



# GILLIBRAND Primary School

Grosvenor Road, Chorley, Lancashire. PR7 2PJ  
Tel: 01257 274983



27<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Dear Parents,

## **Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) proposal**

In March 2022, the government re-stated its aim for schools to form MATs by joining with other schools and working together. At Gillibrand, the governors have been considering proactively what joining a MAT means for our school, its pupils, families, staff and the community. The governors are keen to protect the school's success and ethos whilst also looking to the future.

The governors have been exploring which partnerships could be productive, collaborative and supportive in the future. If the school were to join a MAT with other schools, it would want to ensure that existing strong relationships and professional trust are built upon and enhanced further.

### **Proposal**

In recent months, we have been in discussion with Parklands Academy about becoming part of its multi-academy trust and, therefore, joining the trust with Highfield and Balshaw Lane Primary schools. Parklands became a MAT, to be known as 'Aspirational Futures' in February 2023. Our school has always worked closely with Parklands in the past and most of our pupils move there in Year 7. Parklands is very much a part of our local community and shares very similar vision and values for their children, something that is important to us moving forward.

### **What will becoming a MAT mean for Gillibrand Primary School?**

Currently Gillibrand is a maintained primary school under Lancashire County Council. If we become an academy and join a MAT, the governance arrangements will change as follows:

- The Members will attend the AGM (Annual General Meeting) only but will continue to be responsible for the vision and performance of the school;
- The Board of Trustees will meet at least three times a year and will not consist of parent governors. The Board of Trustees will hold the Chief Executive of the Trust to account for the quality of provision in all schools within the MAT. The Board of Trustees may contain current serving governors from Parklands and the primary schools that are in the MAT with it. The Members must appoint all new Trustees to the Board of Trustees, ensuring there is sufficient skillset, knowledge and experience to serve on the Board.
- A newly established Local Governing Board for Gillibrand will meet at least three times a year. This can include parent governors and is solely responsible for Gillibrand.

### **What are the benefits of being a MAT?**

In the school's opinion the benefits are numerous and would have a positive impact on outcomes for the pupils at Gillibrand:

- Schools in the MAT will support one another through formal collaboration.
- We can forge even stronger relationships and links within our local community, to ensure pupils/students in the MAT contribute to and feel part of the local community.
- We can access support from Parklands teachers who will be able to provide subject specific support, for example in Modern Foreign Languages/ music.
- We can ensure Gillibrand staff have a greater understanding of the secondary curriculum in order to prepare children better for Year 7.

- Our teachers will be able to provide support regarding literacy and phonics and how to better support pupils when they enter secondary education.
- We can collaborate on INSET days.
- We can align school holidays.
- We will have economies of scale when it comes to purchasing goods and services.
- We can forge stronger relationships and links with the local community, to ensure pupils/students in the MAT contribute to and feel part of the local community.

### **Are there any disadvantages to becoming a MAT?**

As a MAT, the Members will be accountable for any other academies that join the MAT in future years. This means increased responsibility. However, as part of the conversion process, the governing body will ensure that careful decisions are taken to ensure that the right governance structure and systems are in place to operate more than one academy successfully.

### **What else will change?**

- We do not intend to change anything else about the day to day operation of our school as a result of converting to an academy and joining the MAT.
- We will continue to be an amazing school where every child is valued and where we continue to Nurture Children's Dreams. We therefore do not intend to change except in ways we think will improve the school even more. For children, it is unlikely that they would see much, if any, change in their day-to-day school lives.
- Mrs Clayton will still be the Headteacher at Gillibrand and continue to lead our school as she does now. After conversion to an academy, our school will no longer be a Local Authority maintained school and will therefore receive funding direct from the ESFA (Education and Skills Funding Agency).

### **Will the school change its name/uniform?**

There will be no change to the name logo or uniform of our school. Each school in the MAT is committed to the retention of its individual identity. We will continue to be Gillibrand, with our same vision and values at the heart of everything we do.

### **How can I find out more?**

There is more information about MAT academies on the DfE website:

[www.education.gov.uk/academies](http://www.education.gov.uk/academies)

If you can't find the answer to your question here, or on the DfE website, please email the school at [CoGB@gillibrand.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:CoGB@gillibrand.lancs.sch.uk) and we will try to assist. There will also, in the next week, be information on the Parents section of our school web site with a list of frequently asked questions.

### **How can I make representations?**

The closing date for representations to be made is Monday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 3pm. Representations can be made in writing to:

Chair of Governors  
Gillibrand Primary School  
Grosvenor Road  
Chorley  
PR7 2PJ

Or by email to: [CoGB@gillibrand.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:CoGB@gillibrand.lancs.sch.uk) . We encourage representations to be made in writing but where this is not possible, please phone 01257 274983 between the hours of 9:30am - 3pm.

Regards,

Mrs Doris Bell

Mrs Ashley Clayton

Chair of Governing Board

Headteacher