

December 2018

Dear Parent / Carer,

I am writing to update you on developments within the Synergy Trust. As of today the trust has eight partner schools. In the next few months two more schools will officially join the trust, though in reality they have been working as trust members since September.

Our partner schools and their dates of joining are:

- Reepham High School & College (September 2015)
- Reepham Primary School (August 2016)
- Bawdeswell Primary School (February 2017)
- Mattishall Primary School (April 2017)
- Foulsham Primary School (May 2017)
- Astley Primary School (July 2017)
- Corpusty Primary School (January 2018)
- Litcham School (September 2018)
- Fakenham Infant and Nursery School (February 2019?)
- Fakenham Junior School (February 2019?)

You can see from the dates above how quickly the trust has grown. In just over two years we have moved from an organisation with one school to one with ten schools. To be candid, I am somewhat relieved that I am not aware at the moment of any other schools wishing to join!

Importantly, all of our schools are within a 25 minute drive of Reepham. This allows teachers and headteachers from different schools to regularly meet each other to learn from each other and together to improve their teaching.

By early 2019 the trust will have well over 400 employees and over 3,200 pupils. The latter figure is important because it means that in September 2019 the trust will be, (assuming the rules do not change), eligible for an automatic annual capital grant of around £400,000. Once this money arrives we will be using it to improve the facilities for the pupils in our schools.

A number of trust schools are currently submitting capital bids to the DfE. These bids are to improve roofs, boilers or other basic infrastructure. We will update you when we hear the outcome of these bids.

Thinking ahead, please be aware that the trust schools have agreed common training days for the 2019-20 academic year. These are slightly different to the county model, but we hope you feel that these new dates are an improvement for you personally. We plan to use some of these training days for joint staff training. This calendar for 2019-20 should be on the website of your son's / daughter's school.

I would also like to make you aware that I will be retiring on the 31st August 2019. There is nothing sinister in this; I had always intended to work as CEO for no more than two years. The trust board will be advertising for my replacement in January and, hopefully, an appointment will be made by March. Whoever is appointed will be joining a wonderful team at an exciting time.

Finally, I would like to thank you for the support and encouragement you have given your local school and, indirectly, the trust. Above all, I hope that you and your family have a very enjoyable Christmas and I send you my best wishes for the new year.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Farrar