



2nd February 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Proposal for Durham Johnston Comprehensive School to create a new multi academy trust with Belmont Community School and Framwellgate School Durham

Durham Johnston Comprehensive School has always been committed to working closely with other local primary and secondary school partners for the good of children in County Durham. That has recently involved working particularly closely with Belmont Community School and Framwellgate School Durham on a range of important educational issues. This collaboration has led to the governing and trust bodies of each of the three schools considering how we might deepen this partnership further in the future. The local and national educational context has changed significantly in recent years, and we feel that working more closely will benefit all of the children in our communities, as we will be able to collaborate on both school improvement and increased extracurricular support and opportunities.

We believe that the three schools share the same ambitions for their pupils, staff and the wider communities that they serve. All three schools have a clear commitment to providing an outstanding education for the young people in the Durham area, whilst also retaining and celebrating each school's unique characteristics. We also value the unique qualities and strengths of each individual school and feel that we can learn from each other.

Based upon that context, we feel that it is the right time to plan for how we might formalise this partnership and the governing bodies and trust have made the decision to consider the formation of a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). The new Trust would be based upon an equal partnership, with each school maintaining its unique character whilst working together on a range of shared projects. Whilst our plans are at a very early stage, we believe pupils, staff and stakeholders would benefit from the greater opportunities that such a formal relationship, through a newly formed MAT, could bring. Those opportunities could include:

- Extending a range of learning opportunities and activities for all pupils in our schools.
- Developing and enriching the curriculum in each school through partnership work.
- Maintaining high standards and further improving the quality of education in each school by enabling the sharing of excellent practice in teaching and learning.
- Enhancing the professional development of teaching and support staff in each school.



Headteacher: A J O'Sullivan BA, MA

Assistant Heads: H Davies BA
C Robson BA
J Wilbraham BA

Deputy Heads: J Bell BSc, MA
R McFadden MEng
M J Wright BA

Associate Assistant Heads: A Colquitt BSc, MEd
S Horn BSc

Director of Resources: H Charlton BA, MBA



- Building mutual support and accountability between Headteachers, Governors and Trust Members from each school.
- Recruiting and retaining excellent teachers so that the children of Durham are well taught and supported both in the short and long-term.
- Securing cost and resource efficiencies through joint commissioning of services.

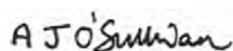
Whilst we are just beginning the work involved, we would hope to build a new MAT based upon the strong values and ethos of each school, so that every child and young person can benefit from being part of a new Trust in the Durham area. The decisions that we make will be directly linked to those shared values and we are excited about what we could offer to the children in our communities by further formalising our current shared work.

We are at the beginning of this process but wanted to write to parents and carers in all three schools in the spirit of transparency. As our partnership progresses, there will be a number of opportunities for consultation and for stakeholders to share their views. However, we are not seeking responses at present as there is significant work that we still need to undertake. We have started, but there is a lot still to do.

All three schools are dedicated to maintaining their current high standards, whilst planning for the future together. We are excited about the opportunities that such a development will bring, but mindful of the importance of having the support of all those within our school communities. Whilst the relationship between our three schools will naturally become closer as we work towards the formation of a new MAT, we will also continue to work very closely with our other primary and secondary partners. Those relationships will not change, and we greatly value, for example, our work with our primary partners on transition and with secondary colleagues on school improvement. The children that currently come to Durham Johnston from local primary schools will continue to do so, and that is equally true of Belmont Community School and Framwellgate Moor Durham.

We will keep you informed of the progress of the MAT in the coming months and will consult widely at key points when there is additional information to share. All three schools have a lot to offer individually but we feel that by working together we can ensure that all children continue to access an excellent education and take advantage of new and exciting opportunities.

Yours faithfully



Andrew O'Sullivan
Headteacher