

Ref: LH/MLN

3 October 2019.

Dear Parents / Carers,

I wanted to write to you to keep you updated on the process for appointing a new Headteacher for Holyrood. However, I feel that I also need to comment on the article in the Chard and Ilminster News which was published yesterday.

Unfortunately the writer of this piece decided to use a headline which not only totally misrepresented my views about bullying at Holyrood, but directly misquoted me. This gave the impression either that I didn't care about any concerns you may have over bullying, or that I was completely unaware of any previous issues some of you may have had with the way bullying is dealt with at the school. Nothing could be further from the truth.

A colleague who was present for the interview has verified that the quote used in the headline was untrue and a formal complaint has been made to the newspaper.

There are a large number of angry comments under the article online and I am not surprised. Bullying is an issue at every school and there is no reason why Holyrood should be any different. I am not in a position to comment on what has gone previously. However, I would like to reassure you that I take it extremely seriously and work very hard to deal with it when it happens. As a parent myself I know how distressing it is when your child is unhappy at school and if this is because of the behaviour and actions of other students, it is my job to do whatever I can to sort it out.

I am extremely upset by the headline in the paper, not just because it is not true but also because fundamentally it undermines everything that we are working very hard to achieve at Holyrood. I wholeheartedly believe that Holyrood is a good school and that the vast majority of the students are friendly, kind and hardworking. I am dedicated to working with you towards making it a great school, which I know we can achieve together.

I am very happy to meet any parent or carer who has concerns about any aspect of their child's experience at Holyrood, and have already had the opportunity to meet several of you so far. I would therefore like to extend an invitation to all parents / carers to come and meet me at Holyrood. I will be holding a surgery for parents on **Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October from 5.30pm – 7.30pm**. If you would like to meet me, please telephone the school for a slot and I will be very happy to listen to any concerns or comments you have about your child's experience at Holyrood past or present.

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Address  
Zembard Lane  
Chard, Somerset  
TA20 1JL

Contact  
tel: 01460 260100  
fax: 01460 260149

Email  
sch.517@educ.  
somerset.gov.uk

Web  
www.holyrood  
academy.com

CEO/Acting Headteacher

**Lorraine Heath**  
B.Ed, OBE

Senior Deputy Head

**Sam Davison**  
BA Hons, MA

Deputy Head

**Claire Berry**  
BA Hons

Deputy Head

**Dave MacCormick**  
B.Sc Hons, M.Ed

Business Manager

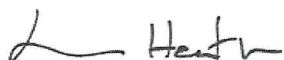
**Tina Coles**  
DSBM



Finally, to go back to the original purpose of this letter, I must inform you that we did not make an appointment last week when we interviewed for the Headteacher role because we are determined to make sure that we find the right person to lead Holyrood into the next stage of its development. We will readvertise later on this term and I will let you know as soon as I have any more information about the next steps.

In the meantime, I will continue in my role as Headteacher at Holyrood. I fully understand the effect that this article may have had, but I wish to reassure you that I am completely invested in the success of your children at Holyrood. I would like to therefore ask for your support so that we can continue to work together to make Holyrood a school where every child thrives.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L Heath'.

**Lorraine Heath,  
Headteacher,  
Holyrood Academy.  
CEO, Uffculme Academy Trust.**