

5<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

### **Leadership at Newstead Wood School**

As we begin the new year, we are writing to inform you that Mr Blount has taken the decision to stand down from his position as Headteacher.

Mr Blount has been discussing the next phase of his career with us for some time and, after careful thought, he has decided to take a career break after 11 continuous years in leadership positions across the school. He has stepped down now knowing that the school is in very capable hands. Under his leaderships the school has successfully maintained and developed further its excellent reputation as one of the country's leading single sex state schools. But, after much consideration, he has decided that now is an appropriate time to focus on other areas of his life before continuing his career in Headship.

We appreciate that this news, coming out of the blue at the very beginning of term, will be a surprise to everyone at the school but we want to reassure you that Mr Blount is well and that the timing of his departure is something that we felt able to accommodate due to the strong structure in place across the school. We know that everyone across the school will join us in wanting to thank Mr Blount for his years of dedicated service and wish him every success in the future.

In due course we will begin an extensive recruitment exercise to appoint a suitable successor to Mr Blount and we know that we will attract a range of outstanding candidates. In the meantime, however, we are extremely pleased to announce that, for the next year, the school will be headed by Mr Paul Norman. Mr Norman is an extremely experienced leader who has worked in senior roles across three of United Learning's independent schools as well as at the City of London Freemen's School.

Currently Deputy Head at our Ashford School, Mr Norman knows this area extremely well and understands the expectations of parents and the reputation that Newstead Wood enjoys as an exceptional school. Mr Norman will take up post on 5<sup>th</sup> January and very much looks forward to meeting students and parents over the course of his first few weeks in post.

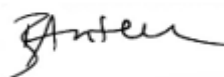
As an existing senior leader in our Group, Mr Norman is fully engaged with our approach to schools and is, we believe, an excellent fit with the aspirations and expectations of Newstead Wood.

May we wish you a very happy and successful new year.

Yours sincerely



**Sir Jon Coles**  
**Chief Executive**



**Ben Antell**  
**Director of Secondary Academies**