



12 December 2017

Dear Colleague / Governor

BECOMING AN ACADEMY AND FORMING A MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST (MAT) CONSULTATION LETTER FOR STAFF AND GOVERNORS

Following the initial consultation in April on our proposals to form a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT), we received positive feedback. After that we applied to the DfE for approval to form the PENNiNE Trust. We are very pleased to say that our application was successful. We are now conducting a second round of consultations so that we can consider the views of everyone as we work towards finalising the formation of the MAT.

We remain convinced that the MAT will deliver significant benefits. The most significant being the difference it will make to our young people's education and life chances through:

- Providing a seamless educational journey from ages 4-16 within the MAT
- Removing barriers to sharing best teaching practice and learning and development between schools
- Using innovative research to drive our ambition to provide a world class education for all our young people
- Improving our chances of being successful for grant funding for school improvement
- Helping us to recruit and retain the best teachers through joint training and development initiatives
- Promoting more contact between pupils of different schools
- Delivering financial efficiencies by improving buying power, allowing more funds for learning

We are all committed to delivering these benefits, whilst at the same time retaining the identities and best aspects of our schools. Each school will keep its own name, headteacher and local governing body, and will continue to focus on delivering quality teaching within its local community. The autonomy of each school will be maximised and the family ethos of our schools will be preserved. But we also agree that closer joint working of staff and pupils, with the oversight of a joint Trust Board, will maximise the chances of achieving the best learning outcomes. This of course is our shared ultimate goal and why we wish to set up the MAT.

The Trust will initially be set up by the following four schools:

Blacko Primary School
Colne Park High School
Laneshaw Bridge Primary School
Lord Street Primary School

Since the initial consultation, two schools unfortunately are unable to join the MAT at the current time. It remains possible that they and/or other schools may at some future point seek to join but there are no plans for that at the moment.

More information on our vision and values is attached, together with answers to many 'Frequently Asked Questions'.

We want to hear all your views and questions on the proposal, which our Governing Body will take into account when making its final decision whether to proceed. A feedback form, in which you may provide comments or raise questions, is included within the document for you to return. If you wish to provide feedback or raise a question, please ensure this is sent to the School Office by Friday 12th January 2018 by either handing it in or emailing it to jo.sharples@laneshawbridge.lancs.sch.uk

Our Chair of Governors and Headteacher will hold a consultation meeting at our school to discuss any questions you may have on Tuesday 16th January 2018 at 6:00p.m. At this meeting we will provide answers to the substance of all comments and questions made.

The consultation period will end on Friday 19th January 2018.

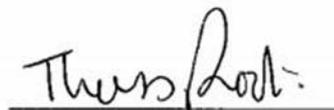
We very much look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

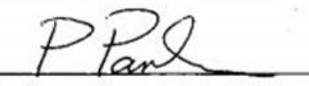
Mr M Harrison
Headteacher
Blacko Primary



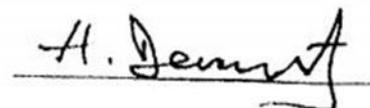
Mr T Root
Chair of Governors
Blacko Primary



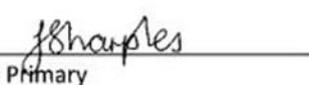
Dr P Parkin
Headteacher
Colne Park High



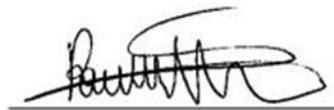
Mr H Devonport
Chair of Governors
Colne Park High



Mrs J Sharples
Headteacher
Laneshaw Bridge Primary



Councillor P White
Chair of Governors
Laneshaw Bridge Primary



Mr D Hetherington
Headteacher
Lord Street Primary



Mrs A Denton
Chair of Governors
Lord Street Primary



Our Vision

We have an unswerving determination to ensure no-one gets left behind by:

- Creating a culture of ambition and high aspirations.
- Transforming education to match world class standards.
- Overcoming barriers to social mobility.
- Fostering a sense of understanding and compassion for others.
- Developing the courage to question, challenge and change existing norms.
- Nurturing active and creative minds to promote a life-long love of learning.
- Securing the future wellbeing of all young people.
- Ensuring a highly effective family partnership reflecting our ethos.

Our Values

By forming a trust and working in partnership we will further improve the current educational outcomes, social mobility and wellbeing for all young people in our area. There are 3 core values at the heart of our trust:

Innovation: Visionary leadership prepared to take radical decisions to bring about long-term, sustained improvement.

We believe innovation is the key to unlocking the potential of our young people, which will be driven forward by the unique qualities of each school. Our young people will follow distinctive learning pathways and support and personal development programmes matched to their individual needs. Common rigorous accountability procedures will ensure gaps in performance can be quickly identified and addressed.

Inspiration: A culture of risk taking founded on cutting edge research creates a dynamic learning environment in which all young people excel.

We believe igniting the ambition and markedly raising the aspirations of young people, staff, parents and others in our local community will ensure a self-sustaining drive for social mobility. This is modelled by inspirational staff and leaders dedicated to academic excellence for all, unlocking the imagination and creativity of all young people. Learning experiences, provided by leading universities and successful companies, will engage our young people in the possibilities of their future educational and career pathways.

Inclusion: Unfailingly reassure young people that by working together there are no barriers to success that we cannot overcome.

We believe that through close partnerships with parents, schools, other agencies and the local community the outcomes for our young people will be enhanced. The success of all groups working together in our trust provides a model for building future social collaboration. We recognise, value and celebrate differences and will provide personalised learning and support for all. Our young people will have the skills and understanding to promote, lead and work as part of diverse teams which will shape their future.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is an Academy?

An Academy is a state school that is run by an Academy Trust. The Academy Trust enters into an agreement with the Secretary of State for Education that sets out its responsibilities and accountabilities for the effective running of the Academy. The Academy is funded directly by the Government and is no longer run by the Local Authority. The Trust is charitable, which means it will operate as a charity and not for the profit of individuals or businesses.

2. What is a Multi-Academy Trust?

A Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) is when 2 or more Academies come together in partnership. Our Governing Body believes that the best option is to form a cross phase school partnership of four schools to establish a MAT. Each school will keep its own name and the MAT will be known as the Pennine Trust. Each school will convert to an Academy. In the future, it will be possible for others to join the Trust. Through partnership the Pennine Trust will support member Academies in:

- developing and sharing best practice in teaching, learning and curriculum
- creating a skilled, motivated, expert workforce
- ensuring high standards through mutual challenge of performance
- making optimum use of their resources.

3. Who will be responsible for running our school?

The Pennine Trust will have a Board of Trustees which may include some individuals from the Local Governing Bodies of the schools. The Trust Board will delegate many powers to a Local Governing Body (LGB), which will have a role similar to that of the current School Governing Body. The scheme of delegation of powers will initially be agreed by Governors from all four schools.

4. What is involved in becoming an Academy?

The Governing Body has voted in principle to move forward, in the process towards becoming an academy and form a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). The DfE has informed us that they feel our schools have the capacity to successfully establish and run the PENNINE Trust and have approved our application. The school must complete a consultation with parents, pupils, staff and the wider community which the Governors will take into account in reaching its decision. If the final decision to convert is made by the Governing Body we would expect to become an Academy within the Multi-Academy Trust no earlier than 1st June 2018.

5. Would the school have to change its name, logo or uniform?

There is no obligation for a school to change its name. Consequently, the school will not be changing its name, logo or uniform as we are proud of our school's history and this would be an unnecessary expense for parents.

6. How will being an Academy affect staff?

Currently, the employer for staff at our school is Lancashire County Council. After conversion all staff at all the schools will be employed by the Pennine Trust. Staff are legally protected to transfer under the same employment terms and conditions, including pensions. Their continuity of service is protected, and all staff will be consulted in accordance with the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations.

7. How are the pupils affected?

In many ways the pupils will not notice any immediate difference, they will be in the same uniform, in the same classrooms with the same teaching staff. We will continue to strive for an outstanding education for all our young people. However, in time the pupils may notice changes and improvements in the way that they learn, resulting from the greater training opportunities given to teaching staff to innovate and improve the pupils' learning.

8. Will we get more money as an Academy?

Academies receive the same amount of per-pupil funding as they would receive from the Local Authority as a maintained school. They also receive additional funding in the form of the Education Services Grant to cover the services that are no longer provided for them by the Local Authority and to cover the costs of Academy status. All funding comes direct from Government to the Multi Academy Trust which controls the overall budget and then distributes the money to the schools. Each school does not necessarily have more money, but as a group the schools are better able to control that part of the budget currently retained by the Local Authority.

9. What are the risks of becoming an Academy?

The change to Academy takes a school out of Local Authority control, but does not exclude the school from Local Authority support. For example, Academies can continue to buy into finance, HR, behavioural support and other services from the Local Authority and where these represent 'best value' the MAT would use these services. Where the MAT feels that others can provide better services or better value the change to Academy increases the freedom to make these changes. There are risks associated with not changing to Academy status. At some stage in the future, any school might be influenced to become part of a broader Academy Chain. We believe that the ability to create a local MAT, under local direction, offers the best opportunity to sustain vibrant, successful local schools.

10. How will admissions to the school be affected?

The school will become its own admissions authority but will be required to adopt clear and fair admission arrangements in line with the admissions law and the School Admissions Code. The Local Authority will continue to have responsibility for making sure there are sufficient places locally and will coordinate the admissions process for all schools. This means parents will still only have to complete one application per child.

11. Does becoming an Academy change the relationship with other schools and the community?

No. Academies must ensure that they continue to be at the heart of their community, collaborating and sharing facilities and expertise with other schools and the wider community.

12. Will our responsibilities in relation to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and exclusions change?

No. Responsibilities as an Academy in relation to SEND and exclusions will be just the same as they are now.

13. Can a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan nominate an Academy as his or her school of choice?

Yes. Schools converting to Academy status can retain the admissions criteria they currently use. These arrangements and related processes must at all times comply with the School Admissions Code.

Multi-Academy Trust Consultation Response Form

School: Please tick the name of the school to which your response refers:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Blacko Primary	<input type="checkbox"/>	Laneshaw Bridge Primary
<input type="checkbox"/>	Colne Park High	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lord Street Primary

Name of Person Responding (optional)

Please indicate below the reason for your interest in the MAT consultation:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Parent / Carer of Student (s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Student
<input type="checkbox"/>	Parent / Carer of prospective future student	<input type="checkbox"/>	Former Student
<input type="checkbox"/>	Member of school staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff of other local school or college
<input type="checkbox"/>	Local Authority Employee	<input type="checkbox"/>	Member of local community
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify)		

Comments / Questions

Please return this form to the school office by Friday 12th January 2018