

## Letter from Head Teacher and Chair of Governors

Dear Parents and carers,

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2020

Our school has been researching the benefits of becoming part of a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) for a number of years now. Many schools have already taken this step and we feel that we are in a position of strength where we can add expertise and knowledge to a MAT and also benefit in equal measure from the opportunity to collaborate with like-minded schools.

There are two main reasons for wanting to be a part of a MAT:

Firstly, MATs are the Government's preferred way for schools to work in the future. Initially it was stated that all schools 'must' become academies/MATs by 2022; now the Government are saying it is 'expected' that they will. The number of academy conversions in Cheshire are rapidly increasing so it is important that we are at the forefront of the decision-making process to ensure that any decisions made are right for our school.

Secondly, many of the services previously provided by Cheshire East Council's education department are unlikely to continue beyond the next 18 months. Many services have already changed significantly. In light of this, schools already have to find ways of sourcing those services for themselves and one of the main and most effective ways to do this is to collaborate together – hence the move towards Multi Academy Trusts.

However, as with everything that we do, our overarching objective for considering joining a MAT continues to be in improving outcomes for our children. We have always believed in improving the children's school experience and therefore improving teaching and learning should remain top of the list.

Alongside this, additional objectives include:

- Retaining a good level of control over our affairs
- Retaining Manor Park's values
- Increasing financial efficiencies
- Providing greater work opportunities and progression for staff

Having explored a number of options in detail, the governing body have decided to complete a period of formal due diligence with Cheshire Academies Trust (CAT). CAT is a cluster of three outstanding primary schools in Cheshire West and also Bexton Primary School in Cheshire East. There is a clear vision for Manor Park and Bexton to join forces and work together as partners to create our own hub of schools within CAT; giving us the autonomy and direction that we desire. It would also enable us to enjoy the benefits of collaborative learning with other outstanding schools who have a similar vision and similar values to our own. We also feel that by joining CAT the expertise and knowledge of our staff will be recognised and utilised to enhance an already high performing group of schools.



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As part of a four week consultation period, we would like to invite you to an information evening on **Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> February at 4:30pm** in our school hall to share our research on becoming an academy and the process of due diligence including the next steps for conversion. It will also be an opportunity for you to ask any questions you may have about the process. You are also welcome to contact the school at any point during the next four weeks with your thoughts or any questions that you might have. This is a link to the CAT website to help provide you with further information <http://www.cheshireacademiustrust.co.uk/>

Thank you for your continued support, we hope to see you on the 25<sup>th</sup> February.

Yours sincerely,

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Mr S Cotterill

Mr G Mason

Head Teacher

Chair of Governors

