



## Loudwater Combined School

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8<sup>th</sup> February 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

### **Loudwater School proposal for conversion to academy status**

I am writing to update you on the governing body's plans regarding conversion to academy status. Attached is a full consultation document explaining the why we are consulting and providing answers to some frequently asked questions, a summary is provided in this letter.

Parents will be aware of the Government's policy of developing the academy programme. As an Ofsted 'Good' school we have the freedom to choose if and when to convert to an academy on our own terms. The governors have kept this under review over the last few years in order to be sure of making an informed choice. During this time we have held meetings with multi academy trusts, as well as speaking and meeting with Headteachers and governors of other schools. We now wish to inform you that we have made a decision, and passed a resolution, to explore, more comprehensively, conversion to academy status within the Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST), which is a new multi academy trust established by the Oxford Diocese for schools seeking an academy option across Buckinghamshire.

As part of the decision-making process, we are carrying out a consultation with parents, staff and stakeholders. The consultation starts on 11<sup>th</sup> February and will run until 5<sup>th</sup> April. Governors are keen to reassure you that the decision to proceed won't be taken without taking your thoughts into consideration. To this end, if you would like to ask a question or make a comment for the governors to consider, please either write them on the attached form and hand it to the school office, or email them to: [governors.loudwater@gmail.com](mailto:governors.loudwater@gmail.com). We will endeavour to answer your questions.

### **Why the Governors wish to make this decision**

Governors believe that this proposed change will enable us to provide some additional choices as to how the school develops, will help us to meet the ongoing changes in the educational system, continue to improve the opportunities we provide for your children and will support the school in its future development. Importantly, we feel that joining this particular multi-academy ensures that the ethos and values of our school, which are of paramount importance, are protected.

In practical terms while the academy status will change some things behind the scenes, on the whole you and your child(ren) will see very little difference initially. In particular,

admission arrangements will not change as they will remain the same as the local authority arrangements, and we do not propose to change the name of the school, the catchment area, the school uniform, term dates or the curriculum. Children would still continue to have the opportunity to sit the secondary school transfer test (11+).

The school would not become a Church of England school, however, the Governors and school leadership team believe that conversion with ODBST will offer many benefits and opportunities and ensure the values of our school are protected. Over time we hope to see a positive impact on the quality of provision at the school. We will also have a greater level of stability and support than we currently receive in meeting the ongoing challenges of an ever changing education system.

On Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March we will be holding a meeting for parents, carers and interested people at 6.30pm, in the school hall. Representatives from ODBST will be present alongside members of the Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team, to answer your questions and listen to your comments.

Refreshments will be provided and so in order to give the school an idea of numbers **please complete and return the form below**. There is space to include any questions you have in advance so that we can make sure that we have answers ready for you. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions at the end of the meeting both formally and informally.

Following the information session, the consultation period will close on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2019. The governors will review the comments and questions raised in the consultation and will decide whether to continue with the process. If it is agreed, there will then be a period of due diligence, including a meeting with staff. At the appropriate point, the Secretary of State for Education will be asked to grant permission for the school to convert to an academy on a determined date. ODBST will make staff available to support the school through this process so that the impact on the day to day running on the school should be minimal.

We look forward to seeing you at the meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully



Clare Cunningham  
Head teacher



Paul Randall  
Chair of Governors

**Loudwater School proposal for conversion to academy status**

**Please complete and return this form to the school office. Thank you.**

I/ We will attend the academy consultation meeting at 7<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at 6.30pm

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

I/ We would like to ask the following question(s):

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Please return this slip to the school office by **Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March**