



Federation of Beckwithshaw, Kettlesing-Felliscliffe and Ripley Endowed
Primary Schools

Consultation on Academisation of Kettlesing-Felliscliffe Primary School

Communication on Academisation of Beckwithshaw and Ripley Endowed

Academy Trusts – Frequently Asked Questions

Why is our Federation considering becoming an academy and joining the Elevate Multi Academy Trust?

Beckwithshaw and Ripley Endowed are obliged to become academies, by law, following their Ofsted Inspections. Kettlesing-Felliscliffe is under no such order as its judgment is historically 'good'. As the IEB is responsible for all three Federation schools, it is our aim to ensure that they all continue to be happy and safe places for the children and for school leaders and staff to work as a Federation team. We aim to see them together develop a strong and effective curriculum which contributes to a high-quality education for your children. We believe that the best way for this to happen is for the schools to continue to work closely together as a Federation, in a supportive, ambitious, and sustainable way. This can only happen if we join an Academy Trust as a Federation.

What is an academy?

Academies are state schools, funded directly from central government, no longer under the control of the Local Authority. Academy status gives schools more freedom to be innovative and creative with the curriculum, timetabling, staffing and governance.

The schools will retain their status of Church of England Voluntary Controlled (Ripley) and Community Primary (Kettlesing-Felliscliffe and Beckwithshaw)

All academies continue to be inspected by Ofsted and comply with the same rules as other schools on special educational needs and disabilities (SEND),

exclusions and admissions. Ripley will continue to be inspected under the Statutory Inspection for Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) framework.

An academy is part of a charitable trust (MAT) run by a board of trustees. Trusts and their academies are rightly expected to work with and support other schools, including vulnerable schools. Should you wish to know more about the Government's policy, the Department for Education has its own academies bookmark on

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/convert-to-an-academy-information-for-schools>

What is a Multi Academy Trust (MAT)?

A Multi Academy Trust is a charitable company and is responsible for overseeing the running of a number of schools. It has three layers of governance: the Members; the Directors; and the Local Academy Councils (similar to school governing bodies).

A MAT is formed when its articles (legal document) are approved by the DfE and it is registered at Companies House as a company. MATs are made up of a number of academy schools – some are just primary school MATs, others will have secondary schools in them and some will include Special Schools too. It is usual for MATs to have periods of growth, when a number of schools might join and then some period of consolidation. There isn't a set number of schools that makes a MAT. The partnership established between all schools in the MAT ensures that the schools can share skills and best practice and make optimum use of resources ensuring best value for money for each school.

Whilst we are aware of some difference in opinion as to the effectiveness of Multi Academy Trusts, and we would encourage you to consider the arguments for and against and submit any concerns or questions you might have as part of your feedback. The IEB have thought very carefully about this decision and are confident this is a positive future for our Federated schools.

What are the main differences between academies and maintained schools?

The models of governance and funding change. MATs have a direct funding agreement with the Education Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA) and receive funding directly from them for all schools in the MAT - these funds are then distributed to each school to manage. Maintained schools receive their funding via the Local Authority (LA) who receive it from government. Standards are

monitored by the governance and leadership of the Trust instead of the LA. Standards are reported to the Regional Schools' Commissioner (RSC) on behalf of the Department for Education (DfE). Academies have more freedoms and do not have to follow the national curriculum, but they do have to take part in national assessments such as (SATs and GCSEs) and Ofsted will still monitor them. As already stated, the effectiveness of the Ripley as a Church School will still be monitored by the Diocese and inspected through the SIAMS process.

Will the uniform at the schools change?

Some MATs do have a corporate approach, but our Federation will continue to have its own unique identity in the Trust and Elevate recognises this includes uniform, logo, and signage.

Will the school day or holiday dates change?

It is not intended that there will be any change to the length of the school day or the holidays as set already by the governing body of the Federation and the Executive Headteachers.

Will the name of the school change?

There is no requirement for the school to have the word academy in its title, although it can if it wishes. Any change of name of a Church School requires Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) approval.

Will staff change or have to move to other schools?

No. Staff terms and conditions are protected by law. Nobody will be told to move to another school. However, if staff are already on Federation contracts it is expected that they move freely between our Federation Schools. Occasionally, there may be job opportunities in other schools in the Trust and staff could apply for those, as they could if they weren't in a Trust. Staff terms and conditions are protected by a process called TUPE when they join the Trust.

What are the advantages for pupils of becoming part of Elevate Multi Academy Trust?

Schools joining Elevate will be given greater opportunities for collaboration and the sharing of good practice. The expectation is that this will have a positive impact over time on teaching and learning and ensure all children in every school will have access to a quality education. The Federation will still be led and managed by a headteachers and the local governors. The Trust structure will provide greater opportunities for curricular and extra-curricular activities. Also, some jobs will be done by the central team of the Trust, leaving headteachers time to focus on teaching, learning and pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural, physical and social development.

What are the advantages in general of becoming an academy in a MAT?

There are many advantages of being part of an academy trust, from working together to preserve and improve education in the area, to educational, and financial benefits. Essentially, a group of schools working together in a single body can do lots of things that are harder for stand-alone schools to do. Teachers work and learn together to improve the way they teach, and schools can share practices that make a difference to the quality of teaching. Teachers and leaders can work together on the things that matter – like curriculum and assessment. In addition, schools can challenge and support each other to continually improve.

What will be the main benefits for schools within Elevate?

- The opportunity to work with top quality staff, including a Trust leadership team who will be sharply focused on securing excellence.
- A strong emphasis on collaboration and partnership across schools including moderation of standards to ensure the highest quality provision.
- A greater control over finances and the money due to schools.
- Educational benefits for students as a result of additional freedoms available to academies in terms of the curriculum we offer, and how we prioritise resources.

- The opportunity to work in close and formalised partnership with other schools and share expertise and services that will benefit all of our students and staff is a key incentive to join Elevate.
- The sharing of resources and expertise will allow us to target funding towards improving front line teaching and learning.
- The opportunity to develop our own solutions collaboratively.

Why change if things are working well with everyone?

Beckwithshaw and Ripley Endowed are obliged to become academies, by law, following their Ofsted Inspections. Kettlesing- Felliscliffe is under no such order as its judgment is historically 'good'.

However, we believe that the best way for our three schools to improve and develop is for the schools to continue to work closely together as a Federation, in a supportive, ambitious, and sustainable way. This can only happen if we join an Academy Trust as a Federation.

Will schools lose their identity and will there be big changes?

No. Each school will become an academy in its own right and will be part of the Trust. The scheme of delegation established by the Trust in consultation with the schools protects the uniqueness of each school. The Local Academy Councils' (LAC) role will be to ensure that the ethos is strong, and that the unique identity of each school is maintained. There are no significant changes planned which will affect pupils on a day-to-day basis. Uniforms, school day, free school meals, school name and holidays will not change.

What will the direct impact be on families if our school joins a Trust?

The move will not have a negative impact on families. The school will still be led and managed by the headteachers and a LAC.

What are the legal responsibilities towards children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)?

Academies must follow the SEND Code of Practice and work closely with the LA, who retains the statutory responsibility for SEND in an authority just like other schools.

What about safeguarding?

The same expectations for schools about safeguarding would be in place in the Trust. LAs also retain a statutory responsibility for safeguarding.

How do the schools convert to Academies?

Beckwithshaw and Ripley Endowed are obliged to become academies, by law, following their Ofsted Inspections

The IEB needs to take a resolution regarding Kettlesing to convert and apply for an Academy Order – which it has already done. The DfE, through its senior regional officer (the Regional Schools Commissioner –RSC) and her Advisory Board need to approve the school to convert and award the Academy Order. The governors (IEB) need to carry out a formal consultation process with parents and carers and with staff. If there are local site trustees, then these need to be consulted too. Following consultation, the governors then need to resolve to ratify their decision. The MAT and school engage in some due diligence of things like finances and the legal status of the land and buildings. The school progresses to conversion.

The cost of the process to become an academy is met by a grant of £25,000 per school from DfE. The proposed timeline and target conversion date for the Federation will be agreed once the DfE Advisory Board issue the Academy Order for Kettlesing-Felliscliffe. The current governing body will become the LAC under the Directors and Members of the Trust.

What is the role of parents?

All schools that convert to academies must ensure that parents are consulted. Parents are important in the work of the schools and those looking to become

part of a MAT must seek to work in partnership with the families who entrust their children to their care.

Elevate will become the Admissions Authority although each school will have their own admission policy which they will follow. There will be no change in policy or pupil admission numbers. Our catchment area and our partner schools will remain unchanged too. Admissions will still be administered by the LA. The MAT board is responsible for arranging for any admissions appeals if there are families who wish to appeal for a place in a Trust school. Parents will also remain as a key category on LACs.

What is the leadership structure in the Trust?

There will be a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and a Chief Financial Officer (CFO). The Federation will have its own headteacher as it does now. These roles will not be diminished. The Trust and the LAC will be involved in the appointment of head teachers if and when vacancies arise. Each school is an equal partner in the Trust so that there is no school more important than another. Each school will retain and manage its own budget but will contribute through a retention of funds for key roles and projects within the Trust.

What services will the Trust provide?

The Trust have a core central team. The core team support schools around standards, finance, school improvement and the operational running of schools. The Trust will purchase services that are of the best value and the best quality. LAs retain their statutory responsibilities for areas such as safeguarding and SEND. The Trust can make savings by economies of scale which can be used for the education of children.

Who owns the buildings and how are they maintained?

The ownership of sites currently operating as maintained Local Authority Schools

At Ripley, the main School site is held by the local trustees (the Incumbent and Churchwardens or private trustees). The playing field is subject to a lease arrangement, and the use of the Star Club is subject to a License arrangement.

Beckwithshaw and Kettlesing-Felliscliffe are in the ownership of the County Council. These arrangements are not expected to change when the schools become academies. The ownership of the Ripley site is acknowledged in the Church Supplemental Agreement (CSA) which is signed by the Diocese and the Secretary of State for Education.

The schools and in turn the Trust will continue to be responsible for the day-to-day management and maintenance of the buildings and sites and the Trust will have access to a standard capital allocation to enable significant works to be carried out when needed. The County Council will be expected to grant a 125-year lease of the Community Primary School sites to the Trust.

What happens with finances and resources?

The Trust Board will be responsible for presenting the consolidated accounts for the Trust as a whole. The Trust will provide opportunities for centralising contracts and service delivery that we hope will yield savings for school budgets. The LAC will be responsible for managing the delegated school budget, with oversight from the central team. The Trust is responsible for the central service fund and for strategic planning across the whole Trust. The LAC is responsible for staffing structures. As now, they will need to ensure that the structure is sustainable within the delegated budget. The central Trust team will support in this area if needed.

What will happen to the existing schools' reserves or deficits? Any transfer of assets?

All assets and existing reserves or deficits will be retained by the schools on conversion, having been contractually transferred by the governing body to the Trust pursuant to the terms of a Commercial Transfer Agreement (CTA). The LA is obliged by statutory regulation to transfer any school surpluses to the academy within 4 months of conversion, though typically it happens more quickly than that.

What happens with teachers and support staff employment?

Teachers and support staff employed by the LA (VC schools)/GB (VA schools) at the point of the transfer will transfer to Elevate on their existing Terms and Conditions.

Who is the CEO and CFO of Elevate?

MATs must have a senior leader, Chief Executive Officer, who would act as the accounting officer for the Trust. They also need a Chief Finance Officer. MATs will have a number of central team colleagues too, including a lead for education standards, often called a Director of Learning. Elevate CEO is Nigel Ashley.