

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS RECEIVED AT CONSULTATIONS AT ALL SCHOOLS

What will the benefits be for our children in becoming an academy?

- Individual schools will have the time and energy to focus on the education and wellbeing of children rather than dealing with red tape and issues that distract from their core purpose
- Schools will have more freedom to design and develop a curriculum that best suits the needs of the children and the community
- Schools will be able to work more effectively in partnership. Our proven track record in this area demonstrates that it is the most effective way to further improve standards for the children
- The schools have received a wide range of accreditations across the schools, which allow us to share knowledge and skills in specific areas such as History, Art, PE, Geography and for Pupil Progress, ensuring that all children benefit from this shared expertise
- Higher expectations and controls on the use of money will ensure best value for our children
- The proposed Trust will focus on the agreed clear aims and visions which ensures that pupils are the cornerstone (please refer to the Aims and Vision document on the school's website)
- The services paid for by schools and provided by the Council can be vastly improved upon both in terms of quality and cost

Will standards drop if we become academies?

- Evidence shows that in the new testing arrangements, our schools performed well above the national average
- Reading, Writing, Maths Combined Results 2016:

Curwen	Kensington	Ranelagh	Newham Average	UK Average
92%	74%	69%	62%	53%

This was as a result of working in partnership, which will be further strengthened by the forming of the proposed Multi-Academy Trust

- By sharing with, and learning from other schools, we continually test and review every aspect of how the schools are run
- The proposed Trust will further raise standards through better training for staff using expertise gained in partnership
- Our work in partnership was also recognised by Ofsted, *'...the school's work with its partner school has been central to improvements since the last inspection. The partnership has been a very successful part of the strategy for improvement.'* Ofsted inspection, Kensington Primary School, July 2016

Why can we not stay within the Local Authority or become an independent Academy?

- The Development Group have worked long and hard to review many different options for the future. After meetings with the Department of Education, it was made clear that they will only consider the creation of Multi Academy Trusts (MATs)
- 60% of primary schools within the Local Authority have already joined MATs, are going through their own consultations or are investigating which will cause the quality and scope of services from the Local Authority to deteriorate
- The Local Authority already plans to charge schools more for existing services and resources, which is not in our best interests as high performing schools
- It will become too difficult for the Local Authority to support and run schools and therefore there is a real risk that schools will have to join other MATs or create their own group as costs are too high
- The proposed Trust intends to ensure that we continue to meet the needs of our pupils
- The Local Authority supports the creation of MATs, and have stated that they particularly like our proposal which is community based and will meet the needs of all of our communities rather than a 'one size fits all' model
- There is no suggestion that the proposed Trust would not work with the Local Authority and they continue to be part of our partnership ideals

Will the schools admission policies, uniform or holiday dates change?

- The proposed Trust's agreed Aims and Vision Document states clearly that there will be no changes
- The proposed Trust will continue to follow the Local Authority's admissions policy
- In setting school term dates, local and wider agreements will always be followed

How will parent voice be heard?

- Schools will continue to seek the views of parents via questionnaires and will offer opportunities to engage with the schools and attend regular meetings
- Parents will have elected representatives at each Local Advisory Board and these representatives will be able to work with the proposed Trusts sub-committees and directly influence the running of the Trust
- The proposed Trust will have parents represented at Board and Trust level; selection will be based on the required skill sets

How can we ensure that if Mr. Harris leaves, the next person will not make changes?

- The proposed Trust has been created to ensure that our agreed Aims and Vision are adhered to and that the Trust will not move away from these in the future. This is the key role of the Members, who oversee the Board of Trustees
- The creation of the proposed Trust cannot be based on one person, therefore our values and principles will be central to the work that we do and enshrined in our Articles of Association

Who are the proposed Members?

- The proposed Members were selected based on their skills sets and previous engagement with the schools
- Full details of the proposed members can be found at the school's websites, which also sets out the core values of the proposed Trust

Will the Trust lose teachers?

- Throughout the process the school has engaged all staff who have been part of the design and who understand the reasons why the schools are coming together to create the proposed Trust
- There will be no changes to staff contracts or their terms and conditions
- The proposed Trust will continue to work with trade union representatives in an effective and productive manner
- The proposed Trust will create and develop bespoke training and school improvement rather than generic courses
- The proposed Trust will provide staff with opportunities to further and develop their careers
- The proposed Trust cannot and should not put barriers to staff progression but wish to provide them with opportunities to work with the schools within the group with the protection of all their rights
- Turnover of staff during our joint work has been very low

Is the Trust being set up to make money and to privatise education?

- No, the schools will continue to be 100% state-funded offering free education to all
- The proposed Trust will have charity status and cannot be run for profit, as law prevents this
- This is not privatisation but instead gives us greater freedoms to run our schools
- The proposed Trust intends to make savings in the back office in the running of schools to ensure that our children receive the very best education leaving teachers and leaders free to focus on education

Will lots of new posts be created for the proposed Trust?

- The proposed Trust will not be creating lots of new posts
- The proposed Trust intends to use the talents and expertise already found within our schools to share back office functions
- All money for the schools will come to the proposed Trust rather than some of it being retained by the Local Authority for services. The Trust will then be able to decide which services should be brought in to support the schools

Why were parents not informed sooner of the proposed Trust?

- The governing bodies, including elected parent governors and staff governors, initially agreed to develop the idea of a MAT in November 2015
- A Development Group was set up consisting of members of all governing bodies from all schools
- All governing bodies have been fully informed at each step during the whole process and provided with full minutes of the meetings of the Development Group
- Parents were initially informed of the proposed Trust in a letter on 8th February 2017
- Our newsletters informed parents of the consultations in April and May
- The on-line consultations and paper surveys were opened on 28th April 2017 and closed at midnight on 22nd May
- The schools will continue to seek the views of parents through the proposed Head Teacher surgeries in June 2017