

Moorside High School
Cellarhead Road
Werrington
Staffordshire
ST9 0HP
Tel: 01782 551200
Fax: 01782 559023
www.moorsidehigh.net
Headteacher Mr S N Clarke

Consultation on Academy Status Proposals by Moorside High School Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Engage and Achieve

Q. 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.

Q. What is a multi-academy trust (MAT)?

A multi-academy trust (MAT) is a group of academies which are run through a board of Trustees who are overseen by the Members. All partners within the Trust share a common ethos and vision. For the Potteries Educational Trust, these are the Values and Principles referred to in the consultation exercise and available on the Trust website www.potteries.ac.uk

Q. What are the timescales involved? How long will it take to convert to an academy?

We are aiming for conversion to academy status and joining the Potteries Educational Trust from 1 April 2021. Throughout the process we are required to consult with students, staff and stakeholders. Before we can fully complete the consultation of our proposal, our application for conversion to academy status had to be approved by the Regional School's Commissioner's local head teacher board which meet on a monthly basis.

Q. Would staff sharing across the Trust be voluntary?

It is the Trust's intention that staff will not be *required* to work across sites. It is our intention that this would be voluntary, and only done in consultation with the member of staff – although clearly we reserve the right to manage the needs of students and staff in the light of circumstances at the time.

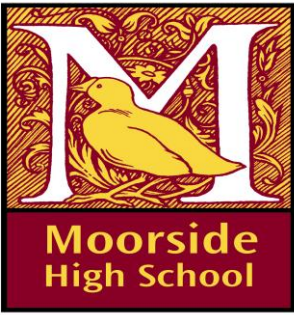
Q. In achieving academy status and consequently joining the Potteries Educational Trust, what funding will the Trust take from the school's budget?

Members would contribute up to 5% of their budget to the Trust. This is common of other MATs, and the expected minimum amount set by the Regional Schools Commissioner. The majority of the contributions by the members of the Trust will be returned in the form of provided services to academies within the Trust, and will be spent on developing teaching, learning assessment and the quality of the student experience.

Q. Does the school have any covenants and loans to transfer to the new MAT?

The school has no debt. The school and the Trust are supported by Legal Advisors who will ensure that all assets, property and liabilities are transferred to the Potteries Educational





Moorside High School
Cellarhead Road
Werrington
Staffordshire
ST9 0HP
Tel: 01782 551200
Fax: 01782 559023
www.moorsidehigh.net
Headteacher Mr S N Clarke

Engage and Achieve

Q. Is there a danger that schools may wish to join the Trust for the wrong reasons or to escape financial pressures?

The Trust would carry out due diligence on all establishments joining the MAT. This would highlight all aspects of finance, staffing, estates, and assets and liabilities to ensure suitability of prospective partners. All MAT partners are expected to uphold the values that we share as a school. The Trust would not partner with an institution that did not share the same principles and values and approach to education. All Members, Trustees and Local Governing Bodies agree to uphold the Principles and Values of the Trust.

Q. Would Trustees be personally responsible if any financial problems were to occur with the Trust?

The trustees would have a degree a responsibility for the financial health of the Trust, as do the Local Governing Bodies, Principals of the establishments, and the CEO of the Trust.

Q. Would any school joining the MAT retain their existing Governance arrangements?

All establishments within the Trust would have their own Local Governing Body. A member of the Trust Board may sit on a school's Local Governing Body to ensure there is effective communication throughout the Governance structure.

Q. What are the key risks in the school achieving academy status and joining the Potteries Educational Trust?

Any change in transfer of assets and liabilities carries a risk, however this is mitigated by employing legal experts to carry out due diligence. Perceived loss of autonomy is a risk but this would not be the case. Decisions are delegated to the lowest legal level possible. The school will retain a Local Governing Body. We will still function in every way as a school retaining our name as 'Moorside High School'.

Q. Who is responsible for the financial health of the establishments in the Trust?

The Trust would be liable overall for the financial position of all the partners within it. Each school would have a delegated budget which will be scrutinised by a trust-wide Audit Committee and a Finance and Resources Committee.

Q. Can academies be forced to move from their existing MAT and join another MAT?

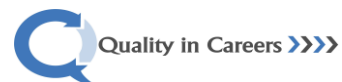
If the quality of teaching and learning, or financial health diminishes, establishments can be directed to move from their current MAT sponsor to a new MAT.

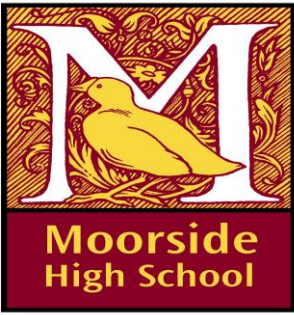
Q. Can a Trust be forced to take on a school if they are underperforming?

Trusts can decline a partnership proposed by the RSC, but not continuously.

Q. Will college and partner schools be inspected as separate entities?

Yes. There is not currently a MAT Ofsted Inspection Framework, therefore establishments will be inspected by Ofsted as providers in their own right. The DFE will visit MATs to check the quality of the education being delivered.





Moorside High School
Cellarhead Road
Werrington
Staffordshire
ST9 0HP
Tel: 01782 551200
Fax: 01782 559023
www.moorsidehigh.net
Headteacher Mr S N Clarke

Engage and Achieve

Q. How would it work logistically if the Trust were to recruit a regional, rather than local, partner who was located 40 miles away for example?

In these instances, the Trust would need to be realistic in the nature of shared services. In these cases, shared delivery of teaching and learning would be unmanageable, however shared back office functions such as IT, HR and Resources, and shared staff development, would be feasible. The benefits that membership of the SFCa carries, would also be extended to MAT partners bringing considerable benefits in sharing good practice and staff training.

Q. There is a lot of inter-MAT partnership work taking place in the sector, where establishments can work closely with establishments in other MATs. In this case, what would be the benefit of an establishment joining the MAT?

The benefits lie in the positives that a deeper partnership can bring. Whilst MATs carry out inter-MAT work, the partnerships and long term shared strategic development within a MAT are greater. For the Potteries Educational Trust, the benefits of the opportunity of an education from 4 – 19 and beyond is attractive. Moorside High School is the largest feeder school for the City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College. There are links to programmes in the MAT that would not be available to those outside the MAT, for example higher achievers programme and links with the delivery of franchised Foundation Year degree programmes (in association with primarily Staffordshire University).

Q. My child has special education needs. How can I be confident that they will be given the same level of support, attention and care?

The school will continue to provide the high level of support it currently provides to all students, including those students who have special educational needs. The Trust Learning Community will further enhance pastoral support between partners and curriculum staff will continue to tailor the delivery of all teaching, learning and assessment to each students' individual needs.

Q. How will this affect the curriculum?

There will be no change to the school curriculum as a result of its proposed achievement of academy status. We will continue to provide a broad and holistic curriculum that meets the needs of the students and the needs of the local economy.

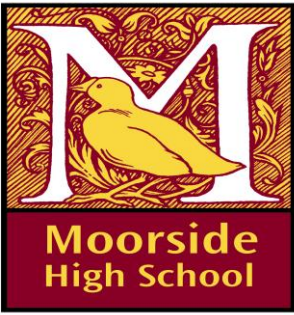
Q. Does the school have to change its name?

No. The institution will still be called the 'Moorside High School'.

Q. Will the school timetable change?

No. There are no requirements for the school timetable to change as a result of conversion to academy status.





Moorside High School
Cellarhead Road
Werrington
Staffordshire
ST9 0HP
Tel: 01782 551200
Fax: 01782 559023
www.moorsidehigh.net
Headteacher Mr S N Clarke

Engage and Achieve

Q. In summary, what will be the key difference if the school were to achieve academy status?

Students, Parents and Staff would see very little immediate difference if the school were to achieve academy status. The main difference in the school becoming an academy and joining the Potteries Educational Trust, is that it will be amongst a core group of organisations working intensely together to share resources, expertise and practice as educators all with the same goal of reaching Ofsted Outstanding.

Q. My son / daughter went to a secondary school which was part of a Multi-Academy Trust. Because staff were required to work across the different partner sites, they were sometimes late to lessons. Will this happen here if the school is to become an academy and join the Potteries Educational Trust?

On becoming an academy and joining the PET, we would ensure that the student experience is not compromised by staff travelling across sites.

Q. Is the proposed Governance structure of the Potteries Educational Trust simply adding another layer of bureaucracy?

Under the MAT Governance structure the Local Governing Bodies of the establishments in the Trust will have the responsibility to focus especially on the priorities of teaching, learning and assessment, student support and outcomes. What this means is that there is a greater degree of freedom for governors and senior staff to focus on the issues in each institution that really matter – the best education of every child and young person and the safety and wellbeing of them all.

Q. Will we have to change uniform if the school becomes an academy?

No. There are no proposals to make changes to uniform requirements.

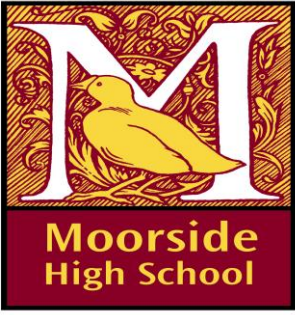
Q. Will my teachers stay the same?

Yes. All staff who are currently employed at the school will be transferred to the Trust. As our partnership work expands, students may well have opportunities to work with other teachers from across the Trust but this is designed to make a positive contribution to your learning experience.

Q. Will the academy status proposals allow new subjects to be offered at the school?

The school already offers a broad and holistic curriculum allowing students to study a wide range of subjects and options. On achieving academy status, the school may be in position in conjunction with Trust partners, to further expand the curriculum offer.





Moorside High School
Cellarhead Road
Werrington
Staffordshire
ST9 0HP
Tel: 01782 551200
Fax: 01782 559023
www.moorsidehigh.net
Headteacher Mr S N Clarke

Q. Will any of the current resources or opportunities be reduced or withdrawn as a result of the school achieving academy status?

No. The objective of the conversion to academy status is to even further develop resources and teaching and learning, to ensure we offer an outstanding level of education in the context of a difficult financial climate. As a school we must take opportunities to develop income streams and preserve the education we provide.

Engage and Achieve

