



Lowe's Wong Infant School  
Open Consultation Meeting on Academy  
conversion and joining a Multi-Academy Trust

Thursday, 22 June 2017

# What is an Academy?

- Academies are independent, state-funded schools, who receive their funding directly from central government, rather than through a local authority.
- The day-to-day running of the school is with the headteacher, but they are overseen by individual charitable bodies called academy trusts and may be part of a multi-academy trust.
- These trusts provide advice, support, expertise and a strategic overview.
- The trust is accountable for school performance.
- Trusts control their own admissions process.

# What is a Multi-Academy Trust?

- Schools can no longer convert as a single academy, they are encouraged to join a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT).
- A Multi-Academy Trust is a group of Academy Schools working together in a formal partnership.
- All Academies in a Multi-Academy Trust are governed by a single trust and a single board of trustees. They can also share staff and expertise, and make savings when buying goods and services.
- The Multi-Academy Trust can establish a separate Governing Body for each of its academies. These are called Local Governing Bodies. The board of trustees can then delegate some of its functions to the Local Governing Bodies.

# Why are we considering joining a MAT?

- The White Paper was the catalyst for many schools to start to consider Academies in more detail.
- This particular MAT – MiTrE – feels right for our community.
- Shared expertise – e.g. opportunities to share training amongst schools, moderation, knowledge in different areas, observation of other teachers and many more opportunities.
- Collaboration in other areas e.g. subject areas such as Music, PE, ICT, DT, collaboration for staff groups, MDSAs & Office Staff.
- Economies of scale (services and resources – e.g. HR/purchase power).
- Formalisation of existing successful partnerships – e.g. SENCo network, Family Heads, FS network.

## What has been done so far?

The Governors have sought advice and information on the possible benefits of becoming an Academy, and have discussed Academisation every year at the Spring Term meeting.

In September the Governors decided to explore the possibility of joining the Minster School Multi-Academy Trust (MiTrE).

In October the Governors formally registered this interest with the DfE.

In November the Governors passed a resolution to move forward with the proposal to become an Academy, with a view to joining MiTrE.

# What has been done so far?

- . We have spoken to all staff at the school, and given them chance to ask any questions.
- . We have had a shared staff meeting with key staff from the Minster School to allow staff the chance to ask further questions.
- . We have been speaking to our Family of Schools and their Governors.
- . We have kept parents informed through newsletters, and created an academy section on website
- . We have met with School Council and discussed the proposal with them.
- . We have open a period of formal consultation, which this meeting is part of.

# What are the advantages of becoming part of MiTrE?

- Ethos and identity of schools in the MAT remain the same.
- An excellent mechanism for ensuring that support and challenge are directed to where they are needed most.
- Closer collaboration to improve provision and standards for students in MAT schools.
- Maintain autonomy.
- Structures to help sustain and strengthen the partnership work of the school.
- Access to increased funding in the long term as we support other schools.
- Pooling of resources to achieve economies of scale.
- Continue links with the Minster TSA (Teaching School Alliance).

# MAT challenges

- Structural organisation of the trust – this has been discussed at Headteacher and Governor level, members of existing Governing Bodies have been invited to put themselves forward as Trustees and Members.
- Ensuring schools are ready & ‘fit’ to join MiTrE – Due Diligence Process
- New financial approaches (systems and collaboration)
- Finalising levels of delegation, exactly where responsibilities will sit.
- Agreement of some key policies – e.g. appraisal/finance/pay



# Our Early Principles

- This has to be for the good of the children, and our community.
- Our school ethos will not change.
- Staffing remains unchanged.
- The day to day running of the school, curriculum etc, will be unaltered.
- No change in uniform / name / book bags etc.

# Academy conversion consultation

- There is a requirement within the Academies Act 2010 to consult prior to conversion to academy on the question of conversion.
- Consultation must be undertaken and completed before the funding agreement is signed.
- All consultation responses will be considered by the Governing Body at the end of the consultation period.
- The website will be updated with information, and any FAQs.
- The formal consultation period will run from Monday, 12 June until Friday, 14 July.
- Current aim is to convert early in 2018.

# Who is being consulted?

- Staff working at the school
- Parents and carers of students at the school
- Pupils
- The wider local community

# How are staff being consulted and kept informed?

- Staff meetings, followed by sharing of any information sent out
- Chance to meet with Minster School staff
- Discussions with union representatives if required
- Frequently asked questions
- Information on the school website

# Parents & Carers

- Information in weekly newsletters
- Letter from the Chair of Governors & Headteacher, detailing rationale behind the Governors' decision and information about the consultation process
- Information placed on the school's website – updated based on FAQ's
- A meeting at the school for parents/interested members of the wider local community to share more information and have an opportunity to ask questions.
- Representations in writing

# Pupils

- Meeting with School Council
- Assembly
- Class discussions

# How can you share your views?

## **Representations must be made in writing**

**By letter** - dropped off at the school reception

Please mark your envelope 'Lowe's Wong Infant School Academy Consultation'

**By e-mail:**

[office@loweswong-inf.notts.sch.uk](mailto:office@loweswong-inf.notts.sch.uk)

Please note - individual responses will not be sent, however **all** representations will be considered by governors.

# Frequently-Asked Questions:

- Staffing – current and future?
- Pay and conditions?
- Curriculum?
- Policy?
- Branding?
- Changes for children?
- Holidays?
- Timeline?
- Funding and finance?
- Consultation?
- How is school affected day to day?
- Governance?
- Who will run the trust? (CEO Matthew Parris)



# Answers to FAQ's

- Staffing remains the same.
- Pay and conditions are carried over and remain the same (TUPE).
- Curriculum remains almost the same but we have more flexibility on the topics we teach.
- Most policies remain at school level, as before. Some policies will be made at Trust level e.g. Appraisal – in the way the Local Authority currently do.
- Uniform, logo and school name remain unchanged.
- Children will not see any day to day changes – these will be seen mainly in the office with systems.
- Holidays remain in the same configuration – there are no plans to change them at present.
- Timeline – we hope to convert early in 2018.
- School is affected day to day mostly within the office.
- Governance remains at local level but there will also be a central governance – details on next slide.
- The CEO at the start of the MAT will be Matthew Parris, Headteacher at The Minster School.

# Proposed Governance Structure:

