



Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership
www.midsomernortonschoolspartnership.com

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Dear Parents and Carers

The Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership is already one of the most successful Trusts nationally and is already relatively large with 28 schools. However, for some time we have been keen to expand the Trust to include more specialist and alternative provision. This is because we recognise the needs of children over the last 5 to 10 years have changed. Increasingly, there are more pupils with complex special education needs in mainstream schools, as well as new challenges relating to anxiety and mental health. The demands of this are significant on schools. Therefore, we are trying to ensure that we develop our own in-house provision to support pupils and staff, as well as ensuring those that do not have a special educational need are not forgotten.

We have already appointed our own Trust specialist service providers – Speech and Language Therapists, Behaviour Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Education Psychologists, etc. These colleagues work for the Trust and have improved access for children and schools to specialist help. However, we still feel there is more that can be done and to that end, we have been working with some special and AP schools in the Bristol and Wiltshire areas to determine if a closer relationship between MNSP and these schools would be advantageous.

I am pleased therefore to announce, that 4 new schools will be joining MNSP in September 2023 (subject to DFE approval). These are Knowle DGE Special School, Soundwell Special School, Notton House Special School and St Matthias Alternative Provision. We are hopeful too, that the Alternative Provision at Rush Hill in BANES, will also become part of MNSP from September. In addition, I have submitted a bid to the DFE for a brand new free school for Alternative Provision, to help better meet the needs of children in BANES through outreach and placements. We hope to hear if we have been successful with the bid later this academic year.

Going forward, when these 4 new schools become part of MNSP, we aim to set up a hub of special and AP schools which will include Critchill Special School already part of MNSP. As a unit of schools, I expect there to be strong collaboration, sharing of provision and a group of experts who can support our mainstream schools as well.

I hope that by developing this Special and AP hub, we will be able to better support all children across our schools. It is a very exciting venture and I hope everyone will see the potential benefits of these schools joining the Trust.

Assuming all goes well with land transfers, financial alignment and the TUPE process, I am hopeful we can complete the merger process in the next 4 months. If you have any questions or views on this expansion, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Alun Williams
CEO

