



Longridge High School

Excellence and ambition from all, for all

Dear Parents and Interested Parties,

Re: Conversion of Longridge High School

Many thanks for all your support as Longridge High School continues its journey to develop and improve. One of the major keys to school improvement is close collaboration with other schools who have a similar ethos. As such, we continue to work well with an excellent group of feeder primary schools and other high schools.

As you will be aware, recent statements from Government outlined in the recent White Paper are very clear about the future of schools in England, with over 80% of all high schools now academies. You will also be aware that many Lancashire schools are forming partnerships under the umbrella of multi-academy trusts. As a school, we have been asked by the DFE to look at joining such a group.

Having explored a range of opportunities to join Multi Academy Trusts in Lancashire, we have been working with the Bay Learning Trust www.baylearningtrust.com for over a year, during which time we have been privileged to utilise excellent school support in terms of developing our curriculum to ensure and assure it offers the very best for all our pupils. I am delighted to say that the 2022 GCSE results are among the best the school has ever achieved, and current progress across the school is very positive.

After a lot of research and lengthy discussions, Longridge High School Governors have been given the go ahead by the Department For Education to look at joining the Bay Learning Trust. As such, we are writing to advise you of the Governing Body's intention to proceed with the conversion of Longridge High School. This letter will give you the information you need to understand our decision and the direction of travel as we move to join a family of schools within an academy trust.

What is an academy?

For well over a decade now, education in England has been delivered through a new form of establishment which takes the best of an existing school and enables it to move forward with greater legal freedoms to create the best working environment for the needs of its pupils and staff.

The school has traditionally been maintained by the local authority but changing times and greater opportunities have demonstrated that outcomes for all are much improved when education is managed and delivered by educationalists and those with the expertise to support teachers to deliver education, sharing best practice, and tailored to their pupils.

HEADTEACHER
Jane Green BA(Hons), MSc, NPQH

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Why is conversion happening?

The Government has made clear its commitment to transforming the remaining school's estate to academies by 2030. Governors have taken the opportunity to identify an academy trust which it believes can partner with the school to take it forward as the education landscape evolves. We want to ensure we determine the path forward for our pupils and staff and believe we have done so through discussions and work with our chosen Academy Trust. The Headteacher has been engaged in these discussions and formed part of our decision-making process.

As a school, we have chosen the Bay Learning Trust because its ethos and values align with our own, putting the child at the centre of all we do. Our school itself would not change in terms of staff, values, mission, and vision. Our school's name, uniform, branding, school day, term dates, staff pay and conditions, the everyday experience for pupils, parents and staff would stay the same. However, we know the partnership would mean enhanced collaboration between the schools, with staff having wider opportunities to share good practice, which in turn will lead to more rapid school improvement. As a school, we want the best possible results for all our young people; working within this family of schools would help further ensure all our young people reach their full potential.

How will conversion take place?

The Advisory Board has approved our application for academy status subject to the statutory consultation required under the Academies Act 2010 and for us to join the Bay Learning Trust.

The process to convert to an academy will sit seamlessly alongside the normal day-to-day operation of the school. It will be a collective project with the school, Academy Trust and Department for Education, ensuring that the transition is as smooth as possible, with pupils and staff being at the forefront of our minds. The activities needed to affect the legal conversion will be done in the background so that teachers continue to focus on pupil learning and development. During this time, we will continue to work with Academy Trust professionals to share best practice and develop our curriculum with their support.

The school will remain within the same school buildings and on the same site that our pupils and community are familiar with, and the Local Authority will continue with the school expansion previously outlined to you last week to ensure there are sufficient school places available for all our children to attend their local high school.

When will conversion take place?

The Governors, Senior Leaders and the Academy Trust will work alongside the Department for Education to achieve a conversion by October 2023. There may be matters which arise that require this date to be revisited; however, we will continue to monitor matters to keep them on track and continue to communicate with parents and interested parties as we approach the target date if we need to make any change.

The Head teacher, Mrs Compton (Chair of Governors), Governors and our senior team feel very strongly that this is an excellent opportunity for our school. The benefits for all our young people are really clear to us, and, since young people are at the heart of everything we do at school, I am seeking your support with this.

Consultation feedback

Governors are now formally consulting on the decision to convert to an academy. Parents and interested parties are invited to share their views with Governors to enable us to consider relevant matters before we proceed further with conversion process. You can submit your views to admin@lhs.lancs.sch.uk or by sending them in writing to the school office for the attention of the Clerk to Governors. The consultation period will run from Monday 28th November 2022 to Friday 6th January 2023.

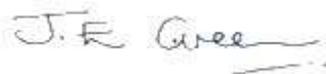
There will be a drop-in session on Monday 12th December at 5pm at the school for any interested parties to ask questions.

Many thanks as always for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,



Chair of Governors



Headteacher

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