



Lisa Mannall
Regional Schools Commissioner for
the South West
2 Rivergate
Bristol
BS1 6EH

12 February 2019

Dear Ms Arlidge and Professor Reynolds,

Closure of The Bath Studio School

Having considered the views of parents and other interested parties, following a listening period that ran for 5 weeks from 23 October to 27 November 2018, Ministers have now made a final decision to close The Bath Studio School (TBSS) at the end of the summer term 2020. This will allow pupils to finish their current key stage.

The decision to close entails the termination of The Bath Studio School funding agreement, by mutual agreement with Wellsway Multi Academy Trust (WMAT). This follows Ministers previously giving in-principle agreement to the closure of The Bath Studio School requested by the WMAT Trust board in October 2018.

Since TBSS opened in September 2014, the school has failed to recruit pupils to its capacity. There are only 123 pupils on roll currently meaning the school is only 41% full and numbers are predicted to fall further. As school budgets are largely determined by the number of pupils in a school, such low numbers make it very challenging to provide a sustainably high quality education for all pupils. As pupils join the school in year 10, they already have a place in a local school and predictions show there will continue to be secondary capacity across Bath over the next five years.

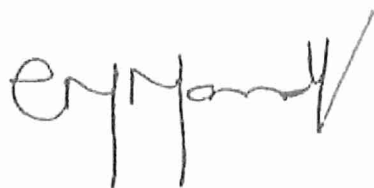
We were pleased that a number of parents/carers of pupils at TBSS took the opportunity to inform us of their views on the proposed closure during our listening period. We have since taken careful account of the views expressed. While we understand the concerns expressed by parents and members of the community, on balance, we believe that current and potentially future pupils at TBSS will benefit from receiving a more sustainable and high quality education in neighbouring schools and colleges. For those pupils moving to alternative post 16 provision in the next two years, they will benefit from attending schools and colleges with an assured future and that able to offer a broader range of opportunities.

Our shared priority must now be to ensure that all pupils have access to that high quality education in a school or college with a sustainable future. With this in mind, it is vital that you continue to provide on-going support to parents/carers of pupils at TBSS in progressing their children's post 16 education. We understand you will work with each pupil, and their families

where appropriate, to ensure year 11 pupils have the information they need to make a decision on their post 16 education and have support to apply. We understand you will provide similar support to year 10 students in 2019/2020.

I appreciate this is an unsettling time for The Bath Studio School pupils, their parents and the school's staff. We will continue to work collaboratively with you, your team and BANES officers to ensure that the closure of the school, and pupils' transition to alternative post 16 schools and colleges, is as smooth as possible.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Mannall', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Lisa Mannall
Regional Schools Commissioner for the South West