



## Academy formal Consultation December 2010

### Questions from the Staff Meeting held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2010

**At the staff meeting the headteacher provided an introduction to explain why the school was considering the change to Academy Status. After this, staff asked the following questions.**

#### **Contract of Employment**

Q. *Who has the ultimate control of contracts if we become an Academy?*

A. Staff are currently employed by the Governors since we are a Foundation school. Everyone with a contract is protected by TUPE if we become an Academy. Terms and conditions remain the same and governors have no plans to make changes.

This type of Academy is different to the previous Academies with Sponsors when some staff did find changes were made to their working hours etc. Our Governors are very happy with the way the school is run. They know there is a great deal of goodwill and there are no plans to make changes that would harm this goodwill.

Q. *What happens to staff on temporary contracts?*

A. If the funding is not available then some temporary contracts would not be renewed. For example, staff who are employed with temporary contracts to support students with Special Educational Needs are linked to whether these students remain in the school. This remains the same whether we are an academy or not.

Q. *What happens to staff who are funded through our Engineering Specialist Grant if that funding is removed by the Government as has been suggested?*

A. The ring-fence on the specialist funding grant has now been removed. If the funding is removed from our school budget, then those staff who rely upon this funding would probably lose their jobs. [ [After the meeting, the Local Authority proposed to the School Forum that this funding remains in place for another financial year](#)]

#### **National Pay and Conditions**

Q. *Would the National Pay and Conditions remain? Could the Governing Body have control?*

A. The governors are required to maintain the current terms and conditions as a result of the TUPE. The national Pay and Conditions are currently agreed with Unions as part of their collective bargaining. This is currently being reviewed by the Government as part of the white paper. The governing body, as employers already have control and staff representatives on the Governing Body can express your views regarding terms and conditions in the future.

Q. *At the moment our terms and conditions are set in stone. If the school becomes an Academy will these change?*

A. It is possible that your terms and conditions could be changed in the future. Any changes would have to be approved by the Governing Body after consultation. As long as I am the headteacher, I will do all I can to ensure that terms and conditions are fair.

Q. *Can we obtain assurances from the Governors not to make any changes?*

A. You can seek to obtain those assurances through your staff governors.

### **Governing Body**

Q. *Who has control of the Governing Body?*

A. The Secretary of State has the ultimate control. Certain conditions are built into the academy funding agreement. If the Governing Body do not implement them the Secretary of State can step in and take control of any academy where there are concerns.

Q. *Who chooses the Governing Body and what will happen if we become an Academy?*

A. It is intended that the make up of the Governing Body would be similar to the current one. Some members such as Community Governors are chosen for their skills and experience. However, Staff and parent governors are elected to serve groups of stakeholders. There are no plans to decrease the number of members of the Governing Body.

Q. *Would it be appropriate to increase the number of Staff Governors?*

A. Statute states the minimum number required.

Q. *Will there still be representatives from the Local Authority on the Governing Body?*

A. At the moment there are 2 Local Authority representatives. There is no requirement to have any LA representative as an Academy.

Q. *How long does the Chair of Governor remain in office?*

A. The Chair of Governors is appointed each year by the members of the Governing Body.

Q. *What would happen if you left the school – we might find ourselves back in the position we were in five years ago?*

A. I have no intentions of leaving. If something happened to me, then a new headteacher would be recruited using a process that involved stakeholders. Staff governors would need to ensure that the model used by the school to recruit me is used for any future headteacher recruitment.

- Q. *Can we speak to Link Governors regarding our concerns?*
- A. Staff should direct their questions to staff governors who represent their views on the Governing Body. It is not part of the role of a link governor to deal with staff concerns as part of this consultation process.
- Q. *The Governors already run the school, will becoming an Academy give them more power?*
- A. The Governors are a collective body with strategic oversight. The day to day running of the school is left to me as headteacher. This would remain the same.
- Q. *Would it be possible to meet with the Chair of Governors without the presence of the Senior Leadership Team?*
- A. The Chair of Governors will be available at the meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2011. It is also possible to communicate directly by email with the Chair.

### **Academy Funding**

- Q. *Are there any benefits other than increased funding?*
- A. Becoming an Academy would give the school greater control of its own destiny. As a Foundation School we can already make our own decisions but our funding is top-sliced by the Local Authority. The main benefit would be the increase in funding by retaining the top-slice.
- Q. *Would there still be cuts if we became an Academy?*
- A. There would probably be deep cuts if we did not become an Academy due to the present economic climate and falling rolls. As an Academy we would have access to greater funding than as a Local Authority school. This increased funding would be used to minimise any cuts required.
- Q. *If the Governors propose to become an Academy in April will Redundancy Notices have to be served?*
- A. Redundancy Notices may be required if the school is unable to balance its budget in February. Becoming an Academy will provide the Governing Body with the maximum funding to avoid redundancy notices being issued.
- Q. *As an Academy would we receive the £400,000 every year?*
- A. We do not know the exact amount that will be received every year. At the moment we estimate the figure to be £400,000 more than we currently receive but future amounts will be based on whatever funding system is used.
- Q. *Are our opinions and concerns going to have any affect on the decision?*
- A. Your views could have a significant impact on how any change is implemented. You can make the Governors aware of your views through your staff governors or

directly to the Chair.

Q. *Why are you proposing to change to a five form entry?*

A. This change is based on the actual number of applications for places in 2011 and the expected number in the next year. The school must ensure that each intake has a curriculum structure that is matched to the number of students present in it.

Q. *Is it a done deal that the school will become an Academy?*

A. The Government intends all schools to become academies eventually. As a Good School with Outstanding Features we can proceed now without a sponsor. The consultation provides stakeholders with the chance to express their views on the proposals. The Governing Body will then take a final decision next term.