



Stowe Valley
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

STOWE VALLEY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST A REVIEW OF 2019/20

In what has been a truly tumultuous year Stowe Valley Multi Academy Trust has gone from strength to strength. The Trust is now responsible for the

education and wellbeing of over 4500 students, 575 staff and includes 3 secondary and 6 primary schools and numerous school buildings.

The foundation of the Trust's success has been a clear vision and determination to achieve goals which facilitate student learning and staff well-being, and which enable both staff and students to be 'the best they can be'. It is this clarity and drive to succeed which saw one of the Trust's small primary schools, Byfield, move from a Requiring Improvement Ofsted Judgement to Good with Outstanding features judgement in January 2020. It was this determination which allowed schools to achieve very positive safeguarding reviews and see improvements in academic outcomes across all secondary schools. These achievements are in addition to an increase in pupil numbers in the vast majority of our schools.

Providing the best all round education for our students by supporting our staff is the business of the Trust. We are determined that our students will become kind, resilient and confident citizens for the future. To this end students are able to take part in some amazing experiences:

- Global virtues projects - Y12/13 trips to Uganda , achieving the Gold Award for Social, Moral and Spiritual education, mental health awareness weeks
- Art, drama and music productions both as performers and audience
- Sports events
- Curriculum enhancing trips from pond dipping to photography in New York

Whilst some of our plans for students were curtailed by the COVID 19 pandemic we are proud of the resilience and commitment shown by our staff and students during this period in particular:

- Fantastic remote learning opportunities from story time via YouTube to video linked lessons, our staff IT skills have never been better across all schools!
- All our schools stayed open for the children of key workers and vulnerable students, with schools also trying to

support their communities with food banks, delivery of lap tops and learning resources

- Headteachers and Safeguarding leaders kept contact with some of our most vulnerable students by making home visits
- Creative community projects such as our growing a sunflower project, growing vegetables, and art from recycling
- Design and Technology staff produced hundreds of visors and face masks for the NHS and Local Charities

It is not always possible to use hard data to measure the impact of what schools can do but the words of individuals who have been at the receiving end of unparalleled kindness is shown by parental/student feedback about our schools at the end of this document.

The wonderful experiences offered to our students is only possible because of our amazing staff. We are driven by a desire to give staff the platform to deliver high-quality memorable learning experiences which students will remember for the rest of their lives. This is never more important than in our current situation.

The work of our student facing staff is enhanced by the infrastructure of support provided by our Central team. Over the last year our finance team have embedded and developed their practice, they have introduced new systems through effective centralisation which has allowed budget savings. These savings have created more resources for education leaders to use in giving every student and staff member the opportunity to be successful every day.

The work of the central team has also facilitated the huge improvements in our school estate. As a result of the hard work and dedication of our estate teams our environment continually reflects our high expectations for students and staff, therefore our school buildings are fit for purpose, clean, and never allowed to fall into disrepair. We are always looking to develop our estate with new buildings; this year a large number of projects have been carried out across the schools in the Trust, ranging from replacement fire alarm systems, security fencing installation to replacement window and door projects.

In addition to the above, we have a number of new buildings such as the £2.5 million Southam College Sports Hall and £420k Southam Primary Nursery.



Within our trust we believe in employing the very best staff and looking after them. The work of the Human Resources and ICT teams has provided staff with the tools to be successful and provide a springboard to carry out their roles whether this is student facing or in other areas. Our investment in ICT over the year runs into many £100,000's. This is money well spent as without the most modern equipment and support we cannot achieve our aspirational goals. The focus of our HR team is to support staff wellbeing and ensure that we retain our 575 staff, but also recruit quickly and effectively when vacancies arise.

We have continued to review the functions required within our central team and the value and impact they can have on our Trust. During the year we appointed a MAT Safeguarding Manager who has led on trust wide consistency in ensuring we are working to provide outstanding practice in keeping our students and staff safe at all times. Internal quality assurance reviews in all schools are being undertaken on a rolling program. This appointment has also facilitated the MAT being able to offer accredited internal and external Safeguarding training which is of huge benefit to our staff and the wider community.

Any organisation is only as good as good the people that work for it. The sudden passing of the Chair of the Trust Board and one of the founders of trust, Brian Wallace was a huge loss. His financial knowledge and passion for the trust has been missed, but our resilience in mitigating this loss is something we will continue to build upon.

Our passion and hard work to go the extra mile at every opportunity has meant that our reputation as a caring, effective and forward-thinking trust has grown with students, staff, parents/carers and the wider education world.

We look forward to this year with renewed optimism. We will be completing due diligence with an additional local primary school which will hopefully join the trust at the end of the year, and we will negotiate our way through the COVID pandemic by being supportive, kind and effective in our actions. We will continue to develop and not wait for this 'crisis' to run its course, the challenges of the current situation will be used as opportunities to innovate our practice so that this cohort of staff and students are given the range memorable experiences as offered in previous years.

We are in position to do this because from the Trust Board downwards there is a spine of professionalism which runs throughout our organisation. A professionalism which means:

- that we are reflective and honest in the appraisal of our practice
- that we are keen to work with others
- that we are driven by a moral purpose to support all our stake holders and give every one of our students the best education possible.



COMMENTS ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

Bishops Itchington - "We cannot praise the school enough for the support, learning and information that has been provided throughout the pandemic. The school is an asset to the village." (*Bishops Itchington parent*)

Byfield Primary - "The teachers and support staff at Byfield have been fabulous and I really feel that what is best for the children has always been at the forefront of any decision made. I am so happy that my children attend Byfield Primary School."

Stockton Primary - "I am so thoroughly impressed with the care and education that has been provided to my child during lockdown and I have no doubt that the safe, positive and loving environment you provide for children will make returning to Stockton a positive experience."

Temple Herdewyke - "I love being at Temple Herdewyke Primary School because all of the teachers are nice and helpful. All of the children are friendly and happy to help if you are lonely. I always have friends at school." (Year 6 student)

Southam Primary - "Thank you for everything you have done for the children over the last few months. It has surely been a roller coaster but you have definitely made it easier."

Rokeby Primary - "The support and understanding from Rokeby, not just of my child but of our family situation has been outstanding. I have never experienced such a nurturing and caring environment. I am sorry that the time was cut short due to COVID because you have made a difference to all of our lives - thank you."

Southam College - "Communication throughout all of this has been brilliant and so appreciated. Love it, done us proud again."

Bilton School - "Awesome - SLT covering students who are in school, clear expectations of what we should be doing. Great leadership."

Kineton School - "As a school, I think you have been absolutely brilliant over the past few months. It reaffirms our decision to send our children to your school. You should all be very proud of yourselves."



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www.stowevalleymat.com

The Stowe Valley MAT Strategic Plan 2019 - 2022 and other related governance documents are also available to view on the Stowe Valley MAT website.