



Thursday 24th October 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

As we reach the end of the first half term of the school year, I am writing to update you on life and developments at our schools across Central England Academy Trust.

Indeed, there is a lot happening at the moment and it is an exciting time to be part of our growing Trust:

- ✓ **Higham Lane North Academy** is on track to open to year 7 pupils in September 2025 (please visit the school's website to find out more and stay up to date with developments: www.hlina.co.uk)
- ✓ **'Unit 1'** is planned to open as part of **Oak Wood Secondary School** in September 2025, offering a vocational route and accreditation for a number of our post-16 pupils with special educational needs
- ✓ Expansion work at **Oak Wood Primary School** has received planning permission and will take place ready to increase pupil number in September 2026
- ✓ **Higham Lane School** achieved its highest ever results at both GCSE and A-Level in the summer, as well as receiving a record number of applications for sixth form places this September
- ✓ We will be **welcoming a new primary special school** in Birmingham to our Trust later this year, currently planned to be in April 2025
- ✓ We continue to run and manage **Jade School** - a secure hospital provision on behalf of the NHS for young people with significant mental health difficulties. This is one of only a handful of such provisions across England and is an important part of our provision

Our schools continue to work hard to develop and be the best that they can be. Oak Wood Primary School and Oak Wood Secondary School are both building upon the positive Ofsted inspections that they had last academic year; Higham Lane School is expecting an Ofsted inspection this academic year following their highly successful inspection in 2019.

Current school improvement priorities at our Central England Academy Trust schools include:

Oak Wood Primary

- Further development of subject leadership in the curriculum
- Implementing strategies to provide wider opportunities to empower all pupils to actively participate in the school community and ensure that all voices are captured and heard
- Further development of a fully inclusive 'total communication environment' for all pupils

Oak Wood Secondary

- Developing communication links and channels with parents and carers
- Embedding strategies to improve maths and reading skills for all pupils
- Development of outdoor learning areas to meet the changing needs of cohorts
- Further implementation of the school's assessment system, evidencing the impact of pupils' learning across the curriculum

Higham Lane

- Further development of the school's new behaviour policy, with a focus on staff training and the implementation of a 'trauma-informed approach' and emotion coaching strategies
- Enhancement of the school's enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities
- Further development of quality first teaching, including consistent support for disadvantaged learners and those with special educational needs

As Multi-Academy Trust, we work strategically in the background to support and challenge all of our schools to continue to develop and improve. We promote and reinforce our Trust's values, ensure compliance with statutory duties and quality assure provision and the impact of resources used and actions taken.

We do not get involved with the operational running of our schools or day to day issues and concerns. These should be raised directly with schools in line with their complaints policies and procedures. However, it is important that you know who we are and that we are here working with the governors and leadership teams at your children's schools. As such, **we will be holding an informal coffee morning at each of our schools next half term to provide you with the opportunity to meet with key leaders in our Trust to discuss what we do, as well as to capture some of your feedback on our schools.**

Dates for the 'Meet the Trust' events (to be held at each school) are:

- ❖ **Oak Wood Primary School: Tuesday 3rd December @ 9.00am**
- ❖ **Oak Wood Secondary School: Wednesday 27th November @ 9.00am**
- ❖ **Higham Lane School: Monday 2nd December @ 9.00am**

I look forward to meeting a number of you over the coming weeks, and wish you and your families a restful and happy half term break.

Yours faithfully



Andrew Dickinson
CEO

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