



Dear Parents / Carers,

We are writing to let you know of our proposal to merge Charlton Acorns Pre-school with Charlton School. As you know, the Pre-school shares a site with the school and most of the children who attend the Pre-school move on to Charlton Primary School. We have had a long and very positive relationship as two separate organisations, but we feel the time is right to unite and move forward into the future as a single establishment.

In legal terms, the proposals are that the school will extend its age range to take children from 2 years old and the Pre-school charity will close and transfer the assets (as to be agreed with the Early Years Alliance and the Charity Commission) to the Vale Academy Trust, as part of Charlton Primary School. The Pre-school building will become the Charlton Primary School Pre-school and will still be known as 'Acorns'.

The School, through the Vale Academy Trust, have committed to accept the current Pre-school admission arrangements. The children who are attending, when the transfer takes place, will continue to attend and they will continue to be in the same building and have the same staff. Those who are on a waiting list will be offered places in the usual way and in the order it currently stands. However, having a place in the Pre-school does not guarantee a place in the Primary School as the separate admissions processes will remain in place and as they are today.

All the current Pre-school staff, who are on permanent contracts, will be transferred into the employment of the Vale Academy Trust under the 'Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment' (TUPE) regulations and they will be part of the school staff, managed by the Executive Headteacher.

There are three main reasons for making this proposal.

- We feel we will be able to offer better continuity for children who transfer to the Foundation Stage and there will be more opportunities for joint activities between the pre-school children and the main school.
- It will give pre-school staff more opportunities to work with school staff and share their skills and expertise.
- It will mean that the oversight and overall management of the provision for the youngest children will no longer rely on the goodwill of those who volunteer to be on the pre-school committee.

We have always been very fortunate to have a good committee, but the frequent change in volunteers (due in part to the large responsibility for the employment of the staff and the accounts) can cause disruption to the smooth running of the pre-school. By coming under the

management for the school, with the central team of the Vale Academy Trust to call on when needed, we do not risk closure of the Pre-School due to low volunteer numbers.

We propose to make this change from 1st August 2021, or as soon as possible after that. Clearly, in the current situation there is a lot of uncertainty but we felt it was important to move ahead as far as we can with this process.

We are therefore undertaking a formal consultation on two points:

1. To expand the age range of Charlton Primary School from the current 4-11 years to 2-11 years.
2. To close Charlton Acorns Pre-school Charity and transfer the assets to the management of The Vale Academy Trust as part of Charlton Primary School.

The consultation will run until Thursday 22 April 2021.

If you wish to make any comment, or have any questions on these proposals, please use the following emails or write to the school or Pre-School

Pre-School email: charltonacorns@gmail.com

School email: office@charlton.vale-academy.org (FAO: Steven Rose)

Regards,

Debra Steer

Debra Steer
Chair of Charlton Acorns Pre-School Committee

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Steven Rose
Executive Headteacher
Charlton Primary School