



December 2023

Dear Parents and Carers

I thought I would write to you with some further news from the Trust. I have again been delighted by the many successes of schools across the Trust since September, particularly with regards to Ofsted inspections. I have summarised these below:

- Beechen Cliff School now graded Ofsted 'Good', up from 'Inadequate'
- Writhlington School now graded Ofsted 'Good', up from 'Requires Improvement'
- Peasedown St John Primary now graded Ofsted 'Good', up from 'Inadequate'
- Clutton school recognised as Ofsted 'Good' for the third successive time
- Notton House residential provision graded Ofsted 'Good' for the fifth consecutive time
- Leigh-On-Mendip recognised as Ofsted 'Good' for the new junior provision (years 4, 5 and 6), the new nursery and overall as a school.

All fantastic achievements and evidence of the incredible hard work of staff and pupils in the schools, with support from the Trust.

I was also delighted to see Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership again ranked as one of the top performing Trusts nationally for GCSE progress. We were sixth in the country on this measure and first in the South West (as a South West only Trust). In addition, our Trust was ranked third nationally for our progress in what are considered, the more academic subjects (the EBAC suite of subjects).

At primary level, the Trust schools performed at 10% above national rates in almost every measure in the national performance tables and I was particularly pleased that 87% of our children passed the Year 1 phonics screening test – well above national rates.

Our disadvantaged pupils also scored very highly, with 2023 GCSE outcomes for these children being amongst the best in the region and more widely across the country. SEND pupils also made strong progress with GCSE scores well above national comparisons. The same is seen in our primary schools too, with SEND pupils making very strong progress in their reading in particular.

Our new Special and Alternative Provision schools have had an excellent first two terms. These schools are particularly challenging and I would like to thank publically, the staff that really go above and beyond in these settings to support some of the most complex children in our communities. They help tremendously to ensure children who may not suit mainstream schooling, have positive experiences and good life chances. The attendance of pupils in these schools is often a great indicator of their success. I am delighted to report that attendance in all provisions is in line with, or above national rates. St Matthias Alternative Provision in particular, has seen a very steep rise in attendance figures. For many parents, reading about these schools might not seem that important, but their support for our mainstreams schools and the expertise they bring, will help all schools to continue improving. They also give all MAT schools rapid access to key SEND services, as well as important outreach work.

The Trust Central Team and other support colleagues, have provided significant support to schools this term. There are over 1,500 support staff now employed across the Trust and these colleagues help ensure schools run smoothly every day. Finance teams keep the Trust and schools financially secure and compliant with auditing requirements, catering teams keep children and staff fed (with over 10,000 meals a day), site teams keep 35 sites safe and well-maintained and many other support colleagues work in a learning capacity with children who are finding learning in school, or life more generally, a challenge. Their impact is often forgotten and I felt that it was important to recognise the tremendous input they all have, which contributes to the very significant successes we enjoy as a group of schools.

Many of these support staff colleagues are helping to ensure significant developments in school buildings take place in a timely manner and provide good value for money. This year we have over 250 projects across the Trust to develop facilities, on top of day-to-day maintenance. Some of the larger projects include:

- A £1million extension and refurb to the Norton Hill Secondary Technology Block.
- New toilet blocks to extend provision for Beechen Cliff School.
- Redecoration of the entire school at Peasedown Primary, following a £3.1 development which saw windows replaced, a new ground source heat pump, proper insulation installed and new lighting.
- A new classroom for Critchill Special School in Frome.
- New Resource Base provision for children at St Mark's in Bath.
- New Resource Base provision for Speech and Language at Westfield Primary.
- New toilet blocks at St Dunstan's in Glastonbury.
- Improved roofing at Hayesfield School.
- New Library at Buckler's Mead in Yeovil.
- New boilers being installed at 7 schools across the Trust.

Finally, the Trust is set to grow by approximately 2,300 children and 3 schools, when Frome College, Oakfield Middle School and Trinity First School join us sometime in the next 6-8 months. This growth is incredibly exciting, as Frome is very close to other schools already in the MAT - in fact, the nearest neighbours to those in Midsomer Norton and Radstock. These new schools will help us further develop our collaborative approach to ensure that children do well in all of our schools. We are also in discussion with another secondary school a little further away, about potentially being part of MNSP, as well as some primary schools in Yeovil. These additions always bring something to the partnership and opportunities for staff and children.

I know this term has been again a very busy one. Thank you to all parents and carers for your continued support and I hope you have a lovely Christmas break.

Kind regards



Alun Williams  
CEO

The Trust Website has been refreshed; including new links to school sites, recruitment opportunities and key information.

<https://www.midsomernortonschoolpartnership.com/>