

8 May 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

Update from SMRT governors for parents/carers

Further to the email dated 29 April 2026 we are writing to provide you with more information on the important decision taken by the Governing Board following a sustained period of reflection, consultation, and prayerful consideration about the future of SMRT School.

After extensive discussion, the Governing Board has agreed to apply for an Academy Order, with the intention of joining Lighthouse Schools Partnership (LSP), a multi-academy trust. This decision has not been taken lightly, and we believe it represents the best way to secure a strong, sustainable future for the School while remaining faithful to its distinctive Christian foundation.

Our Christian identity

The Governing Board wishes to be clear that safeguarding the School's distinctive Christian character, values and ethos has been central to every stage of our thinking. We are confident that, within the proposed trust arrangement:

- The School's Christian vision and daily worship would be fully protected
- The trust recognises and respects the unique identity of church schools
- The School would continue to serve its community in line with its founding values

The Diocese has been closely involved and supportive throughout this process and will continue to work alongside governors and leaders during any conversion period and beyond.

Consultation and engagement

This decision follows an extensive programme of consultation and engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. Governors have listened carefully to the views of parents and carers, staff, pupils, School leaders and the Diocese. Feedback from these discussions has played an important role in shaping our decision-making and will continue to do so as the process moves forward.

Admissions, curriculum and governance

We recognise that admissions arrangements and curriculum are of significant importance to families. Should the School convert to academy status:

- Admissions criteria and policies would remain unchanged
- Decisions relating to admissions would continue to be locally informed and overseen by the School's governing body, in line with statutory requirements

- Our curriculum would remain at the discretion of School leaders and ultimately the Headteacher of SMRT. Any development would be collaborative, phased, and responsive to the needs of our pupils and community, not imposed. Where alignment is required the Headteacher would play a central role in the transition plan.

The Governing Board would remain firmly committed to ensuring the School continues to serve its community fairly and inclusively.

Staff and School stability

We want to assure families that staff continuity is important to us. Should the School convert to academy status, all staff would transfer under TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment) regulations. This means staff would transfer on their existing contracts, ensuring stability in our School community and the quality of education and care your children receive.

Why are we taking this step?

The educational and financial landscape for schools is increasingly challenging. Governors have been proactive in exploring how best to secure:

- High-quality education for all pupils
- Access to wider expertise and professional development opportunities for staff
- Long-term stability and resilience for the School

We believe that joining LSP would enable us to benefit from school-to-school collaboration, shared expertise, high quality operational services, and strategic support. This will help us retain and strengthen what makes SMRT distinctive and valued in our community.

What happens next and when?

Applying for an Academy Order does not result in any immediate change. There is absolutely no plan for conversion to take place this academic year. Governors are currently working with LSP to shape a detailed timeline, with January 2027 being the most likely earliest date for any conversion to occur.

If permission is granted by the Department for Education, there will be a further period of detailed planning, consultation and due diligence before any conversion could take place.

During this time:

- We will continue to engage openly with parents, carers, staff and pupils
- We will work closely with the Diocese and the trust on detailed planning
- We will keep stakeholders fully informed at each stage of the process
- No final steps will be taken without careful consideration of the impact on staff and pupils

Thank you for your continued support and trust. Should you have any questions at this stage, please do get in touch (clerk@smrt.bristol.sch.uk).

We will be in contact early next week to update you on changes within the Governing Body.

Yours sincerely,

Andy Spens (Vice Chair of Governors)
On behalf of the Governing Board