

## **QUESTIONS ARISING FROM INFORMATION EVENING**

### **Will being an academy mean that we will tutor for the 11+ Transfer Test?**

*DfE does not allow ANY primary schools in Bucks to coach/tutor or provide any other type of support for the 11+ test.*

*Any academy school within a MAT is no different in this respect. It is not allowed!*

*Parents will also still have the choice of opting their child out of the test if so desired.*

### **If the schools fails to stay as 'Good' in its next Ofsted inspection (due soon), how will this affect its status to apply for Multi Academy Status?**

*If this situation arose for Twyford (which we feel unlikely), the MAT School Support Director, who is an OFSTED lead auditor in his own right, would aim to be on site for the inspection and support the headteacher. He would also undertake its own review of the school and the MAT would make their decision on whether to proceed with all such information at their disposal. If the school really crashed and fell into special measures it may be forced to become an academy in any case and if it was deemed "requires improvement" the MAT would consider the severity of the recommendations made by the OFSTED inspector to improve within their decision making.*

### **Which other schools are considering being part of the 'Academy'?**

*Four schools have just obtained DfE consent - 2 are local: Padbury & Great Horwood and 2 are in south Bucks. There are another 7 who have expressed an interest with Twyford one of these. The Buckinghamshire MAT are confident this will increase into the teens and beyond. The Oxfordshire MAT has 26 schools at present with a further 5 in process of joining over the coming months.*

### **Will a secondary school be invited to be part of the MAT?**

*If a Secondary School approached the MAT and expressed a desire to join, this would be explored. There is no inherent reason why the MAT would refuse entry if the school was a secondary school as it's MAT structure is set up for each school to maintain its own autonomy with the MAT structure.*

### **How will Twyford Primary manage to maintain its current ethos and character?**

*One of the key non-negotiables for the Governors when deciding on which MAT to recommend was one where the current school's ethos and character was not impacted. This is the case with ODBST - it has the necessary structure and support to allow the existing school governing body and headteacher to manage this in exactly the same way as they maintain it now.*

**How will conversion to MAT effect the financial situation of the school and how will this impact on the provision for the school i.e. the budget and how will staffing be effected?**

*There are two aspects to the financial impact of academy conversion – the impact on how a school’s money is managed, and the impact on the amount available to spend.*

*How money is managed in an academy*

*Most school funding will come directly to the multi-academy trust (MAT) from central government and is then passed on the academy after a proportion is retained – the amount retained and how that is managed differs from MAT to MAT. Most of the funding is received in monthly instalments, and so managing cashflow is a new and important responsibility for both MATs and their academies. SEN and Early Years funding still comes to the academy directly from the local authority.*

*Effect of academy conversion on the amount of money available to spend*

*Extra costs*

*All MATs must retain some proportion of its academies funding to pay for the staff and resources they need to provide services and support to their academies – this is often referred to as a subscription charge, retention or topslice. The amount retained will vary from MAT to MAT as will the level of service provision.*

*Savings*

- *Some local authorities such as Buckinghamshire retain an amount of school’s funding under the heading of de-delegation – this is no longer happens after conversion.*
- *The amount payable for employer’s superannuation for LGPS staff will differ from the LA rate – sometimes it is more, sometimes less, but in the case of Buckinghamshire there is currently a saving of 3.6%*
- *Some costs previously met from the school’s budget may be paid for from the subscription charge or topslice. Some examples are subscriptions, IT licence fees and school improvement support.[SM1]*
- *The larger the MAT the greater the opportunity to negotiate discounts from suppliers which can then be passed on to academies, such as via energy procurement and staff absence insurance packages.*

**How will the management of the MAT be established i.e. will there be an overall head teacher (executive head)? If so, how will this person be appointed?**

*ODBST does routinely not appoint Executive Head Teachers. This is not part of its leadership structures or ethos in effective schools. Judith Foster will remain the Headteacher of Twyford School; she will not be reporting to a MAT Executive Head. In the same way the School Governors & Chair of an effective school will not report to an executive board who oversee or dictate how they manage the school provision. However, ultimate accountability sits with Trustees and therefore should the school be categorised as at risk of being judged ‘requires improvement’ or ‘inadequate’, the Trust has the authority to intervene and change the arrangements for governance or leadership accountability.*

## **QUESTIONS AT THE END OF THE PARENT PRESENTATION**

### **Why have the Governor's decided to convert to an academy with ODBST?**

*The Governing Board has been through a lengthy and detailed decision process in deciding to convert to an academy with ODSTB. As Governors, we believe that the best way to serve the future of this school is to join ODBST as an academy because it will be able to help the school to continue to improve and feedback on the support and services from schools already in ODST is very positive.*

- *it will provide a safe and secure home for our school in times of very considerable change in the education field;*
- *it enables the local governing body to continue to run the school locally (with accountabilities to ODBST and it will preserve the Christian character of the school.*
- *other schools in the area are exploring this possibility and we will therefore have not only the ongoing Diocesan support but that of ODBST and neighbouring schools.*

### **How will this impact on my child being able to sit the 11+?**

*(see question and answer as above)*

### **Will it [ODBST} change any structure?**

*Decisions about the structure of the school remains with the Governing Body.*

### **How will the change impact on the children; the education they received, the environment etc? Will it improve the resources and quality of teaching?**

*Decisions about the curriculum, resources required and the school environment will remain with the school. However, the support provided to the school in making decisions about this will be increased.*

### **Will the school change its name and/or uniform?**

*No. The name of the school and the uniform do not have to change. There are no plans to change the school name or uniform requirements should we do decide to convert to academy status.*

### **What guarantee can you provide that the best interests of the school will be the focus point and not the trust to maximise their profits?**

*The ODBST is a charitable company limited by guarantee (i.e. non-profit). As far as it is possible, decision making is kept at a local level to ensure decisions are made in the interest of the school.*

### **Will this mean the school has less teachers of different teachers?**

*The staffing levels at the school will remain a decision of the Governing Body.*

**What support will the Trust provide?**

*Schools will be supported in the trust to enable school staff to concentrate on continuing to deliver the highest standards of teaching and care to all pupils. This support is given through central services which are funded through a top slice from the academies income. ODBST academies will automatically be provided with support regarding the curriculum, school improvement, HR advice, finance, IT software, training and advice, governance, premises and admissions.*

**What are the proposed timescales? How will the consultation process work?**

*Most school's convert to academy status in about 5 months after achieving the initial DfE approval to proceed. We are currently aiming for conversion by 1<sup>st</sup> December 2017, however this is dependent on decisions and processes outside of the control of ODBST and the school, and therefore may change*

*The consultation process starts on 12<sup>th</sup> June and ends on 7<sup>th</sup> July. A parents' evening is being held on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2017 to answer any questions. The Governing Body will then take a vote on Academy status at their following meeting and we will inform all stakeholders of the decision after that. After this point, we will continue to communicate and consult through a variety of methods to ensure that everyone is kept up-to-date and all views are considered. If parents, staff and the community have additional questions to ask, they should email the school.*

**Will there be an impact on the admissions criteria and application process?**

*The admissions arrangements will not change as they will remain the same as the local authority arrangements, although the governing body will become the admissions authority for the school. If any changes are proposed in the future to admission arrangements, there would be a full consultation prior to any changes being made in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2014. Our admission arrangements will be published on our website well in advance of each academic year. The Local Authority retains responsibility for co-ordination of admission arrangements for entry into normal entry points to the school (i.e. Year R).*

**How will being an Academy change things on a day to day basis for children and staff?**

*The day to day arrangements for children and staff will remain the same, as no changes are proposed at part of the conversion. However, over time, the ambition of the Trust is to maintain and strengthen the school through individual support and partnership working.*

**How would this impact on Ofsted re-visiting, re-rating the school and the plan to improve?**

*Schools which convert to an academy are treated as a new school. The first inspection of a new schools, including academies, will usually take place within three years of opening. In most instances, Ofsted will not select new schools for a first inspection until they are in their third year of operation. Certain types of schools*

*judged outstanding before conversion to academy status are exempt from routine section 5 inspection, unless there are concerns about their performance. New academy converters, whose predecessor school was judged good at its last inspection are eligible for a short inspection. The short inspections of academy converters will be carried out approximately every three years. However, in the case of the first short inspection of a new academy with a good predecessor school, Ofsted will consider the inspection history of the predecessor school to decide the timing of the inspection. For example, where the last inspection of the predecessor school took place sometime before academy conversion, Ofsted may deem that the school would benefit from an earlier short inspection. When a converter academy is inspected either under section 5 or section 8 the outcomes will be the new 'rating' of the school and all 4 Ofsted grades could apply.*

*The plans for improvement are built around the outcomes for pupils and are decided on by the local governing body, supported by the trust. By joining ODBST the school will benefit from professional support and challenge by school improvement officers who will ensure that the headteacher and governing body are focused on the most important improvements. However, the school remains managed by the local governing body and the headteacher who are ultimately responsible for the improvements needed. It is this partnership which is to the benefit of the school in a world of diminishing support from other sources. The partnership with the family of ODBST schools helps support school-2-school challenge and leads to schools being involved in professional development and other opportunities to learn from each other.*