



Midsomer Norton
Schools Partnership



Friday 13th April 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

Following our earlier communication to you, we are now in a position to update you further. Over the last few months Dragonfly Education Trust and Midsomer Norton Schools' Partnership have been in detailed discussions to explore the potential for more formal collaboration in the future, including a possible merger of the two Trusts. The work undertaken has been presented to both Trust Boards in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding which sets out the important principles upon which any collaboration can be based and the benefits that could accrue. Foremost in everyone's mind has been supporting the progress of all children.

After careful consideration, both Trust Boards have agreed the Memorandum of Understanding and support the necessary work that now needs to be undertaken to move to a full legally binding agreement. The benefits that such an agreement would bring are:

- Better cross-school support to accelerate the progress of all children.
- Improved teaching and learning in all schools.
- Provision of a more structured and wider offer to enhance school improvement across schools in our area.
- Enrichment of the curriculum in our sixth forms.
- Improved leadership and management in all schools.
- Better opportunities for staff to work in a larger Multi-Academy Trust.
- A more equitable distribution of pupils across the schools in the area and the possibility of sharing/maximising the resources they have.
- Opportunities for synergies in support areas e.g. catering, sports, computing, finance, etc.

Whilst respecting the distinctiveness of all schools involved, both Trusts recognise that children in our area could benefit greatly from the supportive collaboration proposed by the merger.

Pragmatically, at the point of merger the name of the combined or merged Trust would be MNSP, as this will provide the lowest cost and least administration for both Trusts in forming the new Trust. It has been agreed that the name of the Trust will be reviewed and this will be an early task for the representatives of the two MATs. Importantly, schools will remain with their present names and the distinctiveness of individual schools will be respected.

As before, we do not anticipate that any changes will be made before 1st September 2018. Merging two groups of schools is a significant undertaking and, as you would expect, we intend to ensure that any partnership is well-planned and therefore executed effectively.

During the next four months or so, we see the following actions as being necessary to progress the merger:

- Engaging with necessary stakeholders in the education sector to gain approval for what we are proposing.
- Commencing due diligence, such that neither party is surprised by the outcome of any agreement.
- Continuing to work through several important initiatives so that the benefits above can begin to accrue from 1st September. This will involve a wider group of senior leaders from both Trusts.
- Preparation of legal documents.

We will continue to communicate with you from time to time during the next phase of the process and, as before, we are committed to undertake any statutory consultations and communications with interested stakeholders as the process unfolds.

Yours sincerely,



Damian Knollys
Chief Executive Officer
Dragonfly Education Trust



Alun Williams
Chief Executive Officer
Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership