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3rd October 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

Formal Consultation

Proposal: to convert to academy status and join The Leaf Trust on the target opening date of 1 August 2023

The proposal above is being considered by our governing body and several others overseeing primary schools based in South Gloucestershire. A full list of schools is shown on P23 of the information pack which has been published on www.leaftrust409512253.wordpress.com. The pack explains why we want to form our own multi-academy trust (MAT), our collective vision and guiding principles, school improvement strategy, and benefits for pupils and staff from working together as a family of primary schools overseen by a single governing board with a local governing committee for each school.

To inform governors' decision-making, we would like to invite you to participate in a formal consultation process. You can participate by attending a consultation presentation and Q&A event, and/or completing an online consultation questionnaire (a hardcopy version can be made available upon request at the school office). The data collected will be used to produce a formal consultation outcomes report for governors' consideration before making a governing body decision on the proposal.

If you would like to attend a consultation presentation and Q&A event on Tuesday 18th October 5pm or Wednesday 19th October 9am, please register your interest by either popping into the school office or email: office@stbarnabasprimaryschool.co.uk

Why and What would be the Main Benefits for Pupils and Staff in our School?

The core aim of any collaboration is to improve the provision and outcomes for the children we serve. Children are at the centre of our work and there are many layers of support and care which could be enhanced by working together more effectively and efficiently with other education leaders and professionals.

Our school context means we expect the Trust to create opportunities for our staff to work together more effectively and efficiently with their peers to enable all our children to fulfil their potential. For example by:

- Increasing opportunities for pupils to learn from and be supported by other expert teachers and specialist staff who could innovate, share knowledge, and best practice across our family of schools. For example:

- Our pupils could benefit from the cost savings created through bulk buying power which could be used to purchase resources and specialist support which may not be affordable for us as a single standalone school, e.g. speech and language therapist, sensory play equipment, IT technician support.
- Our pupils could benefit from shared enrichment and extra-curricular activities which become affordable when more children participate and promote inter-trust school friendships, e.g. trips and sports matches. This could be particularly beneficial as our pupils grow older and transfer to the same secondary school.
- Increasing leadership capacity enabling our Headteacher to focus more of their time on overseeing teaching and learning, and less time on other matters such as the maintenance of school buildings and grounds, writing policies. For example:
 - Existing Trust leaders told us how beneficial it was for them to collaborate during the early days of the pandemic when they worked together to understand and develop new ways of working to respond to rapidly changing Government guidance. Their teachers worked together to design and implement new home learning materials in all the MAT's schools whereas staff in standalone schools had to cope on their own.
 - In a Trust, a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for the educational and financial performance of all schools in the Trust. The CEO would hold headteachers to account for performance and delegate to them responsibility for the day-to-day running of their school, as they do now, but with access to more resources to ensure all children are ready to learn, make progress and achieve.
 - The CEO would work with the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and other shared services staff to oversee the delivery of all non-teaching matters in a joined-up way for all schools, e.g., contracts, facilities, HR, cleaning, repairs and maintenance, producing and submitting a single budget return by the Trust's team on behalf of all schools to the Department for Education (instead of one per school to the Local Authority).
- Our staff would have the opportunity to work with and learn from their peers in other schools and take advantage of enhanced career development and progression in a bigger organisation. For example:
 - Our early years, literacy and numeracy subject leaders would have the opportunity to work together with their peers across the Trust to develop shared resources for implementation in all schools, which allow differentiation in the teaching and tasks to suit a range of individual pupil needs.
 - Our aspiring leaders could, if they wanted to, take the opportunity to lead in their specialist area across the Trust, instead of just in just our school to support the development of best practices in all schools,

What would be the Main Disadvantages of joining a MAT?

Greater freedoms would bring additional responsibilities and potential risks for a Trust Board as a charitable company responsible for the performance and fulfilment of statutory duties for a group of schools, rather than just one school. Other MAT leaders have been very willing to talk to us to explain how their Trusts were set up and share learning which has been helpful in informing our thinking and proposals. Trust induction and ongoing professional development training would be provided to our Trust Board before and after opening, so we are confident that by working with specialist advisers and complying with the guidance issued by the Department for Education, these responsibilities and risks could be managed effectively and efficiently.

Would any changes be made to the school because of joining The Leaf Trust?

- The main changes relate to the legal status of the school i.e., from a single local authority maintained school to a group of schools operating as a single legal entity known as a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT).
- The Trust would receive funding directly from the Department for Education and allocate it to its schools.
- All staff wherever they are based, would be employed by the Trust, not the Local Authority or governing body.
- The Trust as a single legal entity would be governed by a single Trust Board responsible for overseeing the performance of all schools and ensuring compliance with its statutory duties. However, committees would be established to work in accordance with the Trust Board's Scheme of Delegation.

In embarking on the exploration of this move, please be assured that the governors do not intend to make any changes on conversion to the name of the school, its unique identity, staffing, pupils' uniform or school day.

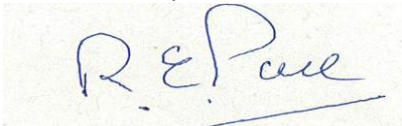
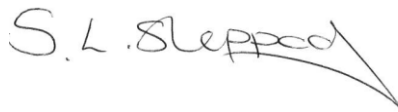
Your views

Please use this link to complete a short online questionnaire by **3PM FRIDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2022**
<https://forms.office.com/r/eSfwfetc8d>

What Happens Next?

The governors will meet to consider the outcomes of the formal consultation exercise and due diligence and make a decision in early January.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "R. E. Paul". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "S. L. Sleppoo". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping line underneath.

Chair of Governors

Headteacher