

**REPORT ON THE CONSULTATION
ON THE PROPOSAL FOR HIGH BEECH C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL TO CONVERT TO
ACADEMY STATUS
AND JOIN THE EPPING FOREST SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP TRUST**

1. Objectives

It is recognised by the Secretary of State and the DfE that the Governing Body and leadership team of a school are best placed to assess the benefits of academy status and to decide whether it is appropriate for their school. Therefore, the purpose of consultation is for the Governing Body to present the proposal to stakeholders, to gather feedback on the proposal and to understand the level of stakeholder interest, support and objection. The Governing Body can then determine whether there is any significant stakeholder objection to academy status that would cause them to reconsider.

The objective of consultation is for the Governing Body to meet its responsibilities under The Academies Act 2010 which sets out clearly the duty to consult with 'appropriate stakeholders'. Following this, the Governing Body can then decide whether to proceed with the proposal to convert to academy status and form the Epping Forest Schools Partnership Trust.

2. Consultation activity

Governors considered carefully consultation and activities were planned in accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Parents and staff received information on the proposal and were also invited to attend a consultation presentation.

The consultation letters and information were published on the school website with the URL <http://www.highbeech.essex.sch.uk/>

Audience	Time & Date
Parents & carers	<i>Thursday 9th November 2017</i>
Staff	<i>30th October 2017 – in school during INSET day</i>

3. Outcome

Parent consultation Thursday 9th November 2017

Present: Headteacher (Sarah Roffey), Chair of Governors (Peter Walker), Parent Governor (Jon Martindale), Sharon Freeman (Finance Manager for the EFASG consortium), 2 parents.

HT and Chair of Gobs gave a powerpoint presentation to the parents and then Sharon Freeman discussed the financial implications of joining the MAT.

Parent Question: Would the fact that the land is leased be an issue for High Beech joining the MAT?

Answer: *It was hoped that this would not be an issue. However the land owners would need to be contacted and their permission granted for the school to join the MAT.*

The parent commented that a copy of the lease is kept in the school safe.

Parent Question: Would the school keep its individuality if it joined the MAT. What would change and be decided by the MAT rather than the school?

Answer: The HT explained that the day to day running of the school would still be done by her. The curriculum, school policies, uniform, staff etc would stay the same. There would be some policies and decisions that would be decided by the MAT but the scheme of delegation would be drawn up by all the Headteachers of the schools. The HT's had already attended a meeting where they had discussed what they wanted from the MAT and what they wanted to be delegated to them.

Parent Question: Would the school be worse off financially if they joined the MAT. Would the MAT decide how High Beech spent its budget and would the money in the MAT go to bigger schools?

Answer: (Sharon Freeman): Sharon explained that the school would still have its own budget and that the governors of the school and the HT would still decide how this was spent. The MAT would not have a say in this unless the school went in to an OFSTED category and then the MAT would step in to decide for the school.

Staff consultation 30th October 2017

Present: All staff present and Chair of Governors present.

Headteacher and Chair of Governors gave a presentation to the staff that covered the main points relating to the MAT and staffing.

Question: Would my pension be affected if we join the MAT?

Answer: It was explained that the pensions and staff contracts would stay the same. These would be TUPEd over.

Question: What would happen if the CEO became 'power crazy' as has happened in some schools and this would mean we could be swallowed up and lose our identity.

Answer: As the CEO is known to the HT's this would hopefully not happen. The HT's would be able to have a say in the appointment of a new CEO. There is not the leadership layer that some MAT's have since this MAT would have the HT's as the leadership layer.

Question: Would I have to go and work in the other schools in the MAT if I didn't want to?

Answer: No – staff may have the opportunity to move around the schools but that would be with the permission of the staff member and the school.

Question: Would the Catering Manager stay the same when we join the MAT?

Answer: It is not sure whether the school would continue to use the Essex Meals Service or whether they would buy in to another service.

4. Conclusion

The Governing Body has met its responsibilities under the Academies Act 2010 to consult with appropriate stakeholders. As a result of consultation, the Governing Body is satisfied that there is no objection that would make it reconsider the proposal to convert to academy status and join the Epping Forest Schools Partnership Trust.