

PRESS RELEASE - For immediate release

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10 WEEKS INTO A THREE-YEAR JOURNEY TO OUTSTANDING

An assurance of excellence from the Executive Principal

Ten weeks into his role as **Executive Principal** of **The White Rose Academies Trust**, **Andrew Whitaker** has established key partnerships with **outstanding schools** to accelerate the Trust's **Journey to Outstanding** within **three years**.

"We are an Academy Trust based in the heart of Leeds. We're also based in some of the most vibrant and diverse parts of the region; a truth which very much drew me to this role. Since the commencement of my role in September, I have established the clear vision that we will be an outstanding Academy Trust within the next three years."

Part of this journey involves forging a **new partnership** with **Cockburn Multi-Academy Trust** to **share good practice** and **elevate standards and expectations**. Cockburn's own five-year development plan has delivered outstanding outcomes and is based on thorough evaluation and review, which includes regular observations of teachers and surveys of staff, students and parents.

David Gurney, Headteacher of **Cockburn School** said: "The Cockburn Multi-Academy Trust is delighted that Cockburn School will be working in partnership with White Rose Academies Trust. We share the same core moral purpose to tackle disadvantage and raise standards, allowing children to be successful. We look forward to sharing our practice and experiences that have led to a proven track record of school improvement."

Reflecting on a transformative term, **Andrew Whitaker** adds: "A particular highlight has been a visit from Vicky Beer, Regional Schools Commissioner for Lancashire and West Yorkshire. Vicky made two very significant points; she first and foremost identified how inspirational and resilient our student communities are across the Trust, whilst highlighting how exciting our plans are in establishing our Journey to Outstanding - providing her with great reassurance for our ambitious future. At the White Rose Academies Trust we are passionate professionals with high expectations. We exist to further the futures of our students, staff and local community. The young people of Leeds demand the very highest standards of excellence in teaching and that is what we will continue to deliver, every day."

ENDS

NOTES TO THE EDITOR

Vicky Beer is the **Regional Schools Commissioner** for Lancashire and West Yorkshire and is responsible for making decisions about academies and free schools.

Regional schools commissioners (RSCs) act on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education and are accountable to the National Schools Commissioner.

Each RSC is supported by a headteacher board (HTB). HTBs are made up of experienced academy headteachers and other sector leaders who advise and challenge RSCs on the decisions they make.

The White Rose Academies Trust is a local trust dedicated to raising the ambitions and aspirations of young people. It is currently comprised of three academies which occupy sites in the centre, east and west of the city. The Trust is sponsored by **Leeds City College**, one of the largest further education providers in the country which encompasses **Leeds College of Music** within its organisation. Through the College's expertise and national and international networks, our Academies now offer highly desirable employability prospects within education and beyond.

The White Rose Academies Trust is the only truly local Leeds partnership of schools that share the same ethos and that have pathways into Further Education through a special relationship with Leeds City College. The Trust shares a mission with the college to ensure that all students attending the academies have very well-developed employability skills. All WRAT Academies also work in conjunction with local businesses in formal relationships which commit employers to supporting young people to understand and prepare for the demands of the world of work.

The Executive Principal of White Rose Academies Trust is **Andrew Whitaker**. Andrew joined White Rose Academies Trust as Executive Principal on 1st September 2016, with a personal determination that all White Rose Academies will become outstanding providers of education to the communities that they serve.

Andrew's recent work includes leading the transformation of Todmorden High School. For more details visit: <https://www.theparliamentaryreview.co.uk/editions/pdfs/TPR2016-Education-Secondary-North.pdf>

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