



Member Primary Schools: Tollerton, Crossdale, Keyworth, Heymann, Burton Joyce, Cropwell Bishop, Willow Farm and Robert Miles Junior School.

Dear parents/carers,

The Equals Trust 'Let's Sing!' mass choir event at the Albert Hall on Wednesday heralds the arrival of Easter and the end of the Spring term. This music event follows the very popular 'Storytelling' project that every school participated in for the second year running.

Our work as a group of schools has again been extremely positive and productive. To provide the best for the children in our care we need to ensure our staff have the best professional development and are provided with everything they need. To achieve this every school has acknowledged that they have a responsibility towards every school in our Trust. School Improvement is, and continues to be, a focus for our work. The Leadership Group of Head Teachers are developing an audit of good practice that can be called on by each school to support them in improving what they do. Together we will develop an Equals Trust teaching and learning philosophy that will set principles and practical ideas in a 'toolkit' for our schools. The sharing of good practice in teaching and learning is essential for improving the provision for the children in our care. For example, we were able to pool the ideas of all the schools in support of improving reading across the Trust. The schools have worked together with Southwell Minster Teaching School on a 'maths hub' and as well as individual school Improvement plans we have a Trust Improvement Plan that identifies initiatives we can work on together. This is a very positive impact of being a member of Equals Trust.

We work in collaboration with and developing strong partnerships with a number of organisations, school improvement with the LA being one of them. Schools and head teachers in the Trust are working on a pilot for 'Peer Review' with officers from the LA (now the East Midlands School Improvement Service). This involves head teachers reviewing each other's schools with an external inspector to validate their findings. This then leads to planning for improvement and sharing the good practice in our schools. We still work closely with the Rushcliffe Learning Alliance, holding networks and CPD events.

In January the head teachers, executive team and directors worked through an audit of 'The 9 Characteristics of Successful Multi Academy Trusts' in order to assess our current position. It was concluded that we have made significant progress in the last 18 months. Our external consultant who facilitated the meeting commented - *'Equals Trust have achieved many of the characteristics very quickly when compared to other academy trusts, which I believe is down to the excellent Governance structure that includes the headteachers from every school within the Trust. This team has set up a structure that completely aligns with the structure Sir David Carter describes, which I am sure will allow Equals Trust to become a "Leading" trust in the future.'*

The Trust also received a review visit from the Regional Schools Commission which concluded that the Trust was strong and well placed to move forward. A recent financial audit found the Trust to be in a healthy and secure position and as reported in the Guardian, a recent survey into 'Gender Pay Gaps' placed Equals Trust in a very positive light.

After the previous success of our buildings improvement works, we are awaiting our second round of CIF (Condition Improvement Fund) bids for our schools. We hope this will add significant improvement to the buildings of our schools as learning environments. The Trust has been instrumental in providing lap tops for teachers.

The common ethos of all the headteachers and their staff has helped us to continue with a determination to put the needs of your children first, to maintain the essence of all things good in our schools and to support improvement across all schools in the Trust. We hope you have a great Easter break and look forward to seeing you back in the summer term.

Yours faithfully

Peter Foals Chair, Equals Trust

Phil Palmer Chief Executive Officer, Equals Trust

