



April 2025

Dear parent/carer/student

This half term sees the start of GCSE and A Level examinations; we wish all our students every success in these external examinations and encourage them to continue with their preparation and revision. Good luck.

### Miss School, Miss Out

Attending school on a regular basis is the key to your child doing well and will set them up with good habits for later life. It will also give your child the opportunity to:

- Make friends and improve social skills.
- Learn new things and develop skills.
- Increase confidence and self-esteem.
- Achieve their potential and fulfil their aspiration

If you need any help or support, please do get in touch with us by speaking to your child's year team in the first instance

### STEP Academy Trust

Thank you to all parents, carers and students who completed the listening period form regarding the proposal to join STEP Academy Trust.

The feedback was overwhelmingly positive with 99.2% of parent/carers in support of the proposal and 99.1% of students who were in favour of the proposition.

A copy of the report is available at the end of this newsletter.

### School Rebuilding Programme

The school rebuilding programme is currently in the feasibility stage which involves a large number of surveys and an exploration around potential solutions are currently being costed. This phase of the programme should be completed by October, and I am hoping that I will be able to share more on their proposals at that time.

### Run 4 Joel

Run 4 Joel will return once again to Sandwell Valley on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June and this promises to be bigger and better than last year, continuing with the colour blast theme. The event at Sandwell Valley Country Park is held in memory of our former student Joel Richards, his uncle Adrian Evans and Grandfather Patrick Evans.

It would once again be great to see a large number of Wood Green students and their families taking part. More details can be found here:

<https://smileforjoel.com/event-details?event=runforjoel2025>

Registrations are open now!

## **Adolescence**

You may have seen the recent media coverage surrounding Netflix's new crime drama *Adolescence*, and the recent interview by Gareth Southgate about positive male role models and the negative impact of gaming and explicit online content on young males. This has highlighted the rise of incel communities and their influence on young people. Therefore, we thought it might be helpful for parents/carers to know more about what the incel culture is, and the signs to look out for to keep your children safe from some of the dangers they are faced with online. We also felt that it would be reassuring for you as parents/carers to understand the actions that we currently take in school to educate all students about online dangers and the current rise in what has been termed 'toxic masculinity' and Violence Against Women and Girls, both of which are linked to the incel culture.

Incel stands for 'involuntary celibate' and is a term adopted by individuals in the incel community to describe themselves. This community is an overwhelmingly male (predominantly young, white male) online community. Incel ideology centres around the idea that incels are denied sexual and romantic relationships, and that women are to blame for this. Women and girls are stereotyped, objectified and dehumanised within incel culture; they are seen as genetically inferior. Incel communications not only focus around rage and resentment directed against women and certain groups of men, but also include feelings of self-loathing, worthlessness, and hopelessness.

It is important that all adults try to understand the pressures that children face online and that we do everything we can to help them navigate through a difficult and influential world, including how to use their mobile phone positively and in a way that does not jeopardise their safety or the values that you as a family, or us as a school, hold. Whilst some incels show aggressive behaviour particularly towards women, there is also a strong link with poor mental health. Some common signs to look out for include sudden changes in behaviour, withdrawal, low self-esteem, hostility towards women, isolation and secrecy, use of incel language, and increased frustration and anger.

Please see our links to our flashpoint pages for further information on the above issues.

<https://www.woodgreenacademy.co.uk/parents/safeguarding/>

In addition, we are raising our student's awareness through the personal development programme during form time and SU4L days. In KS3 students study how to develop healthy relationships and understand respect and tolerance in our communities. Whilst at KS4 students have learnt about sexual harassment, toxic masculinity, the influence of social media and its impact on addiction. We will continue to adapt our programme to meet changes in society and will continue to keep you informed of these changes. Should you feel concerned about any of the signs discussed, please do not hesitate to contact the pastoral team for support.

## **Parking and Road Safety**

Once again, our local residents have raised serious concerns regarding a minority of parents that have caused issues in terms of their parking and collecting of students; this has been escalated to the local authority.

We would like to remind all parents/carers to please respect our neighbours by not parking or collecting your children from St. Paul's Rd, Sparrow Close, or the surrounding area.

Additionally, a number of concerns have been raised by members of the public regarding students being dropped off at the start of the school day. Reports of near misses when students have been getting out of the car and into oncoming traffic, we are told are a regular occurrence. Please can you also help to remind your children of the dangers of this.

### **Polite reminder: PE lessons**

If students are unable to take part in PE lesson for a serious medical concern, can parents please provide medical evidence and a note outlining the problem and the length of time that they cannot take part in physical activity. Students should still bring PE kit and will be expected to get changed for these lessons and support in whatever way is reasonable, unless stated in the medical information.

### **School Rules and Behaviour**

One of the reasons, aside from excellent teaching, that ensures we get excellent outcomes for our students, is the high expectations that we have at Wood Green in terms of student behaviour. Can I thank parents/carers for supporting us with this.

### **Mobile Phones**

Once again please can I thank the vast majority of parents/carers that ensure that their child does not bring their mobile phone to school, however there have been a number of incidents in the last half term that we have had to deal with, therefore for clarity, students in years 7 – 11 **MUST NOT** bring mobile phones onto the school site. If there is an emergency safeguarding reason for a student to have a mobile phone on them on the journey to and from school, that parents **MUST** request temporary permission from Mrs Wood in writing with the understanding that the phone **MUST** be handed in to YL/SSM each day for the period of time that the emergency safeguarding reason is in place.

Students should not use their mobile phone as their bus pass/ticket as mobile phones are not permitted on the school site. If a student brings a phone onto the school site and it is confiscated, parents will need to either purchase an additional bus pass/ticket or will have to make alternative arrangements for their child's transport.

If students are found to be in possession of a mobile phone it will be confiscated and placed in the school safe. Mobile phones confiscated on a Monday or Tuesday will be held in the school safe until the end of the school week where they can only be collected by parents/carers between 2.40-3.00pm (in the event of school finishing early, phones due to be collected, can be picked up between from the end of school and the following 20 minutes e.g. 12.00 and 12.20pm.). Phones confiscated on a Wednesday, Thursday or Friday will be confiscated until the end of the following school week where they can only be collected by parents/carers between 2.40-3.00pm. If, however, the return of the mobile phone falls in a school holiday, the phone can be collected on the first day back to school by parents/carers between 2.40 - 3.00pm with the exception of the summer holiday, in which case the phone can be collected by parents/carers on the first Friday of the holidays between 2.40 -3.00pm. **So, if a phone is confiscated on Wed 21<sup>st</sup> May, Thurs 22<sup>nd</sup> May or Fri 23<sup>rd</sup> May, it will not be returned until Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025 (between 2.40 – 3.00pm) as per our policy. EXCEPTIONS to this policy will not be made and ANY student that refuses to hand in their mobile phone when asked to, will be issued with a Permanent Exclusion. This sanction has been consistently applied where in the rare occasions this has happened in the past.**

## **Student Achievements**

### **I Can I Will Loyalty Cards – Years 7 and 8 only**

Loyalty cards have returned - Year 7 and 8 students have the chance to work hard to get their I Can I Will Loyalty Cards signed as they demonstrate the 7 I Can I Will Characters in their work: Resilience, Drive, Curiosity, Initiative, Risk Taking, Reflectiveness and Flexibility of Mind.

A number of students are already onto their Silver and Gold cards.

The card will take on a different guise this year with a 100 Year special card available for the children to complete.

### **Activities Day**

Mr Baggle has delivered assemblies to students in Years 7-10 outlining the offer and arrangements for Activities Day.

Letters were sent out in January via ClassCharts outlining costs for trips. Sign up has been good, but we want to make sure we get as many students out on activities as possible. Payments have come in quickly and we currently have more students signed up to do off-site activities than before. Parents are taking advantage of the 4 payment slots to spread the cost of activities.

#### **Year 7**

- Option 1: West Midlands Safari Park
- Option 2: Go Ape

#### **Year 8**

- Option 1: Drayton Manor Park
- Option 2: Ten Pin Bowling

#### **Year 9**

- Option 1: Thorpe Park
- Option 2: Escape Rooms
- Option 3: Fishing

#### **Year 10**

- Option 1: Alton Towers
- Option 2: Paintballing
- Option 3: Fishing

#### **Year 12**

Blackpool

There will also be an independent SEND trip to Ninja Warrior – students may still choose to go on their respective year group trips.

## House System

### House captains

House captain applications were submitted, and the successful candidates chosen:

Inaaya Ahmed (Da Vinci), Tayef Ahmed (Ali), Oluwasemilore Ajayi (Einstein), Aamira Begum (Shakespeare), Nadirah Begum (Ali), Ammie-Louise Blunn (Shakespeare), Cody Bytheway (Einstein), Cassey Clews (Parks), Maisie-Dee Hunter (Ali), Zunairah-Emaan Imran (Nightingale), Tahmid Islam (Shakespeare), Bradley Nicholls (Shakespeare), Alaana Smith (Parks), Lucy Stewart (Da Vinci), Ezme Tromans (Parks), Hanif Uzzaman (Ali).

House captains now have badges so they can be identified around school.

### House Competitions

Name	What	When
Autumnal photo challenge	Students upload pictures in order to win house points	Autumn term
Food bank challenge	Each form donates food to local food bank and most amount of food wins prizes + house points for form	Autumn term
100 Years logo competition	In celebration of 100 years students to design a logo	Autumn term
Black History Month Quiz	Form quiz to be done during form time or independently	Autumn term
Pride month forms quiz	Quiz to be done in form time or independently	Autumn term
Christmas parcel Appeal	Staff and students donates items to the Christmas Parcel appeal and largest donators to win house points	Winter term
Elf on the Shelf quiz	Form quiz with guess where the elf is located	Winter term
Ramadan Quiz	Forms quiz during the month of Ramadan	Spring term
Spring photo challenge	Students upload pictures in order to win house points	Spring term
Spring poem challenge	Students upload poem in order to win house points – students to win house points and prizes	Spring term
Easter Egg Hunt	Orienteering style treasure hunt – students to win house points and prizes	Spring term
Charity Cake sale	Can be potentially mixed with the SU4L year 10 event with fundraising for a chosen charity? Forms win House Points for most money donated.	Summer term
Song writing/composing	Promoted alongside music department.	Summer term
Football tournament	Promoted alongside PE department	Summer term
Sports day	Competition to promote House Teams	Summer term
Terrifically tough ten	LM also supporting in promoting the TTT	Ongoing
B4L points	Accumulates over the year and is added to house points each term	Ongoing

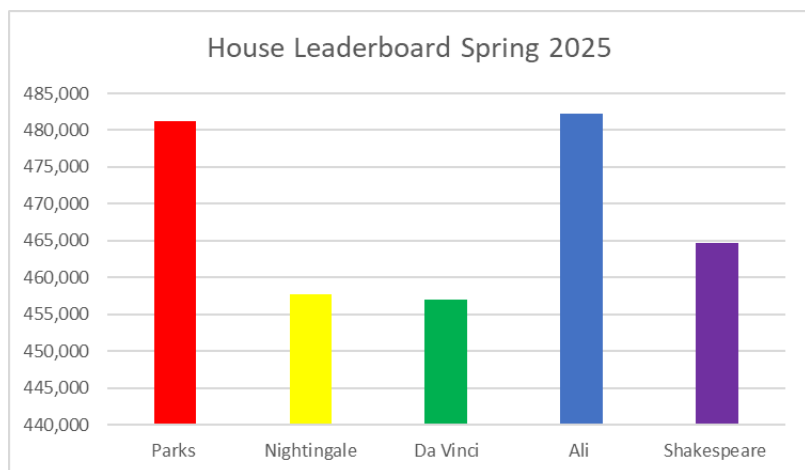
Ali has just overtaken Parks now top of the leaderboard after excellent B4L scores which have been added up since the start of the spring term.

### For the Spring/Summer poem competition:

- In 3rd place: Jodman Mann (Da Vinci)
- In 2nd place: Mya Ruby (Shakespeare)
- And in 1st place: Abdullah Ravat (Nightingale)

### Ramadan Quiz winners:

- Da Vinci with 100 points
- Nightingale with 50 points
- Parks with 50 points



### Announcements

Winners of competitions will be announced through the following:

Student hub, emails, Head Teacher Newsletter, building relationships bulletin in form times.

House competitions are also being announced via ClassCharts, emails, Fun Fridays and Building Relationships Bulletin.

B4L and ClassCharts points are also considered to win House Points.

### Elite Performers



Paigan Follows (Parks). We are all rooting for Paigan as she represents England Schoolgirls once more in the Bob Docherty Cup in Northern Ireland over Easter. She has received glowing reports and saved a penalty in warm-up games.

Travis Abercrombie (Da Vinci) has been selected once more to represent England at Muay Thai Boxing. Travis is going to Verona in Italy to compete for the 12-14-year-old World Title, in June. Travis is very dedicated to his sport – he trains 4-5 times each week at his club Core Fit UK in Sutton Coldfield.

Yr10 student, Zak Millward (Shakespeare) who plays for Walsall Academy u15s had the opportunity to take part in a Premier League tournament for 3 days at St Georges Park. On the first day they beat Cardiff 4-1, on the second day there was a semi-final which they beat Portsmouth 2-0 and in the final they beat Blackburn on penalties 6-5.

Aden Foster (Ali) continues to represent West Midlands Metropolitan County Schools' FA, now as captain. Zak Millward (Shakespeare) continues to play a year up for Walsall FC. Paigan Follows (Parks) continues to play for Wolverhampton Wanderers FC Academy. Alfie Simcox (Nightingale) has now signed for Burton Albion Academy. Charlie Kelsey-Beasmore (Ali) continues to play for Port Vale Academy.

Mr Taylor continues to make his way around Premier League football grounds in his 'other' job as an Assistant Referee. As well as racing up and down the touchline in pursuit of flying wingers and lightning strikers, Mr Taylor has also been behind the screen as Video Assistant Referee and educates staff and students on the decision-making process.

All boys football teams are through to the quarter finals of the Sandwell Schools' FA Cups.

#### **Year 10 Squad:**

Paigan Follows (Parks), Ruaan Joe (Parks), Zak Millward (Shakespeare), Codey Smith (Einstein), Aden Foster (Ali), Charlie Element (Parks), Mason Foster (Einstein), Isaiah Goodall (Einstein), Ethan Bunce (Da Vinci), Matteo Essoki Eyoun (Da Vinci), Sameer Miah (Shakespeare), Jayden Pye (Shakespeare).  
Mr Baggle and Mr Ali.

#### **Year 9 Squad:**

Alfie Simcox (Nightingale), Harrison Perry (Shakespeare), Joel Yeboah (Nightingale), Oliver Corbett (Parks), Charlie Blackhall (Ali), Edgardo Jackson (Ali), Ronny Copper Griffiths (Shakespeare), Maxwell Knight (Shakespeare), Josiah McLeary (Ali), Archie Leon Bolding (Davinci), Kendre Colquhoun (Nightingale), Kyle Arnold (Ali).  
Mr Chidziya, Mr Brown

#### **Year 8 Squad:**

Oliver Baker (Nightingale), Alfie Cavell (Nightingale), Connor Davies (Parkes), Charlie Dempster (Shakespeare), Maiden Dyer (Ali), Fenton Fleet (Shakespeare), Aidan Gregory (Nightingale), Ryan Hall (Parkes), Alfie Hopcroft (Parkes), Dylan Jones (Ali), Charlie Kelsey-Beasmore (Shakespeare), Jamari Languedoc-Alposheri (Shakespeare), Joel Mayne (Shakespeare), Billy Owen (Parkes), Kayan Rana (Ali)  
Mr Allsopp

#### **Year 7 Squad:**

Harrison Leon-Monk (Da Vinci), Jared Pobe (Da Vinci), Bentlee Whitehouse (Nightingale), Diego Bragoli (Da Vinci), Hassnain Nasir (Da Vinci), George Bennett (Parks), George Belcher (Ali), D'Marco Hughes (Parks), Jax Greenhough (Nightingale), Danyaal Islam-Mahmood (Da Vinci), Harry Richards (Parks), Mohammed Tunkara (Parks), Rocco Divattimo (Da Vinci), Israel Ezeoke (Shakespeare), Tyler Togarepi (Nightingale),

Luke Briscoe (Nightingale), Oliver Shermer (Nightingale), Gracie Sheppard (Parks).  
Mr Perry and Mr Richards

Some standout performances from the previous round include:

Year 8 - Charlie Kelsey-Beasmore (Shakespeare) - 2 goals and an assist.

Year 9 - Kyle Arnold (Ali) - Chased down everything including lost causes. Defended from the front – he topped his industrious performance with a goal.

Year 10 - Mason Foster (Ali) - Played in a new role where he was tenacious and battled well.

Mr Baggley called Ruaan Joe (Parks) up to the U15 West Midlands Metropolitan County Schools' FA team to play against Shropshire. Ruaan played very well and will be included in future squads.

Mr Rollason is now refereeing football league games having made a much-publicised introduction to the match Wimbledon v Dagenham and Redbridge recently. Mr Rollason was 4th official at the Football league Two fixture, when the referee pulled up with an injury after only 12 minutes. The television cameras captured Mr Rollason entering the field of play to a massive round of applause.

### **Sporting Aptitude**

Year 7/8 Sporting Aptitude students are engaged in 'Sporting Aptitude Masterclass' sessions on a Friday afterschool. The sessions are well attended, and students are developing accordingly.

### **Sporting Aptitude Basketball Trip**

We had a great trip to Birmingham with some of our sporting aptitude pupils – who went to watch The British Basketball League Basketball Finals at the Utilia arena in Birmingham. Pupils had a great day out and watched some inspiring elite sportsmen and women compete to be the best in Great Britain!

Our sporting aptitude pupils who got involved were :

George Belcher ( Ali), Nathaniel Brown ( Da Vinci), Rocco Divattimo ( Da Vinci),  
Sebastian Hill ( Ali), Riley Lister ( Shakespeare), Scarlett Markham (Parks),  
Jared Pobe ( Da Vinci), Keeyan Rahman ( Nightingale), Harry Richards (Parks),  
Mya Ruby ( Shakespeare), Oliver Shermer (Nightingale), Alexia Stone ( Da Vinci) ,  
Archie Truslove ( Da Vinci), Faye Wilkes ( Nightingale).  
Mrs Thomas, Mr Landsborough, Mr Ali.

British Cycling came into school to do some elite testing with Year 8 and 9 Sporting Aptitude students. They were looking for raw talent to get them on the cycling England pathway. They will come back in May.

### **School Games Organisers**

On Thursday 4th April 2025, staff from across the Wood Green Academy School Sport Partnership took part in an engaging Outdoor Adventurous Activities (OAA) and Orienteering CPD Day, delivered by Cross Curricular Orienteering. Hosted at Grace Mary Primary School, the session provided staff with hands on training, practical resources, and creative ideas to embed orienteering and outdoor learning into their school curriculum.



The day focused on developing confidence and competence in leading OAA sessions, with activities that combined physical activity, problem solving, and cross curricular learning. Staff left feeling inspired and equipped to enhance their PE provision and outdoor education offer.

A big thank you to Cross Curricular Orienteering for an informative and interactive day, and to Grace Mary Primary for being fantastic hosts!

### **Yr5 & 6 TAG Rugby**

We're super excited to welcome Year 5 and 6 pupils from across Sandwell who will gather at Phoenix Collegiate Academy on Thursday 10th April 2025 for an action-packed School Games Tag Rugby Tournament. The event will see teams competing with passion, energy for a place in the Black Country School Games finals in June 2025.

### **Eid Celebration Day**

The Wood Green Academy School Sport Partnership hosted a vibrant and inclusive Eid Celebration Sports Event, bringing together schools and communities for a day of fun, fitness, and cultural celebration.

Held in the spirit of kindness, the event featured a fantastic range of activities delivered by expert coaches and organisations, including Staffordshire Cricket, The Albion Foundation, Archery GB, Wolverhampton Wrestling Club, Sandwell Public Health and Stepping Stones in the Community. Pupils had the chance to try new sports, learn new skills, and celebrate Eid through physical activity and shared experiences.

The event was a huge success, promoting diversity, health, and community spirit. A heartfelt thank you to all the deliverers, staff, and young participants who made the day so special!

### **SEND Multi Sports**

Tipton Sports Academy played host to an unforgettable day of fun, fitness, and friendly competition as we celebrated the SEND Multi Sports Activity Day.

The event brought together an enthusiastic group of participants, each excited to try their hand at a range of sports, and we couldn't be more thrilled with the energy and spirit everyone brought!

This exciting day was designed to provide individuals with disabilities the opportunity to experience a variety of sports in a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment. The multi-sport activities were expertly led by a team of passionate coaches, each specialising in different sports and dedicated to helping participants develop their skills and confidence.

### **Enrichment**

Students have now completed four units in enrichment. They have continued to develop a range of skills and I Can I Will characteristics.

A reminder that enrichment lessons for years 7 and 8 that took place between 3pm and 4pm (Mon – Y7, Wed – Y8) finished at the end of last academic term (Friday 11th April). Students should ensure that they are in normal school uniform each day and school will now finish at 3pm for all students.

Huge 'Thank You' to Wood Green enrichment coaches:

- Wayne McDonald - WM Judo
- Helen Lower & Gill Peters - Wood Green Table Tennis Club

## **Sports Hall Athletics**

On 25th February 2025, Wood Green Academy hosted an exciting Year 9 Sportshall Athletics event, bringing together talented young athletes from five schools from across Sandwell. The event was filled with thrilling performances across a range of indoor track and field events, with students showcasing their speed, strength, and determination. The atmosphere was electric as participants pushed themselves to achieve their best, cheered on by their peers and teachers.

A huge thank you to Wood Green Academy for hosting such a well organised and inspiring event. Congratulations to all the athletes who took part, you made it a fantastic afternoon of Athletics!

## **Student Leadership Success**

Our Student Ambassadors have been hard at work on an exciting new initiative: the creation of a well-being garden. This project has seen them design the garden layout, plant seeds, dig and prepare raised beds. They made excellent progress on SU4L day, their dedication and teamwork have been truly inspiring. The well-being garden aims to provide a tranquil space for students to relax, reflect, and connect with nature. The ambassadors' efforts have already begun to transform this vision into reality, showcasing their commitment to enhancing our school environment. A huge well done to all involved!

Students involved:

Yusuf Halim (Shakespeare) , Shayma Begum (Parkes) , Imaan Guernah (Nightingale) , Mya Ruby (Shakespeare) , Heather Stubbs (Nightingale), Chloe Hughes (Nightingale), Kolby Jay Danks (Parks), Sophie Rushton (Da Vinci), Sanjula Sapkota (Da Vinci), Maddison Clews (Parks), Eliza Williams (Parks), , Cassey Clews (Parks), Lacie Powell (Ali), Maddison Quayle (Parks), Adam Atkinson (Nightingale), Evelyn Richardson (Da Vinci), Holly Churchill (Da Vinci), Hollie-Rai Price (Parks), Kaira Morkar (Parks), Aoife Langley (Da Vinci) and Sumaiyah Tasneem (Parks)

Well done to our Change Your Mind ambassadors who delivered session on Mental Health Awareness to Year 7 Students on SU4L day 2. The Ambassadors were involved in the planning of the sessions, distributions of resources and delivered them to Year 7 directly, with many members of staff commenting on how well they did and how they'd make excellent future teachers! A special thank you to the Yr13 students who have been part of the programme for the last 2 years, delivering several sessions confidently to various year groups, your commitment to the programme has been appreciated.

Students involved:

Zara Samreen (Ali) , Faith Lowe-Higgins (Da Vinci) , Maddison Quayle (Parks), Olivia Evans (Parks), Millie Bowen (Ali), Freya Webb (Nightingale), Millie Webb (Ali), Stephanie Williams (Da Vinci), Ashlee Hall (Parks), Madison Cooper (Ali), Oluwadademimu Abimbola (Da Vinci), Osanherumwen Imagbenikaro (Ali), Tasmia Zannat (Da Vinci), Angel Chen (Da Vinci), Rihana Begum (Shakespeare), Ebony Lewis (Ali), Sophie Rushton (Da Vinci), Analeigh Halford (Parks), Elisabeth Halford (Ali), Sanjula Sapkota (Da Vinci), Hafizaah Uddin (Da Vinci), Sara Hoque (Da Vinci), Phoebe Cooper (Da Vinci), Cassey Clews (Parks) and Shayma Begum (Parks).

## **School Calendar**

Just a reminder that the school calendar is on the school website and has all the Academy's key dates and activities listed: <https://www.woodgreenacademy.co.uk/school-calendar/>

Many thanks

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Topham', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr J Topham  
Headteacher



**Wood Green Academy/ STEP Academy Trust**  
**Listening Period Summary.**  
**For distribution to students, parents/carers and staff**

**Executive Summary**

Wood Green Academy, a Single Academy Trust in Wednesbury, West Midlands, has collaborated with STEP Academy Trust, a Multi-Academy Trust with schools in South London and East Sussex, for almost five years. Both the school and the trust share a similar vision and values. The Trustees of both entities believe that a formal merger, where Wood Green Academy joins STEP Academy Trust, would be mutually beneficial and provide enhanced opportunities for both staff and students.

Overall the proposal for Wood Green to join STEP has been received very favourably by Staff, Parents/Carers and the Student body.

**Listening Period Details**

When a Single Academy Trust (SAT) considers joining a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT), it is recommended that a listening period is held for students, parents/carers and staff. This period allows the school community to voice their opinions and ask questions of the SAT and MAT leadership.

Over what period did the Listening Period take place?	3 weeks: Monday 3rd March to Friday 21st March
How were the Listening Period materials shared?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• On the school website</li><li>• Emails to Students</li><li>• Emails to Staff</li><li>• Emails to Parents</li><li>• Meeting with Student Council with representatives of Wood Green and STEP.</li><li>• Formal Meeting with Staff with representatives of Wood Green and STEP.</li><li>• Online Meeting with Parents with representatives of Wood Green and STEP.</li></ul>

List the respondents and stakeholders you proactively engaged with in your Listening Period process:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students</li> <li>• Staff</li> <li>• Parents</li> </ul>
What information was made available to consultees?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation made to Students and Staff with representatives of Wood Green and STEP.</li> <li>• Online Meeting with Parents with representatives of Wood Green and STEP.</li> <li>• Access to Trust Website</li> <li>• FAQ Document</li> </ul>

### **Distribution and summary of responses**

Students, parents/carers and staff were able to access an online questionnaire, as well as ask questions during the face to face and online meetings.

The questionnaire was sent to 1526 students, 1691 prime contacts (parents and carers) and 179 staff. It included a question asking whether they were supportive of the proposal for Wood Green to join STEP Academy Trust (strongly support, support, neutral, oppose, strongly oppose, no response - treated as supportive) as well as a free format option to submit any comments, or ask any questions.

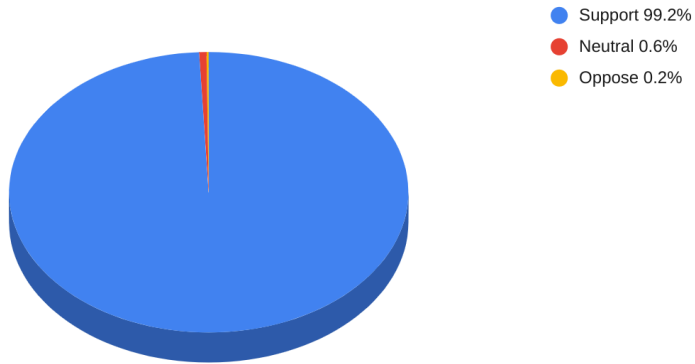
There were a total of 61 respondents to the online questionnaire covering staff, students and parents.

The following responses were received:

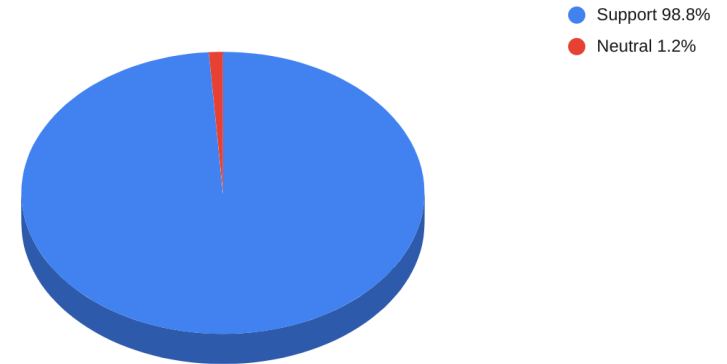
- 99.2% of Parents support the proposal for Wood Green to join STEP
- 98.9% of Staff support the proposal for Wood Green to join STEP.
- 99.1% of Students support the proposal for Wood Green to join Step.

Based on this, there appears to be overwhelming support from the School community for Wood Green to join STEP.

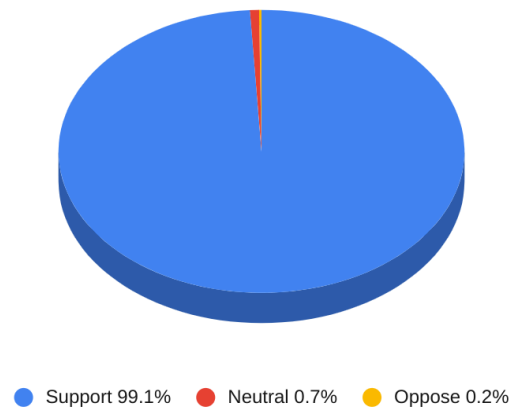
Parents: Do you support the proposal for Wood Green to join Step Academy Trust?



Staff: Do you support the proposal for Wood Green to join STEP Academy Trust?



Students: Do you support the proposal for Wood Green to join STEP Academy Trust?



### **Comments from the school community**

Respondee were asked to comment on their decision to support the proposal for Wood Green to join STEP Academy Trust:

<b>Students Responses</b>
I believe in what Mr Topham says about the benefits which STEP can bring to our great school.
Seems like an admirable goal and would greatly benefit students.
I just agree with it because it is for everyone's benefit.
I feel like being the first academy in this trust will really help other schools across the nation. Joining STEP will not only benefit me and other students but it will also benefit the teachers.
I hope they will improve school and make it more fun.
I don't really mind if we don't or if we do join.
Seems interesting.
I'm concerned that we will be used to support other schools, but there won't be enough support for us. There are students that are struggling and I don't believe that this is the right decision to benefit them.

I feel as though it will be a good opportunity for Wood Green to have a collaboration with STEP and will help us grow as a school and learn more and grow as individuals in the school.
I don't see how it impacts our school and if it does I don't see how.
It will support the school to improve and become better in relation to being able to access a wider network of educational experts with experience and knowledge to know how to improve and best support the school.
I don't know what it includes.
No change to our schooling lives.
I think that STEP will open up more opportunities for our school.
I think its good to connect with other schools.
It seems like a great step for the school and could make students reach even better grades because everyone at Wood Green is already super smart.
It doesn't really affect me in terms of changes.
As it might just be the right decision.
I don't really think it would change another or make a strong difference. So I am not sure what to pick.
I think that our school as an individual is better and joining STEP means we are no longer an individual school.
I strongly support it because we get to help and reach out locally and nationally across the country. We would get to help out Primaries and future High Schools ( if they join STEP ).

**Those students who left comments are overwhelmingly supportive of the proposal and recognised the positive impact that Wood Green joining STEP would have on them.**

Parent / Carer Responses
In theory, it wouldn't affect my son as he's leaving this year being year 11, but if it benefits the already great school then why not.



Moving forward - access to best practices across different schools, more opportunities for students.
Change! Why? If it's not broken don't change, or is it broken we see so many schools that are doing well which get taken over by Academy's to then just spiral and completely change. I know things more forward....What about the cost implications on uniform change for many people.
Why change something that is working.
My child has expressed that she is comfortable with the school as it is and a change would make it difficult to adjust
I would need the benefits of joining this trust laid out in more detail as they are not immediately obvious. Can a trust with, it seems from their website (assuming there is only one STEP academy trust!), only primary school members based solely in the south east, understand the unique needs and challenges of a secondary school and sixth form servicing a post industrial community in one of the most deprived boroughs in England?
Would need further details to decide whether this decision is a business decision to help financials or whether it will actually benefit the children.
My main issue is that every current academy member of the STEP academy trust appears to be a primary school, not a single secondary school and nothing outside of London/Sussex. I might be incorrect in this, this was solely gathered from looking at the step academy trust website, and related individual academy sites.... But if this is correct then i would question the benefits to be gained from partnering with schools not at the same educational level as wood green.
We have not been provided with any material with regards to the STEP Academy Trust. I would like to know the pros and con's of joining the trust, how it effect the teaching standards of the school and effect the school. I understand that the children will benefit but how? will joining the trust mean you will concentrate more on the practical side of life experiences?
I don't know enough about it to make an informed decision.

**Parent/Carer views on the proposal are more mixed, however it is important to note that many of these comments were posted before the online parents meeting, which addressed many of these concerns. The overwhelming majority of parents are in favour of the proposal for Wood Green to join STEP Academy Trust.**

#### Staff responses

The collaboration seems like a very good idea but I would like to know further information of what support for other local secondary schools would include and how it would impact upon us.
I think it will offer some good opportunities for Wood Green moving forward.
I was really impressed with their CEO. He came across as genuine and caring. He was NOT a corporate 'lawyer-type'!
I agree that WGA needs to join an academy trust. Is this the correct one. I am concerned that all other schools are primary, so what curriculum resources can be shared or CPD. Also the location of all other school are tens of miles away, I can't see opportunities for other staff, as they would have relocate.
<p>I feel neutral because I would like to know more at what it looks like for my role within the school.</p> <p>I do think it would be a good (needed) way forward but I would have concerns about</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the trust mainly being London based.</li> <li>- the trust only having Primary schools.</li> <li>- in the talk the trust said they take on failing schools, are we seen as a failing school?</li> </ul> <p>It is hard to agree with something when you don't know the outcome for yourself, job security / terms and conditions etc....</p> <p>At the start of this it asks are you - Parent / Carer / Student or Teacher - no category for non-teaching staff / support staff / cleaning or site staff.</p>
I'm broadly in favour because it is inevitable that WGA will have to join a MAT eventually and I trust the judgement of SLT that this is the right choice of MAT for WGA. I'm am happy to hear that STEP share our values and that schools in the MAT are not expected to change to fit a uniform, corporate image (I have experience of this happening to a previous school).
I think joining STEP will be beneficial for the students at WGA and will definitely open opportunities for students in schools that require improvement and give them a fairer chance in life and reaching targets they may not have been able to without the support of STEP. The only reason I didn't choose strongly support is just not knowing what will change just yet and if each change will be better than how things currently are.
I think it is important that we are not by ourselves and we have the support of other schools and groups. I can also see that this might lead to more career opportunities.
The potential for Wood Green Academy having a significant role regarding within the STEP MAT as a "lead secondary" or similar, is a key argument for the move.

I thought Paul Glover spoke really well when he spoke to us as staff. I thought he had a real passion for teaching and the kids. Also hopefully if we were the first secondary school we would be able to have more influence on the way to best support the other schools and kids.

**Staff comments back up the data above, that they are overwhelmingly supportive of the proposal for Wood Green to join STEP Academy Trust.**

### **Questions from the school community**

The school community were given the opportunity to ask questions as part of this process, both in formal meetings held at the start of the Listening Period and as part of the online survey.

A number of questions were asked by students, parents and staff during the listening period. These are listed below, with answers from either the Wood Green SLT or STEP Academy Trust.

<b>Question from the school community.</b>	<b>Response from Wood Green Academy</b>
What support will STEP provide to us?	Back office support, they provide NPQs. We may be able to deliver these here too. Their expertise is around primary schools so transition, literacy and numeracy and KS3 in the first instance. Whenever we have supported a school we have always garnered good practice from other schools and joining STEP provides us with the opportunity to be part of a much larger organisation and therefore increase opportunities to learn from and share good practice .
How does Wood Green benefit from STEP?	See above. We are also able to help shape the Secondary part of STEP Academy Trust, providing us with a much wider reach whilst also supporting other schools locally. This will give further career development opportunities for staff which are not currently available within a single school setting.
Will science be supplied practical equipment (e.g. lamb hearts) or would you be expected to buy your	Leaders within STEP are empowered to identify/prioritise the resources required to deliver excellence, within the budgets allocated. Wood Green would therefore retain control over expenditure linked directly to educational outcomes. .

own? (I was told that at a previous school this is something that changed after they moved into a trust)	
How will being part of STEP MAT improve the life chances of our students?	I believe that it will strengthen the school both in outcomes and experiences. It should also really strengthen our transition and KS3 offer.
What is in it for the pupils of Wood Green?  Would we get to meet other academies and schools who are in STEP?	Additional CPD for staff so that will mean improved teaching. Opportunities for our student ambassadors to work with their student councils. Debating competitions and likely other student to student competitions.
How will this affect the potential rebuild of WGA?	It won't. We are already identified on the published list of school rebuilds and continue to engage with the DfE around the process and timescales.
Why do we HAVE to join a MAT?	Financially staying on our own is not sustainable. Next year's budget with or without STEP is going to be tough. Additionally, as a Single Academy Trust we are not part of the Local Authority and not part of a wider Multi Academy trust. As a result, at present, we have nowhere we can call on for support, especially around some of the big issues that we have dealt with in the past five years.
What are the benefits of joining a MAT for WGA?  What professional development opportunities will be provided?  Will there be shared training sessions across the trust?	<p><b>A. Improved Educational Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Collaboration: Opportunities for shared best practices, resources, and expertise among schools.</i></li> <li>• <i>Specialist Support: Access to dedicated specialists in areas like SEND, curriculum development, and behaviour management.</i></li> <li>• <i>Targeted Intervention: Tailored support for underperforming schools within the trust.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>B. Financial Benefits</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Economies of Scale: Centralised procurement can reduce costs for services, IT, and supplies and improve the quality of relationships with key suppliers.</i></li> </ul>

<p>Are the trusts current expertise and resources relevant only to primary education, and, therefore, how can the trust bring a significant benefit to staff and pupils of WGA?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Shared Resources: Access to shared staff with expertise in a variety of areas(e.g., HR, finance, premises, project management, pupil representation, inclusion) reduces duplication and allows schools to focus on teaching and learning.</i></li> <li>• <i>Financial Resilience: The MAT's pooled reserves can provide stability during financial challenges.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>C. Staff Development and Recruitment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Professional Development: MATs often provide structured CPD programs and career progression opportunities.</i></li> <li>• <i>Recruitment: Larger MATs have broader appeal and greater resources to attract talent.</i></li> <li>• <i>Collaboration Opportunities: Staff can benefit from cross-school networks and mentorship.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>D. Governance and Leadership Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Centralised Expertise: A MAT provides additional leadership support, reducing pressure on headteachers and governors. This will be particularly important as we move further along the school rebuild process, which has the potential to require significant resource if overseen locally.</i></li> <li>• <i>Simplified Governance: A single local governance structure reduces administrative burdens on individual school governing bodies.</i></li> </ul>
<p>Has the decision already been made?</p> <p>When will the decision be made to join the trust?</p>	<p><i>No. We are currently in a listening period before deciding on whether we move forward. If we do there will be a further TUPE consultation relating to changes (if any) to staff pay and conditions. Alongside this the DFE also have to agree to the proposal.</i></p>
<p>Will the Wood Green branding change?</p>	<p>Only the logo, to be the same style as the other STEP logos.</p>
<p>Why have we chose STEP and not any other academy trust?</p> <p>Why can't we do what STEP are suggesting without them?</p>	<p>We did consider this in detail some time ago, however it is not possible to become a MAT without already actively working with several other schools and even then, new MATs are heavily scrutinised by the DfE in terms of cultural alignment and sustainability.</p> <p>Alongside this, when considering becoming a MAT, our key aim was to broaden our ability to deliver sustainable improvement to other local schools. Establishing our own trust would require the prioritisation of</p>

	<p>significant leadership resource towards governance, supporting / aligning back office processes etc, which would limit the capacity available for school improvement.</p> <p>Joining an existing MAT therefore offers the best of both worlds, particularly in the case of STEP where both cultural alignment is strong and WGA have the opportunity to develop the secondary offer.</p>
When will the specific dates for what happens next be shared.	High level timescales were included within the letter sent to parents and staff on 03.03.25 (parents and students) and 27.02.25 (staff).
Will the school's name or uniform change?	There are no immediate plans to change the school's name or uniform. Our school logo will be updated to reflect that we are now part of the Trust.

<b>Question from the school community.</b>	<b>Response from STEP Academy Trust</b>
How was WGA chosen / selected as a potential match by STEP academy?	<p>STEP's Executive Team and Trustees want to ensure the culture of any new school aligns to that of STEP.</p> <p>As a result, we have met and worked with a number of schools in London, the South East and South West. To date, none have demonstrated the same commitment as STEP to improving the life chances of children – the exception to this has been Wood Green Academy.</p> <p>It is evident that Wood Green has a very similar ethos and culture to STEP, and indeed many visits – on both sides – have resulted in the frequent comment “This feels just like our school/Trust”.</p>
What is STEP's long term vision for Wood Green?	<p>Our trust's vision is to support all learners to become successful adults in the modern world.</p> <p>Clearly Wood Green's approach is delivering on this for the pupils who attend the school, however as the centre of a new geographical hub within STEP, the reach would be extended to the wider area/region.</p> <p>We know that this is something that Wood Green are passionate about, having supported a number of different schools in a range of different capacities in the past.</p> <p>However, we also appreciate that it has been hard for improvement to be sustained beyond Wood Green's engagement.</p> <p>As part of STEP, Wood Green would therefore be supported to:</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Utilise/develop leadership capacity in order to support another secondary in the region.</li> <li>2) Identify a number of primary schools to join STEP. This would be with support from Local Authorities and the Regional Director.</li> </ol>
How will we acquire a failing school?	<p>STEP have an excellent reputation in London and the South East. As a result, we have been trusted by the DfE to grow in order to support 20 schools.</p> <p>Over the past couple of years, we have been developing relationships with the DfE's regional team in the West Midlands, as well as Local Authority colleagues in Sandwell.</p> <p>As we already work across two regions we are confident that, with the testimony of the London Regional DfE team, STEP will be seen as a strong proposition to support a third geographical hub.</p> <p><u>Alongside this, Wood Green have a strong foundation/reputation locally on which to build.</u></p>
<p>What will WGA look like on the first day of being in a MAT; what will WGA look like at the end of the first term, first year and in two years?</p> <p>How will it affect the students day to day?</p> <p>What will change if we join the trust?</p> <p>How will this affect sixth formers?</p> <p>How many 'failing' schools are do you plan to work with at any one time? (where will these schools be?)</p>	<p>Wood Green is a strong provision and so it is unlikely that STEP would require any major educational changes from day 1. Indeed, we have not identified any areas of concern within our educational due diligence so far.</p> <p>We also believe that each school should maintain its own identity, so pupils and staff may not notice too much difference initially, other than changes to visually align Wood Green with the rest of STEP. For example, an update to signage and logos.</p> <p>It is therefore more likely that our support will be in the background, supporting Mr Topham and the wider SLT to develop the capacity required in order to support growth.</p> <p>Alongside this, we will be collaborating with external leaders (within the DfE, LA etc) to identify and engage other potential joiners, to support the growth journey within the new hub.</p> <p>As outlined in the previous questions, any prospective growth opportunities would need to be the right cultural fit for STEP. This forms one of several growth principles within STEP which Trustees scrutinise each time an opportunity arises.</p>

<p>What impact will joining a MAT have on the governance of WGA? (what will happen to our governing body?)</p> <p>Will the trust have a sufficient understanding of the local area and the unique challenges and issues that arise in a post industrial community that is very different to the one its current stakeholders live in?</p> <p>We will still have elected parent Governors?</p>	<p>As part of a Multi Academy Trust, responsibility for academic and financial outcomes sits with the Trustees and Accounting Officer (CEO in STEP's case).</p> <p>This is therefore reflected in our governance structure, which comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A board of trustees</li> <li>- An education, finance/operations and opportunities, risk and audit committee.</li> <li>- Academy committees.</li> <li>- An executive team.</li> </ul> <p>Our Board represent the strategic interests of STEP. If Wood Green join, we feel our board would be further strengthened through the addition of a new trustee, from Wood Green's existing Trustees. .</p> <p>Alongside this, we would establish an academy committee, to represent local interests and provide local governance around safeguarding, stakeholders and standards.</p>
<p>How will funding work – would funding for WGA be ring fenced?</p> <p>Will we get our full budget allocation (how is this decided?)</p> <p>Will Wood Green be in control of its own budget?</p> <p>Will funding be equitable across the MAT?</p> <p>How does budget allocation work eg. Top slicing?</p>	<p>Trustees of STEP allocate financial resources in a way which is transparent and focusses on ensuring that as much resources as possible is directed towards teaching and learning.</p> <p>Once high-level budgets have been set, leaders are empowered to further allocate their budget in a way which supports them to achieve excellence within their area of responsibility.</p> <p>STEP's primary finance model of equitable funding has proved to be extremely successful, ensuring that as much resource as possible is directed towards Teaching and Learning. Evidence of this can be seen from the KS2 outcomes of 74% and every school graded as Good or Outstanding.</p> <p>The financial model for secondary provisions has some key differences to those in a primary setting. In addition, there are many tried and tested models within the Sector. This provides an opportunity to develop a financial model which is not only sustainable, but also facilitates high quality educational outcomes.</p>
<p><i>'Will there be a staffing restructure or redundancies?</i></p>	<p>Prior to any engagement with STEP, the leadership team and Trustees of Wood Green noted the financial challenges of their operating model. Whilst these challenges do not disappear on joining STEP, it will provide an opportunity to ensure spending decisions are sound. As a result, no redundancies are envisaged.</p>



<p>What were STEP's financial reserves in 2024?</p>	<p>STEP's financial year ends on 31<sup>st</sup> August each year. As at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024, we carried forward reserves of £2,315k. Our full financial statements are published on our Trust's website at <a href="http://www.stepacademytrust.org">www.stepacademytrust.org</a>.</p> <p>STEP seek to implement a structure for our next, not current phase of development. As a result, we only maintain reserves to a level required to mitigate a reasonable level of risk.</p> <p>As a result we invest heavily in the future, specifically in strategic priorities which impact on learners across STEP. Examples over recent years include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trust-wide strategic and operational support around inclusion.</li> <li>- The development of one excellent primary curriculum.</li> <li>- Raising the profile / effectiveness of pupil representation.</li> </ul>
<p>How are staff voice &amp; student voice represented across the MAT?</p>	<p>STEP is founded on unity. As a result, we consider stakeholder engagement to be an area which requires constant focus by leaders.</p> <p>Our academy committees play a key role in providing local context. Their role (from a stakeholder perspective) is to consider what it is like to be a pupil, parent and member of staff in each of our academies.</p> <p>Our Trustees and Executive Team are striving to deliver excellent stakeholder engagement, defined as:</p> <p><u>Pupil/Parent experience</u> There is a strong sense of local community and pride in the Academy, as assessed through surveys. Whole school events are planned across the academic year and are well supported.</p> <p><u>Staff Engagement</u> Staff Surveys (comprising over 20 areas of focus, including areas such as resources, workload, communication and autonomy) shows 90% of areas assessed score above the national average. Survey response over 10% of average.</p> <p>Pupils are our most important stakeholders and therefore for the past few years, we have invested in pupil representation. We employ a full-time leader who focuses on this, supporting leaders at each academy to develop and operate a high quality pupil parliament, as well as coordinating trust-wide initiatives such as the annual debating championships.</p>