



KING EDWARD VI FOUNDATION BIRMINGHAM

Educational excellence for our City

July 2023

Dear parents and carers,

It is nearly a year since Lordswood School for Girls joined the King Edward VI Foundation, Birmingham and I would like to express my thanks to all the students, staff, governors, parents, carers and wider school community for being part of the journey over the last year.







Joining a new Academy Trust is a huge piece of work, and I am grateful to your Headteacher and Chair of Governors – Mrs Cooney and Mrs Huxtable – for their leadership during this time. Mrs Cooney’s contributions to the Foundation Education Group, which brings together the heads of all 13 Foundation schools, and Mrs Huxtable’s participation in the Chairs’ Group, which is attended by the chairs of all the schools’ governing bodies, have also been much appreciated.

To help you get to know the Foundation better, I thought it might be helpful to introduce some of the many areas in which staff at the school work closely with the Foundation Office (FO), which is the central team that supports all schools in the Foundation.

On educational support and growth, the Foundation’s Director of Education and her team have been visiting Lordswood regularly, providing dedicated support for the school as it develops its approach to curriculum, teaching and assessment. The school’s senior leadership team and teaching staff have worked hard to make changes, with next year being an opportunity to develop further with support from the newly expanded central team. In addition, teaching staff at Lordswood have access to a wide range of professional development opportunities as part of the Foundation, including professional qualifications and subject network groups, where best practice from each of our 13 schools can be shared.

The following diagram sets out other important parts of school life and how the school and central Foundation team work together.

Finance and procurement		Includes setting budgets and dealing with all the rules and regulations around financial management. The school has a dedicated Finance Manager provided by the Foundation who acts as the first point of contact for all finance matters in relation to the school.
Human resources and payroll		A really important area because it is all about people! The school has a dedicated HR Partner at the FO, access to specialist staff such as the Head of Employee Relations, and an online HR and Payroll system which means school staff can access all their vital information easily.
Organisational development		A thriving sub-department of HR, this area includes the following highlights from Lordswood’s first year in the Foundation: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training for staff and participation in the Foundation’s EDI Leads Group; recruitment of a digital apprentice; and

		being part of a working group to explore training and development opportunities for support staff across the Foundation.
Estates and sustainability		Includes a staff representative from the school being part of the Foundation's Sustainability Working Group and the central team working with colleagues in school to improve safeguarding and disabled access, adopt an Academy Trust-wide catering service and complete essential maintenance funded from the Academy Trust's School Condition Allocation government grant.
Digital and technology		The Digital and Technology team works with the school on the adoption of Foundation-wide systems which enable collaboration with our other schools and deliver efficiencies by using our collective buying power.
Risk and compliance		The Risk and Compliance team works with the school to ensure that risk management, policy, data protection and insurance requirements are met.
Governance		This FO department works with the school to ensure that all the legal requirements for governors are met, including that meetings are run properly and that governors can access useful training to support them in their roles.
Marketing and communications		Includes support with branding, as seen through signage, letterheads and uniform, as well as the school website to ensure it not only includes all the information it is meant to but also looks good and works well.
Archive		The Foundation Archive helps schools to take care of and engage with their unique histories, including digitising historical material to ensure its preservation and make it more accessible. You can explore content already added to the Lordswood Digital Archive at www.kingedwardvi-lordswood-archives.org

While much of the work highlighted above might not be seen by students day to day, I am pleased to say that some more visible opportunities have also come to fruition over the last year. Many of our schools host events and learning opportunities for students from all Foundation schools. This year, these have included an Enterprise Day featuring inspirational speakers and a Dragons' Den style challenge, a Model United Nations conference and a Philosophy competition, and it was wonderful to see Lordswood students taking part in all of these events and impressing with their enthusiasm and contributions. Some Lordswood students have also participated in Equally Safe – a fully funded Foundation-wide programme training students to become anti-bullying advocates who focus on equality issues.

If your daughter is in Year 7, she may have told you about the Foundation Ceremony, an annual event that welcomes all our new starters. It was an online ceremony this year, and we celebrated not only the history of the Foundation in our city – dating back to 1552 – but also the diversity of the Foundation today, with Mrs Cooney reading The Founder's Prayer. We are already looking forward to next year's event, which will be held in person with

different Foundation schools hosting other schools. The Foundation is now responsible for the education of more than 1 in 10 secondary school students across the city, and it's really important to us that our students have a chance to meet each other.



New signage at Lordswood was a visual representation of the school joining the Foundation; Mrs Cooney reading The Founder's Prayer during the online Foundation Ceremony; and a Foundation-wide Enterprise Day, hosted by King Edward VI High School for Girls.

In closing, I would like to reiterate how delighted we are that King Edward VI Lordswood School for Girls is part of our Foundation. While our journey together has only just begun, I know that we share a commitment to making Birmingham the best place to be educated in the UK, to raising aspirations and transforming lives. I look forward to all that the coming years will bring.

With my best wishes for a restful summer,

Jodh Dhesi
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