

For immediate release. With two images.

Dorset specialist school welcomes new Headteacher

Portfield School's new Headteacher told how she will be driving academic attainment at the specialist autism school.

Portfield School is operated by the leading charity Autism Unlimited and supports autistic students from the ages of 4 to 19 across three sites – the main Portfield Site in Parley and two Sixth Form sites in Christchurch.

Gina Wagland joins Portfield School from an independent school for children with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs in Cornwall.

The highly-experienced educator and trained counsellor said: "I am extremely excited to be leading this unique school.

"Portfield School has an excellent track-record in positively supporting autistic students. There is huge commitment to the school from the charity as a whole and the community. Staff are really passionate about getting it right for the students and the children are happy and proud to be here.

"There is so much expertise here and so many therapies available to the students, from art and music to dance. It's an absolute joy to be part of that.

"My priorities moving forward will be to further drive academic success.

"I also plan to empower people more to use their knowledge and wealth of skills for the better of the school."

She continued: "On a personal note, one of my two grown-up children was diagnosed with autism six months ago and this has only deepened my personal mission to support the success of autistic people in all ways possible."

Siún Cranny, CEO of Autism Unlimited said: "We are delighted to welcome Gina to head up our wonderful school. She is surrounded by a talented and welcoming senior team who are excited to work with Gina and the experience she brings.

"We have a busy and exciting year of development ahead for 2023 and Gina will have lots of opportunity to shape the future of our school. I look forward to working in partnership with her."

Ends.

Information for Editors:

Autism Unlimited exists to support and empower autistic children, adults and their families by partnering with them to find successful solutions through bespoke education, independent living skills and career guidance.

Autism Unlimited employs nearly 400 people across the South of England.

www.autism-unlimited.org

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