



Orchard Academy Trust

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Coppice Primary Partnership

An Ethic of Excellence



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Dear Parents and Carers,

The Coppice Primary Partnership (CPP) and The Orchard Academy Trust (OAT) have started to work together and are investigating the possibility of our trusts merging to form a partnership of five strong, local, primary schools. To achieve a successful partnership, it is important that our core purposes are in alignment and that we share similar values and ethos. Following initial discussions, this is clearly the case, which is why we feel this is a partnership that offers great potential. Please also be aware that Mrs Young, the Executive Headteacher at OAT, has decided to retire in August 2023 and this coincides with the likely conclusion of a successful merger process. This gives us time to establish our partnership and ensure that any transition is as smooth as possible.

The past few years have been very challenging due to the global pandemic and this has been reflected in all areas, not least education. However, as we move towards a world which is a little more normal, it is important that we look to the future and how we can continue to meet the needs of your children and provide them with the very best education and opportunities.

To move this process forward we have assembled a Steering Group made up of two trustees from each Trust, the CPP Trust Leader and the OAT Executive Head Teacher alongside the CPP Trust Business Manager. Our first task has been to create a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which will act to guide and support our working together. Be assured that any decisions we make moving forward will not come at the cost of school improvement. We will ensure that we continue to support your child's school throughout this process and will only take the next steps if we feel that we, collectively, have the capacity to support the school's forward direction.

Finally, as you may know there is an appetite in the education sector, driven by government, to develop strong and larger Multi-Academy Trusts. In the recent Department for Education paper entitled 'Building Strong Academy Trusts', they said: *'We want the academy trust system to continue to grow and develop, with outward-facing academy trusts engaging the whole sector, more schools in strong academy trusts and existing academy trusts becoming stronger.'* Whilst it is important to take note of the government's direction our main motivation in investigating this potential merger is to create a strong Trust with the ability to drive improvement and support a larger family of schools.

We will, of course, keep you updated on progress and there will also be an opportunity for a consultation, starting on 16 May 2022, where we will be asking for your views and thoughts.

Yours sincerely,

Nigel Smetham
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Orchard Academy Trust

Carol Hardy
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Coppice Primary Partnership

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