



10th January 2018

Dear Parents,

As you will be aware, over the past term, the governors and I have been looking at selecting a Multi-Academy Trust for Walton Oak to join. There were a number of reasons advanced for this decision, which can be read in my previous correspondence on the matter on our website.

Having met with parents and staff to garner views, a working party of governors began a period of meetings with CEOs of our shortlisted MATs, coupled with other forms of research. Taking stakeholders' views in account, a range of factors that should guide our decision making was devised, and each factor weighted according to its level of importance.

The most important factors were felt to be:

Ethos match

It was crucial to leaders, staff and parents that the essential nature of Walton Oak would not be compromised by this change

Level of autonomy

Stakeholders all felt that we know our school best and would not want to join a MAT that would impose unwanted changes from afar

Opportunity to shape the trust

For example, having a voice on the Trust Board, so that Walton Oak would have some say in how the trust develops over time

Level of support for school development and CPD opportunities for our staff

We looked for evidence of collaborative practices within the different trusts as well as how they can support in challenging times

In addition, we looked at economies of scale, the level of 'top slice' drawn by the MAT and also factored in personalities and practices which indicated how easily the change might be managed during the conversion process and in our new academy's first years.

Taking all of these factors into consideration, the governors have decided to proceed with a more in-depth conversation with The Lumen Learning Trust.

The Lumen Learning Trust is a small MAT, currently only three schools (though ultimately looking to expand on this number): Saxon Primary School in Shepperton, Riverbridge Primary School in Staines and Echelford Primary School in Ashford. It is led by an executive Principal, Mary Ellen McCarthy. Mary Ellen is a successful Surrey Headteacher, trained Ofsted inspector and National Leader of Education.

Best learning + best values = great school

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The next part of the process is to enter a more formal consultation and due diligence period. This will include a more in-depth look at finances on both sides.

As part of this consultation process, I would like to invite all interested parents and carers to a meeting on Thursday January 25th at 6:45pm in the school hall. At this meeting, Mary-Ellen will tell you more about the Lumen Trust, its core values and principal practices, and you will have plenty of opportunities to ask her questions.

I would be grateful if you could complete and return the slip below to indicate how many seats you will need.

Yours sincerely,

Mandy Watts
Head teacher

I would like _____ seats to attend the meeting on 25th January 2018 to meet with representatives from the Lumen Trust.

Name:

Child's name (s):

The questions previously raised by parents who attended our first meeting have been put to Mary Ellen already and will be answered in her presentation. You can see these on our school website under parents/parents communication/exploring a MAT.

If you have any further questions you would like to raise, or you have a question but are unable to attend the meeting, please use the space below to record your question(s) and we will ensure they are raised.