Monday 5th January 2026

Dear Parents, Carers and members of our local community,

Re: Academy Consultation – Lowerplace Primary School and Hollingworth Learning Trust

I am writing to inform you that the Governing Board of Lowerplace Primary School has begun a formal consultation on the proposal for our school to join Hollingworth Learning Trust, a Multi-academy trust (MAT).

For over the last 18 months, we have been working closely with Hollingworth Learning Trust under an Affiliate Programme, along with several other Rochdale Primary Schools. This has been a highly successful and productive period, built on a shared ethos, vision, strong communication, and a clear understanding of what we want for our pupils and school communities whilst ensuring the very best academic and personal outcomes for all of our children. During this time, Lowerplace Governors and staff have also met with members of the Trust and visited the trust schools, to understand how the partnership could continue to support our long-term development.

I want to reassure you that Lowerplace Primary School will continue to retain its autonomy, identity and staff team, all of which are extremely important to us and remain at the heart of our decision-making.

Benefits we believe membership of Hollingworth Learning Trust would bring include:
- Closer collaborative working between strong educational institutions and a skilled Trust team, enabling staff to share expertise and further raise standards for all our children.
- Securing best value for money on products and services, achieving greater economies of scale so that more of our funding can be directed into classrooms and curriculum support.
- Expert and effective support from the Trust's central teams at a time when Local Authority services and capacity are increasingly limited due to budget pressures.
- Retaining our identity and autonomy, ensuring the nature, character, and effectiveness of our school remains unchanged.
- Increased opportunities for the Trust to apply for grants and funding streams that are not available to schools maintained by the Local Authority.
- Greater opportunities for collaborative working with a wide range of schools in other Trusts and Local Authority areas, strengthening professional development and improving educational outcomes for all local children.

The Hollingworth Learning Trust, a multi-academy trust (MAT) currently consists of:

- Hollingworth Academy
- Newhouse Academy
- Heap Bridge Village Primary School

Consultation Process:

The consultation will begin on Monday 5th January 2026 and will close on Friday 23rd January 2026.

During this period:

- A letter and QR code link to a questionnaire is being sent to members of our school and local community, inviting responses.
- We will publish answers to questions received (FAQs) on our school website and update these regularly. Some initial FAQs are included with this letter.
- If you have any further questions not addressed in the FAQs, please contact us at: office@lowerplace.rochdale.sch.uk

We value your views and encourage all parents and carers to engage with the consultation.

Please scan the QR code below to access the questionnaire:

Darren Randle, Hollingworth Learning Trust CEO, will be in school from 2.45pm on Monday 12th January 2026 if any parents would like to say hello, or ask any questions not previously covered in our FAQ's sheet. You would be very welcome. Please come to the main office.

Further information about Hollingworth Learning Trust can be found online at: https://hltrust.co.uk/

Finally, we would like to thank you for your continued support of Lowerplace Primary School. We are immensely proud of our school, and we believe that this decision will ensure that we continue and strengthen our ability to provide the very best we can for our pupils and families.

Yours sincerely,

Ms K Martin   Mr D Watson
Headteacher   Chair of Governors