



"We all flourish from a wealth of learning experiences that positively impact on our academic, physical and emotional success"

The Bluebell Federation: Our Next Step

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are delighted to share some important news regarding the future of The Bluebell Federation which includes Horsted School, Swingate Primary School and Burnt Oak Primary School. After four successful years as a Local Authority Federation, we are preparing to take the next step in our development by applying to become a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT).

What is our structure at the moment?

All schools in The Bluebell Federation are run by the Local Authority (LA). A Local Authority school is a school that operates under the governance and oversight of the local council. This means the Local Authority is responsible for areas such as funding allocation. The Local Authority take a percentage of the funds allocated to children to carry out these services.

What is a Multi-Academy Trust?

A MAT is a group of schools operating under a single legal and financial framework not linked to the local authority. This structure enables schools to share expertise, resources, and opportunities while preserving each school's distinctive character and community spirit. It also provides greater flexibility to make decisions that best serve pupils and staff. Funding for a Multi Academy Trust comes directly from the Government without any percentage taken.

Why are we applying to make this change?

Securing our future: Becoming a MAT will strengthen our independence and reduce the likelihood of being forced to join another trust in the future where we may be taken in a direction that we have no control over. We are one of only a handful of schools still under Local Authority control in Medway. As more and more schools become or join Multi Academy Trusts the capacity of Medway to support schools reduces. There is also a possibility that Medway may increase the amount of money they take from schools in the future as the number of LA schools reduces.

Increasing financial autonomy: We will have greater control over resources, allowing us to invest directly in our schools. We will no longer be paying Medway a percentage of the funds allocated to each child.

Supporting growth and improvement: A MAT structure offers the flexibility to develop and enhance our schools for years to come.

What will this mean for day-to-day school life?

We want to reassure you that there will be minimal impact on the daily experience of pupils and families. School routines, uniforms, and staffing will remain unchanged. Most changes will occur behind the

scenes, improving operational efficiency and enabling us to direct more funding toward your children's education.

More Information

We understand you may have questions. To support you, we have created an information page on each of the school's websites. This include Frequently Asked Questions, Information about MATS, contact details, a time line and a link to the online consultation questionnaire:

www.horstedschool.co.uk

www.swingate.medway.sch.uk

www.burntoak.medway.sch.uk

You can also email any questions to:

matconsultation@thebluebellfederation.co.uk

We would also like to invite you to join us for a presentation and a Q and A session.

Details below:

- Horsted School: Thursday 4 December, 3:30–4:30pm
- Swingate Primary School: Thursday 11 December, 3:30–4:30pm
- Burnt Oak Primary School: Tuesday 16 December, 3:30–4:30pm

Consultation

As part of the application process, we are consulting with all stakeholders. Please take a few minutes to complete the online consultation form:

[The Bluebell Federation Consultation Survey – Please click here to complete](#)

Thank you for your continued support. Together, we can ensure our schools remain vibrant, successful, and prepared for the future.

Warm regards,

Steve Geary

Executive Headteacher
The Bluebell Federation