

15<sup>th</sup> July 2016

Dear Headteachers and Primary School communities

**The Swan School, the new Oxford secondary school, to delay opening to September 2018**

As you will be aware, The River Learning Trust (formerly the Cherwell School Academy Trust) made a successful bid in 2015 to open a new secondary school in the city of Oxford. The Swan School had hoped to open its doors in September 2017. Despite all efforts, the government's Education Funding Agency (EFA), which has the lead responsibility for working with Free School trusts to find a suitable site, has unfortunately not yet been able to secure a site for the new school.

Finding a suitable site for a secondary school with sixth form in the Oxford City area is extremely challenging. The EFA is continuing to work closely with the Trust and Oxfordshire County Council to explore the full range of site options to enable the school to open in September 2018.

We continue to be really excited about the prospect of opening The Swan School, which we are determined will be an excellent school serving the City of Oxford for many many years. We are deeply disappointed that a suitable site has not been secured for the school in time for us to open in 2017, but we are committed to continuing to work with the EFA to find a site solution in time for opening in September 2018.

We have only recently had confirmation that the school will not be able to open in 2017 and we felt it important to inform you and your families before the end of this term as some families will be thinking about choosing secondary schools for their children in the application process for 2017 which starts in September. Oxfordshire County Council have responded to the news by saying, "There are sufficient places within Oxford's school system to accommodate children starting secondary school in September 2017."

The River Learning Trust continues to prepare all other aspects of the school, and will continue to work with the Education Funding Agency to secure a site to enable the school to open in September 2018.

We will continue to keep you informed of progress, which can also be viewed on our website [www.theswanschool.co.uk](http://www.theswanschool.co.uk)

Yours sincerely

Paul James

Chief Executive

**River Learning Trust**