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Headteacher: Mr D Millne BA(hons) PGCE

We are writing to inform you of an exciting new strategic partnership on the Solway Plain. The community secondary schools of Beacon Hill and Solway have always worked closely together to deliver the best opportunities and experiences for our students. Now we are embarking on an initiative to develop this partnership which will ensure improved student experiences and broadened curriculum, and also secure the future for both schools.

The next stage in this developing partnership is to offer students from both schools the chance to choose option subjects at Key Stage 4 taught on either site, which will allow both schools to offer a wider curriculum choice. We are currently working on timetables and transport arrangements that will make this possible.

We have already begun to work more closely together; Key Stage 3 students have begun a five week joint robotic programming project in collaboration with the University of Manchester, students have the opportunity to compete in a weekly 5-a-side football league together, and staff are working closely in terms of resource sharing, assessment moderation and specialist teaching.

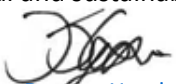
Both schools have a strong, committed teaching and support staff who already go the extra mile for our students and they are positive about working together to the benefit of everyone in the school community. Both schools share a common ethos, and it is a shared strength that we provide excellent pastoral support, personalised learning programmes and individualised curriculum opportunities. This partnership will play to these strengths. In the future the range of curriculum opportunities – both academic and vocational – offered to students of both schools across both sites will not only lead to improved experiences but improved academic outcomes.

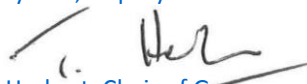
This is not a merger. Both schools will retain their own Department for Education number and separate budgets. Both schools will retain their autonomy and identity; we will be sharing and embedding best practice from both schools in teaching and learning, pastoral provision and extra-curricular opportunities.

Both Governing bodies have fully embraced the concept of an increasingly closer partnership and the project is fully supported by the Local Authority. It fits perfectly within the current framework being used to drive self-improving, system led education in Cumbria.

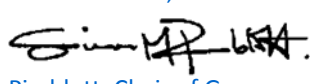
With the current national political agenda of structural change within the educational system, and increasing pressure on school finances, we are confident that this partnership will secure secondary education in both towns and strengthen the position of both schools into the future.

We are intending to play to our strengths in a changing educational landscape. We look forward to interesting times ahead whilst ensuring that our students get the high quality education they need. Parents can be confident each school will continue to serve their child's needs, and that staff and Governors will take both schools forward to a successful and sustainable future.


Danny Gee, Deputy Headteacher


Tim Herbert, Chair of Governors


Judith Schafer, Headteacher


Simon Pimblott, Chair of Governors

