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Dear Parents and Carers

I am delighted to announce that our secondary schools have again scored very highly in the league tables for GCSE and A level results nationally and in the South West. In fact, we are the highest performing South West-based Multi-Academy Trust for GCSE and A levels. **On average, all of our Year 11 pupils across the 12 secondary schools in the Trust achieved ¼ of a grade higher in every examination they sat compared to the national average.** To put that in perspective, Year 11 pupils achieved well-above national average progress last year. We have been in this position as a Trust for a number of years and I am so pleased the hard work of pupils, staff and parents/carers has been rewarded with excellent results. **At A level, we were ranked 16th in the country as a Trust - a fantastic achievement again for the Trust schools and the pupils.**

We have been very busy over the last few months across the Trust as we prepare pupils for national tests and examinations across primary, special, AP and secondary schools. Outcomes look very positive again this year, with pupils and staff working really hard to achieve well. Thank you to all those parents and carers who support at home by testing their child or children on maths and reading knowledge in the primaries and subjects being studied in secondaries and special or AP. Doing as well as you can at the end of Key Stage tests really does matter, so the more revision and support pupils have, the better they will do. **Please contact your child's school if you need any guidance about supporting them outside of school time with preparation for tests and examinations.** My experience of secondary school children – both as a Headteacher and as a parent, means I know only too well how the *'wool can be pulled over the eyes'* of parents and carers. How many times have I heard the comment – 'I've done my homework'. Whilst this was technically true with my own children – to say the homework looked a bit rushed at times, would be an understatement. If your child is preparing for their GCSEs or A Levels, if you can, ask to see the homework completed. **If you think it looks rushed, short in content or a bit scrappy – your judgement is likely to be spot on!**

I would like to publicly congratulate High Littleton Primary School on achieving 'Outstanding' across all areas once again in their recent Ofsted inspection. The school was first graded Outstanding in 2014 and has retained that judgment in 2025, which is an incredible achievement. The Headteacher, Gareth Griffith, is rightly proud of the children and staff. Mr Griffith deserves a mention here too, as he is likely to be fairly unique across the education sector, having secured successive 'Outstanding' judgments as Headteacher. His leadership has ensured children in the village of High Littleton and beyond, have received an excellent quality of education for over a decade. The Trust has had a very positive run of inspections with 90% of the last 20 or so judgments of the key areas in schools being 'Outstanding' – this includes Norton Hill Secondary, St Mary's Primary, Critchill Special School and now High Littleton.

In my last letter to you, I mentioned the introduction across all Trust schools of a new Management Information System (MIS). Essentially, an MIS is the database that holds all data about children, staff, parents/carers, estates, contracts and so on. **We are moving from a system called SIMS to a system called Arbor.** The transition has gone well with 6 primary schools now using the new database. The remaining 13 primary and first schools have also recently transferred and secondaries, special and AP schools will move across at the end of March. There will be an Arbor Parent App which should make finding out information about your child's/children's schooling easier. In addition, some schools will also be moving away from

Parent Pay at the beginning of the next academic year and using the Arbor payment system. St John's Primary School will be trialling the new Parent App in the first instance and we will then be writing to parents and carers about changes and how to access the Arbor database in the Summer Term. We hope to have the whole Trust move to Arbor largely completed by September.

Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership is now classed as a very large Multi-Academy Trust. We will soon be 36 schools and are set to grow again over the coming 12 months. It is likely we will have over 40 schools by this time next year. However, we remain true to the values that were the foundation of the Trust. Our energies are focused on ensuring that all children can attend a 'good' or better school. So far, we are one of the very few Trusts that have never dropped an Ofsted grade in any school inspection – a record we have held since the beginning of the Trust in 2011. We also continue to see outcomes across our varied group of schools being well above national rates. Whilst budgets are tight, we are in a strong financial position as a Trust, which has been achieved through good financial management and realising the benefits of economies of scale – collective buying for example. The most impressive aspect of the Trust is the collaboration and partnership I see between schools – staff are always willing to help other schools to ensure all of our children can thrive. We will of course work together, as we now move into a different and more challenging national and international era, to ensure that this family spirit continues to prevail.

I have been delighted to see our schools compete with one another in various events held this academic year. From the 'Poetry Slam' and 'Speak Out' competitions in primary schools, to sports and cooking in our secondary and special/AP schools. The most recent event was the MNSP Master Chef competition. This competition begins in schools and finalists then meet at Writhlington Secondary to work with nationally recognised chefs as part of the final. Congratulations to Elliot from St Dunstan's (Glastonbury) who was crowned the winner, with Alfie from Beechen Cliff securing second place and a Writhlington School competitor earning a well-deserved third place. The winners received some fantastic prizes, including the opportunity for work experience at top food venues and restaurant vouchers. Every participant was also given a gift bag in recognition of their achievements in reaching the final stage of the competition.

As a final, but important point, we will be saying a fond farewell and many thanks to Miss Emma Wilkes (Headteacher at Oakfield Middle School in Frome). Miss Wilkes has led Oakfield School for 10 years and created an environment where all children can flourish. She will be missed a great deal and leaves the school with a strong reputation for inclusion and supporting all children to do well and be prepared for senior school. We wish her all the very best and know she will be keeping a watchful eye on developments at the school and in the wider education system in Frome.

Thank you as always for your support. I know it is impossible for schools to be perfect, but there is no doubt that staff are working exceptionally hard across the Trust schools to do their best for your children.

Best regards



Alun Williams
CEO