



COTSWOLD BEACON
ACADEMY TRUST

Dear Parents, Carers & Families,

We would like to share with you some important and exciting developments regarding the future of Cotswold Beacon Academy Trust (CBAT). CBAT is the multi-academy trust which is responsible for Berkeley Primary School, as well as Marling School, Callowell Primary School, and Cam Woodfield Junior School.

As you may be aware, CBAT has recently experienced a period of transition, including changes to some key leadership roles. Nationally, the educational landscape also continues to evolve, placing increased pressure on smaller academy trusts to adapt to changes in funding and policy. Considering this, our trustees and leaders have been exploring how we can best secure long-term stability and opportunities for all our schools, including at Berkeley Primary School.

Our priority remains ensuring that every child within our trust receives an exceptional education, empowering them to unlock a future filled with opportunity and choice. With this in mind, we have been carefully considering how a partnership with a larger trust could support our schools to continue to grow and thrive. Having thoroughly explored a number of potential partnerships with a range of organisations, we are pleased to let you know that CBAT trustees have identified Lift Schools as our preferred future partner.

This means we will now begin the formal process of exploring a potential merger, which would mean that Berkeley and the other CBAT Schools would join Lift Schools. This would not mean any significant change on a day-to-day basis for you as a parent, or for your child. Miss Alexandra Robbins and the team at Berkeley would continue the great work that they undertake at the school, but with the added support that Lift Schools can provide.

Lift Schools is a well-established network of 57 primary, secondary and special schools. Several of their schools are already based in Gloucestershire, and serve similar communities to ours, including Brockworth Primary Academy, Offa's Mead Primary Academy and The Ridge Academy. Lift Schools primaries are amongst the highest performing in the country with 89% of pupils passing their phonics check and 77% reaching expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths by the end of Key Stage 2.

What has impressed us most about Lift Schools is their commitment to supporting each school, considering their specific context as well as respecting their identity and ethos. In recent weeks, Miss Robbins has visited two Lift schools, to meet their senior leaders and to speak with key trust staff including, CEO Rebecca Boomer-Clark. Miss Robbins has also had the opportunity to see lessons at both schools and speak with pupils and staff about their experiences.

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The partnership with Lift would offer many benefits to Berkeley Primary School and to your child's educational experience. Lift Schools has a strong record of school improvement, provides excellent operational support to schools, and there are a range of high-quality staff development opportunities on offer. Therefore, we believe that joining Lift would strengthen teaching and learning across all our schools.

Over the coming weeks, colleagues from Lift Schools will visit Berkeley Primary School to learn more about our school. We expect that during the summer term, they will begin to provide more formal support in areas such as teaching and learning, finance, and operations. Our staff will also begin working with colleagues from other Lift Schools to share expertise and best practice.

We want to reassure you that we are approaching this process with great care and thoughtfulness. Berkeley Primary School and our community's values, needs and best interests will continue to be at the heart of all decisions we make. There is still work to be done before any formal merger takes place, and we will keep you updated at every stage.

This is an exciting step for CBAT and for Berkeley Primary School; we are confident that this partnership has the potential to bring great benefits and resource to our schools, our staff, and most importantly, to our pupils.

Yours sincerely,

Duncan Cook
Chief Executive Officer

Chris Brierley
Chair of Trustees