



PRESS RELEASE

Lowbrook Academy expansion plans on hold

(Maidenhead, UK) Wednesday, 28th June 2017:- Following last night's decision, by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM), to refuse the necessary additional funding required to complete Phase Two of the Lowbrook Academy expansion plans, the Academy has committed to investigate alternative options for the school. The decision was taken at a Full Council meeting. The result was 23 'for' and 23 'against', with the deciding vote being cast by the Mayor, Councillor Lenton.

Dominique Du Pré, Chair of Governors, Lowbrook Academy, said; "The result of the Full Council meeting is very disappointing for our parents, local community and the school. The consequence is that we will continue to champion the needs of our local community and parenting body, and accept our published PAN of 30 pupils in September 2017.

"We've made clear from the outset, the level of investment in a project of this size, scope and nature required additional funding. The true cost of the scheme was known by all from the very start with the additional funding being earmarked by the borough in the 2017/2018 budget plans. Last night's result is a complete U-turn.

"It's also worth noting that there are only four primary schools in Maidenhead which can be expanded and Lowbrook is one of them. One of the major challenges the borough faces is that primary numbers are forecast to increase by 18% by 2020, placing increasing strain on local schools. It's no secret that there is an acute shortage of primary school places in England. Therefore, we look forward to seeing how the council will address this predicted shortfall in coming months."

Lowbrook Academy continues to be an Outstanding school where enjoyment, commitment and achievement are valued. The Board of Governors have a judicial responsibility towards current pupils and therefore will not enter into an agreement which places the school and its future pupils at financial risk. Lowbrook remains

committed to expanding and will investigate alternative options such as Multi-Academy Trusts, Free Schools and will reapply for funding through the Education Funding Authority (EFA).

Dominique Du Pré, added, “Lowbrook Academy was originally built in 1978 and was not designed for modern day teaching. Despite the limitations of the building and school grounds, the school and its staff achieve excellent results.

“Furthermore; Lowbrook Academy and its Headteacher, David Rooney, have a strong track-record of helping other schools. Mr Rooney has acted as a trusted mentor to other teachers, and today is a school improvement partner for Dedworth. He has also turned around Holy Trinity C of E Primary School in Cookham from Requires Improvement to Outstanding in two years.”

Yasmin Thorn-Davis, Chair of Governors, Holy Trinity C of E Primary School, said, “Without the successful intervention of Dave Rooney, the Lowbrook staff and governing body we could not have moved rapidly from Requires Improvement to Outstanding. Their commitment and pedagogy has transformed our school which we proudly believe to be a true centre of excellence in the heart of Cookham.”

- Ends -

For all media enquiries please contact:

Kate Bailey, Office Manager, Lowbrook Academy – 01628 671355

For all admissions enquiries please contact:

Kate Bailey, Office Manager, Lowbrook Academy – 01628 671355