January 2021

Dear stakeholders

Consultation to form a Multi-Academy Trust

You may be aware that in recent years there have been significant changes to the educational landscape. These changes continue and, as a school, we have been working hard to find the right solution to ensure that our federation of Pupil Referral Units (Reigate Valley College, Wey Valley College and The Fordway Centre) continue to thrive in the future.

We have strived as a federation of schools to ensure that we offer an outstanding education to students in our care and now aim to formalise our partnership working by becoming a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) called Inclusive Education Trust (IET). The governors of the three schools have begun a formal consultation with all stakeholders about our future and this proposal.

We recognise that you may wish to hear more from the schools about this proposal, how any formal collaboration will continue to provide an outstanding provision for students and continued commitment to our partnership working in Surrey. To this end, and to comply with Government restrictions due to the current COVID pandemic, we propose to hold a virtual meeting on **January 28th at 5:00**. to allow you to engage in discussion with us. All are welcome. To register your attendance and receive the virtual meeting link please email consultation@wvc.surrey.sch.uk I have also included answers to some frequently asked questions in this letter.

What is The PRU federation?

Reigate Valley College, Wey Valley College and The Fordway Centre were set up as a federation as it was clear that working together under one executive leadership team would support the education and life chances of students at risk of permanent exclusion in Surrey. We continue to achieve this goal through providing an OFSTED graded outstanding provision at all three schools.

Why is the school looking to form a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT)?

The governing bodies have an ongoing duty to ensure that the schools remain sustainable and continue to develop partnerships that benefit students and there have been regular discussions about MATs for some time. It is our belief that becoming part of a larger, school-led organisation will enable greater levels of collaboration in all aspects of supporting vulnerable students in Surrey. This will mean more opportunities for our students and staff, which will only benefit our schools. There are also some long- term financial benefits to forming a MAT.

Why form IET MAT?

As I have already noted, we have a very good working relationship in our federation and are keen to work with the community of schools within Surrey to improve life chances through education to all of our students. Whilst there are some differences between the schools in the federation, they all share a similar ethos offering a broad and balanced curriculum to their students and seeking opportunities to widen those opportunities further through effective collaboration. The PRU federation has a strong record of supporting schools locally and nationally with issues around behaviour management and inclusion, which will be enhanced by the formation of a MAT. Our schools bring together an extraordinary range of skilled practitioners that will enable us to collaborate and further develop our own practices within the MAT and in the wider community.

Will the federation lose resources by forming a MAT?

Our funding is based on a government grant per student with a top up from the local authority. This funding

currently goes to our individual schools to allocate accordingly. We propose as part of the formation of a MAT that this funding is received centrally and distributed based on need for each school, as this will be a more streamlined approach, ultimately meaning there are better resources for all students in the Trust. In addition, we will make savings as a larger organisation across our schools, for example through negotiating and purchasing items in bulk.

Will each school maintain control of its own staffing?

Yes, although the MAT are the employers, IET delegates responsibility for staffing to the local Governing Body and Leadership Team, this is then agreed at a MAT level after professional challenge. The MAT cannot employ members of staff using individual school budgets if the Local Governing Body do not agree with this deployment. Transfer of staff to other schools will not take place unless there is a desire to do so from all sides.

Will this impact admission into the PRU?

No, the admission process will not change and the current routes to gain support will not change. The LA will remain the main commissioner and have responsibility for students who are permanently excluded or are at risk of exclusion and they will use the MAT to fulfil those duties.

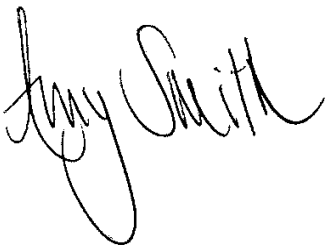
Is this a genuine consultation?

It is important to note that this process has been ongoing for 12 months with a number of discussions held by the governing bodies and a decision made to explore this option. We are undertaking this informal consultation as part of the due diligence process and the feedback from our stakeholders is important to us. We had originally hoped to formalise the MAT in September 2020, but the pandemic has affected our ability to pursue that. We have now decided to conduct the consultation virtually as there is no immediate end to the disruption caused by Covid 19 in sight and we strongly believe that becoming a MAT will best serve our students, federation, local schools, community and other stakeholders.

We have to be very clear that no final decision has been made regarding forming the MAT. We have completed the legal work associated with due diligence and are now consulting with stakeholders before making a final decision.

Yours faithfully,





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