



Holy Trinity C of E Primary School

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Head of School: Miss Anna Smith

Executive Principal: Mr Dave Rooney

13th July 2017

Dear Parents and Caregivers

With the summer holidays fast approaching, I can now update you regarding our leadership structure and our enduring relationship with Lowbrook Academy moving forward.

As you will all be aware from my last letter and the high profile nature of Lowbrook Academy's recent difficulties, the capacity for Lowbrook to continue to work with us has been strained.

A brief background behind Lowbrook Academy's involvement is as follows:

Four years ago, at the request of the Holy Trinity's Governing Body and the Local Authority, Mr Rooney was approached to support the incumbent Head Teacher and the school during a difficult period in our history. At this time it was identified that much needed to change to ensure your children were receiving an outstanding education. The Head Teacher at the time left at short notice for personal reasons and Mr Rooney without hesitation undertook the role of Head Teacher without any additional remuneration to Lowbrook Academy, whilst a more suitable solution was reached.

After one term, the Governors of Lowbrook Academy agreed with Holy Trinity Governors' request that Mr Rooney would undertake the role as Executive Principal of both schools and Miss Smith was appointed as Head of Holy Trinity School. Most of you will be aware that during this period, Holy Trinity moved from Requires Improvement to Outstanding and has maintained the highest of standards from that point onwards.

The relationship between the schools has grown in strength with joint leadership opportunities for all staff at both sites and I am sure you will all agree noticeable school development is the norm.

With regard to recent events, Lowbrook Academy was approached again by the Local Authority over a year ago and asked to expand due to its oversubscription and outstanding reputation for well over a decade. Due to funding, the Local Authority did a U-Turn on this expansion and decided that a free vote at Full Council was required. As I explained in my last letter, 23 councillors voted 'for' and 23 councillors voted 'against', resulting in a casting 'against' vote from the Mayor. Two of these 'against' votes were from Cookham Councillors, Cllr Kellaway and Cllr Clark who also chose not to correct inaccuracies regarding Lowbrook Academy's support of other local schools during the debate. I'm sure that most of you can see the very difficult position that Lowbrook Academy's Governors and the Cox Green community found themselves in. To put this in perspective, 42% of Lowbrook Academy's catchment children along with nine siblings now need to travel by car to alternative schools: This is an unsatisfactory outcome for our partner community.

The Governors of both schools are working together to resolve the Cox Green issue but it appears there are no simple nor satisfactory solutions on the horizon. As always, like the Governors of Holy Trinity, the Governors of Lowbrook Academy have maintained their strong moral compass and have agreed that the Executive Principal's relationship with Holy Trinity will continue until October half term 2017 allowing stability at our school, and time for reflection and for local politicians and school leaders to seek satisfactory arrangements moving forward.

This is an excellent step in the right direction and I am sure you will welcome this news and enjoy your summer holidays without any further immediate concerns. We will of course keep you updated with developments as soon as they become known to us in the new academic year.

Yours sincerely,

Yasmin Thorn-Davis
Chair of Governors