



SUMMERHILL SCHOOL

Tuesday 20th January 2026

Dear parents/carers,

Consultation Letter to Parents/Carers

The Governing Body of Summerhill School would welcome your views through a consultation on our proposal to move from being a Local Authority maintained school to joining an existing Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). A MAT is a charitable organisation with several schools working closely together as one legal entity, collaborating to provide the best educational experience possible for all young people.

For more than three years now, the Governors and Senior Leadership Team have been discussing the future strategic direction of our school and the benefits of joining a Multi Academy Trust. We have explored and carried out due diligence on all options available to us both locally and nationally. During this time, we have been working with the Stour Vale Academy Trust on specific areas of school improvement and have found that they very much share our approach to education and welfare of students. Our values underpin everything that we do at Summerhill, and we feel that Stour Vale Academy Trust represent everything that we believe in. This alignment of values and the opportunity of collaborative work will ensure that we provide the best possible educational experience for all of our students and families.

Stour Vale was founded in 2017 by one Primary and two Secondary Schools who recognised the significant benefits of working collaboratively. Since then, Stour Vale has steadily grown. It now has thirteen member schools and one day nursery across Sandwell, Dudley and north Worcestershire, namely:

Redhill School, Ridgewood High School, The Earls High School, Wordsley School, Oldbury Academy, Holywell Primary & Nursery School, Huntingtree Primary School, Lavender Farm Nursery, Moat Farm Infant School, Moat Farm Junior School, Newtown Primary School, Northfield Road Primary School, Olive Hill Primary School, Queen Victoria Primary School.

Their governance arrangements allow each school to have their own distinctive and individual identity whilst actively working in partnership. Their schools have a shared aim that every student will make excellent progress in their academic achievement and character development, and that they will enjoy the experience to the full. Their ethos is based on core values of trust and transparency, and their model offers opportunities to work with other schools locally and across the MAT on such areas as school improvement, professional development as well as benefitting from economies of scale.



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As such, we feel that Stour Vale Academy Trust offers many opportunities to Summerhill School as we continue our improvement journey.

Our school ethos, values and vision will remain under the control of the school, there will be no change of uniform, curriculum or policy in terms of admissions, behaviour or other aspects of students' experience. This will enable Summerhill to keep the 'golden threads' that make it a special place to study and work. We will continue to be a community school with our strong family feel.

The final decision to join Stour Vale Academy Trust will be taken by the Governing Body and will be based on the best interests of students, staff and the wider community. As part of the decision-making process, the Governing Body is committed to consulting with stakeholders so that their views are taken into account in reaching a final decision.

The consultation period will cover the five-week period from Tuesday 20th January to Monday 23rd February 2026. If you would like to comment on this proposal, if you have any questions about the proposal, or if you have any suggestions or observations you would like to make, then please email, MATconsultation@summerhill.dudley.sch.uk Any responses received after Monday 23rd February 2026 will not be considered. A nil response will be interpreted as being broadly supportive of the proposal.

We will also be holding a consultation meeting on Wednesday 11th February 2026. More information on this will follow.

As ever, thank you for your continued support of Summerhill School.

Yours faithfully,

Carol Fletcher
Chair of Governors

Yours faithfully,

Tim Harris
Headteacher