



Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership

www.midsomernortonschoolspartnership.com

Executive Headteacher/CEO: Alun Williams

Registered Address: Norton Hill School, Charlton Road, Midsomer Norton, BA3 4AD

Company No: 7365778

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Dear Parents/Carers

I thought it would be helpful to write to you with a brief update about the Midsomer Norton Schools' Partnership. As you know, the MNSP is a group of schools in Radstock, Midsomer Norton, the surrounding villages, Glastonbury and Bath, that are working together because they share a similar vision. That vision is about providing excellent education, care and opportunity for children. The Trust started with a hard federation between Norton Hill and Somervale Secondary Schools in 2009. Since then it has grown to 21 schools (listed at the bottom of this correspondence).

The Trust is based on the premise that it is far easier to achieve success if you collaborate in a tight legal framework. This partnership allows for sharing of best practice, sharing of resources and improved economies of scale. The Trust has seen many positive outcomes for schools over the last few years including improvements for children from reception ages right up to A level. We have also supported schools that have failed OFSTED to become 'good'. In addition, we have used our combined finances to support building projects and the development of facilities, for example – new/refurbished Early Years areas in many schools, sports facilities at Somervale and over £1 million spent at St Dunstan's in Glastonbury, to name but a few.

Since Christmas, I have visited all the schools in the Trust and as always, I am deeply impressed by the standard of education children in our Trust are receiving. There are always areas that would benefit from further attention of course and we now have a Central School Improvement team that can work directly with teachers and/or support staff, to ensure this improvement is rapid. Our Central Services Team are also supporting schools with financial planning, improved catering and better site management. These services are particularly welcome in the smaller schools, where budget cuts have forced reductions in staffing of these areas over recent years.

For parents, I know the Trust is not necessarily that important to you and many parents and carers may not even be aware of us. Rightly, parents want their child's school to be the best it can be and I hope you will see and understand the benefit of working together to achieve the best possible group of schools for the communities we serve. On that note, all the primary schools are working on a new curriculum, with improved focussed on the foundation subjects – History, Geography, Art, Science etc. Re-writing new lesson resources for all subjects is a significant task – I estimate over 1000 lessons with resources will be produced and centrally stored. As a Trust, this task is made so much more manageable, as we can share that work across schools. Not only does this ensure the task will be completed in a timely manner, but it is also leading to much improved lessons being produced. Secondary Schools are also working together on improvements to the curriculum, so that Key Stage 3 (Years 7 to 9) are not simply a repeat of years 5 and 6 at primary.

Recent growth of the MNSP

On the 1st April we welcomed Writhlington Secondary School, Mendip Studio School and Peasedown St John Primary into the Trust. This merger between Dragonfly Education Trust and MNSP will bring great opportunity for children and staff. We are already discussing how we can share Post-16 teaching and how we can collaborate on teaching and learning improvements. We have also already begun working to merge the support staff structures to allow for the combined Trust to provide even better services for all schools.





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On the 1st June, we expect Critchill Special School to join the Trust. In partnership with this very successful special school, we hope to begin developing our own in-house special educational needs service to support Trust schools. For example, we want to run our own speech and language service for primary schools and expand our dyslexia expertise. We are also determined to ensure that social enterprise work with older youngsters from Critchill will be developed. We hope to help children who experience difficulties in learning to be employed by the Trust, rather than finishing school without employment.

I have met many parents and carers over the last 7 years firstly as the Headteacher of Somervale and Norton Hill and more recently at public events at other schools in the Trust. When I tell those people I meet what we are seeking to achieve, I am met with overwhelming support for the vision. That vision is shared by our Trustees, many of whom are ex-parents of children from the local schools. I thought as part of this communication you would be interested to know who they are. You can find their names and biographies on the Trust website, under Governance

<http://midsomernortonschoolspartnership.com/governance.htm>

Finally, thank you to all parents for your continued support and I hope everybody can enjoy a restful break over the Easter period.

Kind regards

Alun Williams
CEO

Trust Schools:

Beechen Cliff Secondary
Clutton Primary
Dundry Primary
Farrington Gurney Primary
Hemington Primary
High Littleton Primary
Leigh-on-Mendip First School
Longvernal Primary
Mendip Studio School
Midsomer Norton Primary
Norton Hill Secondary

Peasedown St John Primary
Shoscombe Primary
Somervale Secondary
St Dunstan's Secondary
St John's Primary
St Julian's Primary
Trinity Church School
Welton Primary
Westfield Primary
Writhlington Secondary

