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**Principal: Sabrina Hobbs**

# Severndale Specialist Academy



Everyone valued. Everyone included. Everyone learning.

13<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

We are proud to share the news that Gareth Smith, Department Lead for The Semi-formal curriculum department, has been awarded an MBE for his services to Children and Young People during the Covid-19 pandemic.

I am sure that you will share in our congratulations to Gareth! This is a huge achievement and we are so proud that one of our own team members has been recognised for the work that we did during the pandemic and what we continue to do in different ways. It was a fantastic team effort, which lead and influenced the specialist online lessons of Oak Academy on a national scale.

Gareth supported the leadership of Oak National Academy to shape and develop the specialist provision of their virtual online school, and lead on our weekly contributions with the support of a large number of our staff. The lessons and resources were always of the highest quality and ended up consistently being the most viewed with over 22,000 views captured half way through the summer term.

Severndale planned, resourced, directed, filmed and produced 45 lessons in total, in a period of 9 weeks. This was work done to support children and young people with complex learning difficulties across the country, which was over and above our universal support to our own pupils and families, involving 2 Zoom sessions/lessons a day, making work and resource packs to send home, and actively adding to the Severndale YouTube channel, throughout the whole lockdown period.

I am very proud of what we do and our brilliant staff who make it all happen, to help shape a more inclusive future and raise a positive profile for children and young people with learning difficulties.

In the week leading up to half term, we will arrange for departments to understand and celebrate this fantastic award. We will keep you informed of our plans for this.

Best wishes

**Sabrina Hobbs**  
**Principal**