



February 2012

Dear Parent/Carer

All Age Academy - Gay Elms Primary School and Merchants' Academy

Governors at Gay Elms Primary School and Merchants' Academy have agreed that the merger of the two schools to become an All Age Academy will be delayed. This will not now take place in September 2012 as initially planned. We are determined, in the interests of improving the educational opportunities for all pupils, to continue to work closely together in order to merge no later than September 2013.

In the course of undertaking the necessary checks required for an All Age Academy, it has come to light that the Gay Elms buildings have some significant and outstanding repair requirements. A detailed survey has revealed that substantial work needs to be undertaken in the immediate and medium term to rectify these issues.

Bristol City Council, currently responsible for the upkeep of Gay Elms, acknowledges that work needs to be undertaken on the buildings and has now committed to a full repair of the roof and boiler room. However, there remains a very significant funding gap between this and the full cost of the identified and required building work.

Both sets of Governors, whilst remaining resolutely determined to ensure that a merger between the two schools takes place, agree that this is now not possible in September 2012. The Merchants' Academy governing body and Sponsors are committed to creating an All-Age-Academy where the buildings and environment contribute to ensuring that all our young people achieve more than they ever thought possible.

Merchants' Academy's sponsors, the Society of Merchant Venturers together with Bristol University, will work on behalf of both schools with the aim of resolving the outstanding issues, so that a merger can occur either at or before September 2013.

"Whilst the decision to postpone the merger was inevitable once the building repair costs became known, the Sponsors, Governors and Principal of Merchants' Academy are determined to find a solution so that the merger can proceed. We are committed to making a reality the significant advantages an All-Age-Academy will bring to the young people of both schools."

Chris Curling, Chairman of Governors, Merchants' Academy

"The Head and Governors of Gay Elms are determined to improve the educational opportunities for all our pupils. We remain strongly committed to the idea of an All Through School, which we believe will bring many benefits for the children, especially in terms of the transition from Primary to Secondary education. We sincerely hope that these difficulties with our old buildings can be resolved soon in order that we may proceed along our desired path."

Tim Rippington, Chairman of Governors, Gay Elms Primary School

We will keep you informed of developments and hope that the building problems will soon be sorted. As heads of our schools we are committed to this merger and will do all we can to make it a reality.

Yours sincerely,

Anne Burrell
Principal

Annette Osborne
Headteacher