



Subject: Consultation on a proposal to establish a multi-academy trust and convert to academy status.

Dear Stakeholder,

This document outlines the proposal for Brookfield School to convert to academy status and enter into a partnership with our neighbours at Breck School to form A Multi Academy Trust. It also forms part of the statutory consultation process for pupils, parents and other stakeholders.

Background

The Governing Bodies of the two schools have been discussing how our schools might work in closer partnership to provide mutual support, challenge and benefits for our schools. The Governing Bodies share the ambition for their schools to continue to provide an excellent education for their children while protecting each school's role at the heart of its community and retaining its unique qualities and strengths.

Each Governing Body has been considering the future plans of its school in a fast changing and increasingly challenging educational landscape. They have also considered the current Government policy that all schools become academies and the recent announcement that all schools become academies by 2022.

Proposal

The Governing Body has agreed to apply to form a local multi-academy trust and for both schools to convert to academy status. The proposed Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) would have two founding member schools: • Breck Primary School • Brookfield School.

We believe that pupils and staff will benefit from the greater opportunities that a formal partnership, through the MAT, will bring, which include:

- extending learning opportunities and activities for pupils.
- enriching the curriculum through partnership working and shared resources.
- enabling the sharing of excellent practice in teaching and learning.
- enhancing the professional development of teaching and support staff.
- building mutual support and accountability between the leaders and Governors.
- securing cost and resource efficiencies through joint commissioning of services.

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We are now consulting with staff, pupils, parents, carers and the community. The consultation period will run between Monday, 11th May and Friday 22nd May 2020. Due to the pressures of COVID, all communication will be through social media, email and video conferencing where requested.

The Governing Body will then consider a report on the academy consultation before making a final decision on whether to proceed with the proposal. If the Governing Bodies agrees to proceed, the plan is for the Trust to be established and for the schools to convert on September 1st 2020.

We attach a Consultation Frequently Asked Questions for your information. If you have any feedback on the proposal that you would like to share with the Governing Body, then please forward your questions and comments to academyconversion@brookfield56.lancs.sch.uk. The information gathered will be reported to Governors and all points considered.

Yours sincerely,

Rob Brocklebank (Headteacher)

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Frequently Asked Questions

Our Collective Vision - We aim to become an outstanding multi-academy trust that:

- Improves opportunities and outcomes for all our children
- Nurtures self-motivated, successful and resilient learners
- Drives ambition and aspiration in our children
- Inspires learners with high expectations of themselves
- Grows responsible, open-minded and caring citizens

1. What is the proposal?

The proposal is for two schools to form a partnership called a multi-academy trust (MAT) and for the schools to convert to academy status. The two founding members of the Trust, Breck School and Brookfield School are based in Poulton le Fylde, Lancashire.

The two schools have been working closely together for some time and have already benefitted from this collaboration and partnership.

2. How would this proposal benefit our school?

We believe that stronger partnership between schools that share a similar vision, ethos and values and the same commitment to raising standards, would help our school in a number of important ways, including;

- extending learning opportunities and activities for all pupils
- enriching the curriculum through partnership working and shared resources
- sharing excellent practice in teaching and learning
- enhancing the professional development of teaching and support staff
- building mutual support and accountability between the Headteachers and between the Governors

We believe that we can bring enhanced benefits and opportunities to parents and pupils by formalising these existing working relationships.

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3. How will pupils benefit?

If the schools convert to academy status and establish the MAT, pupils will still wear the same uniforms as before and will be taught in the same classrooms by the same teaching staff. They won't notice any immediate difference. Each school will continue to strive to provide an outstanding education for all of our pupils. However, over time the pupils may notice changes and improvements in the way that they learn, mostly as a result of new training opportunities given to teaching staff to innovate and improve the children's education. In particular, the pupils will benefit from the sharing of excellent and innovative practice in teaching and learning between the partner schools. They will also have wider opportunities to learn new skills and experience new activities.

4. What will be the impact on staff?

Currently, all staff are employed by the Lancashire County Council. After conversion, all staff will be employed by the new MAT. Staff are legally protected to transfer under the same employment terms and conditions, including pensions. Staff will be provided further information of any changes. Being part of the MAT will also provide greater opportunities for career progression and development.

5. What is an academy and what is a multi-academy trust?

An academy is an independent 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 academy trust is given charitable exemption, which means it must operate much like a charity. A multi-academy trust (MAT) has two or more academies as members. Over 50% of compulsory school age children are now taught in an academy or free school following educational reforms in 2010

6. How will the MAT trust and the schools be run?

The MAT will have a Board of Directors made up of a mixture of current Governors, Headteachers and people with particular skills and expertise to help it run efficiently, effectively and compliantly. Although the Board would have a number of legal and regulatory powers it would delegate many of its powers to Local Governing Bodies and Committees. Local Governing Bodies would continue to have a mixture of representatives from parent, staff and local communities. Each Headteacher would still be responsible for running their own school. The two Headteachers would form a leadership group to develop plans for partnership working and collaboration.

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

No, none of the schools will be changing their name, uniform or logo.

8. Will we get more money as an academy?

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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 responsibilities of the MAT, in place of Lancashire County Council, and to cover the additional costs of academy status. The whole of the school budget would come direct to the school from central Government allowing the school to control the whole of their spending. As part of a multi-academy trust, we may also achieve greater efficiencies through increased buying power and joint commissioning of services; such as school equipment, catering and cleaning.

9. Will academies be free from the Ofsted inspection regime?

No. Academies are inspected in the same way as maintained schools. Each school will continue to be inspected individually. The performance of all schools will continue to be monitored and if there are signs of deterioration, or other factors likely to cause concern, these could trigger an inspection.

10. What is the process to become an academy?

Following recommendations from the Headteacher, the Governing Body have agreed to consult on the proposals with parents, carers, pupils, staff and the wider community. On May 22nd, when the consultation period is over, the governing bodies of the two schools will come together to consider a report on the consultation. They will then decide, individually, whether or not to proceed with the proposal. If the decision from all schools is to go ahead then subject to some legal tasks, such as completing the agreement with the Secretary of State, the MAT would be established and the schools would convert on September 1st 2020.

If you have any feedback on the proposal that you would like to share with the Governing Body, then please forward you questions and comments to academyconversion@brookfield56.lancs.sch.uk

Further information on Breck School is available upon request or via the school website (www.breckschool.co.uk)

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