



*The*  
**Kingfisher  
School**

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Principal: Kirsteen Craig

21<sup>st</sup> March 2019

Dear Parents/Carers,

## **THE KINGFISHER SCHOOL**

On behalf of Venturers Trust, I am delighted to share with you the exciting news that The Kingfisher School has secured approval from Bristol City Council (BCC) and the Department for Education (DfE) to move forward with a strategic collaboration project that will see our school community join together with another school within the Trust.

Venturers' Academy, located in Withywood alongside Merchants' Academy Primary, is recognised as a centre of expertise and excellence in providing a high-quality education for children with a primary diagnosis of autism. Since its launch in 2016, Venturers' Academy has been a focal point for raising standards across the region for special education needs and disability (SEND) students and was recently awarded an official Autism Accreditation by the National Autistic Society. Working closely with BCC and the DfE to address a shortfall in school places for SEND students, Venturers' Academy will be opening a permanent second site in St Anne's in September 2019, offering places to 36 children, primarily Reception and Key Stage 1.

Venturers' Academy St Anne's will be located in a separate part of The Kingfisher School building and while there will be some appropriate opportunities for students from both schools to work together, the main benefits of the co-location will be access to additional resources and expertise for The Kingfisher School students and staff. For example, all children and staff will have access to a range of wellbeing therapies such as mindfulness sessions and music therapy. Many mainstream schools are beginning to introduce similar sessions with enormous benefits to pupils and staff.

We have seen first-hand the numerous advantages of co-locating with another educational setting, since we have been sharing facilities with the Children's Centre for many years. This is a model that offers enhanced opportunities to the entire school community, with a positive impact on students as well as staff.

With the full support of Venturers Trust, we will continue to build and develop healthy environments in which children can thrive, enabling us to deliver significant academic progress and achievement for all students.

I understand that you may have questions about the expansion and I invite you to attend a parent meeting with myself, Melinda Baker – Chair of Governors for The Kingfisher School, Trystan Williams – Principal of Venturers' Academy and Executive Lead for Venturers Trust, and Gail Bragg – Chair of Trustees for Venturers Trust, on Friday 29th March at 3pm in school.

I hope you will agree that this is an exciting development for The Kingfisher School that will offer new opportunities to our entire school community and beyond.

Yours sincerely,

Kirsteen Craig  
Principal, The Kingfisher School