



DARELL PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Supplementary Q&A for Parent/Community Consultation on Academy Conversion

ACADEMY CONVERSION PROCESS

No questions raised

ACADEMY TRUST STRUCTURE

43. The Local authority have accumulated specialist skills with many years of proven success. Why change to an organisation that is just a few months old with none of these resources under their control?

All Education and Children's Services for Richmond council are delivered by Achieving for Children. This is a community interest company wholly owned by Kingston and Richmond Councils. AfC provide statutory services to all state-funded schools and this will continue if Darell joins the Trust. The school also chooses to buy into additional services where they offer best value. Each year, the school reviews what services it will buy in and after joining the Trust, the school could continue to select services provided by AfC.

While the Trust was only formally established in September 2016, Grey Court and Hollyfield schools have been working successfully together for 18 months. They also have specialist skills, which are not available from AfC, such as; restorative justice expertise, access to a dedicated Speech and Language Therapist, a dedicated School Improvement Partner, and is currently planning on setting up a specialist unit for children with behavioural needs. Joining the Trust would mean that the school had more options to choose from.

ACADEMY GOVERNANCE

No questions raised

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

44. What things have the school wanted to do to improve education that have not been possible under the Local Authority but would be possible under an academy model?

Every school produces a School Development Plan (SDP). Ours has the following priorities:

- to develop leaders at all levels in the school community and hold them to account
- to ensure the quality of teaching and learning is good to outstanding
- to ensure there is a graduated response to SEND
- to improve attendance
- to improve the behaviour and safety in the school

These priorities are supported by detailed plans but are constrained by capacity within the school and access to resources outside the school.

For instance, the school needs to improve our process for monitoring attendance and understanding the links to pupil's achievement and safeguarding. The school currently works with families that have attendance below our and the government's expectations. While the Local Authority do provide Educational Welfare support, it is not necessarily a nominated individual. Joining the MAT would mean that we could access consistent specialist

support which would provide continuity for the families we are in contact with to access to systems that have worked in other schools.

45. What will the MAT want to do which will improve prospects for Darell pupils?

Every Child, Every Day Academy Trust will support the school in achieving its School Development Plan priorities (see question 44). The local (school) governing body will still have the responsibility to define those priorities and will seek support from the wider Trust to deliver them.

SCHOOL POLICIES

No questions raised

WORKING FOR AN ACADEMY

No questions raised

SCHOOL FINANCES

46. Who will own the school lands and buildings if the school converts to an academy?

The Local Authority will continue to own the school lands and buildings. They will be leased to the Trust on a long-term basis for a nominal rent.

47. Is it possible to see the future financial budget plans for the MAT including Darell?

It is not possible to see formal budgets since there is no funding agreement in place yet. These will only be publicly available once they have been agreed with the Every Child, Every Day Academy Trust.

However, as part of the due diligence process, there will be a detailed review of the budget plans. This due diligence will be completed during Spring term before the final decision takes place.

44. From the Q&A, the LA currently take 8% of Darell's budget to provide services and the MAT would take 2-5%. Are we comparing like with like?

As part of due diligence the Governing Body take into consideration the costs and quality of each service we currently receive from the LA compared to those which would be provided by the Trust. The services provided by the LA will continue to be available for the school to buy if it joins the MAT.

45. The Q&A states that the MAT will have better buying power. Surely the LA has even greater financial expertise, buying power and resources to share than the MAT could ever achieve?

The Local Authority provides the following centrally managed contracts that schools can buy into: school meals, building cleaning, facilities management, broadband. Other purchasing is handled by the school alone, of which the most significant are: grounds maintenance, transportation, gas and electricity, photocopiers and telephony. The Local Authority have cut back on the provision of services due to ongoing budget reductions and therefore, being able to procure these services as part of a larger group will potentially access better value.