

Frequently Asked Questions
Consultation Meeting 22-6-17

Question: Which other schools are thinking about joining this MAT?

Answer: The Minster School, Lowe's Wong Junior School, Bleasby School, Halam School, Holy Trinity Infant School & Farnsfield St Michael's.

Question: Are there any long term plans to grow the MAT?

Answer: There is an expectation from the Regional School's Commissioner that the MAT will increase in size. All of the schools in the original proposal are rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding', and there will also be an expectation that we will support underperforming schools. We want to grow but our principles are to stay local, and perhaps working with other schools from the Teaching School Alliance.

Question: The LA currently takes a 'top slice' from schools funding. Obviously a trust will need funding. How will the top slice the trust takes compare to the LA one?

Answer: We don't actually know the percentage top slice taken by the LA, so it's difficult to compare. However, we've initially planned to take 1.5% as a top slice, which will probably rise as we increase the services provided by the MAT.

Question: Who determines whether the trust provides value for money?

Answer: The Local Governing Body of each school still maintain their own budget, so they would decide if the trust is offering value for money.

Question: What is the process for situations where we don't agree with a trust directive (in relation to the possibility of having to use some of our budget to support a school who is in financial difficulties)?

Answer: We will fully devolve budgets to Local Governing Body of each school at the start of this process. Schools failing for financial reasons have a separate mechanism for support, so we wouldn't be subsidising a school failing for financial reasons. All schools becoming a member of the MAT undertake due diligence in order to ensure they are in a healthy position before acceptance. Schools can also leave a trust if they wanted too.

Question: Are the Senior Leadership Teams and staff of all schools on board?

Answer: Our staff have been consulted from the beginning and are all on board, the motivation was not to become an academy, it was to join this particular MAT. The Governor's decision was unanimous.

At the Consultation meeting Mr Parris said that the Minster School was one of the last secondary schools in the area to convert. Unions and staff have been consulted and are supportive of this MAT. Although some staff might object to Academisation in principle, they are pragmatic about

it and realise that this is the way education is going and they agree that this local MAT is a much preferable option than the alternative.

Question: Will the admissions criteria change?

Answer: We will still be bound by the National Admissions Code; the only change will be that we will run the admissions ourselves. As the Minster school already does that, we will have significant experience and expertise to support us in setting that up. There are no plans to change our admissions policies.

Question: On the board of trustees, is there a need for infant expertise as we are an infant school, not a primary?

Answer: Local Governing Bodies for each school will be the ones with expertise in their own school. Trustees are running an organisation and not individual schools, so schools are still run day to day by the Headteacher and Local Governing Body. Trustees would need to divorce allegiance with the school they come from. A trustee needs to work to the benefit of all schools within the MAT.

Question: Can anyone be the CEO?

Answer: In the short term we feel it makes sense for Mr Parris to be CEO, to reduce start-up costs and because the Minster School is in a position to support this. In the longer term, we will undertake a process to look at who should be the permanent CEO.

Question: Can we guarantee we will keep our staff? Would we ever be in a position where our staff are instructed by the trust to work in a different school?

Answer: We will TUPE all existing contracts across and current contracts specify place of work, so no one could be forced to move to a different school. However, we already release staff for outreach work with other schools on a temporary basis and that will continue. So yes, staff will work in other schools as they do right now. It will not be imposed upon anyone.