



## Bents Green School

**Co Headteachers:**

Aileen Hosty & Laura Rzepinski

**Chair of Governors:**

Laura Gillespie

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www.bentsgreenschool.co.uk

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@bentsgreensch

14 June 2023

Dear Parents and Carers

We are writing to inform you that, after careful consideration, the governing body of Bents Green School are seeking to join a Multi Academy Trust (MAT). We have taken a long time to consider all the options for our wonderful school, now and in the long term. We believe that this is the right step for us at this time and that, above all, it is in the interests of our young people, our families, and our staff.

You may well be aware from the media that the educational landscape is currently undergoing considerable change; Bents Green is keen to retain its unique character and ethos during this time and into the long-term future. A period of research has therefore been undertaken by both the Governors and the Co-Headteachers to ascertain the best way forward.

In proposing this, our priority is to ensure we continue to provide high-quality care and education for our pupils. We believe working in a formal, collaborative relationship with a group of schools is the best way forward.

Having looked at different MATs, we are proposing to join Nexus Multi Academy Trust. We have considered our priorities, our values, and our needs and believe that Nexus are the best fit for Bents Green in the long term. From a governor's and school leaders' perspective, we believe that whatever the future holds for the school system, being part of Nexus offers Bents Green School security, support and opportunities that we simply will not have if we remain as a Local Authority maintained school.

This is an important decision in the life of Bents Green School, therefore lots of consideration has taken place before deciding that Nexus, a MAT with many special schools, was chosen. The Governing Body and Co-Headteachers feel that the school could benefit from working closely with a community of like-minded schools within Nexus, while retaining its essential independence, distinctiveness and character.

Being part of Nexus MAT will support us with our strategic development however it should not impact on the day-to-day experiences of Bents Green; students and parents should not notice any significant changes.

There will be plenty of opportunities to meet and find out more about Nexus in the next period, but in brief: Nexus are based across South Yorkshire and North Nottinghamshire; they are a group of 13, growing to 15, schools, of which all but one are special schools; Becton, Discovery, and Kenwood special schools in Sheffield are part of the Nexus family. In all our discussions to date it has been clear that Nexus would offer us the most support and therefore the greatest

### Ringinglow Site

Ringinglow Road, Sheffield, S11 7TB  
Tel: 0114 2363545



### Gleadless Site

Hollinsend Road, Sheffield, S12 2EJ  
Tel: 0114 2357028



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Eckington Road, Sheffield, S20 1HQ  
Tel: 0114 2479374



ability to deliver and secure our future improvements. The ethos of Nexus is all around collaboration – “learning together, to be the best that we can be”. Each of their schools retains its own distinct ethos and support is delivered through their annual Collaborative School Improvement Framework.

## Why have we come to this decision?

The difficulties we have been facing over recent years have been:

- Due to a lack of citywide strategic planning, there has been an unprecedented demand for school places in special schools. This has meant our school has almost doubled in size in the space of a few years, and our cohort of students has radically changed.
- To respond to these sudden changes, we have had to open another site quickly without the adequate time to plan for the best interests of our students.
- The Local Authority no longer have the services and support we require to benefit our students and staff.
- There is a lack of provision for post-16 places across the city, which has had a huge impact on our school.

There are key strategic reasons we believe joining Nexus MAT will benefit our school community:

- We will be able to access support from other schools within Nexus to support our curriculum development, and local community links.
- Nexus will support Bents Green to have a clear identity.
- Our students will have access to an education that meets their needs.
- Nexus will enable us as Governors and school leaders to forward plan in a timely manner, and we will have a level of protection from sudden or unplanned changes.
- We will be able to access capital funding (not available to Local Authority schools), which will enable us to develop our school sites to meet the changing needs of our students.

Before proceeding with the proposal, we are now starting a consultation period in which we invite you to share your views and ask any questions you may have. **The consultation period will run from 14<sup>th</sup> June 2023 until 21<sup>st</sup> July 2023.**

As part of the consultation, we are keen to gather the views of the wider school community. These will be considered by the Governing Body as part of their deliberations before making a final decision. We would therefore like to invite all parents to an online presentation meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> July at 14:00-15:00, or Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> July 18:00-19:00, about converting to academy status, and of joining the Nexus Academy Trust. This will be an opportunity for parents/carers to ask questions and find out how this may affect the school. As part of the consultation, Governors will (as noted previously) consider all parent/carer views in making their final decision, so we would be grateful for comments and questions from parents who cannot attend the meeting as well as those who can join us. In the meantime, I would invite you all to look at the Nexus Multi Academy Trust Website [www.nexusmat.org](http://www.nexusmat.org) to familiarise yourselves with their structure and ethos.

This is an exciting opportunity to shape our future and bring about positive change in the way we run our school, develop our character and values, and continue to drive the best outcomes

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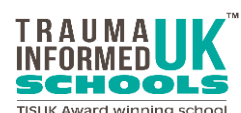
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for our students. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us as detailed above with any comments and questions you may have.

### How can I share my views?

The closing date for representations to be made is Monday 17th July 2023 at 3pm.  
Representations can be made:

Via email: [lgillespie@bentsgreen.sheffield.sch.uk](mailto:lgillespie@bentsgreen.sheffield.sch.uk) or to  
[headteacher@bentsgreen.sheffield.sch.uk](mailto:headteacher@bentsgreen.sheffield.sch.uk)

Via letter: Chair of Governors/Co-Headteachers, Bents Green School, Ringinglow Rd, S11 4TB

Yours sincerely



Aileen Hosty and Laura Rzepinski  
Co Headteachers.



Laura Gillespie  
Chair of Governors

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