

Dear Joy and Governors,

We are writing concerning the upcoming vote on the 12th February with regards the MAT proposal with White Hills Park Trust.

We appreciate the letter you sent out today with Adrian Nash, acknowledging the concerns which many parents hold regarding the huge lack of communication on this subject. For those of us in with children in the Foundation year, we had indeed not received any information on such a proposal at all prior to the most recent parents' forum.

Our [redacted] is thoroughly enjoying [redacted] time at Round Hill School, and as parents, we are very happy with the school's reputation, the curriculum, the staff. We're surprised therefore that the school would take up any discussions regarding becoming an academy as part of the White Hills Park federation with no obvious reason to do so. Whereas we don't expect the Trust to hold anything but good intentions at this stage in the process, we worry about the privatisation of education in both practice and principle.

We have heard and read of many ill effects such changes can bring. With allowing a Trust to determine their own admissions system, academisation creates potential for discrimination, particularly for SEND children whose needs may be seen to be too costly (in a marketised education system) and whose grades may not necessarily fit the ideal in a now competitive market. There are of course the financial and ethical problems that a school may be open to, with there being many examples of sponsors wrongly creating personal profit, with less scrutiny being given to spending. We also worry about staff whose jobs, schedules and salaries are dependent upon the financial interests of the Trustees. Just yesterday we were told of a friend's mother, a decades long teaching assistant in a school, having her salary cut by a third after the school took on academy status. We also hear from our peers who teach within academies, that they feel unreasonable pressure being placed upon them by sponsors to achieve near impossible targets (again due to the system being a part of a competitive market) in turn causing great strain on staff, where focus should instead be placed on good teaching, welfare and a providing a fulfilling and well-rounded education to children of all levels of attainment. Needless to say, all of these potential problems and uncertainties would be detrimental not only to the education of our children but to the trust between parents and school and the life of the wider school community.

Thanks again, for getting your letter out in time for us to raise our concerns before the 12th, and thank you in advance for taking our, and other parents' (and staff's), concerns into account before the governors' vote.

Warm regards,

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