



City Community Learning Trust

Woodthorpe Community Primary School
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Headteacher: Dave Smith
Chair of Governors: Grant Walker
www.woodthorpeprimary.co.uk
08/02/2021

Dear Parents and Carers

I write to update you on our exploration of joining a Multi Academy Trust (MAT). Some time has passed since the last update, this is due in no small part to the pandemic and the knock on effect this has had on school life in general. Behind the scenes, the Governing Body has undertaken a huge amount of research into a wide range of different MATs and there have been many hours of discussion and deliberation. The key guiding principle has been to preserve the unique ethos of our school and build a partnership that enriches and further develops our school rather than change it.

The Governors have met with many MATs and have conducted a robust analysis of benefits and opportunities presented by each of them. Following full consideration of all evidence and discussions, the Governors have voted to submit a statement of intent to the Regional Schools Commissioner to join Minerva Learning Trust; a Sheffield based MAT founded by Handsworth Grange Community College. This decision is subject to further due diligence, consultation with key stakeholders and approval from the Regional Schools Commissioner's Headteacher Board.

Crucially, we are proposing to join a MAT which is in its infancy and which comprises solely of Sheffield based schools. Our initial partners in the MAT would be Handsworth Grange Community Sports College, High Storrs School, Stocksbridge High School and Ecclesfield School. It is our hope that other Sheffield Secondary and Primary Schools will join the MAT moving forward. We are excited about the opportunity to be involved in working with a Sheffield based Trust and see huge benefits in working with a variety of schools from which there will be much for us to learn and much for us to share.

Forming a MAT is not a merger of the schools; the schools remain separate entities in their own right. Joining Minerva Learning Trust will allow Woodthorpe to keep its own identity, values and ethos and there will be no change to our School name, logo, admissions policy, uniform or catchment area. The MAT will allow us to work together at a high level to share best practice and make the most efficient use of resources.

We do appreciate that some members of our community may be apprehensive about Woodthorpe joining a Multi Academy Trust. Therefore we are offering parents and carers the opportunity to attend a question and answer session which will be attended by myself, Grant Walker (Chair of Governors), Andrew Rathbone, Laura Brady (both Parent Governors) and Bev Matthews (Chief Executive Officer of Minerva Learning Trust) and which will be held on:

- **24th February at 6.00pm – please note due to the current lockdown restrictions, this meeting will be held via Zoom. If you would like to attend please email school and you will be sent an invite**

If you prefer, you can email or post questions to the School. These will be addressed in the meeting. Please send any email questions to the address above. For postal questions address the envelope to the Headteacher marked 'Multi Academy Trust'. The deadline for submission of any email or postal responses is 23rd February 2021.



If you have any further questions, or require any clarification on any of the above, please contact me at school.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Smith". The letter "D" is stylized with a dot, and the "i" in "Smith" has a dot above it.

Dave Smith – Headteacher

