

12th September 2024

Dear parents/carers

Re: Trust update, September 2024

I am writing to parents and carers to provide an update on a number of key developments for this academic year, 2024-2025. It is my intention to write more regularly with these updates over the course of the year and I trust the information will be useful in terms of keeping abreast of Trust-wide initiatives and activities. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome families that are new to one of our schools and therefore Vanguard Learning Trust. For more information about our Trust, I would encourage parents/carers to visit our website ([click here](#)) and would like to draw attention to our vision and values which were recently reviewed with a few minor changes ([click here](#)).

- **Oak Farm Primary School**

Parents and carers were written to on Friday 6th September 2024 ([click here](#)) informing them that Oak Farm Primary School is progressing to Stage 3 of our associate membership. This means that an application will now be made to the Department for Education and a number of statutory processes will need to be completed including stakeholder consultations. It is hoped that Oak Farm Primary School will join our Trust in 2025, which will expand our primary phase allowing for more school-to-school collaboration as well as sharing best practice.

- **Policy/protocols development**

One of the significant benefits of our Trust is our work on policies and protocols. The approach taken is to have policies, wherever possible, as Part A, which is Trust-wide and based on statutory guidance and specific legislation, and Part B, which is school-based and provides contextual and procedural information in relation to Part A.

- New protocol

The new home-school communication protocol ([click here](#) for Part A) was developed in the summer term based on one used by a Trust school. It provides information about all modes of communication as well as manages expectations about response times and outlines guidance on the expected tone of all communication, both written and oral. I would like to thank parent focus groups across the Trust that provided useful feedback which led to several refinements to the draft protocol.

- Updated policies

The Trust updated Part A of the safeguarding and child protection policy ([click here](#)) and behaviour policy ([click here](#)). These should be read in conjunction with each school's Part B and are now available on schools' websites.

- Attendance policy

A new attendance policy has been developed to set out the Trust's high expectations of attendance and to establish a consistent approach across all schools ([click here](#) for Part A). The overall aim is to improve rates of attendance and tackle causes of absenteeism, as good attendance is linked to better student outcomes and achievement. By providing a clear framework that outlines roles and

responsibilities, as well as information about processes and procedures, schools will be best placed to support both students and families in sustaining regular school attendance.

One of the suggestions during the consultation of the home-school communication protocol was to have executive summaries for parents. These are being worked on currently for the aforementioned policies and protocols and will be the approach in the future. It is envisaged that these will be shared with parents and carers early next month.

- **Student activities**

The Trust has been expanding its provision of Trust-wide activities. A summary of last year's activities has been compiled in a booklet which accompanies this letter. A booklet outlining this year's activities is being finalised and will be sent to the Trust-wide community next week. The second Trust-wide environmental sustainability week is being organised for Monday 11th to Friday 15th November 2024. There will be a number of activities, including some of those offered during the first one. For those parents and carers who are new to our Trust, the special edition of the newsletter, which was produced following our first one, showcases the success of our first week ([click here](#)).

- **10-year anniversary**

Our Trust will be celebrating its 10-year anniversary in 2025; this marks when Vyners and Ryefield established the Trust in February 2015. The main event will be a celebratory evening at the Beck Theatre on Wednesday 26th February 2025; this will include student performances and presentations about the journey of the Trust from two schools in 2015 to five schools by 2021 (and six schools when Oak Farm joins next year).

- **School condition allocation (SCA)**

When the Trust expanded to five schools in September 2021, it became eligible for the school condition allocation ([click here](#) for information), which is an annual fund to manage the schools' estates. The Trust has used the budget to make significant improvements in all schools. A booklet is currently being compiled to show the changes that have been made since April 2022 when the Trust first received the SCA fund.

The next communication to parents/carers will include our student activities booklet for 2024-2025, the aforementioned SCA booklet and specific information about our Trust-wide environmental sustainability week.

Yours sincerely



Dr Martina Lecky
Chief Executive Officer