

To: Mrs D. Nunn, Headteacher
St. Andrew's C of E Academy
Buckland Monachorum, Yelverton, Devon, PL20 7NA
Via email: Dnunn@lapsw.org, standrews@lapsw.org

10 June 2025

Subject: Objection to Proposed Class Restructure – September 2025

Dear Mrs Nunn,

As parents at St. Andrew's, we are writing to express our deep concern and disappointment over the recently announced decision to restructure the school into six classes from September 2025.

While we appreciate the pressures faced by schools nationally, the manner in which this decision has been communicated and implemented falls short of the standards expected from a school that claims to be guided by Christian values, a caring ethos, and community-centred learning.

1. Educational and Welfare Concerns

The proposal to split year groups across different classes (e.g. with Year 2 being divided between Year 1 in one direction and Year 3 in the other) is pedagogically flawed and developmentally inappropriate. Year 2 is a critical point in early education and social development, marking the culmination of Key Stage 1, and there is particular concern for how this can be delivered when splitting across Key Stages 1 and 2, as will be the case for year 3 students. To fragment the year groups so fundamentally compromises the continuity, coherence, and progression of their learning, while expecting staff to teach across two curricula undermines depth and differentiation.

It is clear from academic research that mixed-class structures require additional planning and resources for teachers. We have seen no plan as to how staff will be appropriately resourced and trained to adapt to the proposed new way of working.

Worse still is the decision to divide the existing classes—children who have built secure friendship and learning bonds over key formative years. This abrupt separation, just weeks before the summer holidays, with no consultation or time to prepare, will cause undue anxiety and distress to young children. The psychological impact of such an upheaval should not be underestimated, especially when imposed with no regard for pupil voice or parental input.

The welfare of the children should be at the heart of every structural change. This proposal suggests otherwise.

2. Lack of Meaningful Consultation

Parents have been presented with a fait accompli. The Microsoft Form and brief 10-minute "listening appointments" offered after the decision has been made do not amount to consultation in any meaningful sense. If the restructure has been "many months in the making," why were parents not included in the conversation during that time?

This process has lacked transparency and has fallen short of the values we expect from a school with a caring ethos.

3. Trust Governance and Lack of Local Benefit

Your letter references the Learning Academy Partnership (LAP) repeatedly, but many parents are struggling to understand what tangible benefit this Trust affiliation has brought to our children. So far, the experience has been one of reduced provision, diminished communication, and now structural upheaval—with no clear advantages articulated or realised. The Trust has failed to communicate how its governance has positively impacted our school, nor why this restructuring is the only viable option under its oversight.

We have been presented with no detailed financial justification for this decision, nor presented with the alternative courses which may be open to the decision makers – It will sit uncomfortably with parents to read the annual report of the LAP and observe senior executive salaries rising year on year whilst learning provision is reduced at St. Andrew's School.

Overall, there has been a failure to explore alternatives transparently. For example:

- Attempts to boost enrolment (e.g. via marketing or outreach).
- Alternative savings options (e.g. non-classroom staffing, overheads).
- Possible use of local fundraising, volunteer support, or phased changes.

The Trust has not made the case that these proposed changes are the last option available to the school, nor that they serve the best interests of our children.

4. Missed Opportunity for Phased Introduction

It is entirely unclear why this structure could not be phased in more sensitively, starting with new Reception joiners in September 2025. These families would have joined the school in full knowledge of a mixed-age model, and the disruption to existing classes could have been avoided.

5. Public Accountability

In the spirit of transparency and in accordance with the public accountability standards that govern academy trusts, we formally request that the school's current financial position—including any deficits, liabilities, or debts—be disclosed to parents. As key stakeholders in the school community, we have a right to understand the financial circumstances informing this decision which directly affects our children's daily experience.

We also request that any supporting documents, financial models, or correspondence from the Trust that contributed to this restructure be made freely available to parents.

Conclusion

This restructure will damage not only academic provision but also the emotional wellbeing of our children. It risks breaking apart established friendship groups, confusing curricular progression, and undermining confidence in school leadership.

We urge you to reconsider both the timeline and implementation of this restructure. At the very least, a meaningful delay, allowing for phased introduction and proper dialogue with families, should be seriously considered.

We request that this objection is formally recorded and shared with the Governing Body and the Learning Academy Partnership Board. We would welcome a direct response to the concerns raised and request an open forum between parents and decision makers so that we may better understand the paths open to the school in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

The undersigned parents of children at St. Andrew's C of E Academy

Kate Brooke	Charlie Dance
Jason Brooke	Ross Dance
Tiffany Adair	Alison Pickles
Leanne Sheridan	Christopher Pickles
Martin Sheridan	Charlotte Eatwell
Cathrin Stone	Emma Mier
Adam Stone	Nick Mier
Emily Foster	Lydia Hosking
Ben Foster	Stephen Hosking
Jo Potter	Liis Penman
Dave Potter	James Penman
Rebecca Pugh	Jen Toop
Ben Pugh	Rich Toop
Masha Newman-Taylor	Hayley Sweeney
Luke Newman-Taylor	James Christian
Sara James	Jessica Cox
Lloyd James	Bradley Jasper
Jenny Molden	Charlotte Hayes
Ben Parish	Christopher Hayes
Clair Roberts	Yasmin Baker
Laura Francis	Andrew Baker
John Francis	Lauren Burton
Jessica Hughes	Laura West
Jake Hughes	Sam Clement
Melissa Miller	Aaron West
Ian Miller	Kelly Green
Stephanie Dibble	Adam Potts
Ryan Dibble	Cindy Kellaway
Libbie Morgan	Mariqua May
Matthew Morgan	John Lings
Jack Pardew	Helen Harvey
Fern Zubka-Hill	Kirsty Ewings
Philippa Malone	Helen Smart
Sean Malone	Emma Martin
Chris Smart	Paul Martin
Teigan Adair	Jennifer Reece

cc:

Rebecca Smith MP, Member of Parliament for South West Devon
Tracey Cleverly, Trust Lead, Learning Academy Partnership
Emma Bone, Deputy Trust Lead, Learning Academy Partnership
Emma Clark, CFO, Learning Academy Partnership