

Plympton Academy

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Ref: LBO/TOV

7th September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Proposal for Plympton Academy to join with a Multi-Academy Trust

I write to you today to share an exciting development which we, including our governors, believe will enhance the future of Plympton Academy.

You will be aware that currently Plympton Academy is a stand-alone academy; classed as a single academy trust (SAT), we are funded directly by the government through the funding formula of our local authority. You might not be aware, but many academies are usually linked together in Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) and SAT's are on the decline.

In the past couple of years, as part of the governors' ongoing responsibility to secure the future of our school and ensure that it remains financially sustainable, consideration has been given as to whether we should become part of a MAT.

It has been during this thought process that we have been in discussions with the [Thinking Schools Academy Trust](#) to investigate whether joining their Trust would be in the best interests of our students and community. Please know that we are committed to continuing to provide quality education for our students while protecting our schools' ethos and position at the heart of our community.

At Plympton Academy, as you know, we believe in inspiring a culture of success for all. Our students and staff are encouraged to take pride in their achievements and are fully-equipped to pursue their dreams. Plympton Academy is the cornerstone of a thriving community, a community that is stronger through collaboration and it is through this that our young students continue to develop as confident and independent learners.

In order to form healthy partnerships with other schools, we have been very clear that our values must align, and with the Thinking Schools Academy Trust's focus firmly on 'transforming life chances' I am certain they are a great fit for us.

Our staff and governors have been through a very extensive consultation and due diligence process with Thinking Schools Academy Trust and are satisfied that there are no undue financial or legal risks involved in joining the Trust.

Following this extensive consultation period, Governors made the decision to approach the Regional Schools Commissioner / DFE to request that Plympton Academy be considered as a potential new member of the Thinking Schools Academy Trust.

As our school is already an academy, there is no legal duty for the school to consult on these changes. However, we know that it is important that the board of governors consider the views of its school community, which is why we invite you to participate in this informal consultation.



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We will be hosting a casual meeting to share a brief presentation and take questions and comments. We hope that as many parents and carers as possible will be able to attend. Details of this meeting to follow, we anticipate it to be in October.

Please note that our ethos, our values and what we stand for will not change if we become part of the Trust, nor will our admission arrangements. However, we will have access to a very comprehensive suite of tools for developing teaching and learning and considerable support for our back-office function. This support will make day-to-day running more efficient, freeing up time and head space to further enhance the focus on our students and their educational journey.

I am convinced that joining the Trust will have a very significant positive impact on the work of our school and I believe joining it is whole-heartedly the right thing for us to do for all concerned.

I include here for you a link to the [Thinking Schools Academy Trust](#) for your information. The Trust has recently had another Plymouth secondary school join; Plymouth High School for Girls successfully became a part of the Thinking Schools in February 2021. Principal Simon Underdown shares the school's experience and his own reflections upon joining the trust - [read all about it](#).

It is the Thinking Schools Academy Trust's ambition that the Southwest Hub of schools will continue to grow and as the hub grows, we would hugely benefit from strong partnerships and shared expertise to ensure that our students get the best possible school experience.

I will write to you again with details of the parent and wider community consultation process. In the meantime, thank you for taking the time to read this and please visit the consultation website [here](#) for further information.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L Boorman', with a large, stylized loop at the end.

Ms L Boorman
Principal