

## INSPIRE PRIMARY PARTNERSHIP MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

### **Why have we made the decision to move from a standalone academy to joining other schools in a Multi-Academy Trust?**

In 2011 Gawthorpe Community Academy became a standalone academy. We received significant benefits from this including:

- Freedom to direct all our funding to meet the needs of our children.
- Freedom to develop our curriculum to match the needs of the school and community.
- Opportunity to bid for funding to support maintaining the school building and improving the learning environment for the children.

Since becoming an academy in 2011 we have secured just short of £370,000 additional funding. We have been able to:

- Refurbish the boys and girls cloakroom and toilets.
- Create a separate cloakroom and toilets for children in Year 6.
- Have pitch roofing works and repair the flat roof, which prior to improvements frequently leaked.
- Arrange for a new fire alarm system to be installed over the coming summer holidays.

Through savings we have made we are now in a position to demolish the existing library building. This will:

- Create additional outdoor space for children in Reception and Year 1.
- Result in a library which can be accessed from inside school because a sun room type building will be installed between the Principal and Vice Principals office.

**This will significantly improve the library environment for all children.**

### **Why can we not stay as a standalone academy?**

In times of budget cuts and the decline of local authorities involvement in schools, it is not viable for academies to stand alone. We need to join with others in order to ensure:

- We are financially secure.
- We can deliver high quality staff training which in turn impacts on children's high quality learning.

Schools and academies cannot stand on their own anymore.

### **Joining Together**

As you are aware, this year we have worked closely with Towngate Academy. This school will formally join a Multi-Academy Trust with us on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2016. We know there has been significant benefits in this partnership. Children have had increased opportunity to work with children from Towngate including:

- More able booster sessions for Year 6 children.
- Coming together in the Town hall for the 1920's/1970's concert. This gave children from across both schools an opportunity to perform in a large venue thereby developing self-esteem and confidence.
- Increased sporting and competition opportunities.
- Staff development in both schools.
- Sharing a teacher across the schools, for example Mr Noble, an ICT teacher, teaches ICT to children in Key Stage 2 at Gawthorpe for 1 day per week.

## **Why do we need more schools to join with us?**

We are given very clear guidance that in order to be able to be a high performing Trust we need at least 6 schools to work with. This will ensure:

- We can work together to use our purchasing power to ensure best value in purchasing goods and services, such as finance and HR services, meaning more money to spend on the children.
- The ability to jointly employ staff directly such as an IT technician, which we would not otherwise be able to afford.
- Greater opportunity for shared projects, events and activities.
- Opportunities for professional development and growth of staff which directly impacts on each academies school improvement and raises standards.

## **Will we still be part of EOCT?**

We will maintain our strong links with all schools in Ossett. We have taken part this year, and will continue to do so, in all the high quality experiences which enhance children's enjoyment and quality of experiences including:

- Riveting Reads
- Town Hall EOCT Concert
- Big Build

## **Additional Schools**

We have been in discussion over the last few months with primary schools in Wakefield who would like to join with us.

A decision has been made by the governors of Half Acres and Ackton Pastures schools, both in Castleford, that they would like to join us. This has been approved by the Department for Education and is expected that after the necessary legal documents have been made, the schools will join us in March 2017. Prior to this we will work closely with them.

## **How will Gawthorpe benefit?**

- Half Acres has been recently inspected and is a high performing school. We will be able to use their expertise to further develop our curriculum.
- Their head teacher is highly experienced and is able to give strong support to the leadership of the MAT.
- The schools have specific expertise which we have used in the past and will further develop. For example the reading recovery teacher from Akton Pastures trained Gawthorpe staff in how to deliver Fischer Family Trust Reading for Year 1. This has had a significant positive impact on the reading progress of many of our Year 1 children.

## **How many schools do we hope to join us?**

We hope to have at least 6 schools by the end of the next academic year. This may expand to 15 however, we hope that this expansion will grow over a number of years.

## What will change at Gawthorpe?

You have already seen some changes. I am aware that many of you were very sad to see Mr Walker move to Towngate however, it is more important to realise that Mr Walker was ready for the next stage in his career and would almost certainly have moved on to another school if he had not been made Head of School at Towngate.

Through our partnership with Towngate we work in close partnership with him and are able to draw on his excellent skills to continue our development here.

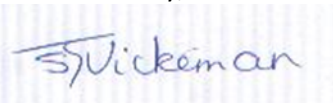
We intend to appoint some new teachers who will work across all the schools in the Multi-Academy Trust. These new staff will almost certainly have subject specific expertise such as science, music, IT, art etc. This will mean that they will be able to teach these subjects to our children and train other staff members.

I will become CEO of the Trust. This means that I will oversee the development of all schools in the Trust. Over the course of the next year I will develop my new role, handing over more responsibility to Mrs Mitchell and Mrs Gill. They will both remain class based but with the appointment of additional staff they will have greater release from class. There will be opportunities for staff development but equally we will have more opportunity to train our own new staff. You have already seen an excellent example of this. Through support and development Miss Sidebottom moved from a teaching assistant to a class teacher. This has been excellent promotion and has enhanced our academy.

At the heart of all our considerations, as we take on this additional work, is Gawthorpe and how we can improve and further develop our academy for all our children.

If you have any questions about our new Trust or about Gawthorpe please let us know. You can contact me at [principal@gawthorpeacademy.co.uk](mailto:principal@gawthorpeacademy.co.uk) or contact the academy office to make an appointment to meet me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "S Vickerman". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a light blue horizontal line.

Mrs S J Vickerman  
Executive Principal