

# Banwell Primary School

## Academisation Parent and Community Consultation

Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021 6.30pm

via Zoom (Meeting to be recorded)

### In attendance

Staff	Governors	Other Attendees
Claire Pocock Paul Davis	Malcolm Davey Kate Booth-Davey Catherine Warren	Adam Matthews – CEO ELAN Lynn Winters – Head of Business Operations (ELAN) Karen Romano - Head of HR (ELAN) Penny Boardman - School Improvement (ELAN) Ian Kilpatrick – Chair of Trustee Board (ELAN) and Headteacher at Sidcot Kerri Mcardle – Head of Development and Innovations (ELAN) 7 Parents were in attendance

<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome and Introduction by Malcolm Davey, Chair of Governors</b> MD welcomed everyone and introduced the attendees.
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Why is Banwell Primary School considering becoming an academy with the ELAN MAT?</b></p> <p>MD explained that the decision to move to academy status has not been taken lightly, and the primary objective has always been to put children first.</p> <p>It has come about since the government initiative some years back was to have all schools to become academies, which is something that North Somerset Council (NSC) pushed. We didn't rush into it as we wanted to ensure this was done correctly. We were working with several other schools who all believed in the Learning Without Limits ideology, and formed the Stronger Together Partnership. It was within this partnership we were striving to become a MAT on our own and took forward to application stage, although we were told that this wouldn't be approved so the application was never officially made. We continued to work in this group and found that we were working well together despite not being part of a MAT, and felt that this was a good middle ground and made the decision not to convert at that stage.</p> <p>Over time the quality of support received from NSC has greatly reduced. This has left us vulnerable, which prompted us to revisit converting to an academy. We decided to look at joining an existing MAT. We looked into several, but have chosen ELAN as they fitted our school very well. Our values mirror very closely to ELAN and we are also very close geographically. There is a very strong central team which will provide much more support than NSC. We also wanted to ensure we joined a primary-only MAT, which ELAN is, as we felt that suited our needs more.</p> <p>Joining ELAN will allow us to focus on the educational aspects of running a school, being able to rely on ELAN for the business support that we are no longer receiving from NSC.</p> <p>Application to DfE has been made and has been successful which means we move to the next stage; both Banwell Primary and ELAN will do the due diligence to ensure that this is the right decision. Governors are meeting on 6 April to consider the responses received to the staff and parent consultations (which close on 1<sup>st</sup> April) and it is only after considering those responses that Governors will decide whether or not to proceed with our application to join Elan. Once we are absolutely satisfied that this is the right decision, we will move forward. We would then hope to be able to complete conversion by late summer.</p>
<b>3</b>	<b>Why is ELAN the best choice for Banwell Primary?</b>

	<p>Ian Kilpatrick (IK) introduced himself as Chair of the Board of Trustees and headteacher at Sidcot School. IK explained that there is a diverse range of schools within the MAT and that is advantageous because of being able to share resources. We all have the same shared vision, which is to promote a nurturing environment and to form well-rounded young people who will be ready to start their journey onwards.</p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Presentation from Adam Matthews – CEO of ELAN</b></p> <p>AM introduced the members from ELAN who are in attendance. The powerpoint presentation was shared (slides attached)</p> <p>AM ran through the trustees, who make the decisions for the trust, the structure of governance, the structure of the MAT, and the central team's role and the services they provide.</p> <p>AM made it clear that joining ELAN does not mean we will have to change the school's 'personality'. We will remain as we are but with the support of the trust.</p>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>Question and Answer session</b></p> <p>Q: How many governors have seen the presentation from ELAN and is this a unanimous decision?</p> <p>A: All governors have seen the presentation and all were impressed. It is definitely a unanimous decision. What impressed governors most was hearing from other headteachers who have been in a similar position and have made the transition. When we first started discussing becoming an academy we set non-negotiables, and ELAN fits those.</p> <p>Q: How is the money that comes from the government split between the schools in the MAT?</p> <p>A: The local authority are still responsible for distribution of funds and will continue to do so. The money is given to the trust by the government and is then provided to the schools based on the allocation from the local authority. There is no more money than before, but schools benefit from being able to access the central team, and being able to be part of a purchasing group, which means bigger discounts etc.</p> <p>Q: How is the support from the children distributed?</p> <p>A: It is a complex picture. Many additional resources and support are available for all of the children. Each pupil is valued equally. We have developed our own charter to ensure we differentiate curriculum appropriately. Each and every child has their own right to be supported. We ensure we monitor all children.</p> <p>Q: What are members/shareholders?</p> <p>A: The trust is a charitable company. The people who own the trust are the Members. All monies are channelled through to the pupils, Trustees do not receive any of the funds. Members and Trustees are voluntary, they do not get paid. Trustees are not shareholders, there are no actual 'shares'.</p> <p>Q: How are the Members elected?</p> <p>A: They are the original signatories when the trust was set up. Members elect other members. They come to us via an organisation called Academy Ambassadors, or by recommendation.</p> <p>Q: Will there be any impact on the admin staff within the school, will there be job losses? It wouldn't be right for the staff team to be unsettled as this would impact the children's learning.</p> <p>A: All staff will move across with the TUPE scheme, in the same roles with the same contracts. The only change that will be made is that we will change the financial year from April-March to Sept-Aug. There have been no other measures taken, it is purely a different employer, no other changes are proposed.</p> <p>Q: What is the duration after TUPE that employment can be changed?</p> <p>A: There isn't a duration, however this could still happen within the local authority. There is the chance that funding may change in the future which could affect staffing levels, but there is always this chance even when still a maintained school.</p>

MD made all aware that there is currently a separate consultation with staff taking place.

IK expressed that the most important thing is that the staff are happy. The positive is that ELAN is flexible enough that if staffing levels needed to change in one school, there is the possibility of being able to redeploy elsewhere within the MAT.

CP commented that the staff team at Banwell is currently the strongest it has ever been and she would never want to do anything to upset that. She made it clear that she absolutely wouldn't move forward with this if she didn't think it was right for Banwell.

Q: There are currently two schools who are rated as 'Required Improvement' (RI) across the MAT. What are you doing to move them up and what will you do to move us up? We don't want to risk falling down because of having to share resources.

A: There is only one setting in ELAN which is currently RI, one is outstanding, and the rest are good. We haven't had any data for two years due to covid, so we can't accurately compare. However we have a very robust assessment system in place, and we also bring in independent consultants to review where we are. We can confidently say that all schools have improved since joining the trust. We feel very secure that the school that is RI has improved. When you join a trust you have much more access to school improvement support than you do as a stand-alone school. In terms of SEND there is an incredible wealth of skill and experience to call upon. We invest heavily in training and development projects. We have just completed a curriculum that can be used across the 8 schools in the trust. As a trust we are moving forward rapidly. There is no ceiling on where we can go. We also feel that Banwell has lots to offer us. Everything we do is reflective, we feel that we all learn from each other.

Q: What change will our children see on day one, and what change will they see over time?

A: On day one they will see no change. Over time they will see a benefit from the training and experience that staff get. They will have improved opportunities across the board, sports, art etc. We have lots of specialisms, all of which are shared across the MAT. We hope that Banwell will be the same Banwell in 5 years time, but improved because of the access to all of the opportunities needed.

Comment: I am a parent of a child at Banwell, but also work in a school that is part of the ELAN Trust. I want to let everyone know that our staffing, ethos, and uniform have not changed. The biggest change has been the opportunities that the children now have. They have many sports events, hiring out the Tropicana and doing a whole day of science there, dancing at the playhouse. The children also get to meet many other children from different schools. It's being in a school but being part of a wider family.

Comment: I am a teacher who has also been through conversion to an academy, and I have nothing negative to report. Just enhanced opportunities for CPD and a much bigger, better resource base.

Q: There aren't many parents here, can you tell me how many attended this morning's meeting?

A: 4 parents attended this morning and here are 7 here tonight. Unfortunately these meetings are generally not well attended.

Q: Will parents who haven't attended get a chance to hear what has been discussed?

A: There are minutes of the meetings being taken, and we will also release an amended version of the FAQ's to reflect the questions being asked.

Q: How will we know that any concerns raised from consultations will be addressed?

A: Governors will be meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> April to address all of the representations made. That meeting will be formally minuted and then the stakeholders will be informed of the decision made.

Q: Is there a challenge period after the decision is made?

A: No, the governors are trusted by the stakeholders to make the best decisions for the school. If people are not comfortable then they need to complete the consultation form to make governors fully aware of any concerns, and also encourage others to do the same.

	<p>IK stated that this is a partnership so it's really important to ELAN that any school joining is happy to do so.</p> <p>CP &amp; MD thanked all parents for attending and said that if anyone has any other questions to please email or speak to the school.</p>
<b>5</b>	<p><b>Next Steps</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholder Consultation Period runs until 1<sup>st</sup> April.</li> <li>• Governor Meeting – 6<sup>th</sup> April 2021 to discuss outcomes of consultations</li> </ul>

**MD closed the meeting and thanked all for attending**