

Joining the drb Ignite Trust

Frequently Asked Questions by Parents and Carers



One Trust - One Organisation
Changing lives together

Outstanding
pupil experience

Excellence
in education

Impactful
teaching

Effective
partnerships

**'All pupils
achieve the
highest standard
of educational
outcomes
regardless of
circumstance or
background'**

Introduction

Now your child's school has made the decision to join the drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust, it is natural to have questions and seek information to understand how this change will affect your child's education.

To help address some of the questions you may have, we have compiled a list of Frequently Asked Questions that parents often have when their school joins the drb Ignite Trust.

We hope this information provides you with a better understanding of what to expect and the many benefits this will bring to your child's overall educational experience.

About drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust

drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust is a vibrant and growing charitable organisation. As a unique family of twelve primary schools, our vision and values are shared and constantly lived across all schools.

drb Ignite Trust was founded in October 2014 and is an ambitious and developing Multi Academy Trust committed to driving educational improvement across its family of schools. We see ourselves as a new civic structure with a remit to advance education for public benefit. Everyone involved with the Trust is clear about the central role of strong leadership and collaborative endeavour in achieving and sustaining this ambition for all pupils.

The Trust currently has twelve primary schools in the Birmingham and Dudley areas of the West Midlands. The Trust also has plans for further growth within the West Midlands area.

A defining feature of the Trust is that it is a specialist primary phase Trust. This means that our work is driven by the distinctive needs of primary schools.

As a group of twelve primary schools, our vision inspires us to work as One Trust - One Organisation, at the forefront of educational leadership and innovation. We are truly inclusive, working hard to ensure fairness and equality of opportunity.

Our pupils come from diverse backgrounds and our educational offer is respectful and engaging as well as challenging. We want pupils to benefit from all aspects of learning whilst also making an active contribution as members of a wider community committed to a healthy and just society.

Our schools are close enough to be able to share practice and resources easily, travel between each other and collaborate around the things that matter most to pupils and families locally. This capacity to work together and get to know each other's schools and communities is an important and central feature of our system design.

The Trust currently operates an annual budget of £29.1m provided by the Department for Education through our Funding Agreement. We use this carefully by planning and prioritising spending decisions to ensure we can maintain a consistently high standard of education to over 4500 pupils.

Frequently asked questions for parents and carers when a school is joining the drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust

What is a Multi Academy Trust?

A Multi Academy Trust is formed when two or more Academy schools join as one legal entity. Every Multi Academy Trust is not-for-profit and is a legally registered charity. This means they cannot be run for financial profit and any surplus is reinvested back into the Trust.

Multi Academy Trusts are independent from the Local Authority and receive their funding directly from the government.

What is an Academy?

An Academy is a state school that is run by a Multi Academy Trust rather than the Local Authority. The 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 not through the Local Authority.

How is a Multi Academy Trust funded?

A Multi Academy Trust is an Academy Trust that operates more than one Academy school. Academy schools are state-funded schools in England which are directly funded by the Department for Education and independent of Local Authority control. The terms of the arrangements are set out in individual Academy Funding Agreements.

Why would a maintained school choose to join a Multi Academy Trust?

Changes in the educational landscape now mean that many schools are no longer under Local Authority control. The Government see the long-term future for schools as developing collaboratively through joining Multi Academy Trusts.



Schools can use the strong collaboration and accountability afforded by a Multi Academy Trust to drive up standards and share best practice and services across the Trust.

The Government believes that all schools, including those performing well, will benefit from being in a Multi Academy Trust.

They want schools to operate in strong, resilient structures which raise standards.

Multi Academy Trusts bring together leadership, autonomy, funding and accountability in a single structure and are the best long-term formal arrangement for schools to collaborate and support each other.

Because of these benefits, the Government expects all schools will form or join Multi Academy Trusts by 2030, helping to secure their long-term success.

Who funds the conversion process?

The conversion process is funded by the Department for Education and a grant of £25,000 is provided to support the cost.





What are the benefits to the school joining the drb Ignite Trust?

Being part of drb Ignite Trust means striving for excellence, valuing the workforce, investing in their future, allowing for progression and growth and working in true collaboration and partnership with others. Working in partnership allows us to shape each school for the community it serves.

All our schools work closely together to create a sustainable model of high-quality education for all pupils. We believe that sharing ideas that work, utilising teaching expertise across the Trust and learning from each other provides us with the capacity and ability to move forward as a group of schools.

Collaboration between our schools means best practice is shared widely and new solutions are developed to address common challenges.

We provide opportunities for all staff to share good practice and to benefit from a professional development programme that adds value to the education and outcomes of pupils across the Trust.

This creates a sustainable organisation that improves our society and the wider environment.

We believe there is one overarching benefit of joining our Trust and we describe it as increasing professional collaboration. This can be broken down into the following important areas:

- improved experiences and educational outcomes for all pupils
- improved strategic planning and direction
- more opportunities for staff professional development and career pathways
- access to high-quality centrally provided services
- benefit from cost savings and efficiencies
- strengthened governance and leadership coherence
- reduction in leadership burdens and isolation
- higher quality teaching and teacher collaboration
- ability to deploy resources more flexibly
- better teacher recruitment and retention opportunities



How will our school retain its identity in the Trust?

The school's identity will remain the same. For example, the school's name will remain the same and the school will not be referred to as an academy.

The Trust is committed to ensuring each school represents and champions the local community they serve.

How will my child's education be affected by the school joining the drb Ignite Trust?

The overall aim of the school joining the Trust is to enhance the quality of education and provide better opportunities for pupils. The Trust brings additional resources, expertise and support which will support the school to improve teaching and learning.

What can we expect to be the biggest impact or change to our school upon joining the Trust?

The biggest change will be the opportunity to collaborate with other schools and educators in a safe and trusting environment, supported by a highly knowledgeable and effective school improvement and team

Will there be greater flexibility financially to invest in resources to further support our children?

Yes, one of the many benefits is the additional funding available to support the schools within the Trust.

Will joining the Trust affect special educational needs (SEN) funding?

No, Special Educational Needs funding is intended to support the children with additional educational needs to ensure they receive the appropriate resources and support and will continue to be funded directly by the local authority.

All Special Educational Needs funding allocated to a named child will continue to be funded directly to the school.





How can parents and carers participate and have a voice in the Trust?

The Trust has a Parent and Community Forum in each school to support and ensure parental engagement and involvement.

Parent and Community Advisory Forums play a crucial role in every Trust school. They provide a platform for parents and community members to come together, voice opinions and actively contribute to shaping the educational experience, health and wellbeing of their children.

How will the curriculum be delivered?

The Trust has worked hard to collaborate with each school in the Trust to design and help deliver the curriculum. Subject leaders are integral in developing the Trust's collaborative curriculum which is delivered in all schools.

A review of the school's curriculum will be carried out before the school joins the Trust and through agreement with the Headteacher, the strongest elements of the school's curriculum and the Trust's collaborative curriculum will be adopted and phased in over a suitable timeframe.

What will teaching and learning look like?

The Trust aspires to have the most effective teaching and learning delivered efficiently and equitably. The Trust is keen to take advantage of the best research to inform teaching and learning. Again, there is a collaborative approach to the development of teaching and learning with all schools contributing.

One way we demonstrate this is by placing a significant emphasis on the continued professional development of all our staff. We want all school staff to grow and develop with us and believe that regardless of job role or career stage, there should be opportunities to develop skills and experience in order to be better and further their career.

To support chosen career pathways, the Igniting Our Potential Professional Development Programme provides all staff with a range of opportunities for networking and professional development.



Will my child have access to additional resources and opportunities after joining the Trust?

Yes, joining the Trust will provide all pupils with access to shared resources and expertise. Your child will have access to enhanced facilities, learning materials and specialized programs or initiatives that the Trust provides across its schools.

Will the schools' uniform change?

No, the school uniform will not be changed.

Will there be changes to the school's term dates?

There is no intention to make any changes to the school term dates at present or for the foreseeable future.

No changes would be made without fully consulting parents and only then if such change was deemed to be in the best interests of pupils.

Will there be changes to the length of the school day?

There are no plans to change the length of the school day.



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