

Dear Parents / Carers

Hugh Christie School to join Leigh Academies Trust

It has been agreed in principle that Long Mead Primary school, currently federated with Hugh Christie under a single governing body, will also join Leigh Academies Trust (LAT), subject to due diligence and consultations. Hugh Christie School (HCS) in Tonbridge was judged "inadequate" by Ofsted in July 2023. Recently, the Department for Education's Regional Director, Dame Kate Dethridge, following a meeting of her Advisory Board on Thursday 21st September, has decided that HCS should become an academy and join LAT. The change will take effect later this academic year.

LAT was formed in 2008 and is a large and successful local trust currently responsible for 31 schools in Kent, Medway, Bexley and Greenwich. LAT has considerable experience of turning schools around such as Wilmington Academy which was "inadequate" when it joined, but in its most recent Ofsted inspection was judged "outstanding" in all categories. In total, 11 schools in LAT are judged "outstanding" overall which is 38% of those inspected compared to 16% nationally. All other schools are at least "good" and many have "outstanding" features.

LAT's two most local secondary schools to HCS are Leigh Academy Tonbridge and Mascalls Academy, both high-performing non-selective schools. LAT is also responsible for three local primaries: Marden, Horsmonden and Paddock Wood. Over the next few months, due diligence and consultation will take place to invite further feedback from stakeholders to continue the strong plan for improvement already underway in both schools. LAT executives have begun working closely with the schools and look forward to these relationships developing positively in the weeks ahead. Our overriding priority is a smooth transition for pupils, parents and staff to guarantee a bright future of HCS, Long Mead and the wider community.

More information about Leigh Academies Trust:

LAT is a large, local and successful multi academy trust which started in Dartford in 2008. It is responsible for 31 academies (primary, secondary and special) in Kent, Medway, Bexley and Greenwich. LAT provides high-quality education for over 20,000 pupils aged 2-19, employs over 3,000 staff and receives an annual income of circa £170m.

For further information:

Leigh Academies Trust can be contacted at info@latrust.org.uk

The Tonbridge Federation can be contacted at admin@tonbridgefederation.co.uk

Yours Sincerely

Lesley Broom
Chair of Governors