

Sandford Hill Primary School

Clayfield Grove. Longton, Stoke-on-Trent, ST3 5AQ

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Thoughtfulness, Respect and Hard Work

Dear Parents, Carers and Staff

As you'll be aware from our previous communications, over the past year we have been working closely with The Societas Trust, a locally-based Multi Academy Trust (MAT). This has involved us collaborating informally initially and then formalising our partnership in November 2025 when we became an Associate Member.

During this time, we have experienced many benefits for both our pupils and staff. These have included enhanced opportunities for professional development, greater collaboration between schools, the sharing of expertise and best practice, and improved opportunities to support pupils' learning and wellbeing.

Having carefully considered the positive impacts of the partnership, school leaders and governors believe that joining The Societas Trust as a full member would provide further opportunities to strengthen the education and support we offer to our children, while preserving the values and ethos that are important to our school community.

Joining The Societas Trust means that Sandford Hill would convert to an academy. We have prepared some further information (via frequently asked questions) on what this means, and the work that we have been doing over the past year, which is available on the school website at www.sandfordhill.org.uk. You can also find out more about The Societas Trust at www.societastrust.org.uk.

The final decision on whether we can become an academy and join The Societas Trust will be made by the Department for Education (DfE). This follows a formal application process that subject to final approval from the Governing Body, we would look to commence in September 2026.

To help inform these decisions, we would like your views. We are therefore launching a four-week consultation starting today (Monday 8th June), and closing on Friday 3rd July, at 12 noon. If you would like to submit any feedback or questions as part of the consultation process, please email these to consultation@sandfordhill.org.uk.

Similarly, if you would like a face-to-face meeting to obtain further information about the proposed conversion, answer any questions you may have or to provide feedback, please let us know via the above email address by Monday 15th June at 12 noon. Depending on the number of requests received, you may be invited into school for a one-to-one discussion, or we will look to arrange a larger group meeting(s).

All responses to the formal consultation, along with feedback already received, will be collated and presented to the Governing Body on 9th July 2026, where the decision to proceed (or not) with an application to the DfE will be taken. If a formal application is submitted, the responses and feedback will also be included as evidence of our consultation activity, as required as part of the conversion process under the Academies Act 2010.

Please do take a moment to read the information on our website and consider any feedback that you would like to provide. Thank you for your continued support.

Sarah Smith
Headteacher

Christopher Austin
Chair of Governors