



17th June 2022

Dear Parents / Carers

Academisation of The Holmesdale School

We are pleased to advise you that we are approaching the final stages of the academisation of The Holmesdale School. The process should be completed on 1st September 2022 when The Holmesdale School will formally become part of Swale Academies Trust (SAT). Although the Academy Order has been in place for some time, the delay with the formal conversion was caused by legalities around the PFI status of the new school buildings.

As you know, the school experienced some severe difficulties a few years ago. SAT started working with the school at the end of 2018. Due to the commitment of the existing staff and the support of the staff that came to us, the school has since stabilised and continues to improve in standards and expectations. SAT has worked very closely with the school and has been able to offer crucial support and capacity to enable Holmesdale's improvement journey. We are also very fortunate to have to have the full support of the Interim Executive Board (governing body) and the staff at the school.

SAT is recognised and respected for its record of school improvement. The Trust currently consists of eight secondary and ten primary schools in Kent and East Sussex. The Trust is very proud of its bespoke approach to school improvement that provides support, challenge and capacity and maintains a clear recognition that all schools are different. The support from the Trust has been wide ranging and includes:

- Advice and guidance from the allocated Executive Headteacher. Mrs Hodges, our current Executive Headteacher, is an experienced ex-Headteacher of The North School and oversees the Sixth Form Provision across the Trust.
- Leadership capacity, including Mr Prebble, Head of School and additional senior leadership support and coaching.
- Formal and informal reviews of the school to ensure that there is a constant focus on improvement and support to achieve the desired standards.
- Subject specialist support and training.
- Network meetings for all leaders enabling them to experience from best practice across the Trust.
- Opportunities to visit other Trust schools.
- Trust events, including leadership conferences and training programmes.
- Student events including peer to peer school reviews, Shakespeare festival and sporting events.

Staff that have come to work at the school are very proud of the achievements they have had the opportunity to be part of, and the school community is looking forward to formally joining with SAT on a permanent basis.



In many respects, very little will change for the school, but it will formalise the very positive relationship. For parents and students, there will be surprisingly little change. At this stage we are not planning to introduce any changes to the school uniform, school name, school hours or school leadership. You may have some of questions for us so we are inviting you to an information session where Mr Prebble and I can talk you through the process and answer any questions that you may have.

The meeting will take place on **Tuesday 5th July between 4pm and 6pm** in the main school hall, so please drop in at a time that suits you. If you cannot make the meeting but have questions, please email them to louise.bates@holmesdale.kent.sch.uk and we will endeavour to get back to you.

We are very much looking forward to the formal joining of The Holmesdale School into Swale Academies Trust and feel confident that the relationship will continue to yield the improvements that it has already supported the school in making.

Yours faithfully

Michael Blanning
Chair of the Interim Executive Board