



## **The Knaphill Federation of Schools (KFoS) Consultation regarding joining The Goldsworth Trust**

Following the consultation, below are the questions KFoS received from a variety of stakeholders via email and in person. Some questions/answers have been slightly altered to ensure anonymity.

The responses include the questions asked at the open meeting on Thursday 6 June. In total five parents attended, including parent reps who were asking questions gathered from the parents in their child's class. Parents from EYFS, KS1 and KS2 were represented along with the PTA.

The Federation Head, the CEO of the Goldsworth Trust, the Chair of KFoS Governors and two other KFoS Governors were in attendance.

### *Will pupils and parents notice any changes when KFoS is part of the Trust?*

We anticipate pupils, parents and staff noticing very few changes. Any changes they will see will be positive changes enhancing the pupil provision.

### *What are the top three reasons to join the Goldsworth Trust?*

- Collaboration to share best practice and provide wider opportunities for our children.
- Make better use of resources across the trust for children, staff and the wider community.
- Ensure greater opportunities for the best possible outcomes for our children.

### *What are the main risks?*

- One risk that is often of concern is that of loss of identity – but this is mitigated as we are joining the Trust at an early stage and are joining as collaborative partners. Existing schools within the Trust have retained their own identity and this would be the case with Knaphill.
- One of the greatest risks for all schools at the moment is the tight financial position and this risk exists whether or not the school joins the Trust. Working together ensures we can make best use of resources and achieve greater value for money.
- Joining the Trust is ultimately the least risky option as we can face any challenges collaboratively.

### *Who are the other schools in the Trust?*

Goldsworth Primary School and St John's Primary School are part of the Goldsworth Trust. The schools are rated as good (St John's) and outstanding (Goldsworth) by Ofsted. They are local schools that the Federation know well and work with closely informally. In addition both schools have their own nursery with provision for 2 year olds upwards and St John's has a Children's Centre.

### *Will there be more sporting, art and music opportunities?*

We are seeking to use all the resources across the Trust to the benefit of all children. It is the intention of the Trust to use the benefits of closer working to enhance opportunities in all these areas.

### *Is there a risk that the school playing fields could be built on or sold off?*

It is likely that there will be less risk as the Trust will have more control over what the fields can be used for and can't be forced by the Council to change the use of the fields. When conversion to joining the academy is complete, the Trust will have a 125 year lease to use the land from Surrey County Council. In practical terms, this means the land must be used for the same purpose it was initially leased for this period of time. Any subsequent change of use would need to be agreed by both Surrey County Council and the Trust.

### *Will the admissions process change?*

We will become our own admissions authority, which means we can set our own admissions criteria. The reception and year three admissions process will continue to be administered through Surrey CC as it is now.

### *With regards funding, as the Trust receive all their budget directly, will Surrey County Council have less money to spend on school services provided to other schools across the county?*

The budget for SEN provision will still go to Surrey as part of the national funding formula (this is called the High Needs Block) and then passed on to the school on an individual per pupil basis for any children that have an Education, Health and Care Plan, so this will not differ. Surrey County Council are reducing the services they provide to maintained schools, particularly back office services such as HR, legal and maintenance support. Being part of a trust means greater independence in being able to shop around for these services to receive the best service at the most efficient price.

### *How much independence will KFoS keep?*

The Goldsworth Trust feel very passionately about individual schools maintaining their own identity and ethos including uniforms.

Some policies will be Trust wide policies but have an individual school angle where appropriate. The Federation will retain its own Local Governing Body.

### *Will there be a lead school?*

Absolutely not. Knaphill will be a collaborative partner with the other schools. The Trust will be changing their name in order that the name of one school is not overly-represented. The CEO of the Trust has indicated that this may be led by the pupils and staff across the Trust. The former Vice-Chair of Governors at KFoS sits on the Trustee Board at Goldsworth Trust so we are well represented.

### *Will we join as one or two schools?*

We will join as a Federation of the two schools with a view to becoming a primary within the Trust when it is favourable to do so.

### *Will there be changes to inset days and school holidays?*

The Trust will share some inset days for training purposes.

Being part of an academy trust allows schools to chose their own school time-table and term times. Currently the Goldsworth Trust operate to the Surrey County Council school calendar.

### *What teething problems have other academy trusts had?*

The main difficulties we are aware of have been around forced conversion, no significant issues have been highlighted by schools who have joined a Trust voluntarily. As the schools already know one another we do not anticipate any difficulties.

### *Parents have asked for more information about the process.*

We hope by sharing these questions and answers you have more information, but please do get in touch if you do have any further questions or comments – [consultation@kfos.co.uk](mailto:consultation@kfos.co.uk)

## Time line

May 2019 onwards	The Academy Working Group (consisting of KFoS Federation Head, School Business Manager and Governors) are conducting due diligence of the Trust as required by the Department of Education
June 2019	KFoS have received the Academy Orders from the Department of Education
May/June 2019	Stakeholder consultation
June 2019	KFoS appointing solicitors to handle the land transfer and other legal matters (funded by the DfE conversion grant)
tbc 2019	Formal staff consultation
June 2019 onwards	KFoS and The Goldsworth Trust to agree scheme of delegation, finance and other governance arrangements
1 October onwards	Estimated completion date pending consultation and legal matters

NB: Some technical elements have to be handled by external agencies so timelines could change.

*What changes or differences will there be to current pay and conditions. Will it be a Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) transfer? Looking to the future will pension contributions continue to be paid into the Local Government Pension Scheme?*

Following our conversation I am happy to confirm that they will be raised at the formal staff consultation. We have been advised that this normally happens approximately two months prior to the completion date.

*Thank you for the email regarding making the Knaphill Federation of Schools a part of the Goldsworth Trust. The point that stood out to me was the mission of the Goldsworth Trust to 'improve the life chances for \*all\* children, whatever their abilities...so they can achieve their full potential'. What does this mean in practical terms?*

In practical terms this means the schools within the Trust will have a formal relationship in which to share best practice and knowledge between staff across all schools. We will also be able to make the most of all our resources and learn from each other's successes and implement them across the Trust.

*What additional opportunities could be provided to children with special needs, should KFOS join the Goldsworth Trust?*

KFoS and The Goldsworth Trust will be doing everything it can do offer the best possible support to children requiring specialist provision. We will potentially be able to share SEND resources and expertise, as well as pool together to address our mutual training needs. Schools within the Goldsworth Trust, as with all schools, have experienced an increase in demand for additional support for children with SEND, and particularly children with ASD. They have plans in place to increase their capacity to support children with these needs, reflecting their belief that, wherever possible, children should be taught in a mainstream environment when this is the best thing for them. At the same time it is recognised that some children's needs become more significant than can be met within a mainstream environment and it would be in their best long-term interests to be educated in more specialist provision.

*Becoming an academy would, in my opinion, change the entire status of the school and I feel this is being underestimated. There has been very little information for parents and a 45-minute consultation one morning does not constitute how important the new changes could or will be.*

*As far as I can see, the 'Goldsworth Trust' is made up of two other schools, Goldsworth Park and St John's Primary. In the letter, it states that resources will be shared, so what are the Governors and Knaphill Schools envisaging for that? Resources, to me, mean staff as well as equipment. I*

*feel this needs clarity. Will money raised from Summer Fairs etc be pooled for the benefit of all the schools within the Trust?*

*An Academy needs strong management and work as a business. Are the right staff and expertise in place at Knaphill Schools for that? Schools without academy status have to work as businesses to a degree, but ultimately they are there to teach; becoming an academy, in my mind, would change that dynamic. Academies do not have to adhere to the School Curriculum which I would not be happy about; how do the teachers feel about that? Who would be in overall charge of the Goldsworth Trust? Do we, as a School, want to take direction from other schools if we are part of one Trust?*

Thank you for you getting back to me with regards your concerns about The Knaphill Federation of Schools (KFoS) joining The Goldsworth Trust. Both the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Governing Board welcome feedback. We really do appreciate you taking the time to get in touch – this is an important part of the consultation; getting parents involved.

Please rest assured this is not a decision the KFoS Governing Board have taken lightly. As detailed in the consultation paper and the newsletter, the Governing Board have been researching and assessing options for the future of KFoS tirelessly for over four years, weighing up all options open to the Federation. We believe strongly that now is the right time for KFoS to join with The Goldsworth Trust. Please visit this link to the consultation paper which details the benefits: <https://www.knaphill-lower.surrey.sch.uk/page/?title=Academy+Consultation&pid=123&action=saved>

The parents who attended the consultation open meeting asked excellent questions, some of which mirror yours. Please do take a look at the attached link which is a document detailing questions asked and KFoS answers. <https://www.knaphill-lower.surrey.sch.uk/page/?title=Academy+Consultation&pid=123&action=saved>

*Should there be a change in Government, the Labour Party has vowed to scrap all academy schools. What would happen in that situation?*

The shadow education secretary has said no new academies would be created under a Labour government, and that existing academies would be able to return to local authorities, “assuming there is capacity and a desire to do so in the relevant local authority”. The information we have is that Surrey do not have the capacity to take any schools back.