



Long Row Primary School

**Long Row, Belper,
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Headteacher: Mrs L. White

10th June 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

A key role of the school's Governing Body is to ensure that Long Row Primary and Nursery School is in an excellent position to continue to deliver the very strong education that our children deserve.

Part of this involves monitoring what is happening in education locally, regionally and nationally. For example, over 150 schools have joined, or are applying to join a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) in Derbyshire.

All Derbyshire schools will be considering joining a MAT in the near future as the County Council may not be able to support all schools as they do currently, and we are already using some alternative providers where these provide a better service than the County Council.

MATs are a group of schools working together, with a shared ethos to benefit the children in their care.

We want to ensure that all the good things we do at our school are protected, whilst developing stronger links with other like-minded schools to share best practice, and broaden the range of what we can offer children and their families.

The Governing Body has spent over two years researching and developing its understanding of MATs, and at a recent meeting we have decided to apply to join a MAT.

After due diligence the MAT that we the Governors have chosen is Embark Federation. We believe that Embark Federation will fit perfectly with our vision, values and ethos, and Embark will put our children at the forefront of everything they do. This was a unanimous decision, which has the full support of the Headteacher and the staff of our school.

In the autumn term there will be a formal consultation with all stake holders, which will follow DfE guidance, and the final decision on joining a MAT (Embark) will not be taken until this consultation has concluded. Parents will be consulted fully and as part of this will be invited to come and see what Embark has to offer and how they work, and to put any questions directly to Embark.

The academisation process can take some time. It is affected by a range of factors beyond the control of the school or the MAT, including the DfE's decision-making regarding priority schools and areas for conversion.

This would be a gradual change with no disruption to the children or teaching and there will be a period for any parent queries to come to us.

Before the consultation concludes, and therefore without final commitment, the school will be working on developing relationships with Embark and procuring services to help the school run as well as it does now. Embark meantime, has been working with us to include the school in some of the services that it provides. Going forwards, in autumn, our staff may be able to attend training sessions with Embark. This engagement does not prejudice any decisions going forwards.

Best wishes,

Andy Fairhurst
Chair of Governors

Lisa White
Headteacher

