



**UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



**AVANTI SCHOOLS
TRUST**

Dear Parent/carer,

As you may know, Avanti Schools Trust has approached the University of Cambridge Primary School to conduct a review of the South West Steiner schools' curriculum. I am delighted to be the lead on the review team and in the spirit of openness and transparency, I thought to share the broad scope of our work and to introduce the review team before we meet you in person in the coming months.

The review will be an opportunity for us to hear from people within each school community (children, parents/carers, teachers). We are keen to understand why your schools are special for you, what you think is important to maintain and what needs to change. The review is not about imposing our view of education onto each community, but rather to open up possibilities and to find synergy.

Designing a principled curriculum for the 21st century

Context:

Avanti Schools Trust has recently brought three schools in the South West region of the United Kingdom into its family of schools. Avanti Schools Trust is energised to work with communities to explore and identify the key principles upon which curriculum design, school structures, teaching and learning expectations and assessment will be built.

Aim and purpose of the review

The aim of this curriculum review is to investigate how the curriculum can align aspects of Waldorf principles in synergy with the 'Avanti Way'. AST's Board of Trustees are clear that as state funded schools there is a balance that needs to be struck in order to ensure that the new curriculum that will be implemented in the three schools from September 2020 is ambitious and designed to give all learners the knowledge, skills and human qualities, underpinned by values, that they need to succeed in life.

The scope of the review will encompass:

- Identify key principles upon which the new curriculum can be designed.
- Identify possible principles which will inform implementation of the curriculum
- Identify meaningful opportunities to evaluate learning and develop assessment
- Identify how SEND provision could create cultures in which everyone is welcome and included

Review team:

- Dr James Biddulph, Headteacher of the University of Cambridge Primary School (Lead Reviewer)
- Ms Michelle Loughrey, Education consultant (recently Headteacher of Weeke Primary School)
- Mrs Aimee Durning, Senior Learning Coach (Teaching Assistant), University of Cambridge Primary School, Best Classroom Support Award Winner 2019.
- Mr Luke Rolls, Assistant Headteacher, member of ACME, Curriculum expertise
- Dr. Richard Pountney, Expert in Steiner Education: see bio <https://www.shu.ac.uk/about-us/our-people/staff-profiles/richard-pountney>
- Adrian Dow, Headteacher of Steiner School, Greenwich see www.greenwichsteinerschool.org.uk/

Review Team

Dr James Biddulph FCCT FRSA: I love school and love learning. It is a privilege for me to run the first University Training School. The heart of our school is a curriculum that nurtures compassionate citizenship; we have a culture in which empathy, respect, trust, courage and gratitude are key. We also use research to inform our practice: for example, we believe that play is an important feature of children's learning and there are many meaningful and open-ended playful enquiry sessions for all our children. It was significant for us that Ofsted recognized this aspect of our work – we were graded an Outstanding judgement in 2017. Prior to this, I was the inaugural Headteacher of Avanti Court Primary School. I am very pleased to lead the Avanti curriculum review of your schools and look forward to learning from you. I am also pleased that Dr Pountney (an academic with expertise in Waldorf Steiner education) and Mr Adrian Dow, (Headteacher of the successful Greenwich Steiner school) will be advising us during the review process. It is important that we hear from the communities these schools serve and we will be sensitive in the ways we conduct ourselves (this is NOT an inspection!). We recognize that, for you all, this is a period of change that could bring worry and uncertainty. My intention is to bring together the principles that are significantly important for your schools with those in the Avanti ethos so that your schools can thrive and your children flourish.



Ms Michelle Loughrey: I have had a happy career as a successful school leader, having 10 years' senior leadership experience in schools in inner-city London. I was the Headteacher of Weeke Primary School (2013-2019) where I loved seeing children grow through kind and caring school cultures that I helped to create. My approach is always to have the children at the heart of my decisions. As an Education Consultant, I inspect social work education courses in England, with the new regulatory body, Social Work England. I am pleased to learn about the unique qualities of your schools and bring my own expertise of educational leadership; cultural and organisation change management and leader /leadership development. I look forward to meeting you and hearing about your schools...and especially meeting your children.

(top)
Luke Rolls
Aimee Durning
James Biddulph



Mr Luke Rolls MCCT: After completing my first degree in Psychology, I lived and taught overseas for several years in a village school in Ghana, an international school in China and various public primary and junior high schools in Japan. On returning to the UK, I qualified as a teacher and spent several years teaching in inner city London primary schools, completing a Masters in Teaching and a Postgraduate Degree in Primary Mathematics Teaching at University College London. I trained as part of the first cohort of NCETM Mastery Specialist Teachers as a Professional Development Lead, I am a Specialist Leader of Education and a member of the Early Years and Primary contact group for the Advisory Committee for Mathematics at the Royal Society. I am currently involved with developing a Japanese Lesson Study approach and co-editing a Routledge book on teacher professional development. In my spare time I enjoy family time, music and walks in the countryside.

Mrs Aimee Durning: I have been an enthusiastic Teaching Assistant for over 15 years, having volunteered in schools for many years. Now I am a Senior Teaching Assistant and was awarded Class Room Assistant of the Year 2019. I am particularly passionate about reading and supporting children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. I also love seeing children flourish in outdoor learning – one of my happiest moments recently was to see a child who had previously not engaged with peers, making friends and having their first ever play date. My focus during the review will be in listening to children and hearing from any support staff.