

Our Ref: JAH/MM

2nd March 2026

Parents and Carers
Saddleworth School

Dear Parents and Carers

I wrote to you last week to introduce the 2 executive headteachers, Mr Heyes and Mr Higgins, who will be working with Saddleworth School for this academic year to ensure that every young person has the best possible provision which enables them to achieve and flourish, in line with our trust values of Ambition, Excellence and Community. We want the best for everyone, and the best from everyone.

I'm writing now to introduce Mr Christian who is joining today as the new interim headteacher of Saddleworth School. He is the person whom children, staff and parents will see every day and who will run the school.

About Mr Christian

Mr Christian joined Colne Valley High School as headteacher from School Mirfield Free Grammar School when the school joined the Mirfield multi academy trust (MAT). As headteacher he took Colne Valley from an Ofsted judgement of Requires Improvement to Good.

When the Mirfield trust merged with Great Heights MAT, he became executive principal of both schools.

In 2025 he took up a post supporting 3 schools in a MAT in the Cumbria.

We are very pleased that he has decided to return to his roots in the Pennines and take over the leadership of Saddleworth School on an interim basis, working with the executive heads, pending the appointment of a permanent headteacher for September.

The process of appointing a permanent headteacher takes time because of HR processes relating to notice periods and other aspects of compliance. In addition, The Cranmer Education Trust wants to get the best person for this key role. In the meantime we have a strong and very experienced team at the helm, who are already having a positive impact. Thank you to parents who have fed that back to us and for your encouragement. We all want the best for the young people.

Below I have laid out our priorities for Saddleworth School:

Priorities

1. Standards

For people in any organization to achieve, succeed and flourish, there has to be good order, underpinned by clear expectations and routines, and mutual respect. Strong, positive, and respectful relationships are at the heart of every successful school, and every successful workplace.

You may have heard that some pupils were sent home last week. The reason for this was that they were rude and disrespectful to staff, ignored or refused reasonable requests or instructions, and used offensive language. This is not acceptable in any school, just as it is not acceptable in a workplace. The school's expectations will be followed up with pupils, and their parents, when they return.

The vast majority of pupils fully understand and uphold standards and expectations and expect that others will too.

Our priority is to ensure that these standards and expectations, including particularly respect for and cooperation with all staff, are the bedrock of the school.

2. Year 11

This is an important time for Year 11 pupils who have completed their mock GCSEs and are now receiving feedback, intervention, and support. This is to help pupils get the right intervention at the right time, to help them achieve their best in the summer and progress to the course they have chosen.

3. Transition and Year 7

Letters are going out today to families of children who will be joining us in year 7 in September. We look forward to welcoming them in our transition strategy.

I will keep you informed of developments, and Mr Christian will introduce himself to you shortly.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs J Hollis
CEO
The Cranmer Education Trust