



Autumn term newsletter 2017

Dear parents/carers,

So it's nearly Christmas, which means we're coming to the end of the autumn term and this calendar year. Everyone is in festive mood and there are lots of productions and performances, especially the nativity of course. It has been an extremely busy and successful term for all of our schools. We continue to strive to provide the best for the children in our care by ensuring that our staff have the best professional development opportunities and are provided with everything they need to achieve this.

The first year of our life as a Trust was spent getting the building blocks in place to ensure that our schools can continue to be at least as successful as they have been in the past. This year we are looking to embed the good practice we have put in place but are also looking to continue to improve our policies and practices. The Board has also been very clear that we want to put school improvement at the centre of our developmental work this year.

The core of our work is teaching and learning and all of the schools' Head Teachers meet regularly as a Leadership Group to plan and organise the initiatives to improve our schools. As you know, there continue to be many changes in education and we are also able to discuss these current educational developments and what is the best way to implement them. For example, the assessment lead teachers for the Trust have developed an excellent set of principles that focus on how assessment benefits teachers and the children.

We are developing our educational partnerships and continuing to work closely with the Local Authority on supporting our schools and the Rushcliffe Learning Alliance. We are constantly trying to improve our provision and the staff are developing their expertise at the higher standards in mathematics with Southwell Minster Teaching School. The teachers involved are very enthusiastic about what they are learning and working with groups of schools, allowing us to gain access to new methods of teaching and resources. All the other projects are continuing, for example the e-learning newsletter, sports competitions and the healthy sports program will start in the New Year. Our Speech and Language Therapist continues to be a great success, benefitting many children across the Trust. As well as continuing with the story telling project we are planning a music and singing project and a healthy lifestyles project. The finances of the Trust are very important and, despite reports of difficulties ahead, we continue to get best value services and we have made further bids for building works in our schools. We have also audited all the IT and computer systems in the schools and we are putting in place a plan to upgrade all IT resources so that the teachers and children will have the best for what they need. This will lead to an upgrade over time and ensure the schools will have the best equipment which will be replaced when needed. We have also had our first rigorous financial audit and Trust passed with flying colours.

We are excited that Willow Farm Primary School will be joining Equals Trust in January, they come with a great deal of experience and many ideas. Other schools have expressed an interest in joining but we are committed to ensure that any schools that join the Trust understand and share our ethos so that there are

benefits both to the current Trust schools and to the schools joining us. An important part of the ethos of our Trust is that all our schools retain their local links and unique character and that essence that makes them your school, but that the collaborative actions of the Trust will improve all our schools further.

We continue to put the needs of your children first, to maintain the essence of all things good in our schools and to support improvement across all schools in the Trust. We hope you have a special Christmas with your children and we look forward to seeing you back in the New Year. Don't forget to look at our website www.equalstrust.org which is linked to all our school websites.

Yours faithfully

Peter Foale, Chair, Equals Trust

Phil Palmer Chief Executive Officer, Equals Trust

