



19 June 2019

Ref: JM/FS

Dear Parents and Guardians

As you will know, our Education Trust has developed so far into a family of four schools.

- First, **Oldbury Wells School** became an academy, with the structure to allow other schools to join the Trust, in July 2015. We did this by establishing the Bridgnorth Area Schools' Trust, with the expertise ready to be able to provide for a family of schools. Since this time, Oldbury Wells has continued to be a very strong school, with a very successful Ofsted in May 2018. It continues to be oversubscribed.
- **Alveley Primary School** joined the Trust in November 2016 as a sponsored school. This meant our Trust worked very closely to begin with, to make sure that the quality of education improved. The school now works much more independently and Mr O'Malley and his team are rightfully proud of their considerable improvements and achievements.
- **St Leonard's CE Primary School** and **Castlefields Primary School** both joined our family in November 2017, both bringing with them considerable expertise, both as high performing schools already when they joined. At this point, we adjusted our Trust set up so that we could include a mix of Church and secular schools in our family.

Behind the scenes, we all work very closely together. Mrs Godden, as Executive Headteacher, works most closely with the Trust in terms of legal and governance matters. Our Headteachers support each other very well and work on joint projects. Our schools' back offices work closely together too, under the coordination of our Director of Finance and Business, Karen Cook. Our joint work has become embedded and all schools are now/still operating at a high standard.

The purpose of my letter to you is to inform you that we have been approached by two schools who wish to join our Trust: Church Stretton School (secondary) and Stokesay Primary School. These two schools are already Shropshire academies and they are already working as a partnership called the South Shropshire Academy Trust. Their Trust is smaller than ours, serving smaller market towns than Bridgnorth. Although they are a smaller Trust, we have found that we have much in common and operate in similar ways. Most importantly, our educational values are the same; both Trusts put the interests of their pupils at the heart of their decision-making.

South Shropshire Academy Trust is currently consulting parents over the proposed change which, if it goes ahead, will technically mean that their Trust will close and they will join our Trust. Mrs Godden will retain her post as Executive Headteacher and our governance and structures will remain the same.

Aside from the obvious financial benefits coming from increased economies of scale, we can see several educational benefits. We are especially looking forward to having a partner school for our secondary, Oldbury Wells. Our primary schools have benefitted enormously from shared leadership work and we look forward to being able to replicate that at secondary level for the benefit of Oldbury Wells in particular. Secondary staff will be able to benefit from shared training and, potentially, from promotion opportunities.

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**Executive Headteacher**

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**Trust Office**

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You may be aware of the national direction of travel for groups of schools. The Department for Education is encouraging smaller Trusts, such as ourselves, to consider merging / clustering together. We are pleased to be able to choose to do this on our own terms with partners of our choice, who share the same educational values as ourselves. We are also pleased to inform you that both the ESFA (the government organisation that funds and oversees the finances of academies) and the Department for Education think that this partnership would be a good idea, in fact they told us last week that they saw us as a 'perfect match'.

Please look out for a letter from Mrs Godden before the end of term, in which she will update you on this process as it proceeds. She also wants to share with you news from our family of schools and the newly drafted Trust Charter. The Charter has been designed by a group of staff, pupils and governors from across our family of schools, and it serves as a set of guiding principles for us to follow / aspire to.

I would welcome your comments about Church Stretton School and Stokesay Primary School joining our Trust. If you would like to do this, please email [judy.mondon@oldburywells.com](mailto:judy.mondon@oldburywells.com) or write to me, care of Frances Sherrington, Clerk to the Trust Board, at the address overleaf.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judy Mondon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Judy Mondon  
Chair of the Board of Trustees  
Bridgnorth Area Schools' Trust