



Silsden Primary School

Thursday 2nd February 2023

Dear Parents,

Over the last few months Governors and senior staff of several local primary schools have been exploring the possibility of converting to an academy in order to secure our school's long term future. Following meetings with several Trusts, our Governing Board agreed to investigate the possibility of creating a new primary partnership within Moorlands Learning Trust (MLT: the multi academy trust initially set up by Ilkley Grammar School).

Having considered the opportunities that working in closer partnership with MLT could bring to Silsden Primary School, our children and staff, and having met with and explored in some detail the practicalities of how this might work with MLT and other local primary schools, I am pleased to share that our Governing Board has now given approval for us to formally pursue this partnership. The other schools whose Governing Boards have also decided to move forward with this at this initial stage are Ashlands Primary School, Burley Oaks Primary School and Menston Primary School.

Silsden Primary School is a good school. We have outstanding facilities and a healthy budget. The decision to become an academy is one taken from a position of strength. By Joining MLT at this stage we will be joining with other strong effective schools to create a partnership that will help us to improve our school further and enhance the outcomes and experiences of your children.

Some of the key benefits that we believe more formal working through MLT would bring to our schools and communities are:

- wider opportunities for pupils' learning and extra-curricular experiences
- an improved and broader school offer as a result of sharing of best practice across multiple schools, including high quality staff development
- increased and more flexible staffing resources where specialisms and experience can be shared across schools
- economic benefits through centralised costs and procurement
- a greater range of career progression opportunities for all staff in order to help develop and retain staff

Becoming part of a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) will mean that the formal, legal status of all schools involved will change. However, all schools will still retain their unique characteristics and identity (name and uniform), with their own local Governing Boards and their respective Headteachers overseeing the operational running of their schools as they do now.

Although we believe that becoming an academy and joining MLT alongside these other schools is the right decision for our School, this is only the first part of the process. There are now many stages of due diligence, as well as legal processes, that we will need to engage in over the coming months before we convert to academy status. We are also aware that there will be questions from you and the wider community about this change for Silsden Primary School and so we will be taking time over the coming weeks and months to engage with you fully about this, to hear your feedback (including through a formal consultation in due course) and to answer any questions.



**Silsden Primary
School**

This means that the earliest that academy conversion would take place would be at the start of next academic year.
1st September 2023.

We hope you will agree that this is a very exciting new phase for our school, and we look forward to discussing this with you in more detail in the coming weeks.

There will be an opportunity for you to meet with key staff of Moorlands Learning Trust on **Wednesday 1st March at 6pm, here at school**. Helen Williams (CEO), Alison Kaye (CFO), Mr. Moore our Chair of Governors and myself, will be able to answer your queries along with other members of the governing body. Please direct any immediate questions to me through the school office and I will be happy to answer them.

Yours sincerely

R Moore
Chair of Governors

Yours sincerely,

Mr K.S.Russell
Headteacher