



The Rivermead Inclusive Trust and The Academy of Woodlands Trust to explore merger

After consulting with the Regional Schools' Commissioner, The Rivermead Inclusive Trust (RIT) and The Academy of Woodlands Trust (AoW) are exploring a possible merger. Both trusts have begun due diligence with the potential to complete within the academic year 21/22.

RIT was established as a Multi-Academy Trust in January 2016 and as at 31st August 2021 operated 3 academies within the Medway area of Kent. The academies include; Hoo St. Werburgh Primary and Marlborough Centre, Walderslade Primary and Rivermead Community Special School. Rivermead School expanded to incorporate an offsite provision specifically for highly vulnerable learners with SEMH (Rivermead Routes for Re-integration – Triple R). RIT also operates a post 16 provision all for learners with EHCP's, this is in partnership with Mid-Kent College. The Trust also operate ROCC (Rivermead Outreach Community Challenge) that is a holiday provision and gives respite care through Short Breaks. The Trust is also working alongside the Department of Education and the London Borough of Bromley to open a new Free School in the Bromley area. The Trust operates academies for pupils from Nursery right through to post 16, pupil capacity of 255 secondary age pupils all with an SEN diagnosis and 772 primary age pupils of which 80 have an SEN diagnosis.

AoW was established as Multi-Academy Trust in April 2013. Since conversion Woodlands has expanded to become a 3-form entry school with a large nursery. The academy provides education for 630 pupils age 4-11 and 112 Nursery children. There is a significant focus on the local community and AoW provides extensive facilities including Treetops Coffee Shop, Woodlands Gym and a variety of Arts and Sports spaces.

Through collaboration and partnership we are working towards alignment of RIT and AoW. This will raise aspirations across all of our schools so learners can achieve more than they think possible. We are passionate in ensuring equality for all, for learners and staff alike. As an inclusive Trust we will continue to work closely with our local communities and feel that the merger of RIT and AoW will benefit our children and families.

Tina Lovey, The Rivermead Inclusive Trust's Chief Executive, said:

"We are very proud of the schools and provisions that are part of the Rivermead Inclusive Trust. We see the Academy of Woodlands as joining our family and we are excited to enter this new stage to our alignment and partnership. This will be a 'coming together' with solidification of ethos, values and vision for the greater good of the children that we serve and our local community. This effective partnership will further enhance the 'inclusive'



approach which will now reach more children and young people across our family of schools emphasizing a therapeutic and holistic learning community. We look forward to embracing new colleagues and celebrating every success both for young people, their families and staff."

Liza Thompson, The Academy of Woodlands Chair of Governors, said:

"The Rivermead Inclusive Trust ethos of wrap around, holistic education and care for all of their children, along with their strong community presence aligns perfectly with the Academy of Woodlands way. The Governing Body are proud of all we have achieved and are excited for our next steps of future working together."

Public consultation will begin on Tuesday 29th March for a period of 4 weeks ending on Monday 6th May 2022

If you wish to come along to the public consultation meeting the details are below:

Friday 22nd April at 2pm in the Oak Theatre (at the Academy of Woodlands) - Public Consultation

Friday 22nd April at 3.30 in the Oak Theatre (at The Academy of Woodlands) - Staff Consultation for AoW staff

Thursday 28th April at 3.30 via TEAMS - Staff Consultation for RIT staff

If public/staff have any questions they would like answered at the meetings, please submit your question to the following email address by Wednesday 20th April at 5.00 p.m.

public.consultation@aow.uk.com