



## Ford End C of E Primary School

Main Road, Ford End, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 1LQ

Tel: 01245 237209 Fax: 01245 237560

Email: [admin@fordend.essex.sch.uk](mailto:admin@fordend.essex.sch.uk)

Website: [www.fordendschool.com](http://www.fordendschool.com)

Headteacher: Mrs. Maria Rumsey

Acting Headteacher: Mrs. Sarah Cottee

3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

### Re Covid-19

I apologise for not having written to you sooner. As you can imagine the governing body has been very busy over the last few months. We have had a great deal to consider and act upon since the lockdown began and then since the school reopened to more children. We have had access to a lot of advice and guidance from the government, local authority and National Governors Association see <https://www.nga.org.uk/Knowledge-Centre/Executive-leaders-and-the-governing-boards/Coronavirus-Information-for-governing-boards.aspx> Just keeping up with reading all this information has been a challenge at times.

We have been working closely with the school leaders – Mrs Maria Rumsey and Mrs Sarah Cottee - and all the staff at Ford End to make sure that we follow the advice and guidance and that we do our best to ensure appropriate school work is allocated to children to carry out at home and to give the children the opportunity to come back to school before the summer holidays. We will continue to follow guidance and best practice to enable all the children to return to school in September.

The governors have thanked the staff for their dedication during this Covid-19 crisis and we also thank you, our parents for your support and patience during this period.

### The Future for Ford End Primary

The lockdown coincided with the governors considering the way forward for the school bearing in mind the key objectives to achieve the best education possible for our children and secure the school's future. Certain constraints arise because we are a small rural school – pressures include a lack of certainty each year on income which is partly affected by pupil numbers coming into reception and other years, cuts in government funding of schools, diminishing support from the local authority and the need for greater efficiency in schools like ours.

For anyone who wants to know more on this please see this report from last March.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/785502/Running\\_small\\_rural\\_primary\\_schools\\_efficiently-brief.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/785502/Running_small_rural_primary_schools_efficiently-brief.pdf)

### The LIFE Education Trust

I am writing to let you know that after months of deliberating and investigating the Ford End Governors voted unanimously on May 20<sup>th</sup> to join the LIFE Education Trust – please see <https://lifeeducationtrust.com/>

A video about LIFE is also available here

<https://vimeo.com/carmelijanefilms/review/400531931/eacc6e1708>



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The LIFE website says “Our Trust has a broadly Christian ethos but recognises and welcomes those of any faith or none. We want to empower school leadership teams and teachers to enhance the quality of education for their pupils.”

This action – becoming an academy and joining the LIFE MAT (Multi-Academy Trust) - is supported by all the governors, the staff, the Local Authority and the Diocese (who have to approve the MAT we join and such MAT has to have a Christian ethos). We naturally considered various alternative options – federating with other schools and joining other MATS, however, the governors are confident that joining LIFE represents the best course of action possible for our school. We want to remain in charge of our destiny as a school and ensure the school can not only thrive but become outstanding. We will publish more information on LIFE next week.

#### **Zoom Session**

We propose to issue a list of answers to frequently asked questions about LIFE on Monday next week. Then we will hold a session next **Friday July 10<sup>th</sup> via Zoom at 9.00 a.m.** (details to follow) to enable parents to have more clarity and ask more questions about joining LIFE. If you cannot attend that session and you still have questions after our list is published please direct your questions to me by email [jjee@fordend.essex.sch.uk](mailto:jjee@fordend.essex.sch.uk)

Yours sincerely

**Jane Jee**  
**Chair of Governors**



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## Appendix

### What is a Multi Academy Trust (MAT)?

A MAT is a single entity established to undertake a strategic collaboration to improve and maintain high educational standards across a number of schools. A MAT is independent of the local authority and receives its funding direct from central government or from the academy trust.

### What are the benefits of being an academy?

In the school's opinion the benefits are numerous:

- academies are independent of local authority control – this means that academies have more freedom about how they conduct themselves.
- academies receive their funding direct from central government – this means that academies receive more funding because none is retained by the local authority for the provision of central services.
- academies have more freedom over the curriculum taught – this means that academies do not need to teach parts of the National Curriculum which they do not consider appropriate for their pupils.
- academies can set their own pay and conditions of service for their staff – academies have the freedom to alter the pay and conditions of their staff (subject to normal employment law protections for staff) and so can provide staff with better pay and conditions than previously.
- academies have more freedom to undertake innovative projects – academies are companies and so have more freedom to undertake innovative projects, such as setting up and utilising trading subsidiaries.

### LIFE Education Trust

Schools in the Trust are listed below and are linked from the [www.lifeeducationtrust.com](http://www.lifeeducationtrust.com) website.

Roxwell Primary School	105 pupils
Margaretting Primary School	84 pupils
Dame Tipping Primary School	105 pupils
Benhurst Primary School	420 pupils
The Bridge	25 pupils
Frances Bardsley Academy for Girls	1400 pupils

### The LIFE Education Trust Ethos

Our Vision as the LIFE Education Trust is to dare to achieve the extraordinary.

This vision is evident in our mission to build learning communities which unleash creativity and champion optimism, whilst equipping everyone with the tools they need to achieve the extraordinary.



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Everyone in the LIFE family shares and demonstrates our beliefs:

### **Courageous optimism**

It takes courage to hope for a better future. We champion a 'can do' attitude and encourage our pupils and staff to tackle challenges with resilience and perseverance as they reach for ambitious targets.

### **Boundless creativity**

Through captivating discoveries in the classroom and eye-opening adventures in the outside world, we give pupils freedom and promote varied learning experiences which stimulate innovation and develop adaptability.

### **Heartfelt compassion**

We show love and respect to each member of our community as we nurture a powerful collective spirit. In humility, we embrace difference and individuality, show forgiveness when necessary, and are united by compassion.

We all demonstrate our Beliefs in our Behaviours:

- We respect everyone
- We listen continuously
- We praise generously
- We are clear and transparent
- We do not ignore the uncomfortable and have courageous conversations
- We give and receive constructive feedback
- We are reliable and do what we say
- We are confident yet humble
- We are accountable
- We create a better future

Our beliefs and behaviours are part of our Code of Conduct and appraisal system.

LIFE's Core Offer and costs – please see <https://lifeeducationtrust.com/our-offer/>