



21<sup>st</sup> July 2022

Dear Parents & Carers,

### **Federation and Academisation Update**

The purpose of this letter is to summarise the progress we have made on our outward facing work with other schools and our next steps towards joining a multi-academy trust.

#### **June 2021 - Consultation to convert to an Academy and join Bright Futures Learning Trust (BFLT)**

This time last year, the governing body consulted with the school community on whether to become an academy under the Academies Act 2010. Governors proposed to join BFLT which is a local, small and primary only Trust with which Worplesdon already had links through our work in recent years with the Woking Confederation family of schools. The outcome of the consultation was to convert to an academy and seek to join BFLT.

#### **October 2021 - Consultation to federate with Wood Street Infant School**

At the beginning of the new academic year (2021/2022), the governing bodies at both Wood Street Infant School (WSI) and Worplesdon Primary School (WPS) met to discuss future plans to federate. Following advice received, the academy process was paused before initial application in order to federate first. On 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022, we informed the community that there had been overwhelmingly positive feedback from consultation to federate and therefore governors of both schools resolved to proceed. This will become effective on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2022 with a new federated Governing body.

#### **July 2022 – Returning to academy conversion and joining a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT)**

While federation has been ongoing this year, WPS has also been fortunate to work closely during this time with the schools and executive team and trustees at BFLT. This has been a rewarding time on both sides and has delivered against the WPS outward facing school's agenda; has led to development opportunities for staff; and ultimately has fed back to the quality of teaching and learning afforded to pupils at WPS.

During this time, the Department for Education has also set out policy encouraging schools to join Trusts, and for smaller Trusts to consider merging to form 'stronger' Trusts. In light of this, and following our risk management processes, BFLT and WPS have agreed that there is no option for WPS to join BFLT which necessitates the consideration of alternatives. In this way, WPS can be clear on both what it can contribute to the MAT and what it will receive in return up front.

#### **Looking forward to the next academic year**

So that we can focus on getting the most from the new federation, conducting thorough MAT due diligence, and continue to ensure the best possible outcomes for children at WPS the Governing Body has decided to end the secondments of senior staff to BFLT during the first Term of next academic year (2022/2023). We hope you will all be excited by the prospect of Mrs O'Brien and Mrs Woodruff returning full time to Worplesdon, and Miss Parker retaining her role at Worplesdon. Mrs O'Brien will continue her role as Executive Headteacher across Wood Street Infant School & Worplesdon Primary School.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Bassett-Cross for her continued hard work in leading the school over the course of the year, along with the senior leadership team. Mrs O'Brien has been tasked to clarify the leadership roles across the federation of schools and these will be communicated with the community in the new academic year.



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This has been such an active and productive year and we are delighted to have brought WSI and WPS together so successfully. We have also benefitted significantly from the opportunity to work in partnership with a local MAT, in an authentic manner to share good practice and opportunities for development. It has reconfirmed the benefits of doing so and we look forward to progressing on this path during the next academic year.

Yours sincerely,

David Philpot and Stephen Pitman