



**Consultation regarding
WEST ASHTEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL
joining the
LEO ACADEMY TRUST**

CONTEXT:

West Ashtead is a small primary school serving the community of Ashtead and Leatherhead. It has a Pupil Admission Number (PAN) of 30 in Reception and Key Stage 1 (Infant) classes with an additional 30 places provided in Key Stage 2 (Junior) classes to accommodate children transferring from nearby Infant schools. With the falling birth rate, and no major increase in local housing, Surrey County Council have predicted a surplus of places in the area. West Ashtead was already seeing the impact of this with fewer children joining the school at Key Stage Two. This has caused a significant impact on the budget as the cost of staffing two classes per year group, without the full number of children on roll, is not sustainable. West Ashtead Governors, reluctantly, requested a change to the KS2 PAN from the current additional 30 to 2. This will be in place for September 2023.

Small schools offer children a great deal. There is a strong feeling of community and belonging. Staff and children get to know each other across the school. Strengths and needs of individuals and groups are easily seen and catered for and it is easier for school to become an extension of children's family life.

There are, of course, disadvantages in being a 'small school'. Economically it is harder to provide the widest range of facilities and access to specialist teaching. There is less flexibility in managing absences with fewer staff available and when purchasing resources for smaller numbers, discounts and economy of scale does not kick in. Opportunities for staff development are limited.

In the summer of 2019 OFSTED inspectors judged the school as Requiring Improvement. The headteacher had been in post for only a few months. That year's SATs outcomes, only available after the inspection, were good and have continued to be at the National Average or better since then. This was through the pandemic, when the optimum number of children were taught in school.

Governors have confidence in the current staff team's ability to deliver a strong curriculum that supports all our children to make good progress from their starting points.

The priority of the West Ashtead Primary School Governing Board is to ensure an excellent education for all its students. We are wholly committed to improving standards to allow students to flourish in an exciting and engaging environment. Our current status is as a Community School within Surrey County Council. There is a commitment from the government that all schools should be part of a Multi Academy Trust.

The Governing Board has carefully considered the options available and believes that the best way to maximize the future success of the school whilst retaining its ethos, philosophy and commitment to improve is to join the LEO Academy Trust.

<https://www.leoacademytrust.co.uk/>



LEO is currently made up of seven primary schools in Sutton and in Surrey. The Chief Executive is Phillip Hedger. He has good experience of, and expertise in, supporting working across primary schools. This offers an exciting opportunity to enhance the opportunity to continue to build on the good work that has already been done over the last three years. We are passionate about working collaboratively with other schools who have the same commitment, ethos and drive to achieving the very best for its pupils. Working collaboratively with the schools in the LEO Trust will allow us to share the many strengths we have at West Ashtead whilst having the chance to learn from others.

We want to make a positive decision for future of our youngsters and know that making the decision to join the LEO Academy will allow that to happen.

In making this decision we have taken into consideration the following:-

- Our commitment to ensure excellent outcomes for our students.
- The ability to provide new and more opportunities for staff
- Safeguarding the school's long term financial future
- Ensuring good governance
- Being part of a MAT that is aligned to the ethos and culture of our school.
- The benefits that being part of a Trust can bring to our school.

We believe that joining the LEO Trust will:-

- Protect the identity and autonomy of West Ashtead Primary School
- Create opportunities to share skills and expertise
- Develop a robust programme of mutual support
- Strengthen school systems of assessment and moderation.

Under these proposals:-

- Each school remains focused on delivering excellent teaching and learning
- Each school continues to have its own Headteacher
- Each school continues to have its own governing body
- All schools work together on projects to improve education and learning in all schools
- A Trust Board exists to provide oversight of the performance of each school and to ensure there is effective investment in improvements across all schools.
- A local governing body to focus on teaching and learning at West Ashtead.

The formal consultation process begins on 21st November 2022 and will run until 16th December 2022. We have kept staff, parents /carers and SCC officers updated informally throughout the process.

Responses can be submitted by completing [this form](#).



Our proposed formal consultation timeline is outlined below.

Audience	EVENT	Date /venue
All stakeholders	Formal Consultation Starts	
All Staff	Meeting with LEO CEO, HT	30th November 2022, 3.45p.m. School
Parents & Carers	Meeting with LEO CEO, CoG, HT	5 December at 700p.m. School Hall
SCC	Consultation Letters sent	
External users of school site	Consultation Letters sent	5 December at 700p.m. School Hall
Local Schools & Pre schools/nurseries	Consultation Letters sent	5 December at 700p.m. School Hall
Union Representatives	Consultation Letters Sent	5 December at 700p.m. School Hall