



# Orchard Academy Trust

Hildenborough Crescent, Maidstone,  
Kent, ME16 0PG  
Telephone: 01622 757350

Executive Head: Mrs J Young

29<sup>th</sup> June 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

## **Consultation on extending the school age range at Orchard Academy Trust to include provision for two year old children**

### **Current Position:**

Orchard Academy Trust currently consists of two primary schools Allington Primary School and Barming Primary School. Both schools offer education from 4 – 11 years. As a fully inclusive Trust we commit to being an outstanding Multi Academy Trust and invest in the staff, so that the outcomes for our children are exceptional. We create an inspirational and vibrant community where all members are able to achieve excellence as proud, confident individuals.

As many of you are already aware the manager of Belmont Pre-school is retiring and has accepted an offer from the Trust to take this on from September 2018. As the preferred option is for this to be a part of the Trust rather than a subsidiary company it is necessary to follow a legal process that includes a period of consultation when parents are asked their views.

### **The Proposal:**

The Proposal is to extend the age range in the Trust from 4 – 11 years to 2 – 11 years. The Pre-School will continue to run from its current site and will retain its name and current staff. The children will have the benefit of being able to access facilities on the Barming Primary School site, such as the grounds, ICT suite, Forest Schools etc. Parents would be able to access school meals and in the long term, have access to before and after school club.

### **The benefits:**

Research has shown that where schools provide Early Years education, pupils make rapid progress as they move between the early stages of learning.

School staff are able to share their expertise between Early Years and Key Stage 1 and this is critical to consistent progress.

Where children go on to attend the school, the transition would be a smooth and effective process allowing the children to settle more quickly. It would provide continuity of education and provision through a single leadership team.

A wider range of resources and expertise could be shared across the age range of the school. This wider flexibility can be particularly useful for children with special educational needs or vulnerabilities.

The children would benefit from experiencing educational activities to support their learning and development, as part of a wider school curriculum.

**How to make your views known:**

You can send your comments and questions by email to [tbm@allington.kent.sch.uk](mailto:tbm@allington.kent.sch.uk) or by letter to either school office. The consultation closes on 27<sup>th</sup> July at 4.00 p.m. Responses will be published on the respective websites during August.

It is hoped that these arrangements will be in place ready for September 2018.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J Young', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mrs J Young

Executive Headteacher