

November 2020

Dear Parents,

## Creation of The Balcarras Trust

We are writing to inform you about changes to the governance arrangements at Balcarras which will take place from December 1<sup>st</sup>.

Since January 2011 Balcarras has been a Single Academy Trust (SAT) and our company name has been The Balcarras Academy Trust. As a SAT we are legally responsible for our own affairs and free from local authority control with the school's governing board having ultimate legal responsibility for the trust.

You will no doubt remember that in July 2018 we were appointed as the sponsors for Cheltenham's new secondary school, The High School Leckhampton, which will open in September 2021. As part of our appointment as sponsor, the Regional Schools Commissioner instructed that we would have to form a Multi Academy Trust (MAT).

A MAT is a trust that oversees the running of multiple schools. It is our intention to call our MAT, The Balcarras Trust, and in the first instance it will oversee the running of Balcarras and The High School Leckhampton. The Department for Education are keen for successful MATs to take on the running of more schools, so it is possible that The Balcarras Trust might grow in the future.

The current governors of The Balcarras Academy Trust have been involved in drafting our plans in preparation for the creation of The Balcarras Trust in December.

## What happens next?

### Creating *The 'Members'*

Like any Academy Trust, the MAT will have a group of *Members* who will have certain powers reserved to them, for example the power to appoint *The Trustees*. *The Members* act much like shareholders do in a company, receiving the annual reports from *The Trustees* and approving the financial accounts.

Our *Members* will be:

Chris Healy	(Headteacher of Balcarras 1996-2016)
Gill Sage	(Former Deputy Chair of Governors at The Balcarras Academy Trust)
Rosalind Shepherd	(Current Chair of Governors/Trustees)
Barry Stagg	(Former Chair of Governors of The Balcarras Academy Trust)
Dame Janet Trotter	(Former Vice Chancellor of the University of Gloucestershire)

## Formation of the Board of Trustees

In December seven existing Balcarras governors will become *The Trustees* of The Balcarras Trust:

Dominic Burke	(Headteacher of Balcarras since September 2016)
Peter Horne	(Current Parent Governor of The Balcarras Academy Trust)
Mike Huysinga	(Current Parent Governor of The Balcarras Academy Trust)
Jo McGuire	(Current Appointed Governor of The Balcarras Academy Trust)
Julia Poulson	(Current Appointed Governor of The Balcarras Academy Trust)
Bernard Roberts	(Current Appointed Governor of The Balcarras Academy Trust)
Geoff Sparkes	(Current Appointed Governor of The Balcarras Academy Trust)

## The work of *The Trustees*

*The Trustees* will oversee the broad strategic aims of The Balcarras Trust which will revolve around ensuring the highest academic standards in our schools, overseeing the statutory legal responsibilities of The Trust and ensuring that there is appropriate and proper financial oversight. One of their first actions will be to create a *Local Governing Body (LGB)* for Balcarras. In reality this LGB will be a continuation of the current governing body.

## The work of the *Local Governing Body at Balcarras*

The *LGB* of Balcarras will continue to have strategic oversight of the school's operational procedures and systems, curriculum provision, pastoral care, academic achievement, and broad oversight over the school's ethos. Mr Burke will combine his role as Headteacher of Balcarras with a new role as CEO of The Balcarras Trust.

The *LGB* will include at least two parent governors and two staff governors. The *LGB* on December 1<sup>st</sup> will comprise:

Rik Boulton	Parent Governor
Dominic Burke	Headteacher Governor
Chris Hansen	Parent Governor
Daren Hazael	Staff Governor
Karen Holdsworth	Appointed Governor
Pak Wai Hung	Parent Governor
Howard Kellett	Appointed Governor
Peter Mitchener	Appointed Governor
Gavin Thomas	Parent Governor
Laura Williams	Parent Governor
Kate Wilkey	Support-staff Governor

The existing governors are confident that the creation of a MAT will be in the long-term interests of Balcarras and that on a day to day basis little will change. The creation of The Balcarras Trust will mean that Balcarras School continues to be governed by people who value its culture and ethos long into the future.

Yours sincerely,



Rosalind Shepherd  
Chair of Governors/Trustees, The Balcarras Academy Trust



Dominic Burke  
Headteacher