

5th Jan 2023

Dear Parents/Carers

You may remember that for the last three years we have been working towards joining a Multi Academy Trust (MAT)

Back in 2020, we consulted with parents regarding joining a trust with Brockhill Performing Arts College in Saltwood. We presented the case to parents for strengthening leadership, improving human resources and creating economies of scale across the trust to support improvements in teaching and learning.

Whilst that proposal was generally supported, the Department for Education felt that we should look at a different selection of trusts to join. Since February this year we have been pursuing possible membership of The Howard Academy Trust (THAT), a group of schools in Medway. We felt that this was a trust that closely aligned with our values whilst retaining many of the benefits of our original MAT application.

Following our 'Inadequate' Ofsted judgement in May, our relationship with THAT has strengthened, with them offering external scrutiny and audit of our improvement plan. This relationship has been very positive for the school. We are therefore pleased to announce that The Department for Education has decided that The Howard Academy Trust is their preferred partner for The Abbey School, and consequently instructed us to join their MAT.

We anticipate that The Abbey School will join THAT by the end of March 2023. On a day-to-day basis, this will not mean any immediate visible changes for your child's education. The curriculum and teaching staff will remain the same. However, some of the administrative functions of the school, including finance and human resources will move to a centralised team in Medway. The benefit of this is that the school will have a more specialist team available to call on which is shared across the trust of schools.

No doubt, joining THAT will increase our leadership capacity and strengthen our academic performance in the long-run. We have been preparing for an Ofsted monitoring inspection which senior staff from THAT have been involved with. We are confident that the improvements we have made will be recognised.

I have asked Owen McColgan, CEO of The Howard Academy Trust, to write to you separately in the forthcoming days to introduce himself and the family of schools to you. This is a fabulous development for our school and places it in a position of strength going forward within the DfE's educational vision, which encourages all schools to be part of a Multi Academy Trust.

Have a great start to the New Year



Dr Rowland Speller
Headteacher