



5th December 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

Following our letter in September informing you of our intention to consult on joining a multi academy trust, we wanted to write to you to confirm that the consultation process has now finished.

We are now at a stage where we are reviewing all information which has been sourced as part of the consultation, before the school Governors make a final vote. This will decide whether the school will formally start the process of joining The Challenge Academy Trust.

We would like to thank all parents, carers and family members who have either attended our parents' consultation meeting on 18th October or have used the google form to ask specific questions. Governors and school leaders have ensured that all questions asked by those who have engaged have been answered.

Parents who attended the consultation meeting were enthused by the prospect of the school joining a highly effective and successful family of schools and commented on the significant benefits they felt it would bring for students, teachers and the whole school community.

As leaders and governors, it is our commitment that South Wirral High School is able to collaborate with other schools and colleges and to be supported and challenged by other school leaders. We want our teachers to receive the very best support to develop their teaching. We want our children to have access to the very best resources and facilities.

In our previous communication on this we provided some detail on why we are proposing to become part of multi academy trust and why we felt joining The Challenge Academy Trust was right for our School. We thought it may be of use to provide the details of our decision making again so you had full details:

Why are we proposing this now?

South Wirral is currently in a strong position to plan for the future. Our last Ofsted report was very positive. The school has been oversubscribed for the last 3 years. School finances are healthy and improving. This means that the school is able to make a careful and informed plan for the future. It means that we can be bold and ambitious in our plans.

In 2020 the school took advantage of a Department of Education initiative called the "Trust Partnership" to work closely with, and learn about, a multi-academy trust. This initiative has been called a "try before you buy" approach. We researched every multi-academy trust within a 40 minute car journey of our school. In doing this we established the following criteria for decision making.

- Our chosen family of schools should share our commitment to promoting social justice.
- The quality of education must be improved further by collaboration and the professional development of staff.
- We must preserve our ethos as a community and child-centred school.
- Financial stability must be guaranteed and investment increased.
- Staff pay, conditions and welfare must be protected.
- We should place ourselves within a principled and robust framework for accountability.

We selected The Challenge Academy Trust (TCAT) because it meets all of these demanding criteria.

Over the past 18 months we have worked directly with the Trust to improve our school.

This has consisted of

- Support from Trust leaders with school improvement
- Visits to Trust schools for our middle and senior leaders
- Membership of professional development networks for staff
- Opportunities for students such as the Warrington Youth Rowing project and the visit to Warrington Wolves stadium.

The support that we received was reflected in our recent Ofsted report. Our experiences have shown us the principles and values of the Trust are lived out in practice. It has been a wholly positive experience for the school. This is why we consulted with staff, parents and the local community on joining TCAT.

Once a final vote takes place the Governing Body will write to all parents and carers to inform you of the outcome. We will then provide further information on the next steps for the school based on the outcome of the vote.

Many thanks for taking the time to read through this update on what we feel will be an opportunity that holds significant benefit to all learners and the wider community.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Goodwin
Headteacher



Mr Richard Barker
Chair of Governors