



22nd October 2021

Dear Parents,

I thought that I would take this opportunity to write to you as we approach the half term holiday. Despite many Covid-19 related challenges across the trust our schools have continued to ensure that the children have been able to access an exciting, broad and balanced curriculum. It was lovely earlier in the term to see the children adapting to life without bubbles and playing with friends from other year groups. Educational trips have been taking place with greater frequency and a wealth of visitors have provided exciting curriculum-based activities for our children.

Two of our schools, Witheridge Academy and High Bickington Academy have also had their Ofsted Inspections. Witheridge's inspection went extremely well and the feedback on the day from the inspection team highlighted the great work the school has been doing since it was last inspected. The report has now been published by Ofsted. Schools across the country are now being reviewed under Ofsted's new inspection framework which came out in 2019. Inspections are rigorous and it is more challenging now than it has ever been to obtain the grade of good. Inspectors no longer want to spend vast amounts of time discussing the school's internal data but instead want more meetings with school leaders, subject leaders, governors and other staff members. Along with this they carry out 'diving deeper' exercises that involve talking with children, scrutinising the pupil's work, looking at curriculum planning and ensuring safeguarding measures are secure. The inspection at High Bickington Academy finished yesterday and we will have to wait for a few weeks before the report is published. Overall though, we were once again very pleased with the positive feedback received from the inspection team.

Despite the challenges of Covid-19 our schools have continued to work in collaboration with many schools locally, regionally and from around the world. The staff and children of Witheridge Academy have continued to work on curriculum-based activities with Sanjivani International School in Mumbai, India. Our other schools have continued to collaborate with Lourdes Central School in Mangalore, India. Along with this Pilton Bluecoat Academy has resumed the British Council Project work with schools in Europe. It is lovely to think that our children are still collaborating with their peers and learning about their partner countries despite the challenges of the past 18 months.



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COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER 8110847



On September 1st, 2021, the government updated its statutory guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education. As a result of this, we have updated our trust Child

Protection and Safeguarding Policy and our trust Behaviour Policy. As you will know keeping children safe is our number one priority and as we progress through this academic year, we will be continuing to focus on this. The two updated policies are now on each school website for you to view should you choose to do so.

Christmas is approaching fast and I know that our schools have already started planning activities for the children to enjoy. As I write this, I am aware that Covid cases across Devon and the country are once again on the rise. Only time will tell if we must make alternative arrangements after half term.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support through what has been a very busy time. My visits to each of our school settings, time and time again, continue to highlight just how amazing our children and staff are. Have a lovely half term.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mr Thomas'.

Mr Thomas
CEO TEAM Multi-Academy Trust