

School is looking forward to merger 'EXCITING TIMES LIE AHEAD' SAYS HEADTEACHER

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FIVE new faces will soon be joining the team at Penhill Primary School as it prepares to become part of the Swindon Academy.

Headteacher Jan Shadick said staff will be hired at the school to help with the merger.

Parents turned out in force to collect their children's free new uniforms on Wednesday after the merger became official on Monday.

Ms Shadick said the merger will bring changes to the curriculum, including a different approach to reading.

"I am absolutely delighted to be working with the staff here," she said.

"I am really excited about it. The first three days have been incredibly positive.

"It could not have gone better."

Penhill Primary School will operate as a stand-alone site but will be part of Swindon Academy.

Other changes will include applying the academy's ways of dealing with child behaviour and tracking academic progress.

Ms Shadick said new staff are being hired to help cater for children with special needs and make sure staff in senior positions have time to concentrate on management.

No staff will lose their jobs.

A major objective for the school is to overcome challenges in the community, she added.

Penhill Primary School's deputy head Vicki Wyatt said: "I am looking forward to the challenge. I am also looking forward to working with Jan, having great achievements and reaching the children's potential."

Eight-year-old Sian Wirdnam, of Penhill, was excited to receive a white polo shirt as part of her new uniform.

Sian said: "I really like the colour."

Pupils also collected academy branded rucksacks and schools bags.

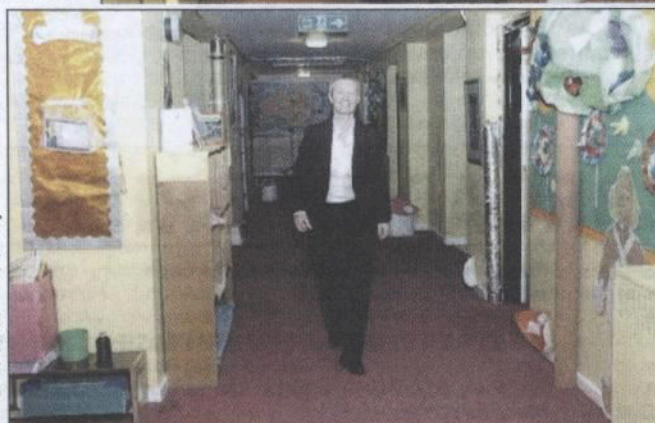
Sian's mother, Jemma, 25, added: "The uniform is definitely different. We will give the merger a chance. There seems to be a good atmosphere here today.

"I am glad Sian is getting back to school after Christmas."

Lessons are due to start today.

Staff found out on the last day of term that the amalgamation would go ahead after waiting for Government approval.

Penhill Primary School joins Pinehurst Infants, Pinehurst Juniors and Headlands Secondary School, which have all combined to form the academy.



DECISION TIME
Above, Swindon Academy headteacher Jan Shadick helps pupil Sian Wirdnam choose her uniform. And left, Ms Shadick at Penhill Primary School

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**Behind the scenes at
the Swindon Academy**
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