



BANWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Belong Believe Achieve

Headteacher: Mrs C Pocock

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Thursday 6th February 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to share a significant and exciting update regarding a new model of school leadership that we are implementing.

To provide some context, North Somerset schools have seen significant drops in pupil numbers over the past few years which has only added to the significant reductions in education funding that has affected all schools. This has meant that the way many schools are structured and run has had to undergo change, so that they can continue to drive forward with commitment to providing an extraordinary educational environment and improve the overall experience for pupils and staff within budget constraints. This year, our trust (Extend Learning Academies Trust) has provided significant financial support to the current budget, however, this is not a sustainable model for the future.

With this in mind, working with the governing bodies of both Banwell and Locking, ELAN central team and trustees, we have developed a new joint partnership approach which includes the implementation of an Executive Headship across both schools. A joint working party of governors, including both school chairs of governors (Charlotte Martin and Alex Clark) are overseeing the development of this project.

The concept of Executive Headship involves appointing a leader who will strategically oversee the two schools of Banwell and Locking. This model allows for greater collaboration, resource sharing, and strategic planning across both schools, ultimately benefiting our pupils and the communities of both schools. This model is being used increasingly across the country and is proving to be highly effective, both strategically and operationally for schools. We will also continue to run separate and independent governing bodies which will be working with children, staff and our communities to continue to uphold and shape the individuality of each school.

Following a consultation process with Mrs Claire Pocock (Headteacher of Banwell) and Mrs Roxanne Simpson (Headteacher of Locking), Mrs Claire Pocock chose not to apply for the position of Executive Headteacher or take up another headteacher position within the trust. Instead Mrs Claire Pocock has chosen to leave Banwell Primary School and explore other opportunities.



Therefore, Mrs Claire Pocock will leave her position as Headteacher of Banwell at the end of this academic year (31st August 2025)

We are incredibly grateful for her commitment and leadership during the 11 years she will have been at Banwell. This has seen the school thrive and grow in many ways.

As we bid farewell to Mrs Claire Pocock, we are pleased to announce that Mrs Roxanne Simpson will be joining the school as Executive Headteacher, effective 1st September 2025. Mrs Roxanne Simpson is the current Headteacher at Locking Primary School and comes to us with a wealth of experience in education. We are confident that she will bring fresh perspectives and innovative ideas to our school community.

Undoubtedly, this partnership and change will come as a surprise and you may have some worries and concerns that you like to share. To ensure a smooth transition and to help to plan effectively, we will be hosting a Q&A where you will have the opportunity to discuss this further with Mrs Roxanne Simpson and learn more about her vision for the schools and how the new model will work. We encourage you to attend and engage in this important conversation.

The Q&A session will be held on **Thursday 13th February at 3.30pm.**

We are committed to ensuring that this transition is smooth and beneficial for all involved. The Executive Head will continue to work closely with the existing leadership team, staff and governing body at Banwell Primary School to ensure that our school's unique ethos and values are upheld, while embracing this new model. We believe that this change will not only enhance further the quality of education but also bring a stronger sense of community among our schools and villages.

Your support will be invaluable as we embark on this journey together.

We understand that leadership changes can bring about questions and uncertainties. We want to work together to develop this new joint partnership. Please feel free to reach out to me directly at office@extendlearning.org if you have any concerns or would like further information.

Kind regards,

Adam Matthews

Chief Executive Office

Extend Learning Academies Network (ELAN)

