

# Banwell Primary School

## Academisation Parent and Community Consultation

Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021 10.30am

via Zoom (Meeting to be recorded)

### In attendance

Staff	Governors	Other Attendees
Claire Pocock	Malcolm Davey Joan Gilbert	Adam Matthews – CEO ELAN Lynn Winters – Head of Business Operations (ELAN) Karen Romano - Head of HR (ELAN) Penny Boardman - School Improvement (ELAN) 4 Parents were in attendance

The meeting was delayed by 15 minutes due to a technical issue.

<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>	<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: 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?</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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 are a part of ELAN. Most questions/reservations staff have are around the TUPE process (moving from one employer to another).</p> <p>Q: Is there anything we can do as parents to help and support the process?</p> <p>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</p> <p>Q: What will happen with regards to the PTA? Will that be solely for our school?</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Q: With Mr Kilpatrick (Head of Sidcot) being a trustee, does that mean children are encouraged to attend Sidcot after finishing primary school?</p> <p>A: No not at all, it's not a marketing ploy by Sidcot, they just agree with the ethos and ELAN work well with them, and have done previously. Sidcot look at it as community outreach work, and they put in a lot to the trust.</p> <p>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?</p> <p>A: We have no failing schools in our trust, we all benefit from working with each other and standards have improved across the board.</p> <p>Q: Does being part of a MAT give headteachers a bit more of a free reign on what they teach?</p> <p>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.</p> <p>MD noted that CP has been attending the weekly head meetings for the last few months so is already being able to benefit from what the trust is doing. CP is hoping that she will be able to focus more on what is happening in the classroom rather than having to deal with HR matters or buildings etc.</p> <p>MD thanks AM for all the support they have offered to us over the last year as we haven't be supported by NSC as well as we would have liked.</p> <p>MD reminded parents that they can read the FAQ and encouraged all parents to complete the consultation documents.</p> <p>CP thanked all parents for attending and said that if anyone has any other questions to please email or speak to her.</p>

<b>5</b>	<b>Next Steps</b> <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**