



## **The Link Academies Collaborative Trust (LACT) is working towards joining Grove Learning Trust**

3<sup>rd</sup> May 2023

Dear All,

The Governing Bodies of Millbrook Primary School, Peatmoor Community Primary School & Shaw Ridge Primary School, which comprise the Link Academies Collaborative Trust (LACT), want to ensure that the schools are in the strongest possible position so school leaders and their colleagues can provide the highest quality of education for all children in their care. From the outset, we've had a vision to be '*Individually Strong, Collaboratively Stronger*'. This has never been truer in a post-pandemic environment.

One of LACT's priorities is to ensure that the schools are best placed to do this by being outward facing in their school improvement work whilst protecting each school's identity, ethos and position at the heart of its local community. The schools work very closely with each other and with several other Swindon schools to ensure that they continue to develop their provision and keep ahead of the changing educational landscape around them.

We are excited to be writing today, on behalf of the individual Governing Bodies, to explain that we have reviewed the future opportunities for our schools and have concluded that the time is now right for them, as single academy trusts (SAT), to join a multi academy trust (MAT). The Governing Bodies have explored together several different options and have decided unanimously that moving towards joining [Grove Learning Trust](#) (GLT) is the best course for the LACT schools. Grove Learning Trust currently comprises 4 schools: Eastrop Infant, Southfield Junior, Wroughton Infant and Wroughton Junior Schools, with a 5<sup>th</sup> school, Oakhurst Community Primary School, currently in the process of joining.

The Governing Bodies agree that the LACT schools need to be part of a trust that has a culture of high-quality collaboration which will result in the best outcomes and opportunities for children, building on the current strengths within our schools. Consideration has also been given to the size and ethos of the trust we'd like to move towards joining so that the schools can benefit from collaboration and financial economies of scale, whilst maintaining a strong local identity.

Governors have therefore been looking for a trust that has the capacity to grow, retain and develop staff to meet the needs of the schools both now and in the future, and one which champions a strong local community. Above all, governors want the schools to be part of a trust which focuses on school improvement, puts the needs of children, families and staff at its heart, and where our experience as effective single academy trusts could have a direct impact on the trust's future development and growth.

Importantly for governors, Grove Learning Trust values the individuality and ethos of each of the LACT schools. By joining GLT, our schools will have:

- more opportunities for children to collaborate as part of a wider family of schools
- greater opportunities for staff to collaborate as part of a wider family of schools
- opportunities to benefit collectively from economies of scale and group purchasing
- the ability to enhance local provision and achieve better value for money by sharing costs & resources
- the ability to streamline the processes we each have to follow as single academy trusts
- more time to devote to school improvement, in our own schools and as part of GLT

**The LACT schools would not be required to make any changes to the schools' identities, nor would they be required to change or lose any staff.**

After becoming single academy trusts in 2013, joining Grove Learning Trust feels like a very exciting next step, building on an already established and successful partnership as the Link Academies Collaborative Trust.

Now all our communities have been informed of this exciting venture, the following steps will be taken:

- A period of due diligence – a process through which the schools and trust take steps to make checks on things like finances, land & buildings, educational standards and the risks & benefits of bringing the 8 schools together.
- The LACT staff teams will be given opportunities to meet GLT trust leaders and staff representatives from GLT's current schools.
- Parents and carers will be given an opportunity to share their feedback and ask questions.
- Governors will meet with GLT's directors to consider plans going forwards.

We believe that this is an amazing opportunity for the LACT schools to embark on a new adventure with Grove Learning Trust and following the steps set out above, approval will be required from the Department for Education's Regional Director for the south west region, Hannah Woodhouse. What will follow, should this go ahead, is a period of 'onboarding' in which the legal processes to transfer the LACT single academy trusts into Grove Learning Trust would be supported by solicitors.

Further information will follow. We hope you are as excited as us and look forward to your continued support.

With best wishes,

**Andrew Bourne**

Chair of LACT and Chair of  
Peatmoor Primary School

**Philip Harland**

Chair of Shaw Ridge Primary  
School

**Luke Dawson & Kelly Hunt**

Co-Chairs of Millbrook Primary  
School

**Libby Matthews**

Head Teacher of Peatmoor  
Primary School

**Sally Cowell**

Head Teacher of  
Shaw Ridge Primary School

**Karen Pyman**

Head Teacher of Millbrook  
Primary School