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Co-Headteachers: Mr Paul Grimwood BA (Hons); NPQH & Mrs Mary Ellen McCarthy MA; Ed.M
Executive Principal: Mrs Mary Ellen McCarthy MA; Ed.M

11th March 2022

Dear Parents & Carers

I write with the excellent news that we have appointed a new Headteacher for Walton Oak.

We advertised shortly before the half term break and received a great deal of interest from school leaders with a range of experience, including current Headteachers.

I am delighted to share that Mrs. Sian McCarthy (no relation!) has been successful in her application to become Walton Oak's next Head. It was an intensive process with strong candidates, and I was grateful for the support of our Chair of Governors, Mr. Keiran Patel.

Mrs. McCarthy began her teaching career here in Walton at Bell Farm, before first moving onto another Surrey school and then taking an Assistant Headship in Hackney. Whilst in Hackney she was invited to become part of an Advisory Team supporting schools in Hackney with behaviour management. Returning to Surrey with her young family in 2012, Mrs. McCarthy became Inclusion Lead and Assistant Headteacher at Saxon where she was instrumental in transforming Saxon's Inclusive practice.

In Sept 2017 Mrs. McCarthy moved to the Deputy Headship at Riverbridge where she has been part of the very strong team under Mr. Grimwood's leadership, which has moved the school from Requires Improvement to Good in June 2019.

Mrs. McCarthy is already a familiar face to many of our staff and children, as she was seconded for 2 days a week to Walton Oak for the Autumn term of Sept 2019, to support with some of the changes to practice needed in the school at that time.

Whilst Mrs. McCarthy's performance at interview was impressive on many levels, what shone through was her commitment to building strong relationships with everyone in the school community, in order to ensure that the children's needs stayed at the heart of all the decisions about provision.

This is great news for Walton Oak and I am confident that Mrs. McCarthy is the right person to build on all the hard work being done this year to strengthen provision in every way.

In due course we will have plans to share about opportunities to meet Mrs. McCarthy and welcome her in person to our wonderful Walton Oak community.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs. Mary Ellen McCarthy
Executive Principal, Lumen Learning Trust