



The Way Forward for Broughton Primary Academy

Since 2011, Broughton Primary School has operated as a Single Academy trust, (SAT) that is, as a school which is not under Local Authority (i.e. Cumbria County Council) control, but as a school managed and governed by its senior teaching team and its Board of Governors; the school is therefore directly accountable to the Department for Education from whom it receives funding. Being an Academy has some advantages in independence of decision making, flexibility in spending and staffing and decisions like setting term dates, but also has some risks, particularly in terms of funding, where there is no buffer or bankrolling by the Local Authority.

The educational landscape is a rapidly-changing one and has been an increasingly challenging environment in which to operate as a standalone academy, particularly over the last few years. Fortunately, our school is highly regarded locally and recently achieved a “Good” Ofsted rating, this reputation and demonstrated performance has contributed to a modest year-on-year growth in pupil numbers. Despite this however, the school Governors have worked with the Headteacher to investigate ways in which we could make the school more resilient to change and improve funding sustainability. An option we are considering very seriously is to join formally with one or more other local schools to form a Multi Academy Trust (MAT), and after very careful consideration of the options, the Governors are proposing to join a new MAT, Learning for Life, where Broughton would be one of the founding schools.

Further information about what joining a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) means, and how to comment on the proposals, is set out below. We have decided to undertake this consultation with parents (a separate consultation is taking place with Staff) so that we can properly explain what the Governors see are the major benefits of joining a MAT, and how, if done sensitively, the fundamental autonomy, identity, management and values of Broughton Academy will continue.

What is a multi-academy trust?

A multi academy trust is formed where a group of academies are overseen by one trust and a single board of Trustees. The board is responsible for decisions relating to strategy, overall policy and the degree of delegation of authority to individual schools. It is usual for each school to retain a local Governing Body and a Headteacher responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school, the way the Curriculum is delivered and the management of finances to an agreed budget. For clarity, the relevant authorities and responsibilities are set out in a written Scheme of Delegation.

What is the Learning for Life Trust?

The Learning for Life Trust is the name of the Multi Academy Trust that Broughton Primary Academy is intending to join. At the moment it comprises only Fairfield Primary School in Cockermouth. Fairfield Primary has around 450 pupils and was graded ‘good’ in their most recent Ofsted inspection and they have a strong academic, pastoral and financial track record. Broughton Primary School already works closely with Fairfield and becoming part of Learning for Life Trust would be the natural next step to formalise the collaborative partnership.

The current governing body of Broughton Primary School would remain in place, as would our headteacher Mrs Bewsher.

Vision, Values and Ethos

We have worked with Fairfield Primary School on an informal basis for a long time. We also know a lot about the Learning for Life Trust and its leaders. We have been fortunate enough to work with the Trust in revisiting its vision, ethos and values and we have recognised a great deal of commonality in our respective approaches. We feel that the Trust's aim to create an effective partnership of ambitious schools collaborating to ensure that staff and pupils are supported in reaching their full potential is one that will make this strategic move a positive development for Broughton.

A key aspect of the collaborative approach we have developed with Learning for Life is the importance of each partner school maintaining as much independence as possible, and retaining its own particular identity and characteristics.

Learning for Life Vision:

Learning for Life aims to create an effective partnership of ambitious schools collaborating to ensure that everybody is supported in reaching their full potential.

Learning for Life Mission:

The Trust's ambition is to be recognised as a Trust who serve their school community in delivering creative, ambitious and exciting education practices, allowing pupils and staff to thrive and succeed.

Learning for Life partner schools will be the first choice for their local community and will ensure that all children leave our care having achieved their very best and ready for the next stage of their life.

Learning for Life Values:

Integrity – We will behave ethically, always working with trust, transparency and honesty.

Individuality – We recognise that, in order to develop a strong, inclusive whole, our schools need to retain their own distinct identity in order to best serve their community.

Ambition – We will always strive to offer the best possible support, resource and facilities to our schools allowing them to deliver the most inspiring curriculum offer for the community they serve.

Creative – We are committed to developing traditional and new education practices in an innovative way, allowing our schools to deliver what is best for their community.

Supportive – We always support and nurture our community of schools ensuring that we are able to achieve our full potential.

Inspiring – We aim to inspire everybody associated with the Trust to be the very best they can be.

What are the benefits of being part of a multi academy trust?

The Governors have carefully considered the potential benefits of being part of a Multi Academy Trust. It would offer:

- Securing cost and resource efficiencies through joint commissioning of Services.
- Having the capacity to take swift and decisive action whenever it is necessary.
- Protecting the future direction of the school, strengthening its position in the current educational climate. The ability to extend learning opportunities and activities for all pupils in the Trust.
- The ability to enrich the curriculum through partnership working and shared resources.
- Sharing of excellent practice in teaching and learning.
- Enhanced prospects for professional development of teaching and support staff.
- Building mutual support and accountability between the Headteachers and between the Governors, strengthening leadership at all levels.
- A stronger voice with Government

How will Broughton Academy change if we join Learning for Life?

The collaborative approach offered by Learning for Life means that as far as pupils and parents are concerned, the appearance and day-to-day functioning of the school will barely change:

- school uniform will not change
- the school signage and letterhead will remain, with a very small additional line explaining that the school is part of Learning for Life
- the school office and reception will remain in place
- the pupils will be taught by the same teachers and classroom assistants as now
- Broughton's Out-of-school Club will continue to function.
- School meal arrangements will continue as now.

Will the admissions arrangements change?

As an academy within a MAT, the Trust will put in place admission arrangements, and decide which pupils should be offered places in accordance with those arrangements. The academy will still be bound by the national Admissions Code and Admissions Appeals Code.

The current admission arrangements will remain in place for the time being. If the Trust wanted to change its admission arrangements consultation would be required.

How can I find out more and make my views known?

The purpose of this letter is to inform you about the consultation and anticipate some of the questions that you may have. We would very much welcome your participation in the consultation and also to raise any concerns that you may have. There are lots of ways to do this including:

- Contacting Mrs Bewsher or me (Huw Morgan) directly.
- Email your question or views to: consultation@broughton-pri.cubria.sch.uk
- A Parent drop-in session with Directors and LfL Trustees: 3rd November 2021 at 6pm

The consultation remains open until 3rd November and the Board of Directors will meet soon after to review the responses and other considerations before making the application. Staff Governors will be fully involved in this decision.

All comments and feedback will be made available to the Governors. The Governors are determined to base their decision exclusively on the interests of pupils and their education.

Yours faithfully



Huw Morgan (chair@broughton-pri.cumbria.sch.uk)
Chair of Governors



Anna Bewsher (head@broughton-pri.cumbria.sch.uk)
Headteacher