

7th September 2018

Dear Families,

Welcome back! I hope you've had a fantastic summer holiday with the opportunity to make some fun memories with your child. We're all looking forward to another successful academic year at The Rise.

Having been the Deputy Head Teacher for the last two years at The Rise, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the Interim Head Teacher of The Rise. I will be taking care of The Rise until at least Easter 2019. It is an honour and a privilege to lead The Rise. It is a special place for children to come to school and it is a special place to work; my mission is to nurture it as it continues to go from strength to strength.

Before joining The Rise full time in June 2016, I taught in locations as varied as Romania, Tanzania, El Salvador and Croydon – less exotic! I am in love with learning and have held a variety of positions over the years from Head of Department, Assistant Head Teacher and Deputy Head that have allowed me to really focus on the questions of: 'How can we help children to learn better? And make it an enjoyable experience?'

My core values align with those of The Rise. I believe in being kind, compassionate and humane. I believe in mutual respect. I believe in the power of being positive! And perhaps most fundamentally, I believe in investing in people – pupils and staff – so they can reach their potential. I want all of The Rise community to share my thirst to learn and develop.

In terms of autism, I have become a massive advocate for our children and their abilities. Furthermore, I want them to understand themselves and be empowered so they can advocate for themselves in adult life: what adaptations do they need in order to be successful? They are valuable and add value and therefore, how can those around them support them?

We will continue to work incredibly hard with your children to help them gain their 'golden tickets' (qualifications) and their 'toolkit' (their social, emotional and professional skills) to be successful in life beyond school. We are driven by the desire to see your child to have choices and opportunities.

On that note, we are delighted to share that our first cohort of three Year 11 pupils did brilliantly in their exams last summer. They have achieved between 5 and 9 qualifications each, with highlights including two of the pupils achieving C and above in both their English and Maths GCSEs and one pupil achieving an A in GCSE English. We are incredibly proud of all the year 11s, their hard work and resilience has led to some fantastic first KS4 results for The Rise. All three pupils are accessing further education courses in partnership with West Thames College.



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As always, the partnership of school and family is so vitally important. Together, we can do so much for your child and their future.

Thank you for your continued support,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Helen Ralston". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small flourish at the end.

Helen Ralston
Interim Head Teacher