

MR DAN MORROW | PRESS RELEASE

"Revealing the Champion within"

2nd December 2021

From January 2021, Dan Morrow will be arriving as the new CEO for the Dartmoor Multi Academy trust, a family of 17 Primary and Secondary schools within Devon.

Already a highly regarded Education leader with a national reputation, Dan is currently the Trust Leader and CEO for Woodland Academy Trust, an Educational Charity serving several thousand children in the South East of London and employing 350 staff. He is passionate about removing as many challenges as possible for children to believe and achieve following his own experience of being a free school meal pupil who went on to be the first in his family to go to University, reading History at the University of Oxford. Speaking as to why the post attracted him, Dan said: "I have spent a lot of time in Devon previously and have always been stunned not just by the beauty of the landscape but also by the strength and bonds of community. I wanted to find a role that I can really invest in and one where we can make a change together- having such a strong community as a basis really is a privilege.

Dan already has big plans for the schools within the Trust to reach out even further to the communities that they serve. His favoured metaphor for talking about the children in his care involves 'invisible backpacks'. Inside those backpacks are all the negative experiences and difficulties children have faced which need to be unpacked; no child leaves their bag at the door when they come into school under Dan's leadership. Children are at the heart of all that Dan does and he noted, "I was a bit lost as a child myself; nervous, anxious and often not confident to speak out. I may have grown past that but we must always remember that every child is gifted and talented- it's our job as the adults in charge to find what that is for each and every unique learner."

Dan recognises the most valuable and valued resource under his leadership is his staff. Listening to what staff teams needed ensured Dan created a

framework that would allow children to believe and achieve, while also ensuring staff can grow and develop. This supports a climate and culture based on excellence for all. Additionally, he reflects that it can often be that one adult or teacher that can make a difference for a child-“without the belief and support that teachers gave to me throughout my own journey, I wouldn’t be having this conversation with you now.”

Building on the superb support that Dartmoor MAT has given to the community throughout the pandemic, January looks like a truly exciting time for the direction of our schools and for the future of our children. Under Dan’s leadership, the Trust is confident 2021 will be a much better year for us all.
