

Sidney Stringer Multi Academy Trust

Update February 2017

As we come to the end of our third year as a Trust there is much to reflect on and to be proud of whilst we clearly have a lot still to do.

It is clear that in the current educational climate that not only are Multi Academy Trusts here to stay but also a push to expand the number of Multi Academy Trusts and in particular small trusts who have the capacity to support more schools. We therefore need to consider as a Trust how we move forward as part of this changing educational landscape and take advantage of the opportunities that exist.

When we became a Trust in January 2014 with just 3 schools we did not have access to the large amount of expertise that new trusts setting up currently have. There were very few trusts in existence and we had to create all of our systems and structures from scratch. Our vision was and remains to have outstanding outcomes for all of our students. Three years on we have achieved a great deal in terms of centralised services, systems and opportunities to share good practice. There have been some disappointments in outcomes as you will read below but we now have a well-developed central team and provision that is able to support not only the current schools in the MAT but also realistically needs more schools to make it financially viable. Governors and school leaders have learnt much from both our successes and failures and we are excited about the opportunities ahead to secure standards in our current schools and also expand our Trust to build a wider base of support.

As a Trust we have identified what is important to us in the way that we work together as schools. Our Values include making sure that all of our staff feel valued and supported and prioritising so that those needing the most support have access to it. We are committed to sharing expertise across the Trust and identifying and developing leadership potential to support this as well as the training of future teachers through the SCITT.

One of the strengths of our MAT is the fact that we have Primary, Secondary and Special Schools. We are also part of the Free Schools programme with Sidney Stringer Primary being in its second year of opening and full and successful. We also run the Coventry SCITT with over 30 partners and the Swan Alliance Teaching School Alliance. We are proud of the fact that the lead School Sidney Stringer Academy was in the **TOP 3% of schools nationally** in 2016 for pupil progress and **Top 4% for Progress in Maths** and **Top 5 % for Progress in English**. This means we have shown that we have maintained our high standards whilst at the same time providing support to the other schools in the Trust.



The schools in our Trust

As a trust we educate over 2,500 pupils in primary, secondary and special schools and employ over 500 teaching and support staff.

Sidney Stringer Academy became an Academy in 2010 when it was judged as Good by Ofsted. In 2013 Ofsted judged the school as Outstanding and the school is regularly in the top 5% nationally for pupil progress. In 2014 it became the lead school in the Trust as well as the lead school in the Swan Teaching School Alliance. In 2015 it became the lead for the Coventry SCITT which is now training over 30 teachers. The school is heavily oversubscribed.

Ernesford Grange Academy joined the MAT in January 2014 when Ofsted judged it as having Serious Weaknesses. Results improved in the first year but declined in the following two years. As a result of this the school was judged to be Special Measures in December 2016. However, with the appointment of a new Acting Head and other senior leaders from Sidney Stringer Academy in September 2016 we are confident that we can make the improvements needed as quickly as possible. Governance is more robust with the creation of an IEB (Interim Executive Board) consisting of Directors from the MAT. WE are pleased that standards at Post 16 have improved and Ofsted Judged post 16 provision as good and this is supported by our best ever 'A' level results this summer.

Radford Primary Academy joined in January 2014 following an Ofsted where the school was judged as Special Measures and the departure of the Head Teacher. The school has been on a journey with a complete change of staffing and a new Head Teacher. In October the school had its first Ofsted since converting to an Academy. Inspectors recognised that the school was heading in the right direction and that there have been big improvements but judged the school to be Requires Improvement because although results in 2016 were better than those of the previous summer this needs to be sustained. We are confident that they will continue to improve in 2017 to support our progress towards a good Ofsted judgement.

Riverbank Academy joined the MAT in January 2015 and was originally known as Alice Stevens. As part of the move to a new building co-located with Ernesford Grange it changed to become a broad spectrum school catering for 150 secondary school pupils. The school was judged as Requires Improvement in the last inspection before converting and is due another inspection in 2018. Standards in terms of pupil outcomes for progress and attainment have risen rapidly under the leadership of the new Head Teacher who was appointed from Sidney Stringer and took up post in January 2016.

Sidney Stringer Primary School is part of the Free School programme and opened in 2016. There are currently children in reception and year 1 and it will be another 5 years before it is full. This autumn we moved into our new building and we are full in both year groups. Monitoring reports from the DfE have been very positive and we are due an Ofsted visit in the next academic year.



What else has been achieved this year?

- We had another very positive report from the auditors in 2016 and the financial systems across the MAT are in a strong position and we have plans in place to reduce the budget deficit at Ernesford Grange
- We have created more centralised posts such as Facilities Manager, Head of English across the Trust, Head of Maths across the Trust, Education Psychologist, Careers and Education Welfare posts and a Clerk to the Governors for the MAT
- We have a central ICT network provision, HR service, policy service and finance team.
- We have MAT safeguarding boards, Teaching and Learning, Inclusion, Business Manager and leadership group meetings.
- The SCITT is successfully up and running and helping to attract high quality teachers to our schools
- We have a clear MAT Development plan in place
- There have been some strong appointments to the Governing bodies
- There was a very successful joint MAT training day and this is being followed up with joint CPD pathway sessions that all schools take part in.

Priorities for 2017-18

- Secure standards at Ernesford and work towards the appointment of a permanent Head Teacher.
- Ensure that results at Radford continue to improve.
- Manage the proposal for the nursery at Radford and Hillfields Children's centres to join the schools and to be financially viable as well as ensuring high standards of provision.
- Continue to build capacity at Sidney Stringer Academy to support the school improvement agenda.
- Appointment of a Head of Science across the MAT
- Review staffing at Ernesford Grange to manage the reduced budget and look at how we further consolidate shared support staff services across both schools.
- Move towards a permanent Head Teacher at Sidney Stringer Academy and a CEO of the Trust to support the development of the MAT moving forward.
- Ensure that we appoint high quality governors/directors to vacancies.
- Ensure that Sidney Stringer Primary is on track to get a good judgement from Ofsted.
- Look at how we can expand – how do we market ourselves and how do we build capacity? Ideally we would have more primary schools joining the MAT as well as another strong secondary or another Free School or special school.
- We will need to consider how the governance will work if we expand.
- We must ensure that the Teaching School and the SCITT continue to support our schools



Sidney Stringer Multi Academy Trust

In Summary

It has been a challenging year for the MAT with the disappointment of Ofsted at both Radford and Ernesford Grange but we know we are making a difference and have learnt some tough lessons. The fact that standards have continued to rise and be outstanding at Sidney Stringer means that we are in a position to demonstrate our capacity to support the school to school improvement agenda. The success of our SCITT means that we are developing the next generation of teachers and leaders not only for our MAT but for other schools in the city.

The next year is a crucial one for our MAT and we are confident that with imminent positive Ofsted inspections for Riverbank and Sidney Stringer Primary we will be in a stronger position next year.

Wendy Tomes
Executive Principal, Sidney Stringer Multi Academy Trust
February 2017