

Parent and community Consultation

Wednesday 17th October 2018

Why now? If we are improving anyway....

- Access to curriculum innovation
- We no longer have access to significant LA services as in the past
- Same legalities apply around admissions and exclusions as currently
- Access to improved site and resources through academy ring-fenced Condition Improvement Fund
- Collaborative working arrangements to ensure more improvement and to maintain pace of improvement
- Improved local staff development opportunities
- Our future sustainability as an inclusive secondary school in Lancaster
- Improved recruitment and retention of excellent staff
- Recruitment of future cohorts
- Future financial sustainability
- Collective responsibility to provide all children in Lancaster with an excellent education
- Education landscape is challenging; locally and nationally

Different types of academies

- Schools with a GOOD or OUTSTANDING Ofsted rating have the opportunity to choose to convert to academy status
- Schools with SERIOUS WEAKNESSES are issued with an Academy Order by the Secretary of State so that they may be supported to improve by an Outstanding Multi Academy Trust

Options available

- Do nothing, remain an LA school
- Previously we could have converted to a stand alone academy
- Join a multi academy trust

Which MATs did we consider?

We were approached by:

- United Learning Trust, STAR Academies (formerly Tauheedul and sponsor of Heysham)

We also talked to:

- Fylde Coast Academies Trust, Co-operative Academies, The Aldridge Foundation, The Bay Learning Trust

We compared ethos and values, geographical mix of schools and practicality, retained identity and USP of individual schools, value for money, capacity to support our continued development, opportunities for our staff

How does Governance work?

- A Multi Academy Trust is a non-profit making charitable trust
- The academy trust has a Board of Directors – ultimately accountable for the work of the academies and the trust
- Each academy within the trust has a Local Governing Body
- Each LGB retains parent governors and staff governors
- The LGB sets the academy vision with the principal (NH) and draft the academy spending plan
- The LGB has delegated power from the Trust Board in respect of financial delegation, staff recruitment and the school site
- Each academy within the trust will work to the same scheme of delegation

Our school funding

- The DfE meets the running costs of academies directly
- Academy funding is calculated on a like-for-like basis to LA schools but funding is direct to the academy
- We already have significant autonomy to commission services and resources, this will not change
- Our budget will be almost identical to currently (excepting for funding policy changes e.g. national funding formula)
- We will have access to CIF (Condition Improvement Funding) for site and resources which is priority driven and only available to academies

What will happen to SEND funding?

- SEND funding comes directly from the government through the Education Funding Agency.
- Funding directly allocated to a named child with an EHCP will continue to be funded through the local authority
- SEND funding was cut significantly to all schools as a central initiative when statements changed to EHCPs several years ago
- We will not be able to access more funding, this will not enable us to increase our levels of support staffing again

Does it cost us to become an academy?

- Yes, there are legal costs involved
- The government gives each converting academy £25,000 to cover these costs
- The costs will be met within this grant and there is no perceived further cost to the school
- The local authority will grant a 125 year lease to the academy trust for the land
- School land and playing fields are protected under Section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act. Same rules for permission for disposal stand for LA schools or academies
- Pay a proportion of funding to MAT for shared services
- We will be able to take even better measures to ensure best value across all of our services

What is the overall process?

- Register interest with DfE and inform Regional Schools Commission
- Governors open consultation
- Governors meet to discuss consultation responses and make a decision as to whether to proceed
- If yes, Regional Schools Commission approves decision to join The Bay Learning Trust
- Secretary of State issues an academy order
- Transfer of school staff to MAT in accordance with TUPE regulations
- Commercial transfer of land and assets
- A school can change its mind right up until the point where documents are sent to the SoS for signing (around 3 weeks before agreed conversion date)