



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS - CONVERSION

GENERAL	
Why does this consultation not include the Junior School?	<p>The Junior School is not included within this proposal as it has received a Directive Academy Order from the DfE as a result of the previous Ofsted inspection.</p> <p>As a result, the DfE has exercised its legal powers to compel the Junior School to become an academy and join a MAT.</p>
Why does the Infant and Nursery School need to become an academy?	<p>John Rankin Schools operates as one community with a shared Governing Body and Leadership team. We operate from one site and are a single employer for all our staff. To disaggregate the two schools would be costly, inherently problematic and, we believe, not in the best interests of our community.</p> <p>As a result, the Governing Body strongly believes it is in the best interests of our children if we move forwards together as one school, and that both schools join the same Trust.</p>
Why has this consultation for the Infant and Nursery School been convened so quickly?	<p>The Governing Body has been in discussion with the DfE and LA for a number of months, and we wanted to see which Trust the DfE appointed as the improvement partner for the Junior School.</p> <p>We also wanted to assess the approach that Maiden Erlegh Trust took, and we have been really pleased with their challenging, yet supportive, approach. They have clearly demonstrated their understanding of our schools and the community, and we believe they are the right Trust to support us moving forwards.</p> <p>It was important to us that the community had clarity on the proposed direction of travel before the summer break as it is likely that the sponsoring Trust for the Junior school will be confirmed in July.</p>
ETHOS AND VALUES	
Would the name of the school change?	No.
Would the uniform change?	No.
Would the school's core values and ethos remain unchanged?	<p>Local values and ethos are distinct to each school and their context and we support these, but would expect all schools to espouse our core values of Aiming High, Being Inclusive, and Working Together.</p> <p>If schools wish to retain local expression of values and ethos in addition, then that is fine e.g.: Great Hollands Primary School "GREAT"</p>
What are the Trust's core values and ethos?	<p>Aim High – Be Inclusive – Work Together Inclusive and ambitious for all Mutual respect, equality, and empathy Collaborative High expectations of both staff and children</p>



EDUCATION	
Would there be autonomy about delivery of the curriculum?	<p>We have guiding principles around the design of the curriculum to ensure it is ambitious and inclusive.</p> <p>We don't want schools or individuals to work in isolation as we believe that collaboration and sharing is ethical, developmental and supports the reduction of workload. However, we completely understand that a curriculum is also set in context and subject leaders will have done their own research which underpins their pedagogical choices. Where that is demonstrably effective then we would not change this, but furthermore look to share best practice across the Trust where possible.</p>
What are the educational opportunities that joining a trust would bring?	<p>Increased "experiences" for pupils e.g. activities, facilities, sharing of resources, trips etc.</p> <p>Wider access to subject and other specialists (e.g. to enhance foundation subject development and delivery, to support safeguarding).</p> <p>Membership of key organisations e.g.: The Key, NASEN, subject groups</p> <p>Scaled economies of resources and finances which releases capacity at local level to focus on own schools.</p> <p>Opportunities for staff to share their expertise.</p> <p>Shared roles (which then releases capacity/budget locally) e.g. central roles to lead on PSMSC, reporting etc.</p>
How much autonomy is there with respect to the impact of policies on education	<p>Policies are devised centrally, in collaboration with stakeholders, and schools then determine how they will implement them in their context.</p> <p>Lines of accountability are set out in the Scheme of Delegation and also in job descriptions.</p> <p>We have a number of working groups and networks which ensure that leaders and colleagues feed into the design and review of policies and procedures (e.g. curriculum and standards, SEND, Safeguarding, Reading etc).</p> <p>In terms of impact, this is reviewed as part of the Continuous Improvement Strategy (CIS) and SEF/SIP review process and school leaders work with School Improvement Team for support, validation.</p> <p>Our CIS ensures that across the Trust there is a shared language of evaluation and this "short-hand" supports highly effective and supportive collaboration and exchange.</p>



<p>Are there schemes, assessment packages, learning resources that are an expectation of all schools within the MAT to use?</p>	<p>Our vision is that each hub works together on aligned principles and that allows the assessment and learning resources to be phase/age specific. Again, this then supports the “short-hand” of collaboration and exchange. We would expect all schools within the hub to be part of the process to develop these aligned practices.</p> <p>For example, we have adopted Read Write Inc as our phonics system at primary as we can evidence impact.</p>
<p>How is the curriculum delivery within each school of the MAT monitored?</p>	<p>We have a Continuous Improvement Strategy which frames this work and provides the common language.</p> <p>This has been developed over a number of years with colleagues from across the Trust. The expression of this on the ground may look slightly different as it is adapted to context, but the principles are the same.</p> <p>Along with our new approach to professional development, the premise is that it is evaluative and developmental and not judgemental.</p>
<p>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT / COLLABORATION</p>	
<p>What are the learning opportunities that joining a trust would bring?</p>	<p>Annual Trust Conference, with a menu of between 40 and 60 different sessions delivered by both internal colleagues and external experts.</p> <p>Access to the full range of courses funded by the Apprenticeship Levy, applicable for all teaching and non-teaching staff.</p> <p>The Trust’s Education Leadership Group can provide expert “consultancy” in their fields e.g. Inclusion, Safeguarding, Curriculum Design, Assessment.</p> <p>The Maiden Erlegh Institute is continually developing its range of professional development to ensure that all staff are able to access high-quality CPD that is relevant to them.</p> <p>Various networks that promote collaboration and sharing across similar roles/functions</p>
<p>How are staff developed within the MAT?</p>	<p>There are different levels of CPD</p> <p>Mandatory e.g. safeguarding, H&S and other role-specific</p> <p>Cross-Trust thematic e.g. reading, PSMSC, coaching</p> <p>School thematic – linked to SIP or team planning</p> <p>Individual thematic – linked to their identified development goals</p> <p>We provide access through:</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trust and school CPD• School and team meetings• Online activities (through Handsam or our CPD area on the IntraMet)• Targeted reading• Action-Research activities• Coaching/Mentoring (depending on aims)• Visits to other departments/phases/schools (in the Trust or outside)• Opportunities to shadow contribute to school improvement work.• CPD through partnership eg: through Challenge Partners. <p>Some CPD is run through the Trust School Improvement Team and/or Maiden Erlegh Institute, some (most) run through schools and some self-directed.</p> <p>As a Levy payer, all staff can access development opportunities through an apprenticeship and this is widely supported for both teaching and support staff.</p> <p>The Trust also has an Intranet which hosts a wealth of information to support professional development.</p>
Are there opportunities for staff to gain promotion within the MAT?	Absolutely yes. The Trust believes strongly in developing and progressing their own staff and as a growing Trust with a range of settings there are a broader range of opportunities for professional growth. All posts are advertised internally. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are many opportunities “pre-promotion” also eg:• Opportunities for staff to share their expertise (cross-Trust CPD, networks, working groups, partnership, action research).• Shared roles (which then releases capacity/budget locally) eg: central roles to lead on PSMSC, reporting etc.• Job-shares/exchanges with different settings (eg: primary and AP)• Mentoring and coaching• Leadership programmes (internal and NPQs)
Does the MAT have joint INSET training/MAT conference each year?	The Trust has established an Annual Conference and this is very well received by all staff.
Would the school work both with other local schools and with schools within the trust?	The Trust absolutely supports both intra-Trust and wider system collaboration. All of our schools contribute to and support local networks e.g. Headteacher Roundtables, Schools Forum, Federations etc.



<p>How much autonomy does each school within the MAT have on their staff's training?</p>	<p>The Trust sets 2 days CPD (1 day at start of year and one Trust Conference). Remainder at school discretion. INSET days are aligned across the organisation to facilitate wider collaboration.</p>
<p>FINANCE</p>	
<p>Would there be savings from central procurement?</p>	<p>Possibly but not always. We have central frameworks for expenditure on energy, ICT procurement, licencing and we demonstrably benefit from economies of scale in other areas such as refuse collection, grounds maintenance, administrative supplies, catering supplies etc.</p> <p>If schools can demonstrate best value by procuring outside of a centrally negotiated framework, then that would generally be supported.</p>
<p>If school funding is pooled within a trust, what are the risks of having to pick up the pieces if one of the schools was not well managed and went down?</p>	<p>The Trust has strong and robust financial procedures and monitoring processes that allow us to quickly identify potential financial issues.</p> <p>The Trust also has healthy reserves that enable us to withstand headwinds, for example, the impact of falling rolls.</p> <p>The Trust takes the view that there is no benefit in one school flourishing whilst another flounders and pooling allows for the strategic application of resources, underpinned by an open and transparent funding policy.</p>
<p>Funding to the school: SEN, Pupil Premium Grant, Capital spend, percentage of the school budget de-delegated to the MAT, licensing, maternity/supply cover? What happens if a school has a surplus?</p>	<p>Deprivation funding is fully delegated in line with the GAG allocation as these are context specific.</p> <p>LA SEN, EYFS, Sports Premiums etc are fully allocated to the school.</p> <p>PPG – The Trust retains a small amount of the total PPG pot to cover PPG strategy and impact oversight, with the rest allocated out based on PPG statements. LAC PP fully delegated to school.</p> <p>Any surpluses (and deficits) arising are absorbed by the pool, either by offsetting with surpluses (or deficits) arising elsewhere, or by accessing reserves.</p> <p>Schools are expected to set and achieve a balanced budget each year, supported by the pooling of funds across the Trust.</p> <p>Whilst the Trust is a single legal entity and therefore sets and monitors the budget holistically, budgets are set and monitored at a school level.</p> <p>Each school is delegated an annual revenue and devolved capital budget from the pool. Schools set an expenditure budget that is reviewed and approved. Any</p>



	<p>net deficits (or surpluses) arising either support one-off improvement projects or contribute to overall reserves.</p>
<p>Would the MAT be assessed on the basis of a combined trust, in which case struggling schools could inherently divert funds?</p>	<p>Ofsted currently inspects schools separately. There is a MAT Evaluation Schedule but this is under review and does not reflect on the individual schools (more the other way round to incentivise MATs to support schools effectively). MAT inspections are on the horizon.</p> <p>Ofsted's mantra is "the Trust is the school; the school is the Trust" and there should be synergy in ways of working BUT provision should be contextually ambitious for all learners.</p> <p>At MET we are very clear that we share responsibility for all the children and staff in all our schools, and one should not be advantaged or disadvantaged for the sake of another. Our moral purpose is to provide the best education and experience for every child that attends one of our schools.</p>
<p>Would we maintain control of assets such as the playground and buildings?</p>	<p>Trust Estates Manager would commission a condition survey that would inform the Trust's Estates Strategy.</p> <p>The school is delegated devolved formula capital and have discretion over how it is spent.</p> <p>Other capital projects are then determined with reference to the Estates Strategy, informed by the condition survey.</p> <p>The school can also bid annually for capital funding for one-off or maintenance projects where there is demonstrable need for additional capital expenditure to support teaching and learning, or to improve the learning environment.</p>
<p>Would the Trust decide what services you could work with or buy in e.g. counselling?</p>	<p>No, but advice and guidance available from the School Improvement Team who can help broker external support or advise of internal capacity/expertise.</p> <p>The Trust currently employs a counsellor, two speech and language therapists and a careers adviser and will expand in-house provision of other specialists and therapists.</p>
<p>Would IT be shared across sites?</p>	<p>Maiden Erlegh Trust has outsourced its ICT Support to TurnITOn under a Managed Service contract and it is anticipated that any existing IT support staff would TUPE across to TurnITOn.</p> <p>ICT is a centralised service and is therefore funded by the pool. This covers core infrastructure (broadband, servers, WIFI and provision for end user devices for staff and students). Schools are able to source additional IT hardware and software locally from their own devolved capital or revenue funds.</p>



	<p>The Trust has consolidated MIS (Bromcom), HR (Every), Finance (PS Financials) and Budgeting (HCSS) systems and all schools within the Trust are expected to migrate to these systems.</p>
STAFFING	
<p>Would staff work within one school, or would they be shared across the trust?</p>	<p>Generally, staff work in a single school but occasionally opportunities arise to share expertise across more than one setting, in line with the proposed hub model.</p> <p>Cross-site working is not imposed but often results to support professional development, or as a result of new posts.</p>
<p>Would there be a staff re-structure imposed/expected?</p>	<p>Highly unlikely unless there were structural reasons to implement e.g. drastically falling NOR, significant deficits etc</p> <p>As a growing Trust there are opportunities for redeployment and any redundancy action is an absolute last resort.</p>
<p>Does the MAT have a preferred staffing structure?</p>	<p>No. Schools within the Trust have the latitude to determine the most appropriate staffing arrangements for their setting.</p> <p>Staffing structures are reviewed against various metrics to ensure they a) can deliver the business of the school and b) are financially sustainable.</p>
<p>Does the school have a prominent role in recruiting staff for the school?</p>	<p>The school will lead on recruitment for their own setting, accessing support from the HR team to advertise, create job descriptions etc</p> <p>The Trust would only directly lead the recruitment to senior leadership posts, in line with the Scheme of Delegation.</p>
<p>How is Performance Management arranged for staff?</p>	<p>We have moved away from the traditional approach of appraisal towards a more development focussed scheme.</p> <p>The Trust Pay Policy removes the historic link between performance and pay progression.</p>
<p>Are there opportunities for secondments for staff across the MAT</p>	<p>Yes. A key benefit of the breadth of our provision is that we can easily support secondments across any of our schools, so staff can develop their expertise across phase and type of school should they wish.</p>
<p>Are staff 'contracted' to the school, or to MAT, could they be required/expected to work at another school of the MAT if asked?</p>	<p>All staff will be employed by Maiden Erlegh Trust upon transfer.</p> <p>Staff terms and conditions are protected under TUPE legislation, so no member of staff will be disadvantaged as a result of the transfer.</p>
THE MAT	



<p>What are the benefits of joining the trust? What does the trust see as their unique selling point?</p>	<p>Ambitious Inclusion – a quality first approach to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Curriculum (design and delivery)• Behaviour Management• CPD <p>We ensure all pupils/students achieve highly, academically and in terms of personal development, but are praised for our approaches to inclusion and support.</p> <p>Also, the breadth of our provision means we are a truly inclusive organisation and we live by our values and ethos.</p>
<p>What level of influence would the school have in the trust? Are schools at the forefront within the trust and actively involved in their decision making.</p>	<p>There is NO hierarchy of “influence” but differentiation of support (in inverse proportion to need).</p> <p>Headteachers are read in to key organisational proposals and have opportunities to contribute to the strategic direction of the Trust.</p>
<p>What are the Trusts long term plans/ambitions?</p>	<p>To continue putting children and young people front and centre of all we do, and to provide a stimulating and fulfilling career for our staff.</p> <p>To ensure that the Trust is considered an employer of choice in the local area, and that our schools are viewed by the community as the first choice for their children.</p> <p>To achieve a scale that safeguards the Trust and its schools from changes in the funding and political climate.</p>