



OAK HILL C. Of E. PRIMARY SCHOOL  
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Head Teacher: Mr Adam Greaves MA PGCE NPQH

20 November 2023 (*Letter 1 of 2*)

Dear parents,

### **Important information regarding our continuing school improvement strategy**

September 2022 now seems like a distant memory, but we continue to be proud and inspired every day by the positive impact on all aspects of school life we've seen since the whole school first came together permanently on one site in Alderton. We don't take for granted the hard work and dedication of our staff who've not only made this change successful, but have done so in ways which make it hard to believe all being together on one site is still a new part of Oak Hill's history.

We are delighted to see the wraparound care provision provided by Breakfast and Afterschool Club is now an integral part of school life and we're grateful to all of you who regularly use these programmes. Without your support we couldn't offer wraparound care and guaranteeing we can continue to do so is essential to the long term future of our school.

We are writing today to advise you of another change on the horizon for our school. For some time, the Governors have been considering whether the school should remain as a local authority maintained school or whether it should seek to join a Multi Academy Trust ("MAT"). You may be aware other local schools are already academy schools, some as stand alone academies (Gretton Primary School), some as established members of MATs (Winchcombe Abbey Primary School) and some who have recently joined established MATs (Winchcombe School)

These discussions have been central to our evolving school improvement and transformation plans. Governors have for many months been working closely on these plans with the Department for Education (DfE), Gloucestershire County Council (our Local Authority) and the Gloucester Diocese. The DfE therefore made an Academy Order confirming the Secretary of State's commitment to supporting school's like Oak Hill to ensure every child can access high quality education and experiences. This was a key moment in our school's improvement journey, providing new opportunities we couldn't previously access.

The Academy Order ensures we will be supported by knowledgeable education professionals during our conversion to an academy, most importantly by an experienced local MAT who have agreed to act as our sponsors by inviting us to join their group of schools.

We are therefore delighted to announce that subject to the administrative elements still being progressed, our school will be converting to an academy and joining the [Primary Quest MAT](https://www.primaryquest.co.uk/). We are working towards completing the conversion by the end of this academic year if not before.

Primary Quest MAT incorporates the Gloucestershire schools of Ann Cam, Hartpury, Highnam, Redmarley and Staunton Corse Primary. All five are small, village primary schools like Oak Hill. As part of the MAT, these schools gain expertise by working closely together, whilst each school remains distinctive with its own particular character and charm. All Primary Quest schools achieve high academic standards through an exciting and engaging curriculum that makes the most of the rich local surroundings unique to small rural schools.

Governors and staff have been impressed by the caring and nurturing environments in Primary Quest's schools and by their dedicated staff. All these factors were recognised by Governors early on to be of key importance for our school, mirroring the ethos and values at the heart of Oak Hill.

We first began working with Primary Quest in January 2022 after our last full Ofsted Inspection when they were commissioned by the Department for Education to support our improvement work. Their input is evident in all our learning environments, in our reading curriculum and much more. Joining the Primary Quest MAT was an obvious next step after the Academy Order was made and one, we and the Governors are certain will ensure Oak Hill continues to develop and thrive, preparing our pupils for life in all its fullness through a curriculum that provides high quality education and experiences for all.

This change will provide a greater number of choices as to how the school continues evolving, will help to meet the ongoing changes in the education system, allow us to continue to improve the opportunities provided for children and will support the school into the future.

In practical terms, academy status will change some things behind the scenes. These changes will enhance the running of the school but otherwise the school will operate on a day-to-day basis in a similar way to now. There will be no negative impact on the curriculum or your children's day to day experiences. Staff will have access to continued professional development opportunities, networking and quality learning circles. Primary Quest facilitates networking and development opportunities for staff which promote the implementation and embedding of best practice.

We will continue to work closely with other local primary schools, especially those in the Winchcombe and Bishops Cleeve primary school clusters. Becoming part of a MAT will give us more freedom to decide how our funding should be spent and a greater level of stability and support than we currently receive in meeting the ongoing challenge of an ever-changing education system.

We've written to you separately today (*letter 2 of 2*) about the formal process of closing the Dumbleton site which was put on hold earlier this year whilst negotiations were carried out further to the Academy Order. You'll note we need to engage in a second public consultation process now the Local Authority and the Department for Education have agreed the school's capacity should reduce to 80 pupils.

As part of this consultation we will be holding a meeting for all of our parents and stakeholders on Monday 4 December 2023 at 6pm in the school hall. We will also use this open event as an opportunity to discuss the school's conversion to an academy. The CEO of

Primary Quest MAT, Stephen Dean will be attending and we hope as many of you as possible will join us on 4 December.

There will be an opportunity at the meeting to ask questions both formally and informally. In the meantime, if you have any questions regarding this process or if you wish to share your comments with us, please email us or alternatively, use the online feedback and response form which you can access by <https://forms.gle/kFz4YgRezCJKpvwM7>.

The Governors and staff believe that conversion with Primary Quest MAT will offer many benefits and opportunities for our pupils and staff, whilst protecting that which makes our school special as we begin this new and exciting chapter in Oak Hill's history.

With kindest regards,



Adam Greaves  
Head Teacher



Victoria Leather  
Chair of Governors

**For and on behalf of the Oak Hill CofE Primary School Board of Governors**