



Tackley C of E Primary School

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11th February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

The development of Tackley and Wootton-by Woodstock Primary Schools in 2021

We are writing to inform you of some important changes at our schools.

As you are aware, in September last year, Tackley and Wootton-by-Woodstock announced a shared headship model between our two headteachers: Mrs Lauren Murrey and Miss Valerie Lucas.

This followed Miss Lucas indicating that she wished to retire from her post as Headteacher at Wootton-by-Woodstock with effect from August 2021, and the recognition of the governing bodies that working together can drive up standards and improve outcomes for our children. Miss Lucas has now confirmed her plans to retire in August 2021. We are now pleased to outline the plans for leadership at our schools from September.

From September, Mrs Murrey will be Headteacher at both Tackley and Wootton-by-Woodstock schools. This builds upon the work already successfully undertaken by Mrs Murrey and Miss Lucas to provide a wider and richer curriculum for all our children, and ensure good practice and expertise is shared between the schools. This work will continue.

Mrs Murrey's time is expected to be split evenly between both schools. Mrs Barnett will continue in her role as Assistant Headteacher from September 2021 and will support Mrs Murrey with the day to day running of the school.

To support joint working between the two schools the governing bodies of both schools have agreed to merge. Both governing bodies recognise that strengthened governance, through the sharing of good practice to support Mrs Murrey is critical to further improving standards in both schools.

This does not mean that Tackley and Wootton-by-Woodstock schools are merging. Both share many characteristics – they are vital parts of their local communities, as Church of England schools they have shared values and both are members of the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust (ODST) family of schools but they will retain their own identity and traditions. The governors and ODST remain committed to the development of both schools.

You will be aware that financial constraints and budget challenges have dominated decision making for Governors at Tackley over the last five years. Our number on roll has fallen over time, due to a reduced catchment area and no longer being the catchment school for pupils from The Heyfords. New housing developments in Tackley have begun to strengthen our numbers in the last year.

Like many rural schools we have had to re-structure classes, and reduce our finances in key areas. We are very proud that these financial constraints have not impacted on our ability to recruit experienced staff, or on the quality of teaching and learning that we are able to provide.

These pressures are ongoing for small schools such as Tackley, and are unlikely to change in the short term. Working together with Wootton by Woodstock will help us to manage the impact of current and future budget challenges.

This proposal was recently presented to the full governing bodies of both schools and received the unanimous support of all governors. ODST is fully supportive of these changes and will help us plan and implement them.

We will now start on the process of establishing how we work together from September in detail and look forward to updating you in due course. We trust that the plans outlined above will reassure you that Governors have the best interests of both schools at heart and continue to work with that in mind.

Yours sincerely,



Matt Mead

Chair of Governors,

Tackley Church of England Primary School



Martin York

Chair of Governors,

Wootton-by-Woodstock Primary School

