

Moorside High School
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www.moorsidehigh.net
Headteacher Mr S N Clarke

26 June 2020

Dear Colleagues

Consultation: Proposal to convert to an academy and join the Potteries Educational Trust

Our Governing Body's priority remains to enable the school to continue to provide an excellent education for our children, whilst continuing to be at the heart of our community. Our Governing Body has decided to consult with parents, carers, staff and other stakeholders, on whether our school should become an academy and join the Potteries Educational Trust.

Our Governing Body will only pursue this proposal if it is in the best interests of Moorside High School and its students taking into account the legal and practical ramifications. We are therefore commencing formal consultation today, Friday 26 June 2020, for a period of three school term weeks. Consultation will therefore end at 3pm on Thursday 16 July 2020.

What is an Academy?

Academies are state schools, funded directly from central government, no longer under the control of the Local Authority. Academy status gives schools more freedom to be innovative and creative with the curriculum, timetabling, staffing and governance. All academies continue to be inspected by Ofsted and comply with the same rules as other schools on special educational needs, exclusions and admissions.

There are now over 9,000 academies in the country, including many schools in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent local authority areas.

An academy is part of a charitable trust run by a board of Directors. Academies are rightly expected to work with and support other schools, including lower-performing schools. Should you wish to know more about the Government's policy, the Department for Education has its own academies bookmark on <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/convert-to-an-academy-information-for-schools>

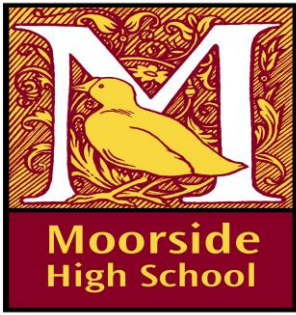
What is a Multi Academy Trust (MAT)?

A MAT is formed when two or more academies legally come together in partnership. Each school keeps its own name and it is possible for other academies to join the Trust in the future.

The partnership ensures that the schools can share skills and best practice and make optimum use of resources ensuring best value for money for each school. In many ways the children will not notice any immediate difference, they will be in the same uniform, in the same classrooms with the same teaching staff. However, in time the children will perhaps notice changes and improvements in the way that they learn for example and have greater links with each school or college within the Trust. There will be continuous professional developmental opportunities for staff.

Engage and Achieve





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How can we find out more about the Potteries Educational Trust?

The Potteries Educational Trust was formed in March 2017. The City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College converted to a 16-19 Academy in September 2017 and joined the Potteries Educational Trust. Biddulph High School, having been an associate member of the Trust joined as a full member on 1 September 2019.

The Potteries Educational Trust is founded on clear principles. The Trust is a caring community, delivering excellence and inspiring futures. As a Learning Community, the Trust shares common values and principles which are embraced at every academy within the Trust. The focus is to provide the very best education, for every child and young person within the Trust, offering a high quality, broad, academic education for the children and young people of Moorlands, Stoke-on-Trent, North Staffordshire and beyond.

Working with like-minded partners the Potteries Educational Trust centres on the development of the very best practice in teaching, learning and assessment. The Trust provide teaching and learning in a nurturing, supportive environment with a broad range of opportunities and extra-curricular activities available for all within the Trust. As a Learning Community, the Trust shares common values and principles which are embraced at every academy within the Trust. These values form the foundations of everything that the Trust does and achieves as a Multi-Academy Trust with one outcome in mind, to create a caring community that delivers excellence and inspires futures.

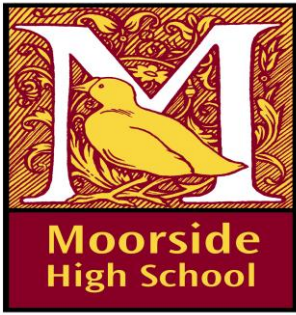
Another central principle to how the Potteries Educational Trust operates is how all school maintain their individuality, uniqueness and a great deal of autonomy, so that they are able to be creative and flourish. The Trust values what makes schools different, however schools are bound together by their desire to ensure every school is supported.

Visit the website www.potteries.ac.uk

What are the main benefits for schools within the Potteries Educational Trust?

- Provide new opportunities for staff and students including joint CPD, mentoring, joint curriculum projects
- Allow us to establish a learning community of equals, sharing staff, curriculum and resources for teaching and learning
- Even closer partnership work to further improve practice linked to action research for what works best in Teaching and Learning
- Secure better value for money in procuring goods & services
- Provide opportunities for all to share back-office
- Creates opportunities to improve the recruitment, development and retention of talented staff





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What additional responsibilities will Academy status bring?

- Additional financial and legal responsibilities – however as the Potteries Educational Trust is already established arrangements are already fully in place to deal with these responsibilities.
- Currently the Governing Body employs our staff – going forward the Potteries Educational Trust would be the employer rather than the Governing Body.
- The Academy Trust would be responsible for admissions rather than the Governing Body (although the Local Authority would still co-ordinate and ensure the Trust adopts clear and fair admission arrangements in line with the admissions law and the School Admissions Code).
- The Potteries Educational Trust would enter into a 125-year lease for the land, usually owned by the Local Authority. We already have responsibility for the cost of maintaining the land and buildings.

Would Moorside High School change if it achieves academy status?

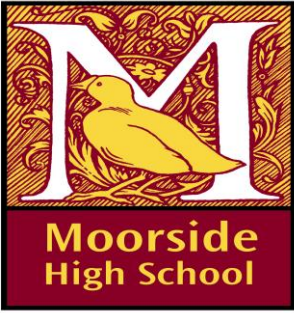
The school would not change. These among many things will remain the same:

- We will remain Moorside High School and keep our identity and autonomy
- The breadth and diversity of our curriculum
- High quality education, whilst striving to be Ofsted 'Outstanding'
- Maintain and expand additional opportunities available for students.
- An atmosphere of hard-working enjoyment of learning.
- The very best in pastoral support, valuing each as an individual
- High quality advice & guidance in enabling students to progress
- Inclusive school with an open access policy
- Partnership with schools, colleges and universities across the region

In the longer term, we believe academy status would benefit young people, promoting better outcomes, improved transition between the different phases of education and help ensure that young people are even better prepared for progression to university, apprenticeships and employment.

It will also offer new opportunities for improved practice across the education sector in Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire, both within and beyond the multi-academy trust, and ensure better value for money in purchasing goods, services and back office functions, enabling greater investment in delivery to our students.





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How do I learn more, and how do I respond to the consultation?

Our Governing Body would very much like to hear your opinion. Due to the current situation we are unable to hold face to face information sessions for parents however we encourage you to email consultation@moorside.staffs.sch.uk with any questions you might have and we will endeavour to answer them all.

You will find further information about the consultation on the school website www.moorside.staffs.sch.uk

If you wish to respond to the consultation, please email consultation@moorside.staffs.sch.uk with your feedback, and include your name and contact details by the closing date of Thursday 16 July 2020.

Yours sincerely

Mr S Clarke
Headteacher

Mr D Goldstraw
Chair of Governors

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