves Brooke Weston and I have never worked with a more hard working, talented and successful school leader. I wish him the very best of luck as he steps up to lead this wonderful school.

I want to end by thanking you all again for your support over the last four years. I leave with so many lovely memories and I will miss the entire Brooke Weston Academy community. These difficult times will pass and I have no doubt that Brooke will continue to offer an amazing education to its community.

Yours sincerely



Pete Kirkbride
Principal