



Monkton Church of England Primary School

Monkton Street, Monkton,
Ramsgate, Kent CT12 4JQ

Telephone: 01843 821394

Email: office@monkton.kent.sch.uk

Executive Headteacher: Mr P McCarthy

Head of School: Mr C Marston

Date: 06.11.2025

Monkton Academy Conversion Letter

Dear Parent/Carers,

It was lovely to meet with a selection of parents from Monkton recently for the academy conversion consultation.

At this meeting, Tammy Mitchell - CEO of the East Kent Schools Trust, and I were able to give a vision for Monkton school and the benefits of joining the Trust. We were also able to answer any questions, or address any worries associated with the conversion process and give a window into what it looks like once complete.

There are so many benefits that I have outlined in my previous letters and at the heart of this process is improving education for all of the pupils of Monkton C of E School.

The reason I am writing today is that the meeting highlighted things that the wider parent body may be worried about and I want to address this.

Monkton is a unique and wonderful school that I am privileged to be the Executive Headteacher of. I was made aware by Mrs Stone (previous EHT) that this is something that is cherished by all of you as parents. You chose Monkton for a reason, and I have never had any desire to change the school or turn it into a 'Mini Minster' - this was highlighted in the meeting. We have been a federation for a long period of time now and both schools benefit massively from working together. At the outset (pre-federation), Mrs Stone worked across both schools due to weaknesses highlighted by KCC at Monkton. This did lead to the use of lots of Minster resources and systems and probably was the catalyst for the Mini Minster perception originally. The schools were officially federated in April 2019 with both schools at this point being in a very good place.

Ever since I started my current job role, the use of best practice and innovative ideas has been a two-way street with Monkton leading the way on many things – Monkton being deemed the best in Kent for delivering 'spirituality' in school, as highlighted in our SIAMs inspection and sharing best practice. Then from Minster we have OPAL – this is a great example of something that is greatly valued by pupils and parents at both schools.

I have personally kept a lower profile than I would do normally when I was employed, to keep the day-to-day change to a minimum. It is interesting to hear that parents want to know more about me and my role and something I am more than happy to share at a later point.

This is a long way of saying a few things – so in answer to some of the questions here are the open and honest answers:



Q. Why the change?

A. Initially, when I first started to look into this, there was an academy drive from the Conservative government. It was about being 'ahead of the curve' at this point and being able to make a choice of the best fit for Monkton school. We didn't want to be forced into an academy that would ultimately affect our identity and how we run things on a daily basis. We are a great school and joining an academy should add to the Monkton experience and not drastically alter it. With a change in government there has been a shift in focus but systems to convert remain open. All secondary schools in our area are academies and over 50% of primary schools have also converted. With the decline in KCC support and services and the rise in costs many schools are now starting to consider this move too but now with fewer options to choose from.

Q. What will change?

A. Nothing will change really from the outside looking in. The Trust we are joining means we will retain everything that we do currently including our staffing structure, governance structure, how we deliver the curriculum, our trips, OPAL etc. etc. I have spent 3 years researching which Trust to join and didn't want us to work within a 'top down' structure. Everything stays the same with our current federation structure – we just won't be a federation any more. There will be some EKC branding on some of the shared resources/website.

There will be positive change as children will be able to take part in more enrichment/curriculum opportunities. Standards of teaching and learning, including outcomes, will improve further due to greater accountability and support via CPD for all staff. The business side will benefit massively as will the school leaders via networking and support mechanisms that we are not currently getting as a KCC school.

Q. Will Monkton get swallowed up?

A. Really important answer this one. **No – Monkton will retain everything it does currently.**

Q. Will they sell off the school / site?

A. No – they are not allowed to do that.

Q. How do we know this is going to be a good fit for Monkton?

A. We have had a SLA (service level agreement) with EKC for over a year now. This has served as a 'try before you buy' scenario to gauge how this might look in the future. All staff and lots of pupils have benefitted from the opportunities from the opportunities offered so far. This will increase as our length of association continues.

Q. Will this negatively affect the SEND offer from the school?

A. No. KCC still have a statutory right to all schools (including academies) with regards to SEND. We will positively benefit with SEND via the EKC network for SENCOs and also with any bought in services that a Trust (with combined buying power) can access compared to a small federation.

Q. Will governance continue in the same way?

A. As with our current structure, we will retain a single governing body. There is a Trust Board and there will be an opportunity for someone from our federation to sit on this board at some point. The Diocese sit on this board also.

Q. Will we retain our C of E Status?

A. Yes. The Diocese have worked with the Trust and are part of the Trust Board. The Trust has shared articles that enable us as a Church of England school to join. When we first explored joining EKC we couldn't as it wasn't approved by the Diocese. The Diocese recognise this Trust as an amazing opportunity for its schools and so have worked to ensure that we are able to join. The Director of

Education for the Diocese is delighted that Monkton are able to join such a high quality and well run Trust and that they will be part of this journey.

Q. Have the DFE approved our application?

A. Yes – both schools in the federation have had approval over the summer.

Q. When will we academise?

A. The date for conversion is 1.4.26. This is a great time to convert due to it being the end of the financial year for KCC schools.

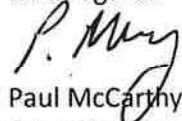
Q. Will Monkton benefit financially?

A. Yes. Currently we pay a top slice to KCC and then pay extra for services via their privatised company Education People – we will instead receive our full DFE allocation directly to school and buy in the Trust services as needed. This is financially beneficial plus we will receive some services as part of the parentship that we are currently having to pay for. Ultimately more money that can go into education for your children after we have balanced the books after the changes to HNF and the impact that this has had on school budgets!

To conclude, I'd just like to say a massive thank you to the Monkton staff for all of their tireless hard work, ensuring that Monkton CEP is an amazing, inspiring and fun place for learning. It is a pleasure working with the team and I look forward to many more fantastic Monkton Memories 😊

Should you have any further questions please don't hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards



Paul McCarthy
Executive Headteacher