

Banwell Parents consultation additional FAQ's from Parent consultations March 2021

Q: How many governors have seen the presentation from ELAN and is this a unanimous decision?

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.

Q: How is the money that comes from the government split between the schools in the MAT?

A: Funds for schools within a Multi Academy trust come directly from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). However, the local authority are still responsible for distribution of funds through the local authority's locally-determined funding formula and will continue to do so. Budgets will be allocated to individual schools using the same DFE/Local formula. There is no more money than before, however, after academisation schools no longer contribute money to the local authority and benefit from central team services and whole trust procurement. Which results in improved services and savings.

Q: How is the support from the children distributed?

A: 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 to gauge progress throughout the year. Additional resources are deployed to meet need in line with the code of practice and are continually monitored by school SENDCos and trust specialist teachers. This can be Trust specialist provision or statutory Local Authority provision, depending on need

Q: What are members/shareholders?

Members are similar to a company's shareholders(there are no shares) - they sit above the board of trustees in an academy trust. In simple terms the Members "own" the Academy Trust. They have a number of statutory rights set out in the Academy Trust's Articles of Association (the Articles). The minimum requirement is 3 members. Ideally, trusts will have 5 members as this helps make sure they can take decisions at meetings.

The ELAN Trust board and Members are non- executives and, as such, are not paid or receive any remuneration, with the exception of the Chief Executive Officer who is an employee of the trust.

Q: How are the Members elected?

The members comprise:

- The people who signed the trust's Memorandum of Association when the trust was created
- Additional members appointed by the members by a 'special resolution'
- Employees of the academy trust can't be members.

Members can be appointed when:

- The existing members remove a member that they have appointed, and appoint a replacement (see Article 13 of the model articles)

- The existing members appoint additional members by passing a special resolution (see article 15A)

Members are recruited by recommendation or through the Academy Ambassadors organisation.

Q: Will there be any impact on the admin staff within the school, will there be job losses?

A: Rules for conversion to academy status mean that Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment (TUPE) regulations apply and all staff will transfer on existing terms and conditions to the Trust as the employer.

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 or changes proposed, it is purely a different employer.

Any staffing changes will be driven by the school to meet the needs of the school or match its budget. This is no different to its current situation as a maintained school

Q: What is the duration after TUPE that employment can be changed?

A: There isn't a duration. Any changes to employment conditions, whether to schools in a trust or maintained schools in the Local Authority, would have to go through full consultation. There is the chance that funding may change for all schools in the future which could affect staffing levels, but there is always this chance even when still a maintained school.

Q: If you have a child waiting to join a school that they already have siblings in, will you be guaranteed a place in that school?

A: Being part of a Multi Academy Trust has no bearing on North Somerset School Admissions, parents will need to apply for school places in the same way as before. This activity is carried out by North Somerset, who ensure fair play and that all children are allocated places in line with Local and national regulation.

Q: I appreciate how difficult this whole process must have been, so thank you for everything you're doing for our children. I would like to know how this is being taken by the teachers? Often the news of converting to a MAT is seen negatively by teaching staff, how are they responding to it.

A: Positively, we have had lots of open conversations with staff and because Paul Davis (Deputy Head) has already been through this process twice, he is able to reassure staff and answer any questions. Staff are aware that this is a decision that has been many years in the making, they are comforted that we are being very careful. Staff are very keen that the Beach School is part of ELAN. Most questions/reservations staff have are around the TUPE process (moving from one employer to another).

Q: Is there anything we can do as parents to help and support the process?

A: Being engaged is great, we are really happy that you have joined this meeting. Nothing specific is needed, but we'd like parents feedback, so please complete the consultation

Q: What will happen with regards to the PTA? Will that be solely for our school?

A: Yes, those funds will be for your school only, all our schools have their own PTA and the money they raise goes directly to their school. The trust has no control over these funds.

Q: With Mr Kilpatrick (Head of Sidcot) being a trustee, does that mean children are encouraged to attend Sidcot after finishing primary school?

A: No not at all, it's not a marketing ploy by Sidcot, they support the ethos of ELAN, work well with them, and have done over many years, previously supporting 5 of their schools. Sidcot look at it as community outreach work, and they put in a lot to the trust. (Sidcot School is an independent school)

Q: Schools that have joined mats previously have often been failing schools that have benefitted from joining MATs. What is the benefit of a good school joining?

A: We have no failing schools in our trust, we all benefit from working with each other and standards have improved across the board.

Q: Does being part of a MAT give headteachers a bit more of a free reign on what they teach?

A: Technically we are allowed to teach whatever we want to, but we are still accountable to Ofsted, which means we do have to follow government guidelines on curriculum. What we can do is interpret areas of national curriculum and we can produce curriculum that is better suited to our schools. It enables us to change the content somewhat.