



Thursday 26th May 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing today with an update on the leadership and governance at Wensum Junior. We know that the last few weeks have been unsettling for the community of Wensum Junior and we want to ensure that we communicate all changes and updates with you as soon as they are made.

Challenges at Wensum

There is work to be done to ensure that Wensum is in the best position to deliver a great education to your children. There are some challenges faced by the leadership at Wensum currently to ensure that both good standards of behaviour and high-quality learning is supported throughout the school. Staff across the school continue to work hard to ensure that this is the case.

Support from the Trust

As a trust, our role is to ensure that standards remain high and to support schools facing challenges and we continue to do this by supporting the leaders of the school in their work and making checks to ensure that good progress is being made.

Local Governance Arrangements

When schools are faced with challenges, as Wensum is currently, we need to adapt our governance to ensure that leaders in the school are supported and challenged appropriately. Our Trustees ask Local governing Bodies to carry out these duties, but when schools are faced with the challenges faced at Wensum, the Trustees ask that a Transition Board replaces the Local Governing Body as a temporary measure to ensure that the school makes rapid progress towards their priorities.

At Wensum Junior, a Transition Board will replace the Local Governing Body with immediate effect. We thank the Local Governing Body for their time and dedication to the school and hope they will continue to support parent voice within the next part of the school's journey.

Transition Board

The Transition Board will be made up of consultants who are sourced from roles internal and external to the trust, the Chair of the board will be independent of the trust. The Board operates by holding meetings in the same way that Governors do but their objectives are tightly set and focussed on rapid school improvement. **The Transition Board is a temporary measure and will be returned back to a Local Governing Body once the objectives are achieved.** One of the key objectives of the body will be to ensure that you as parents are clear on the work to be done and carried out and any changes this may bring. You may be aware that there has been some noise in the press recently concerning our trust view on Local Governing Bodies. It is important to state here that the reports are false and as a trust we value the work of Local Governing bodies and these bodies will continue to be in place within the trust. Our work as a trust is in reviewing the makeup of the bodies and effectiveness and not getting rid of them as a body. Only when a school faces significant challenges will a Governing Body be temporarily replaced by a Transition Board.

Next Steps

School Leadership

We continue to wish Victoria well in her recovery and are grateful to Teresa Buttery for standing in as Interim Headteacher over the last few weeks. We are now aware that Victoria will be away for a further period and have been able to secure a new Interim Headteacher to lead the school in her absence from 6th June. Justine Abbott brings considerable headteacher and other leadership experiences and will be at Wensum 5-days per week for the summer term. Justine will be on the playground on her first morning, alongside our Director of Education and Chair of the Transition Board. Justine will also ensure regular communications and availability with parents. We understand that a key focus for this next period is to ensure timely communication with parents and children.

Transition Board

You can expect a letter from the Chair of the Transition Board in the first week of the new term to introduce the board, and soon after this hear about the objectives of the board and how you as parents will be consulted and have a voice in the school.

We know that change is worrying and we also know that good communication can help alleviate fears and worries and we aim to get this right for you and your children, both in communication and ensuring a good quality education for your child.

Thank you

Lynsey Holzer

CEO

Evolution Academy Trust