

2<sup>nd</sup> June 2026

Dear Parents & Families,

As you are aware, Brook Primary is a highly successful school with an excellent reputation—one that we are extremely proud of. We celebrate the achievements of our children, who work incredibly hard to reach their full potential. I have often shared how proud I am to be the headteacher of Brook, and I take great pride in our commitment to continual improvement and our drive to be the very best we can be.

Over the last five years, we have worked closely with a number of local schools and academy trusts, who have supported our development and provided a wide range of opportunities for both staff and pupils. Through this, we have recognised the many benefits of collaboration- working alongside other professionals and supporting one another to continue raising standards.

The government’s school white paper ([Every child achieving and thriving - GOV.UK](#)) published in February 2026 sets out an ambition for every school in England to be part of a “strong” academy trust. With this in mind, and building on our positive experiences, we have been working with staff and governors to explore a range of options for joining an academy trust that shares our values and community ethos. It is important to us that any partnership enables us to retain our autonomy, ensuring that our deep-rooted Brook identity continues to be celebrated, while also providing the support and challenge needed to sustain our ongoing development.

Together with myself, our senior leadership team and the governing body of Brook Primary, we would like to initiate a consultation regarding the potential academisation of our school to join the Stour Vale Academy Trust.

This decision has not been taken lightly, and I would like to reassure you that significant research and first-hand experience have informed the process over a number of years, with the full support of the governing body. Stour Vale Academy Trust was founded in 2017 by one primary and two secondary schools, who recognised the benefits of working collaboratively. Since then, Stour Vale has steadily grown and now comprises of thirteen member schools and one day nursery across Sandwell, Dudley and North Worcestershire. We recognise Stour Vale for its strong local alignment, particularly with The Wordsley High School, supporting a coherent local education system and transition pathway for our pupils. The trust’s values—Integrity, Respect, Collaboration and Excellence—align closely with Brook’s principles and provide a clear moral and professional framework. Therefore, it is our recommendation that Stour Vale is the academy trust best placed to support us in continuing to develop and evolve on our improvement journey.

We understand that this is an important decision for our school community, and we are committed to ensuring that you feel informed and able to share your views. The consultation process will provide you with the opportunity to find out more, ask questions and offer your feedback, all of which will be carefully considered by leaders and governors **before any final decision is made.**

**Respect ★ Pride ★ Challenge ★ Independent ★ Resilient**

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The consultation will run from Tuesday 2nd June to Tuesday 30th June. A consultation evening for parents and members of the local community will take place on Wednesday 17th June at 5:30pm, providing an opportunity to find out more, ask questions and share your views.

We also welcome any comments on the proposal, as well as any questions, suggestions or observations, which can be shared via email using the following address: [Academyconsultation@brook.dudley.sch.uk](mailto:Academyconsultation@brook.dudley.sch.uk)

It is important to me that our school community has the opportunity to engage meaningfully in the decision-making process. The consultation period is therefore crucial in helping us understand and reflect the views of our key stakeholders. I have also attached a list of frequently asked questions, which I encourage you to read. There are many misconceptions surrounding academisation, and I am keen to address these from the outset.

We are excited about the potential opportunities this could bring for our pupils, staff and wider community, whilst remaining firmly rooted in the values that make Brook so special. This is about building on our strengths and ensuring that we are in the best possible position for the future. Your voice plays a vital part of this process, and I warmly encourage you to take part in the consultation and share your thoughts with us.

I thank you in advance for your time and continued support.

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs M Fellows  
Headteacher

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is an academy trust?**

An academy trust is a group of schools that work together under a shared governance structure. These schools remain focused on their own individual communities but benefit from being part of a wider network. The trust provides support, guidance and strategic direction, helping schools to collaborate, share expertise and continue improving. Academy trusts are funded directly by the government rather than through the local authority.

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### **Why do schools join academy trusts?**

Schools choose to join academy trusts for a range of positive reasons. Being part of a trust allows schools to work closely with others, sharing best practice, resources and expertise to improve teaching and learning. It can also provide greater opportunities for staff development and enhanced experiences for pupils. For many schools, it is about strengthening what they already do well and ensuring they are well-positioned for the future within an increasingly collaborative education system.

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### **Is it only failing schools that join academies?**

No—this is a common misconception. While some schools have converted to academy status following support or intervention, many strong and successful schools also choose to join academy trusts. These schools make the decision proactively, recognising the benefits of collaboration and wanting to build on their existing strengths. At Brook Primary, we are exploring this from a position of strength, not because it is required.

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### **Will our school uniform change?**

There are no plans to change the school uniform. Decisions such as uniform remain with the school, and we would not make changes without clear communication and consideration of our community. Maintaining our school identity is very important to us.

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### **What impact will it have on our children?**

Our children will continue to receive the same high-quality education in a familiar and supportive environment. The day-to-day experience of school life is unlikely to change. Over time, being part of an academy trust may bring additional opportunities, such as wider curriculum experiences, shared events, and access to a broader network of expertise. Any changes would always be made with the best interests of our pupils at the centre of decision-making.

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### **Will the school holidays change if we join an academy trust?**

No—there is no intention to change the current school holiday pattern. While academies do have the flexibility to set their own term dates, we recognise how important consistency is for our families and community. We are committed to maintaining the existing holiday arrangements and would only consider any changes in exceptional circumstances, with clear communication well in advance.

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### **Will the school's ethos and identity change?**

Maintaining Brook's strong identity, values and community ethos is a key priority. Any partnership we enter into must respect and support what makes our school unique. This has been an important consideration in identifying Stour Vale as a potential partner.

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