Dear Chair,

I am writing regarding the governor's meeting on the 12th of February to decide whether Round Hill will seek to join the White Hills Park MAT. A decision to become an academy within a trust may have significant and lasting consequences for the running of the school, including its curriculum, staffing and the use of funding. I have been impressed with the quality of Round Hill, and feel that any changes should be on the basis of strong evidence that they will improve the quality of the schooling experience for all pupils. Whilst instigating membership of a MAT may benefit schools in some situations, a best practice decision making model involves consulting with the stakeholders, including parents, *early* in the process (1). The minutes from the extraordinary meeting of the governors held last June indicate that you have formed a working group to investigate the advantages/disadvantages of joining the While Hills Park Trust. From the very limited communication available to parents on this issue, I am unable to discern how the working group and forthcoming vote/meeting align with the model for decision making outlined in the ASCL guidance paper. I understand that there will be a bulletin with further information issued later in the week, which is a welcome development, but I remain concerned that parents have not have been adequately consulted in the early stages. An obvious way to remedy this would be to share the findings of the working group report for parents to consider and provide feedback. If the vote could be delayed to enable this it would greatly improve the transparency that you noted as key to the process in your June 2018 meeting. It would also be extremely useful to clarify whether the (post-vote) consultation that has been promised would focus on the details of a potential MAT membership, rather than whether Round Hill should seek to join a MAT.

With best regards,

(1) https://www.ascl.org.uk/help-and-advice/guidance-papers/ascl-guidance-staying-in-control-of-your-schools-destiny-joining-a-multiacademy-trust.html