

Dear Parents & Carers,

I am writing to formally introduce myself as the new CEO of OWN Trust. I joined the trust at the start of September, although I was fortunate to spend a couple of weeks transitioning at the end of last term.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my first few weeks at the Trust and have had the pleasure of visiting all of the schools in the Trust multiple times. It has been a delight getting to know the staff and pupils and learning about all the amazing things happening each day. I have visited our youngest pupils in their early years classrooms and have been fortunate to attend phonics lessons in each school, as well as hearing some children read.

I have also had the opportunity to complete site walks at each of our schools, appreciating the great resources and facilities we have.

I am really looking forward to collaborating with school staff, governors, and trustees to make our schools the best they can be. I am also very keen to build strong relationships with you, the parents/carers of our schools. I firmly believe that by working together, we can achieve the best for your children.

That said, I must make a small plea for help. We are very fortunate that our school sites are so well-maintained by the Trust's site and school cleaning teams. Our school staff, including the Headteachers, also have high expectations for making our schools look and feel the very best they can. However, and this is where we need your help: school budgets have never been more stretched. The slight cushion we may have had previously to improve our school sites is being squeezed further due to increasing staffing costs, operational costs like heating and electricity, and essential maintenance repairs. Therefore, I am reaching out to our large parental community with the following requests:

- If you work for a company that may be interested in sponsoring all or part of the renovation of the early years' outdoor areas in any of our school sites, we need significant investment—around £30k per school—to create the best environments for our youngest pupils.
- If you work for a company that could provide us with replacement sheds across our school sites, we would greatly appreciate it. Currently, we have about 10 sheds that need replacing as their windows have fallen out, or the wood is rotting, which is causing our resources to be ruined.
- If you have a team of people willing to come in and help with some external painting, please let your school know.

We are also seeking two companies that can help with the following:

1. At Nene Valley, we have a fantastic outdoor classroom and stage, which sadly cannot be used because the roof has been condemned. The roof needs to be removed and replaced so this wonderful resource can once again be utilised (see picture below).

2. At Woodston, we are looking for a local company or charity to partner with us to develop our pond and nature area, which is in need of some love and attention. It would be fantastic if this charity could also work with some children in the area once it has been renovated.

Lastly, we are looking for individuals interested in supporting the leadership of our schools and Trust. We are searching for local governors for our schools and trustees for our Trust board, particularly those with finance, HR, or risk management experience. Our Trust needs strong leaders to sit on our governance boards and provide challenge and support to our leadership. This could be a parent, another relative, or someone you know in the local community. We would be happy to meet and discuss the role with anyone interested.

I hope to be present at the school gates at each of the schools over the coming weeks. If you see me, please do come and say hello. If you think you can assist with any of the above, please contact your school office, which will pass the information on to the Headteacher or myself. We will be eternally grateful for any support you can provide in making our schools the best environments for learning.

Thank you for your ongoing support and for entrusting us with your children's primary education. Please keep an eye out for our parent and carers' survey later this year, where we will welcome your feedback on all aspects of our Trust and the schools within.

Kind regards,

Lorraine Greco
CEO | OWN Trust

