



1<sup>st</sup> December 2016

Dear Parent/Carer

We wrote to you in July about the formation of a new local primary/secondary multi-academy trust. The partnership would be known as the Sherborne Area Schools' Trust (SAST). Each school will keep its name and distinct identity. Our established culture, ethos and values will continue to underpin a high quality of education for all our students, staff and communities.

The schools that have chosen to be involved are Buckland Newton CEVC Primary, St Andrews CEVC Primary (Yetminster), Sherborne Primary, Sherborne Abbey CEVC Primary, Sherborne Learning Centre (Pupil Referral Unit), St Mary's CEVC Primary (Bradford Abbas), The Gryphon School and Thornford CE VA Primary.

Being part of a new multi-academy trust will allow us to further strengthen the links between our schools in order to support continuity of education from 0-19 within our community. The Sherborne Schools' Partnership has worked closely together for many years to provide an excellent education for our young people, and so to collaborate more closely is an exciting prospect, particularly as academies also have greater flexibility in delivering the curriculum. The opportunities include developing our provision, sharing best practice, being more creative in our curriculum, enabling further development of our teachers/staff and taking collective responsibility for all of the children's development and progress. There is also more freedom on how we spend our funding and we would be able to explore opportunities for financial efficiency, determining for ourselves which services and providers we will buy into to provide outstanding provision for our children.

We are writing to update you on the work conducted this term by the Project Steering Board which has representatives from each School. This has included detailed due diligence work in each School, looking at the organisational and operational structure, meeting with other schools and multi-academy trusts to learn lessons and meeting with a Department for Education representative. There remains more to do in finalising our ideas and planning. We now anticipate that detailed proposals will be published and shared in the Spring Term; the SAST would become established in the Summer Term 2017.

We will be consulting fully with all of our stakeholders in the Spring Term of 2017. We appreciate that you may have many questions at this stage. If you have further questions for consideration by the Steering Board please submit these via email to [info@sast.org.uk](mailto:info@sast.org.uk)

This is an exciting and important opportunity for all the schools involved and we would welcome your engagement as we progress on our journey.

Yours sincerely,

*N.A. Ralph*

N A Ralph  
Headteacher

*Janis Hill*

Janis Hill  
Chair of Governors/Chair of Board

