

Parents/Carers' Forum - 21st April 2018

Child's current year group	Question	Response from Mr Farquhar / Trust Board
4	<p>Class sizes: Classes of 30+ have shown to detrimentally impact children's education. What assurances are there that our children's education won't be compromised due to financial restraints?</p>	<p>Each academic year, schools look at class groups and this year will be no different. All year group sizes currently differ and therefore class group sizes do. Confirmed pupil numbers for next year will inform decision making.</p>
4	<p>If class sizes are as large as 32, will there be a TA working with each year 5 teacher?</p>	<p>It is the aim of the Trust to keep class sizes around 30. In some circumstances, there may be a slightly larger class. At present, there are 2 classes with 31 pupils (year 6 Greneway).</p>
6	<p>A number of pupils in year 6 are leaving at the end of the year. Will this mean that year 7 could be in larger class groups, reducing the number of classes in year 7 next year?</p>	<p>It is the aim of the Trust to keep class sizes around 30. In some circumstances, there may be a slightly larger class. At present, there are 2 classes with 31 pupils (year 6 Greneway).</p>
4	<p>Transition: Will Mr Farquhar be at the sites on Transition Day?</p>	<p>Mr Farquhar has many commitments at his current school which have to be arranged around the dates before he can commit.</p>
4	<p>How will pupils be allocated classes? Could children choose friends to be with?</p>	<p>Classes will be allocated using the usual procedures. Year Leaders of year 5 will allocate pupils to classes following discussions with staff from the first schools and parental requests.</p>
4	<p>Transitions dates all predate the appeals process. What is your advice for parents and children going through this process in order to avoid confusion and distress?</p>	<p>We are keen to understand the concerns that a small number of parents have about allocations. Along with Hertfordshire</p>

<p>4 8</p> <p>6</p>	<p>Is Mrs Clay doing transition work with current year 8 pupils? They are also moving this year.</p> <p>Will there be many more days of pupils coming together at the Greneway site as it seemed to work well?</p>	<p>Admissions, we aim to ensure certainty about school places at the earliest date. We advise parents to accept the place they have been allocated and submit a continuing interest application for either Greneway/Roysia. All pupils will be offered transition activities to support their move.</p> <p>Hertfordshire Admissions Officer, Helen Kemp will be happy to talk through the continuing interest process and can be contacted via the Hertfordshire Customer Service Centre 0300 123 4043 or e-mail helen.kemp@hertfordshire.gov.uk.</p> <p>Year leaders, members of the support teams and Mrs Clay work alongside pupils in year 8 who need support with transition.</p> <p>Year 5 have a day planned for 10th May. During next academic year, joint activities will be planned.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Uniform: Concerns about having a mixture of uniforms during the changeover will compromise the value of 'sameness' uniform provides, resulting in bullying for kids in the 'wrong' uniform.</p>	<p>Ideally, everyone would be in the same uniform from day one! However, we recognise the significant cost of uniform and expect the new uniform to be purchased when replacement is necessary within an 18 month to 2 year timeframe. Some parents may choose to purchase the new uniform when it is first introduced.</p>
<p>4</p> <p>6</p>	<p>Offers of help: I really want Royston to have an excellent schooling system. How can I help? How can the community get behind our schools more? Lots of parents have lots of skills, use them!</p> <p>I am responsible for our Apprenticeship programme at my place of work. I am happy to start a conversation if we can help education provision anywhere.</p>	<p>These offers of help are warmly accepted. Working together as a team is always the best way forward.</p> <p>The Trust will be in contact with further details of a parents' forum in due course.</p>

<p>4</p> <p>4</p> <p>4</p> <p>5</p>	<p>Roysia: Why weren't we allowed to look round Roysia to make an informed considered decision?</p> <p>What will you do if 38-45 children want Roysia?</p> <p>What plans do you have to ensure that the single form at Roysia will be as much part of the community as the 5 forms at Greneway?</p> <p>Will you be able to keep the caring feel of Roysia? The staff have offered my family much support and we hope this will continue in the new school.</p> <p>Would the Trust consider selling the Roysia site to help with funding?</p>	<p>When the open evenings were held in October, there was no reason to expect that the schools would not be merging in September 2018 therefore were only held on the Garden Walk site. An open morning is taking place on 3rd May where pupils (who have been offered places) and their parents are invited to visit Roysia site. Please contact the school office for more details: admin.roysia@rsat.org.uk</p> <p>Each academic year, schools look at class groups and this year will be no different. All year group sizes currently differ and therefore class group sizes do. Confirmed pupil numbers for next year will inform decision making.</p> <p>Joint activities will be planned across all year groups regardless of their site in the academic year 2018-19.</p> <p>One of the core values of the Trust is to have a caring ethos and work alongside parents to ensure all members of the school community feel supported.</p> <p>The Roysia site does not belong to the Trust therefore, it can not be sold. It is leased from Herts County Council.</p>
<p>7</p> <p>7</p>	<p>Meridian: Very concerned about lack of communication from Meridian. We would like to see this improve.</p> <p>Delighted to hear of the ambition to rebuild the sixth form. What are the chances that will be the case by the time our children get that far?</p>	<p>Communication across the Trust will be part of a review.</p> <p>The Trust is keen to reinstate the sixth form as soon as it is financially viable.</p>

4	<p>Logistics: Will pupils have to move between sites unsupervised?</p>	<p>Middle years aged pupils will not be moved unsupervised between sites. The intention is for Year 5 pupils to be taught on their designated site (Roysia or Greneway sites).</p>
4 7 7 7 11 4 7 9 7	<p>Staffing: How are you going to retain and appoint high-achieving, outstanding teachers when you have taken away the sixth form? When will we be informed about the teaching staff leaving/staying? Can you offer reassurance that students will get more continuity of staff at Meridian? My son has experienced a number of teachers in some subjects this year, how is this going to be addressed? Concerned about staff job losses and how this will impact on children and parents' trust.</p>	<p>The Trust is committed to retaining and appointing high-achieving, outstanding teachers across all key stages. This information will be communicated to parents when staffing has been finalised for next academic year. Usually, this is towards the end of the summer term. It is the intention of the Trust to provide as much continuity of staffing as possible. The Trust is committed to keeping job losses to a minimum.</p>
4 4 7	<p>Uniform: Please could we be given a timeframe for uniform? Would current year 4 parents need to buy 3 separate uniforms? Cost would be astronomical.</p>	<p>Once approval is given for the new through school, details of the new uniform will be shared with parents. The Trust are committed to build flexibility into the introduction of the new uniform. It is intended to make as much of the uniform available from suppliers of the parents' choice in order to keep costs as low as possible.</p>

<p>4</p> <p>4</p>	<p>Pupils with Special Educational Needs: What opportunities will there be for children who struggle academically / have additional needs to develop skills for life? Will there be opportunities to get skills that will put them in a good position when looking for jobs?</p> <p>Will there be the same opportunities and full support for each child of any ability? Will there practical courses EG bricklaying, plumbing, life skills?</p> <p>Will you be increasing student support (EG TA provision) for students with additional needs, particularly in such a period of change and transition?</p>	<p>As part of the usual transition process, Leaders of Inclusion across the Trust liaise with feeder schools - this will continue and is already taking place. The Trust will explore Careers guidance and vocational offers.</p> <p>In planning for provision for all pupils, a range of different opportunities will be considered.</p> <p>Teaching Assistants will be allocated to support pupils by the Leader of Inclusion (SENDSCO) based on Education, Health Care Plans and pupil need.</p>
<p>4</p> <p>4</p> <p>7</p> <p>7</p>	<p>Other: Do you plan to open a breakfast club?</p> <p>Will there be any bus services for children travelling from across town?</p> <p>Can you take into account parents from foreign countries? This is too much information to take in when you do not know the system.</p> <p>On a day to day basis, what will change for my child between now and September? Will they be in the same class, same teachers, same school house, similar type of timetable?</p> <p>Will the schools continue to use the names Greneway, Roysia and Meridian?</p>	<p>Roysia site currently offer a breakfast club. Although there are no immediate plans for a breakfast club on the Greneway site, it would be an ambition for the future.</p> <p>Currently, there is a public bus service from Burns Road to Garden Walk (No 16) that is scheduled linked to the times of the school day.</p> <p>All schools in the Trust are happy to meet with parents, on an individual basis, who would like further clarification or support through this process.</p> <p>Inevitably, there will be some minor changes. However, it is the intention of the Trust to provide as much continuity for pupils as possible.</p> <p>For the academic year 2018-19, the three schools will be known as</p>

6	<p>Joyce Frankland Academy currently has a negative score for value added (-0.27). This means it is underperforming. How will Mr Farquhar ensure that this does not follow him to Royston?</p>	<p>Greneway, Roysia and Meridian under the umbrella of RSAT.</p> <p>On this criteria the performance is not as high as I would like but it is one of multiple criteria. Grade 4 plus and Grade 5 plus in English and maths are considerably better. The figure is an improving one year on year which needs to improve further. The attainment scores have improved over time but it is based on the standard of teaching across the school, this will of course be the focus at both Joyce Frankland and more importantly from our perspective all the three Royston Schools.</p>
4	<p>It was suggested the the conversations with the DfE and through school decisions were separate conversations. I am sure this isn't the case.</p>	<p>Decisions about the merger are conducted between the Department for Education (DfE), Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC).</p>
	<p>Will there be a review of policies to ensure they are more inclusive and therapeutic?</p>	<p>All school policies will be reviewed as part of the merger process.</p>
4 7	<p>Who would fund the 'other criteria' trips?</p>	<p>This would be decided on a case by case basis.</p>
	<p>King James was a witch hunter and a thoroughly unpleasant man - perhaps not an appropriate symbol for our young people in 2018.</p>	<p>King James Academy, Royston and Royston Academy were the most popular names voted for in the recent consultation.</p>
7	<p>Concerned about the RSAT board who never seem to appear to explain, justify their decisions.</p>	<p>The Trust board is made up of Trustees which include senior leaders from the school. In September, Mr Farquhar will be a Trustee and therefore represents the Trust.</p>
7	<p>How will you prevent further losses of year 7 children? Children in school are losing many of their friends as they 'jump ship'.</p>	<p>The board can be contacted via: clerk@rsat.org.uk</p>
		<p>It is a stated aim of the Trust that the new through school will be the school of choice to all in Royston. By engaging with parents (EG via</p>

4	With a larger intake in Year 5, how can the school guarantee equal opportunities, in particular with school journeys?	<p>the Parent Forum) and working alongside pupils, we hope to grow confidence in the new through school and therefore pupils will want to remain within the Trust.</p> <p>It is always the intention to offer opportunities equally. In the case of school journeys, where numbers at the centre are limited, other school based activities are usually offered. If oversubscribed, places on school journeys are offered through a ballot process.</p>
6	How can the school reassure parents that the delayed DfE decision will not have an adverse effect in terms of funding and therefore quality of teaching?	<p>School funding is strongly linked to pupil numbers and therefore allocated funds reflect this. Teaching and learning will be at the heart of decision making linked to resourcing.</p>
7	Decisions for year 9 have to be made early in year 8 and we will have little to go on as it will be so early with the new approach. How do you convince us to stay and not apply to Buntingford who have great results over a big 'unknown'?	<p>Please come along to open events in October to find out about progress towards the new through school and discuss measures in place to improve performance.</p>

General comments received from parents:

Thank you for the session. I believe my children will be very fortunate to be part of the new school. Thank you for today.