



April 2021

Dear Headteacher / Alliance Partner

We are writing to you to tell you about the changes taking place with regard to Teaching Schools and the impact that this has on Pickwick Learning Teaching School Alliance.

As you may be aware, the national landscape around Teaching Schools is changing. All current Teaching Schools will lose their designation and will be replaced by fewer, larger Teaching School Hubs (87 nationally, organised around LA areas). This means that Pickwick Learning Teaching School Alliance, like all current Teaching Schools, will no longer receive DfE funding and will cease to exist from August 2021.

The Teaching School Hub for the Swindon and Wiltshire area will be led by Danielle Fisher (DFisher@glenmoorandwinton.org.uk), from Glenmoor and Winton Academy.

Although we will no longer operate as a Teaching School, we remain fully committed to developing people in our profession and supporting schools in helping each other to improve outcomes for children. As a Trust, we have taken the decision to continue the outward-facing work that we have been doing as a Teaching School: training, developing, supporting and connecting classroom practitioners, leaders and schools, in order to continue to work with and support schools in our geographical area next year. 'Pickwick Learning' will be the name of the part of Pickwick Academy Trust that continues to provide services such as school to school support, training and professional development programmes etc. Amy Tapscott has been retained as the Trust's Professional Development Director, and will continue to oversee this work.

We will continue to provide an Initial Teacher Training (ITT) route into teaching. Our school Direct PGCE Primary programme will continue, working in partnership with North Wiltshire SCITT. We already have ten primary trainee teachers ready to begin their course in September 2021 (they will be unaffected by this national change) and we are still recruiting. We will continue to seek partnership schools to host trainees for placements, look for enthusiastic mentors to share their expertise and identify teacher educators to lead central training. We plan to build on our current provision offering high-quality, accredited mentor training and development, which will be free to our ITT mentors; building and improving our ITT curriculum so that the links between the core content and Early Career Frameworks are clear, and seeking to expand our ITT provision more widely.

Our Targeted Leadership Programme will continue, supporting the development of middle and emerging leaders, in both teaching and non-teaching roles in schools. Leaders benefit from time to learn about and reflect on the leadership knowledge, skills and behaviours to equip them in driving improvement projects within their own schools; inspiring and managing those around them effectively, working with other leaders and schools, and drawing on evidence informed practice to ensure sustained improvements.

We will continue to work with newly qualified teachers, and those in their second year of teaching, through the Early Career Framework (ECF). Many of you will be aware that we have been an expansion hub for the early roll-out of the ECF, delivering the Early Career Professional Development Programme for 67 Early Career Teachers (ECTs) and their mentors. Next year, we will be a delivery partner for the Educational Development Trust, running this programme as part of the national roll-out, on behalf of

the new Wiltshire/Swindon-wide Teaching School Hub for our area. Any schools in Wiltshire and Swindon, who want to, are able to join this fully funded programme which will support their new teachers and their mentors. To find out more about the ECF and/or to talk about how we could support your school or Trust in providing it please email ecf@pickwickacademytrust.co.uk.

Our School Improvement Groups (SIGs) will continue and will be open to any schools who wish to continue to work with and engage with us. Inspirational leadership talks will remain a feature of these, free and available to all your leaders in school, in order to share good practice, hear about new initiatives and draw on each other for support.

Our current Specialist Leaders of Education will no longer be recognised by the DfE as part of 'Pickwick Learning Teaching School Alliance'. However, we recognise the breadth and quality of expertise of these exceptional practitioners, and they will be able to transfer without needing to reapply/interview (if they would like to) into 'Pickwick Learning' as 'Pickwick Specialist Leaders'. We will be contacting our existing SLEs to explore whether they would like to continue in this role as part of the new Pickwick Learning model. We will be building on the ways in which our Pickwick Specialist Leaders can develop and enhance their skills in supporting others (e.g. through an accredited Instructional coaching programme), share their expertise (e.g. in an accredited 'delivering high quality CPD' programme) and building a wider network of specialists across the region, in non-teaching roles as well as in the wider curriculum.

School to school support work and opportunities will continue to be available through Pickwick Learning, utilising the expertise we have within our network of schools and wider partnerships.

'Pickwick Learning' will be a training and support network of schools and partners. We will continue to work alongside other partners across the region, to bring expertise, to signpost opportunities, and provide high quality professional development, such as the work we have done this year through the #WiltshireTalks Oracy Project, in partnership with Wiltshire Local Authority. We also want to further develop our links with the curriculum hubs (e.g. Maths, English, Computing) in our area, and hope to play a key role in supporting the core functions of the newly formed Teaching School Hub.

Whilst you are obviously no longer able to be a Teaching School Alliance member, we would love to continue working and connecting with you, and involving you in our work from September 2021. **If you would like to be part of our Pickwick Learning network please let us know by 28 May 2021.** Use the form to 'opt in' (scan the QR code or click this link <https://forms.office.com/r/CJbwy8xiGw> to access the form digitally.

We will also send a PDF which you can print, scan and return if you would prefer) and let us know how you would like to be involved/what you would like to find out more about. Being part of our new Pickwick Learning network is open to schools, Trusts, LAs, Dioceses and other organisations in Wiltshire and Swindon, and beyond.



We hope to hear from you soon. Many thanks for all your support.

With best wishes,

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