

TRAFALGAR COMMUNITY INFANT SCHOOL

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*A voyage of discovery -
we're sailing to success together*

Dear Parents and Carers,

The Full Governing Body (FGB), with full support from the school's leadership team, are considering voluntary academisation of Trafalgar Community Infant School, and have entered a period of detailed discussions with GLF Schools.

GLF Schools is a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) of 43 schools, which includes Greenway Junior School, as well as several schools across Sussex & Surrey and a number of dedicated infant schools across the south and south east.

The school's senior leadership team - Miss Hickie and Mrs Cotton - and nominated members of the FGB have met with senior representatives from GLF Schools, including their CEO, Chief Financial and Operations Officer, Chief People Officer and Regional Education Director.

We have subsequently conducted extensive mutual due diligence, looking at GLF Schools' education and operational support offer, a process which has included visits to other GLF schools across the south east and meetings with head teachers from other schools within the MAT.

The FGB has concluded that joining GLF Schools would enable Trafalgar Community Infant School to retain its identity and remain firmly rooted in the local community with our own character, while benefiting from a whole range of opportunities available through membership with a larger family of schools.

GLF Schools' model places strong emphasis on collaboration, sharing best practice, and supporting strategic development while recognising the importance of local agency and protecting a strong identity for each school. The Trust's scale, stability and collaborative culture provide a strong foundation for the future while preserving the unique character of each individual school.

While there are numerous MATs operating across the country, the governing body's investigations have revealed that joining GLF Schools makes the most logical and strategic sense, given our existing close working relationship with Greenway Junior School (resulting from this school being the natural progression for most of our pupils from year 3 onwards). This position has been reinforced by the Department of Education, who similarly are aware of the strategic relationship between Trafalgar and Greenway. To be clear, the proposal under consideration is for Trafalgar to join the MAT that already contains Greenway. There are currently no plans for the two schools to merge into a single school.

For these reasons, **the FGB and school senior leadership team are recommending the decision to proceed with joining GLF Schools** and would like to invite your views on this proposal.

We are therefore launching a formal consultation to allow you to share your views in relation to our school joining GLF Schools.

What does this mean for our children?

The FGB's commitment to your children remains unchanged in that we will always prioritise decisions that we believe are in their best interest. Our considered view is that joining GLF Schools brings additional benefits that will enhance their daily experience while protecting what is already great about the school. These benefits include:

- More opportunities for learning - access to a wider range of shared curriculum tools and resources and a range of education experts.
- Access to a wider range of enrichment activities, competitions, festivals and partnerships that broaden experiences and support personal development.
- Stability and investment - the financial and operational security of a large trust means we can better protect and improve our facilities and staffing and overall offer. Significant investment is planned by GLF across education, estates and facilities, IT, HR and finance systems, as well as marketing and communications.
- Staff support - GLF is known for its excellent professional development. This means our amazing staff will have access to trust-wide support, training and resources, benefiting them and therefore the children in our school.

What does this mean for our staff?

When staff join GLF, their contracts and pension arrangements are transferred and protected as part of the TUPE scheme, retaining full service record and pension contributions with the Teachers' Pension.

In addition, being part of GLF provides opportunities to collaborate with colleagues across the Trust, share expertise, access high-quality professional development and pursue opportunities within a large, welcoming and supportive organisation.

The school would also benefit from dedicated specialist support in areas such as technology, estates, finance and operations, allowing leaders and staff to remain focused on delivering the best possible education experience for children and families.

Next steps

It is important to emphasise that this is a consultation and **no final decision has yet been made**. We will listen to your views carefully and make an informed decision only after the consultation has closed.

We will be holding an in-person event to provide an opportunity for you and any other interested stakeholders to come and hear from members of the FGB, GLF's CEO Warwick Sharp, and other senior representatives from GLF Schools. We are keen to hear from you and want to provide the opportunity for you to ask any questions.

The meeting will be held on **Thursday 22 October, 5.30pm to 6.30pm** in the school hall.

If you would like to attend, please email office@trafalgarinfant.com so that we can account for the expected number of attendees.

In the meantime, please take the time to read the full set of questions and answers provided in the appendix below.

When you are ready to share your views, we would be grateful if you could use the online form available [here](#). The consultation will close at 11.59pm on Sunday 8 November.

[Trafalgar Academisation Consultation – Share Your Views](#)

Alternatively, if you prefer you can also submit emailed responses to office@trafalgarinfant.com or written responses can be posted or handed in to the school office (Trafalgar Community Infant School, Victory Road, Horsham RH12 2JF).

Thank you for your ongoing support and contributing to our school community. We look forward to hearing from you.

Regards,

Richard King

Parent Governor and Co-Chair of the Full Governing Body
Trafalgar Community Infant School

APPENDIX:

Proposal for Trafalgar Community Infant School to join GLF School MAT – Questions and Answers

We recommend reading this document carefully before submitting a response to the consultation.

1. What is a MAT and how is it different from being a maintained school under the Local Authority?

A MAT (Multi-Academy Trust) is, in essence, a charity that runs a group of schools. Academies, first developed by the Labour government in the late 90s, are schools which operate outside local authority control and are allowed certain freedoms and a level of autonomy. They are still state schools and subject to the same Ofsted scrutiny and DfE oversight as any other school. GLF Schools is one of the largest MATs in England, with 43 schools, but each school keeps its own identity and character. Deep engagement in each community is very important within GLF. A MAT can centrally share support services, school improvement programmes, training, and provide overall leadership capacity.

2. Why is the school considering joining GLF?

In previous years, the Governing Body has periodically considered whether Trafalgar Community Infant School should become an academy. This has become a topical issue again following the Department for Education's recent White Paper, which encourages schools nationally to consider joining a Trust. It is also essential that we consider the onward transition for our pupils into their junior years. Given our close alignment with Greenway Junior School and the important transition between our two schools, we

naturally sought to begin discussions with Greenway Junior's MAT, GLF Schools, which has several other schools nearby and runs several infant schools.

One of the benefits of being part of a multi-academy trust is the opportunity for schools to work closely together, sharing expertise, resources and successful approaches. Where there is alignment between schools, this can make collaboration and support more effective and successful, helping to strengthen outcomes and experiences for pupils. For example, one of GLF's strengths is in inclusion. They are working with The Ambition Institute to roll out an inclusive teaching framework next year, and our teachers would be part of this, which would benefit all our children.

Beyond education, we are also mindful of the decreasing number of school-age children due to falling birth rates, and the need for all schools to think strategically about how to continue offering high-quality, sustainable early years provision. Parents and staff will know that there are many important aspects to keeping a school functioning beyond education: IT, HR, contracts, suppliers, catering and more. These aspects are all our responsibility at the moment. Within a MAT, many operations are run centrally, providing schools with the benefits of professional expertise and economies of scale in negotiating contracts, and helping to free up school leaders to focus on children.

Last but not least, GLF Schools would provide substantial investment in our school's infrastructure, such as IT (classroom AV refresh, replacement of ageing server infrastructure, Microsoft licensing, internet filtering and backup provision), and our school's site. It is unlikely this level and quality of investment would be possible for the school were it to refrain from joining the MAT.

3. Who makes decisions about whether the school joins GLF? Who has the final say?

In the case of voluntary academisation (which applies to our school), the school's governing body ultimately makes the decision whether to apply for academy status. The consultation is designed to gather views from parents, staff and the wider community, and governors will take those views into account when making their decision.

4. What happens if it doesn't go ahead?

If a decision is made not to proceed with academisation, the school will remain a maintained Local Authority school, run and governed in the same way it is today. The benefits described in this consultation would therefore not be possible for our school.

5. What is the process if the decision is made to join GLF?

The decision to join GLF would be followed by a formal Academy Order issued by the DfE. After this, the school, Local Authorities and GLF would need to complete legal formalities, such as finalising the

Academy Trust's Memorandum and Articles of Association, negotiating the Commercial Transfer Agreement, completing TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings - Protection of Employment) for staff and finalising the Funding Agreement with the DfE. It is envisaged that this could take 3-6 months from the academy order to complete the transfer. This is a process which many schools have taken forward, including many locally, and we would make it as straightforward and seamless as possible.

6. Will the school still have its own Governing Body?

In a MAT, the Trust Board is the legally accountable body for all schools, but each school has its own School Standards Board (SSB). Members of an SSB play an important role and act as independent advisors to the Trust Board, providing local knowledge and context. The SSB operates like a local champion for the school, maintaining its role of providing guidance and oversight on school priorities. It helps provide a strong link with the local community including parents.

7. Will joining GLF improve the school's financial stability?

Joining GLF would not automatically increase the amount of government funding received by the school - all schools are funded on the same basis. However, it would provide access to greater financial expertise, support services and significant purchasing power of a much larger organisation. The aim is to improve long-term financial resilience and ensure resources are used as effectively as possible to support pupils and staff. It is important to also note that GLF plans investment in the school including across estates and IT.

8. How will joining GLF benefit pupils?

The governing body's view is that joining GLF Schools would create new opportunities for learning, access to a wider range of shared curriculum tools and resources and a range of education experts. There would also be access to a wider range of enrichment activities, competitions, festivals and partnerships that broaden experiences and support personal development through the GLF Foundation, which aims to give all children equal access to enrichment and extracurricular opportunities. Greater staff support with GLF known for its excellent professional development ultimately benefits all children. Our amazing staff will have access to trust-wide support, training and resources, benefiting their careers, as well as the children in the school. Finally, with dedicated support services relating to non-educational topics such as estates management, joining GLF will give the school's senior leaders greater capacity to focus on delivering better educational outcomes for pupils.

9. Is the curriculum going to change?

Joining GLF Schools does not automatically mean that the curriculum will change. However, as an ambitious and continually improving school, we are never complacent about the education we provide. Just as GLF is, we are committed to ensuring that every child receives the very best educational

experience. With GLF's support, we will continue to review and develop our curriculum offer to reflect the latest evidence, research and effective practice. This is especially true in light of the recent national curriculum and assessment review which means changes across the whole system which every school needs to respond to.

One of the benefits of being part of a multi-academy trust is the opportunity for schools to work closely together, sharing expertise, resources and successful approaches. Where there is alignment between schools, this can make collaboration and support more effective and efficient, helping to strengthen outcomes for pupils. Any future curriculum developments would be carefully considered by school leaders and informed by what is proven to work best for children. Parents can be assured that the curriculum will remain evidence-informed, ambitious and focused on delivering the highest quality education.

10. Will my child's teacher change? Will any of the teachers or school staff have to leave as a result of the academisation?

No. Joining GLF Schools will not result in teachers changing. Children will continue to be taught by the staff currently working at the school. As with any school, staffing may change over time as colleagues move on or new staff join, but this would happen regardless of whether the school joins GLF Schools.

In practice, all staff would transfer under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (TUPE). TUPE is specifically designed to protect staff, ensuring that existing terms, conditions, and continuity of employment move to any new employer.

11. Will the uniform change? Will school hours, term dates and school catchment be changing?

No changes are planned to the school's uniform, school day or admissions arrangements. The school would continue to serve its local community as it does now. As part of GLF, the school would join a wider programme of Trust activities, including the annual GLF inset day for staff, meaning full alignment with Greenway Junior School, and opportunities for pupils to participate in events such as the Boundless Festival.

12. Will Trafalgar be merging with Greenway?

There are no plans for Trafalgar to merge with Greenway, and that is not being considered. There are significant benefits from both schools being in the same Trust which leads to plenty of opportunities for how we can work very effectively together.

13. Will the change affect the Friends of Trafalgar and events held throughout the year (Christmas market, summer fair, etc)?

We would expect the Friends of Trafalgar, the Christmas Market, Summer Fair and other much-loved school events to continue. These activities are an important part of the school's identity and community. Joining GLF would provide opportunities to share ideas and access additional support where helpful, while preserving the traditions that are important to pupils, families and staff.

14. How will parent and staff consultation views be considered and factored into the decision making?

The full governing body (FGB) will use the consultation to gauge overall stakeholder sentiment towards the proposed option to join GLF Schools MAT. As with any consultation, we anticipate there will be a range of views, all of which are important for the FGB to understand. Understanding which things our stakeholders support, don't understand, require more information on, or are concerned about, helps inform our final decision as to whether to proceed. The governing body will take the information gathered via the consultation process into account before making a final decision on whether to proceed with the process.

15. What will stay the same and what will likely change if Trafalgar joins the GLF MAT?

Most of what families experience day to day would remain the same. The school would continue to serve its local community, pupils would continue to be taught by their teachers, and the values, ethos and identity of the school would remain at the heart of school life.

For school staff, the school would become part of GLF's wider family of schools, giving leaders and staff access to additional expertise, training, specialist support and opportunities to collaborate with colleagues across the Trust. The Headteacher would continue to lead the school while being supported by a Regional Education Director and a network of education specialists.

16. What will change in the day-to-day life of pupils or children?

Children will continue to attend the same school, be taught by the same staff and enjoy the same school traditions and community. Over time, pupils will benefit from additional opportunities that come from being part of a larger family of schools, including Trust-wide events, enrichment activities and the sharing of successful educational practice across GLF schools. The aim is to build on the school's existing strengths, not change what makes Trafalgar special.

17. Does GLF plan to invest financially in the school?

Yes. GLF Schools has already identified a number of areas in which to invest, which will benefit the school and education of our children.

IT: GLF plans to invest in bringing Trafalgar Community Infant School's technology up to date. The intention would be to provide a more resilient, secure and consistent digital offer for pupils and staff, while also enabling Trafalgar to benefit from GLF's central IT support, infrastructure, network and upgrades, cyber security controls and platform standards.

HR and Finance systems: GLF plans to integrate Trafalgar into its HR and Finance systems, which will be secure, compliant and consistent. They will help deliver a better user experience for staff and enable the school to benefit from GLF's central HR and finance support.

Estates: Capital funding will be released for improvements across the school site, including roofing repairs, toilet refurbishment, resurfacing of play areas and flooring replacements.

The Trust will also fund a new website, and other marketing materials.

18. Will Trafalgar pay into GLF for a range of services?

At the moment Trafalgar pays into West Sussex LA for support. The arrangement in future with GLF would be similar: each school in GLF contributes a partnership fee to help fund central services such as finance, HR, estates, IT, governance, safeguarding support, school improvement and legal services. In return, the school receives services and expertise that would otherwise need to be purchased separately at higher cost without the economies of scale that are possible at GLF. Governors have considered the overall financial implications and believe membership of GLF represents good value and will strengthen the school's long-term sustainability.

19. What happens to the school's land and buildings?

Ownership of the school site will transfer to GLF schools to ensure that it remains available to the school. The land and buildings would always continue to be used for educational purposes. Arrangements are put in place between the local authority, the academy trust and the Department for Education to ensure school sites remain protected for education.