

13th February 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

Confidential Announcement

I am writing to tell you that Wellsway Multi Academy Trust (WMAT) has received formal permission from the Secretary of State for Education to close The Bath Studio School (TBSS) by mutual consent following the five week listening period. I thank those parents and carers who responded in this period and for their comments, which were considered carefully. The accompanying letter from the Regional Schools' Commissioner explains this decision and outlines how, despite everyone's very best efforts, the school has proved to be neither financially sustainable nor educationally viable.

This decision means that TBSS will close at the end of August 2020 and until then we will continue to provide the full curriculum offer for students currently in Years 10 and 12, alongside a limited one-year offer for students currently in Year 11. This will enable all current students to complete the courses and qualifications they have enrolled on. No further students will be admitted to the school from September 2019. During the period of closure we will draw on resources from across our Trust to support the students' on-going education and transition, helping them to choose the best route for them into education, employment or apprenticeship. We are providing additional careers guidance and working closely with local educational establishments to help students consider the range of options available to them. All members of staff at TBSS will receive advisory support from the Trust and where possible, we will look to identify opportunities for them within other WMAT academies.

Aspire Academy, which shares the site and building with TBSS, will remain within the Trust and plans are already underway to expand the school to provide more places for children with social, emotional and mental health needs, from September 2019. Alongside this expansion, WMAT is planning to further develop special school provision on the site to meet the growing need for more special school places for children and young people on the autistic spectrum with challenging needs. Our aim is to open this new provision, in the parts of the building vacated by TBSS, in September 2020.

We do understand how upsetting the closure decision is for many students, parents and carers, but we hope you understand that this decision has not been taken lightly and is, quite literally, a last resort. WMAT remains completely committed to the students and staff at TBSS. We will work hard to support the students' current education and future ambitions and will continue to provide a wide range of additional support for the school, calling on the expertise and resources we have available across our family of schools.

The official announcement will be made at 9am on Thursday 14th February 2019 and I would appreciate it being kept confidential until then.

Yours sincerely



Andrea Arlidge
CEO
Wellsway Multi Academy Trust