



Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership

www.midsomernortonschoolspartnership.com

Executive Headteacher/CEO: Alun Williams

Registered Address: Norton Hill Primary School, Silver Street, Midsomer Norton, BA3 2UD

Company No: 7365778

15th December 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to you at the end of another successful term. Whilst there have been significant challenges once again, I am very pleased with the progress of children in our schools and the improvements we have seen. Congratulations to St Mary's Primary School in Timsbury who were judged 'Good' in all areas in their Church School inspection (SIAMS). The church inspections now resemble Ofsted in many ways and therefore serve as a good indicator of the status of the school. Hayesfield Girls's School also had some good news this term, achieving the prestigious Character Award status which recognises excellence in provision for personal development of children. St Mark's Secondary School in Bath also had a very positive Church School Inspection - the result of which will be communicated to all parents after Christmas.

We have continued to work in schools to improve the curriculum planning and also the quality of teaching and learning. All schools have been visited by Trust improvement personnel and received support to provide better education for children. Governor training has continued along with professional development of staff and central office teams have been working hard to provide meals, improve facilities and ensure good financial management. Nearly 11,000 Christmas dinners have been prepared and served this week despite staff shortages. It would have been easy to cancel Christmas lunch, with all the challenges that Covid presents to us, but our resolve to try and make schools as 'normal' as possible has once again seen us through. Thank you to all catering teams and staff volunteers who have helped bring some Christmas cheer to the final week of term.

As a Trust we are subject to a great deal of external auditing. We also have to produce annual financial returns and statutory accounts. The Midsomer Norton Schools' Partnership is now a very large group of schools with a combined income in excess of £65 million. We educate 12,000 or so children from the ages of 2-19 and have over 2000 employees. Nevertheless, I personally spend as much time as possible in our schools – Covid permitting and I am looking forward to visiting all of them again in the New Year. Those that I have been able to visit this year have been deeply impressive. Not only because they are resolving issues related to Covid-19, but also because of the consistently high standards I see in the learning and provision. This is the result of strong leadership and good quality staff on the ground, all of whom work tirelessly for the good of children. My great concern going forward for all schools nationally and in the Trust, is the recruitment of good quality staff and governor volunteers. I am sure many of you in other sectors have the same problem. **If you are interested in working in schools, there are a range of different roles which you can undertake. You can also now train as an apprentice teacher. Please do contact me directly or, your local MNSP school if you are interested in a career or volunteering as a governor with us.**

We were expecting Preston Academy in Yeovil to join the Trust in January, but this has been delayed slightly and is now due to take place in February. Nevertheless, we are continuing to work with Preston as though they are already part of the Midsomer Norton Schools' Partnership. I know they will bring some great qualities to the Trust and will help begin developing the Yeovil Hub of Schools.





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In other news, Sophie Addison the current Headteacher of Critchill School has now been promoted to an Executive Headteacher role with the responsibility of our two Resource Bases. Resource Base provision is designed to bridge the gap between special and mainstream schools and we currently have two Resource Bases attached to secondary schools in the partnership.

Emma Yates Deputy CEO, will begin to work more widely across the Trust following some impressive work in the Bath Hub and Philip White will therefore assume full control of Hayesfield Girls' School from January as Headteacher. Emma will still continue to support Hayesfield as Executive Headteacher until Easter and also have oversight of a few new schools - St Dunstan's, Glastonbury and Buckler's Mead Academy in Yeovil – in addition to the Bath Hub schools.

I suspect that after Christmas, we may see some additional restrictions in place in schools to try and reduce Covid transmission. If this is the case, then I will work with the Headteachers over the Christmas period to plan any changes required and will write to you before the start of the next term. I hope this won't be necessary, but if so, I will try to give you and your children plenty of warning.

I have already received confirmation that the next round of booster vaccinations for children is being planned and I hope the roll out of these will be smooth for all school children. Again, I will notify you of details relating to this Government initiative when I know further details.

Free school meal vouchers are again available over the Christmas period and families should receive notification of this entitlement in due course from your child's school.

I do hope that you can all enjoy a happy Christmas with family and friends. I hope too, that 2022 will bring positivity and an end to the wide-ranging impact of Covid-19.

Merry Christmas

Alun Williams

CEO

