



## JOINT STATEMENT FROM KIRK HALLAM COMMUNITY ACADEMY AND NOVA EDUCATION TRUST

Dear Parents and Carers,

The last six months have been a very challenging time for the Kirk Hallam Academy community, so it is with great pleasure that we are finally able to welcome back all our students for the start of a new term.

This new term also sees Mr Belshaw starting his role as Head of School. Mr Belshaw has an outstanding track record of school improvement and has had a long and successful partnership with the Nova Education Trust.

We are pleased to have been able to secure his services at Kirk Hallam and his particular skill set of delivering school improvement made him the perfect fit. He has demonstrated in a range of different settings his ability to transform schools, both as a Head Teacher and as part of wider teams.

As well as being a school leader, Mr Belshaw is also a parent and, as such, he understands the need and importance of developing a culture that allows children to feel safe, successful and happy.

In his last two roles for the Nova Education Trust, Mr Belshaw's experience and knowledge developing, embedding and maintaining the highest school standards has resulted in both schools being rated in the top ten of most-improved schools in the country. The circumstances in those schools were every bit as challenging as those that we face at Kirk Hallam.

His determination to secure the very best possible future life chances for our students, coupled with a wealth of experience in school improvement, can give the whole community confidence that they will soon have a school to be proud of.

Whilst this approach to school improvement is not a 'quick fix', everyone will see and feel significant positive changes fairly quickly. We will be asking everyone in the school community to join us on this journey. Leaders, staff and students all have to raise their standards and expectations so that the lottery of education provision is addressed, and every child gets the very best chance in life.

To support this change, Mr Belshaw and his team have worked tirelessly to prepare the school for full re-opening and the COVID-19 safety measures that have been put in place are extensive. Our priority has been to keep students and staff as safe as possible, whilst offering as broad a curriculum as we can within the restrictions.

Mr Belshaw has also worked with support staff in the school to undertake an extensive refurbishment of the school, ensuring all our classrooms are clean and pleasant teaching spaces.

This commitment to the learning environment for our students has also been reflected in the introduction of clear expectations around uniform, behaviour and standards of work. These aspects of school life will be critical in securing strong and sustainable improvements at Kirk Hallam, and we ask that you support Mr Belshaw, the Local Governing Body and the Nova Education trust on this journey.

Mr Belshaw has our wholehearted support and approval for the ambition he has set for himself, the staff, parents and, most importantly, the students. In fact, we would accept nothing less moving forward.

**Dave Hooker**  
Executive Head Teacher  
Vice CEO, Nova Education Trust

**Mel Lawson**  
Chair Local Governing Body