WPPS Parent Info Meetings - FAQ updates.

*This FAQ document summarises a number of questions that have been raised in relation to the partnership between Wimbledon Park Primary School (****WPPS****) and West Wimbledon Primary School (****WWPS****). Some of the questions were raised before the update meeting on 11 October and the answers reflect the fact that the partnership arrangement has been adapted as a result of the OFSTED inspection at WWPS in early September. As already communicated, following the OFSTED Report being published the Governing Bodies of both schools have agreed to extend the partnership beyond one year and to deepen the relationship between WPPS and WWPS.*

**1. How will information about the partnership be communicated to parents and staff at Wimbledon Park?**

We consider parents and staff at Wimbledon Park to be key stakeholders in the partnership and the governors have committed to provide communication when there are updates to share. We will produce a summary document outlining the main points of discussion and outcomes from relevant review meetings. This will be shared with parents and staff via email and / or the website.

**2. Who holds ‘ultimate responsibility’ for decisions at Wimbledon Park Primary School?**

Mr Lufkin remains headteacher at Wimbledon Park Primary School and as such holds ultimate responsibility. Operational or day-to-day decision making is undertaken by Miss Clogg. Urgent decisions requiring Mr Lufkin’s input on days when he is offsite will be managed via close communication between Miss Clogg and Mr Lufkin.

**3. How does the partnership affect roles and responsibilities at WPPS?**

Please see the FAQs dates 11 July (Who will be in charge at WPPS? and Will there be a loss of leadership capacity?). The information set out in response to those two questions remains the same.

**4. What are the objectives for the partnership?**

The partnership had three main objectives when the MOU was signed in August 2018. These were:

1. For Mr Lufkin to work with the senior leadership team at WWPS to achieve good or better outcomes
2. For Mr Lufkin to work with the senior leaderships team at WWPS to ensure there is an accurate self-evaluation of WWPS and to develop the WWPS school development plan
3. Ensuring a smooth implementation of any agreed action plan (set by the governing body executive committee) including transition to a new leadership team/appointment of a new headteacher

Since the OFSTED inspection at WWPS, these objectives have been expanded to include the action plan set out in the OFSTED report. These can be read in full [here](https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50031532) and relate to improving consistency of teaching and learning, improving the progress children make in early years provision, improving the progress of disadvantaged pupils and strengthening the science curriculum.

The immediate action plan is to implement the curriculum, teaching and assessment approaches from Wimbledon Park into West Wimbledon. Wimbledon Park leaders and teachers will help train teachers and support implementation at West Wimbledon in these approaches (mostly over two shared training days).

**5. What are the parameters for reviewing these objectives?**

These objectives are reviewed every half term by a joint committee including representatives of both governing bodies and Mr Lufkin. As well as monitoring progress made against these objectives, we are also interested in a range of other factors specific to the impact of the partnership on WPPS. These include: staff feedback, monitoring the amount of time teachers spend supporting WWPS, continued monitoring of results at WPPS (as is usual for the governing body through the Standards, Teaching and Learning Committee) as well as a review of any feedback from parents and pupils.

**6. What happens if these are not met?**

Both schools have the option to end the partnership by giving one month’s notice. As noted above at WPPS we have established a regular review panel consisting of members of the governing body and the Senior Leadership Team to review the impact of the partnership on school life at WPPS. A summary document focussing on the key agenda items for these meetings will be published on the school website and/ or be circulated via email for parents to read.

**7. What is the recruitment process for a new headteacher at West Wimbledon Primary School?**

Recruitment of a new headteacher is the responsibility of the governing body. At the present time, the governing body of West Wimbledon have decided to delay recruitment of a new headteacher and instead focus on a closer model of partnership working with WPPS as this is felt to be the best way to achieve the objectives set out by OFSTED and to be for the long term benefit of both schools. Mr Lufkin is Executive Headteacher of West Wimbledon while remaining Headteacher of Wimbledon Park.

**8. Why were West Wimbledon not able to recruit a headteacher last year?**

Due to retirement of the previous headteacher in May 2018, this did not leave adequate time to run a thorough recruitment campaign for high quality applicants, most of whom would have already secured jobs for September 2018.

**9. Is the plan for Mr Lufkin to leave WPPS to become headteacher at West Wimbledon?**
No. Mr Lufkin remains committed to Wimbledon Park School and the wider school development plan. The partnership will not end after this academic year, and the governing bodies at both schools are planning a permanent future for both schools together with a single long-term vision under Mr Lufkin’s leadership.

**10. Will the staffing structure change at WPPS in the light of the widening and deepening partnership arrangements? Will there be a significant staff turnover?**

The action plans and staffing structures for the next academic year at both schools will be determined during the spring / summer term by Mr Lufkin and the leadership teams. The Governing Bodies of WPPS and WWPS are also considering what the structure of a longer term partnership will be with the Senior Leadership team. The importance of having a clear structure is very much a focus for the Governing Bodies so that we retain our best teachers and staff.

We hope to mitigate against significant staff turnover by ensuring that middle and senior leadership staff continue to take on similar roles in line with our school development partnership. This is already working well both as part of the partnership and in other areas, for instance our role in supporting other local schools as part of the South West London Maths Hub and leading in Guided Peer Review exercises with other primary schools. Feedback about these professional development opportunities is that they are highly valued by staff and provide motivating opportunities for career development.

**11. If the partnership is successful could WPPS be asked to support another school.**

Yes. It is possible that WPPS could be approached again in future if the partnership is judged to be effective and if another school requires assistance. We remain committed to ensuring that we meet our civic duty by supporting others and are also keen to share our own approach with others as outlined in our school development plan. There are no current plans for us to support other schools in the immediate future, as everyone is focused on the success of this partnership.

**12. Is Merton providing funding for this work.**

Since the recent OFSTED inspection of West Wimbledon School, Merton Local Authority have provided some additional funding to strengthen the leadership capacity at WWPS.

**13. You mentioned the support of the parent community, do you expect parents to participate in the partnership through the PTFA / in some other way?**

This is something we could look at if parents would welcome the opportunity. It is not something that we have discussed but we see parents as key stakeholders in the longer term partnership. There will be opportunities for the staff of each school to meet (such as the inset day before half term).

**14. It was asked last time if the partnership work could really be completed and benefit WPPS in one year so an extension seems sensible and the longer term seems more beneficial for WPPS. Will this increased commitment be Mr Lufkin on his own or others from WPPS?**

At the moment the key person is Mr Lufkin. This has been discussed in detail and it was agreed that it is better for both schools to have certainty around who is in charge on a day-to-day basis and not to share the leadership teams on a more ad-hoc basis. There is no intention to move class teachers or other staff. There will be opportunities, such as the training days mentioned (the inset day and a day when WWPS staff will come and see teaching at WPPS) for both staff groups to work together. Teachers may then keep in touch on an individual basis and share ideas for teaching (probably on a year group basis) as the Wimbledon Park curriculum is implemented at West Wimbledon. This will mainly be done by email or phone. There may be individual one off opportunities for specialist teachers to spend a day or half day across the schools (as our maths mastery teachers do currently across 7 schools and as part of the guided peer review process we participate in).

Mr Lufkin will be largely full time at West Wimbledon for the rest of this term and into the Spring Term when the arrangement will be reviewed. Both schools are under the common leadership of Mr Lufkin and this allocation of time represents the immediate need at West Wimbledon but as improvements are delivered the time commitment may change.

As noted in our presentation we are continuing to work on what the longer term partnership looks like and expect to have a better idea in the Spring Term around the longer term structures.

**15. What is the impact of the partnership on WPPS so far?**

The benefits for Wimbledon Park are longer term but since the start of the partnership, WPPS has had its strongest ever start to the academic year under Miss Clogg’s leadership, as evidenced by a rigorous external review of the school in early October. Staff tell us that the opportunity for extra leadership opportunity and responsibility has resulted in higher motivation and effort among the wider leadership team at Wimbledon Park. It has also been really good to see the support from staff for both the partnership and Miss Clogg’s leadership. This was evidenced by the large number of staff who stayed late to attend the information evening on 10 October.

Partnership working and school support opportunities are central to the vision of the school and a key motivator for the current leadership and staff team. Without partnerships like West Wimbledon, the governors believe that the school is more likely to lose key leaders and talented staff because they will seek those leadership challenges elsewhere now that Wimbledon Park is so established as an outstanding school.

**16. Role of the Governors**

The role of the Governors continues to be to deliver good governance at WPPS. Day-to-day management and operational matters continue to be for the Senior Leadership team and ultimately Miss Clogg (as Acting Headteacher) on a day-to-day basis and Mr Lufkin (as Headteacher) when necessary. The review meetings that we are undertaking are part of our governance of WPPS to monitor and evaluate the performance of the partnership, particularly monitoring the impact on WPPS.

**17. Next Steps**

The Governing Body of WPPS has appointed a small working group as the review committee for the partnership and also to work with a small group of WWPS governors to develop a structure for the longer term partnership of both schools. As noted at the presentation on 11 October, the structure is something that is being looked at in detail but requires further research and information on the various options available before any decisions can be made. We expect to have an update on the progress towards agreeing a longer term structure in the Spring.