



St John's CE (A) Primary School
Wheatly Avenue
Trent Vale
Stoke-on-Trent
ST4 6SB
Tel: 01782 238889
Headteacher: Mrs SM Bowyer

24th April 2023

Associate Membership – Orchard Community Trust

Dear parents/ carers,

We want to write to you to update you on our partnerships and future journey to support further school improvement within St. John's.

You may already be aware of the government's agenda for schools to convert and join Multi Academy Trusts (MATs). Currently there are 9 schools in Stoke-on-Trent who still remain outside of the academy system and St. John's is one of those 9 schools. To respond to the diminishing support from the Local Authority and the need to ensure that we have a quality community to support improvements at St John's, we made a decision to actively seek out alternative partnerships that may be available to us. In the summer and autumn term of 2022, senior leaders and governors took time to meet with a number of Multi Academy Trusts to establish a partnership that could support St. John's and also had the facility for St. John's to support others within the partnership.

Following full consultation with our board of governors, which is represented by staff, parents, Local Authority and foundation governors, we are excited to announce that we have made the decision to initially join the Orchard Community Trust as an associate member. This will enable St John's to be part of a committed partnership where we can gain support for our community but also offer support, and share the great work that also takes place at St John's with others.

The Orchard Community Trust (OCT) is a group of Stoke-on-Trent schools who also work with schools in Cheshire and the Humber, so have the balance of working closely together in Stoke but also look outwardly to share best practices in education. You can find the Orchard Community Trust website on the link below and we will also add this to our new website in the near future.

[Orchard Community Multi-Academy Trust \(orchardct.org.uk\)](http://orchardct.org.uk)

We will keep you updated as to the partnership journey and the activities that our pupils, staff, parents and governors will take part in over the coming academic year.

If you do have any questions then please do not hesitate to ask in the meantime.

Yours sincerely

Mrs SM Bowyer

Headteacher

Mrs L Jones

Chair of Governors