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To All Parents & Carers  
St Benet's MAT Schools

Dear Parents and Carers,

Once again as we approach Christmas, I write to thank you for all that you do to support your child's education at one of our schools.

Since my last Christmas letter, we have welcomed Hickling and Sutton Infant Academies and Catfield, Happisburgh and St Mary's Primary Academies into the St Benet's family - it has been so good to see the many ways in which their staff have worked collaboratively with our other schools in the development of the very best classroom practice.

Last month I was delighted to see over 200 of our staff take part in a training session led by our excellent School Improvement Team. This was the first of three events focusing on developing teaching strategies based on the latest research.

One of the key reasons that the Governing Bodies of these schools decide to become part of a Multi Academy Trust is to enable their staff to feel less isolated, particularly given that most of our schools are in rural areas, and to access support and development opportunities with colleagues practicing in other schools.

The external scrutiny of our schools is important to us in providing a benchmark against other schools across the country. Over the past 12 months, two of our schools have been inspected and I would like to highlight some of the findings:

**OFSTED inspection at Dickleburgh Primary Academy (with Pre-School)**

The inspectors judged the school to be Outstanding in every category, which a very rare achievement for any school. The full report can be found [here](#) and I was delighted to see that reference to our focus on staff development:

*'The school is rightly proud of its ability to support and develop new teachers and future school leaders. Trust leaders, school leaders and school staff are all committed to bringing the school's vision to fruition. Staff feel supported. The school shares its best practice willingly and welcomes support and challenge. The trust's systems of support provide ways for school staff to feel and be part of something bigger.'*



Similar reference was made in the **SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) inspection at Tacolneston Primary Academy**. The full report can be accessed [here](#):

*'Tacolneston Primary is a welcoming, inclusive church school with a clear sense of its vision and what it aspires to bring to its community. Leaders have taken care to ensure the recently refreshed vision suits the context of this particular school. It lies at the heart of leaders' priorities and school development. The school has strong relationships across the federation with Morley Primary and with St Benet's Multi-Academy Trust.'*

During the past fortnight, I have once again prioritised visits to our schools and I am delighted to share with you that what I saw lifted my heart. It has been wonderful to see children singing and performing to packed school halls and churches. Those parents, grandparents and carers who were fortunate enough to have been there too will have shared that feeling and enjoyed the timeless Christmas story.

At the end of this term I shall be stepping down from my role as CEO and moving into semi-retirement. It has been an absolute privilege to lead St Benet's over the past 6 years and I am very grateful for the support and challenge from parents, staff, Headteachers, Governors and Trustees along with my colleagues in the Central Team. Collectively we have created something very special, and I am delighted that the Trust Board have appointed Mr Sam Nixon as my successor. Sam is currently Deputy CEO and is extremely well placed to lead St Benet's into the next chapter; I wish him every success on that journey.

I hope and pray that during the school holiday you can enjoy precious time with your family, and I wish you a very Happy Christmas.

With best wishes,

**Richard Cranmer**  
**Chief Executive Officer**