

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2021

## **THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF CLIFFE WOODS ACADEMY TRUST**

Dear Parents/Carers

As I am sure you are aware, the educational landscape is always changing. Whether that be through policies, expectations or due to decisions made by Government.

One aspect that is a key focus for Government is for all schools to become academies. This is not particularly new, however there is now additional emphasis on small Trusts joining larger Trusts.

Something that the Trustees and I have always been determined to do is to be the makers of our own destiny and to be in control of the educational direction of the Trust.

Therefore, since the beginning of the academic year, the Trustees and I have had many discussions regarding this matter and what the future looks like for the Cliffe Woods Academy Trust. We have sought advice from various sources, including the Regional Schools Commissioner.

After considering the advice and through our own discussions, we determined that the best way forward would be for us to investigate joining a Trust which matches our ethos and aims.

Before we began to investigate local Trusts, we drew up a list of qualities that we felt were paramount to a successful partnership. The key points we identified were:

- to ensure that there are benefits for all of the children
- to keep the character and identity of both schools (existing names, existing uniform etc)
- to ensure that the ethos in each school is maintained
- to ensure that we retain staff
- to keep our curriculum offer and educational direction
- to preserve Local Governing Bodies and local autonomy
- to work with like-minded schools and professionals
- to preserve the funds that each school has generated
- to have the opportunity to improve operational efficiencies, improvements and savings to offset expected funding challenges

The Trustees have considered these points very carefully and after we investigated and considered a number of local Trusts, we believe that Aletheia Anglican Academies Trust meets and exceeds these key tests. In addition, we believe that it would provide certainty, support, as well as an exciting future for the schools within the Trust in the years ahead, while strongly protecting each school's ethos and local approach. Furthermore, we are currently working with this Trust which has given us a clear understanding of their ethos.

**Compassion • Integrity • Thankfulness • Respect • Resilience**

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Trustees believe that becoming part of the Aletheia Anglican Academies Trust is the best way to support the schools in continuing to develop and improve and will bring benefits to teaching and learning and thus to your child's achievement.

Making this change means that will be joining a Trust on agreed terms, rather than being allocated a Trust to join by the Government.

We would expect that you and your children would see little visible difference should we become part of the Aletheia Anglican Academies Trust. The schools name will not change and nor will the uniform, or the school's admissions policies. All children and members of staff will continue to be part of the school as they are now.

As always, we would really like to hear your questions and thoughts, so if you do have any feedback then do get in touch by:

- Emailing [CliffeWoodsAAAT@Cliffewoods.medway.sch.uk](mailto:CliffeWoodsAAAT@Cliffewoods.medway.sch.uk)
- You can write to the Headteacher and/or the Chair of Trustees at the school address (View Road, Cliffe Woods, Rochester, ME3 8UJ)

We will use this feedback to create a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document, which we will publish on the schools' websites. All comments and questions should be received by Friday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2021, please.

In addition to this we will be holding an open community meeting with the Executive Headteacher, School Governors and representatives from AAAT at 7pm on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> July at Cliffe Woods Primary School providing that that COVID restrictions have been fully lifted.

We look forward to hearing your views and please be assured that the Trustees and I believe that sharing all views and opinions is vital in supporting the Trust in making the right decision for the pupils of our schools, now and in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Tim Muggridge on behalf of the Board of Trustees