



**ACADEMY CONSULTATION ON
BEHALF OF THE GOVERNING BODY**

**Huyton with Roby
CE Primary School**

PROVIDING OUTSTANDING TEACHING AND LEARNING FOR ALL

The Governing Body of Huyton with Roby CE Primary School is proposing to convert to academy status as a member of the Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust, which is a Multi-academy Trust that will include a number of other Church of England Schools from across the local area. For further information on the LDST please go to: www.huytonwithrobyce.co.uk

This decision has been taken after a considerable degree of research and discussion and with the firm belief that this is in the best interest of our children and community. Current government policy is focussed on joining schools together in Multi-academy Trusts to create supportive links and partnerships between schools.

A family of schools working together to embrace and promote our Christian distinctiveness whilst reflecting the changing world of education.

Why convert to Academy status and be a part of the LDST?

- Broader curriculum and wider social opportunities for pupils
- Improved professional development opportunities for staff
- Shared expertise and strengths
- Enhanced mutual support
- Address impact of tightening budgets

Why work together?

- Christian Character
 - To share the Christian values that make us distinctive as a Church of England School
- Teaching and Learning
 - Shared learning and curriculum development utilising specialisms and resources available
 - Opportunities for children, teachers and leadership teams to work collaboratively

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- Resourcing
 - Collective purchasing and shared contractual arrangements
 - Sharing of human and physical resources

What do we want to retain?

- Our Christian character
- Our schools' individual identity
- Excellent teachers
- High quality education

As part of the conversion process, we are keen to listen to the views and comments of all stakeholders. We are consulting with parents, carers, staff and the wider community. The consultation period will run until **16th June 2017**. During this time you are invited to make any written submissions you wish the Governing Body to consider, using the response form issued with this document (APPENDIX A).

The Governing Body will meet the following week to consider how best to proceed and make a decision about whether or not to move forward along the conversion process. We will then submit all documents to the Liverpool Diocesan Board of Education.

Finally, we have included a Frequently Asked Questions section that may address any immediate questions you have and uploaded to our website a pamphlet produced by LDST for your further consideration

Signed by Canon J Stanley
Chair of Governors
Huyton with Roby CE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is an Academy?

An Academy is a state school that is run by an Academy Trust. The Academy 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 and is no longer run by the Local Authority. The Trust is given charitable exemption, which means it must operate much like a charity.

There are two types of Academies:

- **Converter:** maintained schools that are regarded as being at least “good with outstanding features” are able to apply to become “converter academies”.
- **Sponsored:** a maintained school that has been transformed to academy status as part of a government intervention strategy. Sponsored academy status is designed for “underperforming” schools where action is needed to raise standards.

All “Good” and “Outstanding” schools (as judged by Ofsted) will be **converter** academies.

2. What is a Multi-Academy Trust?

A Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) is when 2 or more Academies come together. It is an incorporated company which runs more than one Academy. Church of England schools must use the Funding Agreement and Memorandum & Articles of Association produced by the National Church of England Education Office (CEEEO) legal advisers.

- **Members** are like shareholders in a commercial company but not ones entitled to receive a dividend or shareholder return. They appoint the Directors, calling them to account for operating within the vision of the Trust and delivering high standards and financial sustainability. The members in the Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust are appointed by the Diocese.
 - **Directors** are appointed by the Members of the Academy Trust. They have the legal responsibility for the operation of the schools within the Multi-academy Trust but will delegate much of the operational responsibilities to the Local Governing Body and Headteacher.
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- **The Local Governing Body** provides local governance for each school within the Trust, on behalf of the Directors, and is empowered to do so by a "Scheme of Delegation". Our school governing body will remain largely unchanged.
- **The Scheme of Delegation** is the document by which the Directors empower the Local Governing Body to provide local governance of the school. It requires the Local Governing Body to comply with the Department for Education and Ofsted guidance, and any Multi-academy Trusts, as well as SIAMS guidance for Church of England schools. It can be a flexible Scheme of Delegation that reflects the principle of "earned autonomy".

The Department for Education has developed clauses for use in funding agreements that enable former Voluntary Aided, Voluntary Controlled and Community schools to be within the same Multi Academy Trust. These are known as Mixed Multi Academy Trusts. The LDST is a 'Church majority model' and all Directors are appointed through the Diocese. The individual governance at schools within the LDST, whether they are VA, VC or Community schools will reflect as much as possible their current structures.

3. How would converting to an Academy benefit our School?

Converting to an Academy is about enhancing teaching and learning for all children; it would allow us to share skills and operate more effectively.

4. What is involved in becoming an Academy?

The Governing Body of our school has voted for this proposal *in principle*. The school must complete a consultation with parents, pupils, staff and the wider community which the Governors will take into account in reaching its decision.

5. Is the Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust a charity?

Yes, the LDST is a company incorporated in England and Wales, limited by guarantee with a registered company number 9235635. It is an exempt charity.

6. Would the school have to change its logo or uniform?

No. The school will not be changing its uniform as a result of Academy status.

7. How will being an Academy affect staff?

In Church of England Voluntary Aided Schools staff are employed by the Governing Body and in Church of England Voluntary Controlled Schools by the Local Authority. After conversion all staff will be employed by the LDST Multi Academy Trust. Staff are legally protected to transfer under the same

employment terms and conditions, including pensions. Their continuity of service is protected, and all staff will be consulted in accordance with the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations. So the same people will be employed on the same terms and conditions as before.

The Diocesan Board of Education – Policy on Academies – states “a commitment by the Academy Trust must be given to retain the national terms and conditions of service as a minimum standard for the employment of Academy staff.”

In relation to day to day matters, we can confirm that:

- The hours currently worked will remain the same
- Planning & preparation time will be given and, at a minimum, remain the same
- Term times will remain the same

8. How are the children affected?

In many ways the children will not notice any immediate difference, they will still be taught in a caring, Christian, learning environment, be in the same uniform, be in the same classrooms with the same teaching staff. We will continue to strive for an outstanding education for all our children. However, in time the children may notice changes and improvements in the way that they learn, resulting from the greater training opportunities given to teaching staff to innovate and improve the pupils’ learning.

9. Will we get more money as an Academy?

Academies receive the same amount of per-pupil funding as they would receive from the Local Authority as a maintained school.

All funding comes direct from Government to the Multi Academy Trust. The Board of Directors (appointed by the Diocese) then controls the overall budget. Each school will have the same funding allocation as they do now, but as a group the schools will be better able to maximise the funding available to them.

There will be additional funding to help the school meet all the legal costs and requirements in moving to academy status. This will not be funded by school budget.

10. What are the risks of becoming an Academy?

The change to Academy takes a school out of Local Authority control, but does not exclude the school from Local Authority support. For example,

Academies can continue to receive finance, HR, behavioural support and other services from the Local Authority and where these represent 'best value' the MAT would use these services. Where the MAT feels that others can provide better services or better value the change to academy status increases the freedom to make these changes.

There are risks associated with not changing to Academy status. At some stage in the future, any school might be influenced to become part of a broader Academy Chain. We believe that to be a part of the Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust, under diocesan direction, offers the best opportunities for our staff and pupils. The Government has made it clear that they aim for all schools to become academies.

11. How will admissions to the school be affected?

Academies are responsible for their own admissions and must meet all the mandatory provisions of the School Admissions Code. The Diocesan Board of Education – Policy on Academies – states "the Academy agrees to consult with the Diocese on its Admissions Policy and on any subsequent changes, having regard to Diocesan guidance on Admission."

The Governing Body has no plans to change the admissions criteria.

12. Does becoming an Academy change the relationship with other schools and the community?

No. Academies must ensure that they continue to be at the heart of their community, collaborating and sharing expertise with other schools and the wider community.

13. Will our responsibilities in relation to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and exclusions change?

No. Responsibilities as an Academy in relation to SEND and exclusions will be just the same as they are now. The local authority would retain responsibility for assessing and funding children with SEN. We would, therefore, continue to receive additional funding for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs.

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14. Can a child with a statement nominate an Academy as his or her school of choice?

Yes. Schools converting to Academy status can retain the admissions criteria they currently use. These arrangements and related processes must at all times comply with the School Admissions Code.

15. Alternative provision – would the LA expect us to pay for this?

Yes, and if in the future there is Alternative Provision available to us from within the LDST family, each child referred will still need to be funded by school.

16. Will academies be free from Ofsted inspections?

No, academies remain subject to the Government's inspection arrangements and to the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)

17. Who is taking the decision on becoming an Academy?

Having listened to your views the governing body takes the final decision.

18. When will the decisions be made?

The Governing Body will inform the Diocesan Board of Education (Schools Committee) of its decision before it next meets. Should the decision be to proceed, and all formal approvals are received, we would expect to convert to an academy during the autumn term 2017.

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