

15<sup>th</sup> April 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Across this academic year, schools across the Trust will have made positive and effective use of 10 additional half day INSET sessions to support staff training and development. We would like to share some feedback on how these sessions have worked, and to explain how we will be refining this approach for the 2026/27 academic year.

The purpose of introducing half day INSETs was to give all school staff dedicated time to further develop their professional skill and knowledge, as well as to support curriculum planning, teaching practice and assessment. Each school established their own approach, with oversight from our Trust Central team, to respond to their staff members' development needs. This professional learning opportunity, which supplements the 5 full training days we have as well as other regular weekly training, directly supports the quality of education children experience in the classroom. Over time, we expect this continued focus on staff development to further improve outcomes for children.

Feedback from schools shows that this approach to staff training has had a beneficial impact. Staff have been able to take part in additional well planned, focused training and professional learning, and schools report improvements in skills, curriculum consistency and teaching quality. Importantly, attendance levels for pupils have remained strong overall, and schools have managed early finishes safely and effectively. We are grateful for the way families have supported schools on these days. Thank you.

At the same time, we recognise that 10 half-day finishes over the year created practical challenges for some families. We are grateful for the flexibility shown and feedback given by parents who have shared their thoughts, and this has been carefully considered alongside the evidence from schools.

As a result, from September 2026 we will be slightly revising our approach, to take account of the feedback received from parents, as well as acknowledging the improvement in staff professional development which has been achieved over the last academic year. Next academic year, schools will move to **6 half-day INSET sessions per year** (in addition to the 5 full day INSETs), one per half term, **which will be structured over Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday**. This change allows us to continue the benefits of high-quality staff training while reducing disruption for families and offering a more predictable pattern across the year.

Schools have carefully considered dates, which we are now able to share well in advance to support planning in schools and with the hope that early notification will be positive for parents and families as well.

For the 2026/27 academic year, the dates will be:

Autumn term 1 2026	Tuesday	22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2026
Autumn term 2 2026	Wednesday	25 <sup>th</sup> November 2026
Spring term 1 2027	Thursday	4 <sup>th</sup> February 2027
Spring term 2 2027	Tuesday	16 <sup>th</sup> March 2027
Summer term 1 2027	Wednesday	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2027
Summer term 2 2027	Thursday	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2027

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We will continue to review this approach annually to ensure it remains in the best interests of staff, pupils and families. Our priority remains providing the best possible education for your children, while working in partnership with families.

With kind regards



Simon Dilkes

Chief Executive Officer

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THE  
BRIDGE  
SCHOOL



THE HEIGHTS  
ACADEMY



LEYCROFT  
ACADEMY