



Consultation Document

Regarding the Academisation of
Beaford Community Primary and Nursery School
within
TEAM Multi-Academy Trust

March 2022



Context

TEAM Multi-Academy Trust (TEAM) consists of five local schools – High Bickington, Umberleigh, Brayford, Witheridge and Pilton Bluecoat Academies. Pilton Bluecoat Academy Trust was first established in 2012 and converted to TEAM Multi Academy Trust in April 2015 following a successful management partnership between Pilton Bluecoat, Umberleigh and Brayford. In June 2017 Witheridge and High Bickington joined TEAM and since that time the schools within the group have thrived and the combination of rural and urban settings have been beneficial for both pupils and staff. All five schools are currently rated by OfSTED as being Good.

During Autumn 2021, discussions took place between the Trustees of TEAM and the Governors of Beaford School regarding the creation of a formal Management Partnership between the two organisations. Following subsequent discussions, that included representatives from the Local Authority and Diocese of Exeter, the route was clear to establish the partnership and begin our work together in January 2022.

During the first half term of the partnership a great deal has been achieved and all schools have benefitted from being part of a larger organisation, particularly in the context of professional development and curriculum innovation. Staff have shared ideas working closely in curriculum teams sharing ideas, supporting each other's planning and using their expertise to explore how we teach our children. A TEAM MAT Inset day also provided another opportunity for teachers and senior leaders to get to know each other and work closely together. The children have also engaged in a range of curriculum based activities the highlight being the online question and answer session with Lourdes Central School in India.

So, what is an academy?

The Department for Education states that:

An Academy is essentially an independent state school. It is funded directly by central government, is accountable to them and independent of the local authority. It has increased freedom to determine its own curriculum and terms and conditions for staff. Academies are still subject to the same inspection arrangements of any state school.

To expand on that, the main features of an academy are:

Funding

Academies receive the same level of per-pupil funding as they would receive from the local authority as a maintained school, plus additions to cover the services that are no longer provided to them by the local authority. However, academies have greater freedom over how they use their budgets to best benefit their pupils and they receive their funding directly from the Department for Education rather than from local authorities.

Governance

The principles of governance are the same in academies as in maintained schools, but the governing body or Trustees have greater autonomy. Each individual school also has a local governing body that helps to maintain its local distinctiveness and place in its community.

Admissions, special educational needs and exclusions

Academies are required to follow the law and guidance on admissions, special educational needs and exclusions as if they were maintained schools.

Collaboration

Each individual school must ensure that they are at the heart of its community, collaborating and sharing facilities and expertise with other schools across the Trust.

Why should Beaford Community Primary and Nursery School become an academy?

The Governing Body can see benefits in increased freedom and financial autonomy. It will allow the school total control over the budget allocated by government for our pupils.

The Governors feel very strongly that national and local terms and conditions of employment and union rights need to be fully preserved if they were to convert to academy status. This is morally right and realistic if the school is to continue to recruit high quality staff. In addition, they are excited about the possibility of having the freedom to develop strong educational partnerships with the other schools in the Trust and are confident that the structure of TEAM will benefit Beaford in aspects such as school administration, curriculum, teaching and learning. Alongside, the Governors feel that their community will enhance TEAM's current work and they will be able to contribute to the overall development of the Trust.

Finally, the Governors are aware that the Department of Education has an agenda to either encourage or direct schools to become academies. The opportunity to make this decision on our own terms, and in partnership with TEAM, an organisation we trust, is an attractive one.

The purpose of this consultation is to deepen our understanding of the issues around academy conversion and get as many perspectives from stakeholders as possible.

What is a Multi Academy Trust?

A Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) is where distinct schools become academies in their own right, retain their separate identity, and yet legally join together through a joint governing body of Trustees. Academies are Charitable Trusts in law and an Academy Trust would be set up to hold ownership of the site and become the employer of school staff. If the school was to become part of TEAM, it would retain its own distinct name and its own budget but gain flexibility regarding resources, facilities, learning opportunities, staff training and community activities.

A Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) therefore is not a merger. It is advantageous for the schools to maintain important aspects of its organisation. Retaining a distinctive identity offers reassurance to parents, carers and pupils. However, by working in partnership, the opportunity to use resources more efficiently and effectively for the benefit of students is tremendous, as is the opportunity to maximise expertise and best practice for the benefit of all schools.

Why a Multi-Academy Trust?

By bringing our school within TEAM there is potential for us to benefit in several ways.

Pupils will benefit through:

- Having more opportunities for the schools to come together for curriculum events and special occasions.
- Having increased opportunities for learning across the Trust and developing an understanding of their contrasting locations and distinctiveness.
- The schools providing an innovative education and being part of a wider and more inclusive community that can offer a greater range of opportunity.
- Having consistent shared policies related to school improvement strategies like quality of teaching, behaviour and safety, achievement and target setting and leadership and management.
- Sharing a greater number of resources such as technology facilities, forest school provision and aspects of the local environment.
- Having access to a wider set of staff expertise and a wider range of teaching and learning styles.
- Having more chances to develop friendships with each other and provide mutual support.

Parents and carers will benefit from:

- Having a shared ethos across the Trust schools which will enable mutual policies and practice.
- Having coordinated and joined up leadership across the schools, leading to improved communication, and clearer expectations for all pupils across the schools.
- Knowing that resources and facilities will be shared across the schools, which will give richer provision for their children.
- Knowing that their children will be in schools that are striving to be outstanding and that jointly offer excellent education and provision.
- Knowing that their children will have a greater range of teaching expertise from the schools to enhance learning.

Staff will benefit through:

- Being in ambitious schools that are jointly at the cutting edge of inclusive education, creativity and provision.
- Having increased chances to work with other colleagues. This means enhanced opportunities for teaching and professional development.
- Having a greater understanding of the different but complementary approaches needed for individual pupils.
- Sharing specialist knowledge and experience e.g. sharing musical, dance and drama projects and sports.
- Being part of a highly motivated and experienced workforce, which fully believes in providing inclusive education that will bring considerable benefits to all pupils.

What are the key arguments for becoming an Academy?

- Increased financial freedom based on a centrally provided budget. In the short to medium term, the increased resource that would come to the school directly as an academy grant and the reimbursement of financial resources currently ring fenced by the Local Authority. This will allow us greater control of our resources and will have implications for being able to sustain the provision we enjoy at present.
- The ability to have greater flexibility in our curriculum, that will enable us to respond to our locality and opportunities that are presented to us such as external grants and broader partnerships.
- Working in TEAM means our staff, senior leaders, Head of School and governors will receive more support provided by the MAT Central Team. The trust can provide additional financial, Human Resources, premises, SEN, admissions and school improvement support.
- The Academy movement is here to stay. Many schools have already converted and the expectation is that this will expand in the years ahead.
- The commitment that academies have to make to work in partnership with other schools.

What will the school be called?

- The intention is that the school will keep its own name and logo so that the individuality of the school is retained.

What will be the main responsibilities of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for TEAM?

- The CEO will have responsibility for all schools within TEAM. However, the leadership role will be shared with a Head of School in each establishment. The overall leadership will focus on ensuring that the schools grow together, that they share the same values and vision, they focus on teaching and learning, maximise resources for the benefits of students and co- ordinate effective professional development for all the staff. The key role of the CEO is quality assurance, support and challenge. The CEO will be accountable to the Trustees for the effectiveness of all schools. Heads of school are accountable to the CEO and their local governing body.

The Consultation Process

The Governors of Beaford have recently been granted consent from the Department for Education for their application to become an academy to be considered by the Regional Schools Commissioner. The completion of this is conditional that the school form a Multi-Academy Trust with TEAM and their application is agreed by a range of organisations and groups. Before entering the formal conversion process consultation needs to take place with the following groups:

- Full approval from TEAM trustees
- Full approval from the governors of Beaford school for the principal of

conversion to be taken to consideration.

- Agreement from Devon LA that they are supportive of the formation of a MAT between the six schools, subject to the outcome of appropriate consultation.
- Approval from Regional Headteachers' Board
- Support from the staff and parents at the school.

Identification of groups and method of consultation and participation across the school.

Stakeholders	Newsletters	Email/Letters	Local Newsletters	Websites	Open Meetings
Parents	*	*		*	*
Staff		*			*
Local Community		*	*	*	*
Other Learning Community Schools		*		*	
Local Authority		*			
Regional Schools Board		*			*

The consultation process will be completed on the 6th April 2022. If there is approval the aim will be to complete the conversion of Beaford school to an academy as part of TEAM MAT on 1st June 2022

The Layers of Governance

Level 1 – The MAT Members

The members are similar to the shareholders of a company, in that they meet annually and are provided with an academic and financial overview of the trust. The members will be made up of the following representatives:

Diocesan Representative (EDEN)
Chair of Trustees
Church Parish Representative
Representation from Lee Abbey
Representative from Mole Valley Farmers

Level 2 – The MAT Trustees

The Trustees will manage the MAT on behalf of the Members. The membership will consist of the CEO, the local parish incumbent and 11 additional trustees, the majority of whom will be Foundation appointed through Exeter Diocese.

The Trustees will secure for the school:

- the quality of education and delivery of other agreed charitable outcomes;
- the appropriate educational provision and challenge for all children to be achieved through their monitoring role;
- the secure management of the Academy Trust's finances and property, ensuring its solvency and efficient running;
- the employment of staff;
- the compliance with both charity and company law;
- the management and adherence to the obligations in the Funding Agreement.

Level 3 – The Local Governing Bodies

Local governing bodies support each individual school. Delegated powers and the composition of the local governing bodies have been determined by Trustees in their document of delegation. Boards will be made up of parents, teachers, and people with a local interest in the school

Frequently Asked Questions

What will be the role of the School Leaders at each school?

Within a multi academy trust each school retains its distinctiveness and will have its own leader who will be responsible for the day to day management of their school as agreed with and delegated to them by the CEO. This recognises that each school is unique, but they also share a common purpose.

Who will be teaching my child? Will the same teachers and teaching assistants remain in each school?

The existing teachers, teaching assistants and support staff will carry on working in their current school and there will be no compulsion to change. There may well be opportunities for colleagues from our schools to broaden their role by working in another school. However, there would be no pressure to do so. We do not want our children to feel that their school has changed (apart from continuing to get even better!)

How will converting to an academy and joining a Trust impact on transition to secondary school?

There will be no change in this area. As now, parents will be able to select the secondary school of their choice for their child and the partnership will provide the appropriate transition programme for each individual.

Will the staff of the Trust still have the same employment rights if we become an academy?

In practice, all staff will transfer their employment from the Local Authority to the Academy Limited Company. Their Terms and Conditions of service will be protected under transfer of undertakings legislation known as TUPE. It will not be the intention of the current Trustees to propose that any Terms and Conditions are changed. Furthermore, the Academy Limited Company will continue to recognise the nationally negotiated NJC recommended pay and conditions documentation. Equally it is the intention of the Trustees to fully endorse continued union recognition rights.

What will the school times be?

The schools will keep the same timings, as this seems to be working well. If there was ever a view to change timings of the day, it would be a matter for consultation before any decision was taken.

What will happen to school uniforms?

The school will keep the current school uniform, again to retain the individuality of the school and ensure continuity

Will OfSTED continue to inspect the schools separately?

Yes.

And finally, to sum up...

Why is it beneficial for Beaford Community Primary and Nursery School to join TEAM, and why is this a better option than what we currently have in place?

Over the past two years the educational landscape has changed at a rapid rate with many primary schools in the South-West now becoming academies. Over the last few years there has been a significant reduction in funding directed towards the Local Authority. This has meant that school improvement services and other forms of support have suffered.

Joining TEAM would mean that the school would be provided with bespoke ongoing support. Both parties also recognise that Beaford Community Primary and Nursery School has a lot of expertise to offer TEAM Multi-Academy Trust which through increased collaboration will only help to strengthen the quality of education for all children.

In January of 2020, nobody could have predicted the events that would go on to shape the rest of the year. The Covid-19 crisis placed us all in a position where we had to reflect on the real meaning of life and consider what it means to truly love and care for those around us, especially the most vulnerable. Within our school we have all had to learn quickly and many hours have been spent considering how we can continue to provide our children with the best education possible. We have had to reflect on today, tomorrow and the future.

Putting children of North Devon at the heart of all decision making is a belief that both Beaford and TEAM have in common.

We recognise that working closely together will provide us with more support and a great opportunity to ensure that we prepare the young people of North Devon for what lies ahead. We want them to approach the future with hope, confidence and aspirations for achieving great things in life. It is the aspiration of all here to create an outstanding centre for inclusive learning. All five schools in our current partnership have their own strengths and areas for development. Within our partnership we can learn from each other and innovate new ways of approaching our teaching and learning.

A Multi Academy Trust with one Executive Headteacher and School Leaders will enable our schools to retain their distinctiveness, fulfil their potential in partnership, be at the cutting edge of inclusive education and be a beacon for best practice in North and Mid Devon and beyond.

By joining TEAM Academy Trust we become one, a family joined together with a common purpose to collaborate, share expertise and support our community as a whole.

Our Vision Statement for Our Multi-Academy Trust.

Our ambition is to provide an outstanding learning environment that will enhance the lives of all members of our school communities and ensure our children have a strong foundation for the next stage of their education. We see our schools as an integral part of our local and global environment.

Within the context of the Trust, we see the partnership as an opportunity to enhance our understanding of each other and provide valuable opportunities for the exchange of ideas and be a platform for mutual support.

We will always strive to ensure that children across the Trust find happiness and friendship in our schools, where learning is an enjoyable, caring and purposeful experience. Across our schools, every child will be treated in a fair and considerate manner - feeling safe and well supported.

We recognise that all children have individual needs, and our ambition is for each child to achieve their best. As well as providing the highest standards of teaching to promote academic excellence, we fully appreciate the importance of personal and social development. This will be secured within a creative and supportive environment. We will encourage every child to develop their talents and abilities and, most importantly, enjoy their learning.

In all schools, we will nurture a sense of spirituality and enhance each child's understanding of themselves. Importantly, we will use the distinctiveness of each school to enhance the lives of those across our partnership.

Timetable for the development of the Multi Academy Trust

February 2022

Regional Schools Commissioner and advisory board agree in principle to Beaford Community Primary and Nursery School becoming an academy. (18th Feb)

Academy order granted by the Regional Schools Commissioner which will enable the school to convert to an academy. (18th Feb)

Department of Education assign a project lead to work with Beaford and TEAM. (28th Feb)

March 2022

The formal consultation on Academy Status is launched. The consultation will run for four weeks from Monday 7th March to Wednesday 6th April 2022. During this time there will be briefings, question and answer sessions, opportunities for written feedback and follow up meetings to clarify any issues/concerns that are raised through this process.

This document will be sent to parents, carers and members of staff before scheduled meetings at Beaford Community Primary and Nursery School.

Local schools and organisations will also be contacted for their views.

Consideration for academisation will also be put to the Regional Headteachers Board.

April 2022

The two governing bodies will meet to receive the feedback and consider written comments and responses. From this meeting a final decision to proceed with the MAT partnership will be made.

May 2022

If all is in place, administrative and legal documents will be drawn up and ratified by the Regional Schools Commissioner on behalf of the secretary of State for Education

1st June 2022

Beaford Community Primary and Nursery School formally joins TEAM Multi-Academy

Roles and Responsibilities

Role of the Chief Executive Officer

The CEO has overall responsibility and accountability for the schools within TEAM MAT and reports directly to the Trustee Body.

Overall statutory, strategic responsibility and accountability

- Overall accountability for student and staff performance
- Overall responsibility for school improvement
- Overall strategic plan
- Overall budget and management of resources
- Grant/ funding bids applications
- Overall inclusive curriculum plan
- Overall integration for students

Quality Assurance

- Quality assurance against OfSTED framework, using self-evaluation processes within the schools
- Quality assurance of teaching and learning, assessment of learning and pupil tracking
- Quality assurance of recruitment, retention and staff training
- Performance management of Senior Leadership staff

Site Leadership

- Communication across the site and links between the schools
- Overall Health and Safety
- Management Information Systems
- Common Policies
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Overall staffing and recruitment
- Marketing of schools

External links

- Ensuring that the schools are working in partnership with neighbouring Mainstream schools, the local authority, Exeter Diocese, business partners, regional and national educational organisations.

Role of the Head of School at each Trust School

Heads of School will have responsibility and accountability for their individual school and will report directly to the CEO. They will also report to their respective local governing bodies.

Strategic responsibility and accountability

- Development plan stemming from the overall strategic plan
- School self-evaluation
- Quality of teaching and learning
- Health, well-being and safety of students
- Performance of pupils at the school
- Tracking of pupil progress
- Accuracy of teacher assessment

- Designated budget
- Curriculum plan
- Common policies specific to each school

Pupils

- First point of contact for parents and carers
- Personalised Education Plans and annual reviews in partnership with MAT SENCO

Staffing

- Performance management for staff in school
- Deployment of staff and timetabling
- Continuing professional development for school specific training
- Staff induction
- Day to day communication with staff

Site Leadership

- Health and Safety directly relevant to the school
- Specialist facilities
- Liaison / Links with other schools / agencies / partners

Role of the Business Manager

- Oversee procedures related to admissions and attendance at each school within the trust
- Monitor external contracts and service level agreements
- Maintain a close overview of finances and prepare reports for external agencies
- Monitor day to day issues related to premises management, including health and safety
- Oversee the administrative tasks related to personnel and contracts
- Provide high quality information to the trustees and CEO regarding all business aspects of the Academy Trust.



MAT Parent Consultation Form



Proposal to convert Beaford Community Primary and Nursery School to become an Academy and member of TEAM Multi-Academy Trust with effect from Wednesday 1st June 2022.

The consultation period will begin on Monday 7th of March and end on Wednesday 6th April 2022.

Thoughts and views as a parent and carer after considering the proposal.

Responding

You can respond to this consultation through the following means:

- Email your response form to: consultation@team-mat.org.uk

- Complete this form and send it to Mr Matthew Millichope, Beaford Community Primary and Nursery School, Beaford, Winkleigh, North Devon, EX19 8LJ.