



Academisation consultation

What is ...

... an academy?

Academies are still state schools, but they're funded and operated a little differently than maintained schools.

Instead of being funded by the local authority, academy trusts are paid directly by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. This means that academies have more control over how they do things, than schools that aren't academies.

Academies don't charge fees.

... a multi academy trust?

Academy trusts are not-for-profit companies. They have trustees who are responsible for their performance, in the same way that local authority (LA) maintained schools have governors.

The trustees are both company directors and charity trustees, and the academy trust employs the school staff.

We're proposing to Ambition Community multi-academy trust (ACT). This means that we'll be part of a community of schools that are governed by one board of trustees. Each school in the trust will also have its own local governing body, with some delegated governance responsibilities for that particular school. The trust will also employ a team of central staff to support the group of schools and drive school improvement. As part of a trust with multiple schools, our school will have the opportunity to collaborate and share resources with the other schools across the trust.

... the benefit of academisation for our school?

The benefits for our school will include:

- Improved teaching and learning for our pupils, because:
 - Teaching expertise and resources can be shared across the trust
 - There will be more training opportunities for our staff
- Greater freedom in deciding how to spend government funding
- The opportunity to collaborate
 - So we can have more or better extra-curricular activities, for example
- Greater financial efficiency
 - By procuring goods and services at a larger scale across the trust
 - By sharing staff, including specialist staff who work centrally for the trust, like a school improvement team or pastoral team

We are proposing to join Ambition Community Trust as the values, vision and culture of our school is underpinned by a sound understanding of what children in our context need to learn best. We believe that the offer provided by the Ambition Community Trust directly aligns with our approach and this will allow us to further develop our understanding trauma, attachment and adverse childhood experiences. It will enable us to have a best-informed approach to how these impact on the children in our care; and how a relationally inclusion approach supports all children to thrive. By joining a trust that has a wealth of understanding of the importance of inclusion for all children, we will be able to draw on wider resources to best meet the needs of our children and families. The clear, strategic and pedagogical understanding of the Trust allows for a sharing of experience and best practice that will benefit our learners in achieving best outcomes.

On money ...

... will the trust or trustees make a profit from the school?

No. Academy trusts are charities, and any surplus or other income must be used to benefit pupils.

... will the trust take any money away from our school?

Explain the trust's top-slicing or general annual grant (GAG)-pooling policy as simply as possible. For example:

The trust will receive our school's money known as the general annual grant (GAG). It will collect a proportion of this funding to form a fund to pay for some central services before passing on the rest to our school (known as top-slicing). The top slice will be 4%.

However, the Trust will:

- Carefully consider the funding needs and allocations of each academy
- Service level agreements, previously purchased by the LA will be provided within the Trust's offer- Therapeutic Support, HR, Payroll, School Development.
- Consult on any proposals to pool the GAG
- Not top-slice or pool other funding outside of the GAG

The school will have to pay costs of approximately £10,000 to cover legal and land costs during the conversion.

When our school is an academy ...

... will it still be inspected by Ofsted?

Academies are inspected by Ofsted, and are held to the same standards as other state-run schools.

... will it follow the National Curriculum?

Whilst, Academies don't have to follow the National Curriculum, Gorse Hall Primary School will continue to follow this.

... will we change our name/logo/uniform?

No there are no changes planned to uniforms or logos.

... will our term times change?

No proposed term changes.

... will our catchment area or admissions policy change?

No, Academies must follow the same rules for admissions as other state schools.

How will academisation affect ...

... our pupils?

Pupils won't notice a big difference in the day-to-day operation of the school, but that they'll benefit in the long term from the opportunities provided by academisation.

... our provision for special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)?

Academies have the same requirements when it comes to SEND as other state schools, as set out in the SEND Code of Practice.

... our school staff?

No proposed staffing changes at this time. At the point of having been granted an academy order, the employer of school staff (The Local Authority) have started the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) process with staff.