



A Message from the New Interim Managing Director for Children Families and Education



Dear Colleagues

I wanted to write to you personally to introduce myself as the new Interim Managing Director for Children, Families and Education.

My professional background is in social care. I became the Director of Social Services for Bedfordshire County Council in 2004 and subsequently was appointed the Director of Children's Services in 2006. In March 2009, Bedfordshire County Council was abolished under Local Government Re-Organisation and since then I have been working in interim positions. My last role was working for Essex County Council which was in similar circumstances to Kent when I joined. I am pleased to say we delivered rapid improvement within children's services in Essex during my time there and I see no reason why we cannot achieve the same in Kent.

Since joining Kent I have already been very impressed by what I have seen. I am tremendously proud that I have been given the opportunity to lead the Directorate at this challenging time. I have spent my time in Kent so far looking at our strengths and weaknesses, and particularly considering how we can tackle the required improvements in children's services. You will know better than me that Kent has a proud record of delivering some of the best local government services in the country and I intend to continue in that spirit.

I am aware of the excellent reputation of Kent's family of schools and the way in which they work together in a strong spirit of collaboration. Kent has always been recognised for its innovative models of leadership and there is much to be celebrated in our schools. This was clearly demonstrated in the most recent national test results which were a credit to all the hard work.

I have no illusions as to the size of these challenges, but equally I have every confidence that with the calibre of partners, officers, schools and Members in Kent we can achieve these aims. I know that there can often be high expectations surrounding the arrival of a new Managing Director. I'm also aware that realistically, significant improvement cannot be achieved without the full commitment and buy-in of all partners and staff across the service. I have been very heartened by the enthusiasm I have met since my arrival and I know that there is great energy across Kent to improve our services.

Over the next few months, I will be visiting partners and front line workers to see first hand the work that you do. I look forward to meeting as many of you and your colleagues as possible and would be very interested to hear your views about how I can support you. In the meantime, if you have initial ideas or thoughts you wish to share with me, I would be glad to hear from you.

Regards

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