



Lawn
Primary
School

Academies

A briefing for parents of Lawn Primary School

Academies

- Academies are publicly funded independent state schools.
- Funding comes directly from central government rather than via the Local Authority.
- The Governing Body decides whether to apply.
- Conversion to academy status is irreversible.



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What's different about Academies?

Differences from other schools

- Freedoms
- Governance
- Accountability
- Funding

....and what stays the same

- Laws on admissions, exclusions and SEN
- Partnership and collaboration
- Inspection
- Not for profit



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What are MATs?

- A MAT is a multi-academy trust.
- A MAT brings together a number of schools in a single charitable trust with a Board of Directors answerable to the Trusts members.
- MATs are expected to collaborate to bring about improvements and support one another.
- MATs vary in size from small ones (3-5 schools) to very large National ones (50+ schools).
- Government thinking is that large trusts are the way forward of between 15-20 schools.



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Freedoms: Facts

Academies have freedom

- from Local Authority 'control'.
- to adapt or vary the National Curriculum.
- to vary pay and conditions for staff.
- to change length/timing of school day/term/year.
- to choose their providers across a wider range of services eg HR, Buildings etc



Freedoms: Issues

- Schools are already largely self-managing.
- Academies must still comply with the law on admissions, SEN and exclusions.
- Converting schools are normally expected to partner a less successful school.



Governance: Facts

- Academies are companies limited by guarantee and are charitable trusts.
- Members of the company are guarantors not shareholders.
- Governors are directors of the company and trustees of the charity.
- The academy company is the admissions authority, employs school staff and owns the premises.
- The academy company is accountable for standards and attainment.



Governance: Issues

- Governing Bodies may be smaller with fewer elected parents or staff reps.
- Members may appoint governors to maintain majority.
- Levels of delegation to governors from members may vary.
- Academy members' liability is up to £10 per head.
- Governors' (as Directors) liability is unlimited; the Trust must provide indemnity insurance.



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Accountability: Facts

- Academies are independent of Local Authority 'control'.
- They are ultimately responsible to the Secretary of State and the Education Funding Agency.
- Funding agreement sets out obligations.
- They are still subject to primary legislation covering e.g. employment, health & safety and equalities.



Accountability: Issues

- Schools are already largely autonomous; the LA does not exert operational control over day to day running.
- An academy will have fewer links with the local democratic decision making process.
- LA councillors will have less influence if parents complain.
- Reduced support from LA if problems occur: may be purchased but may no longer be available.



Staffing: Facts

- On conversion staff will TUPE on current terms and conditions.
- Academies can later choose to change contracts and set own pay structures.
- Increased employers' contribution for non-teaching pensions.
- Must offer access to national pension schemes to staff.



Staffing: Issues

- Each school establishes own arrangements for salary negotiation.
- Newly appointed staff are not automatically employed on national pay and conditions.
- Academy must manage staff response to any proposed changes in pay and conditions.



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Premises: Facts

- Academy owns and manages premises.
- Academy has a 100 year lease on the land just like the council do now.



Premises: Issues

- No automatic access to LA expertise and support in event of problems or critical events.
- May have to use contractors with no detailed knowledge of buildings.
- Academies assume responsibility and liability for day to day management of premises including H&S and asbestos.
- No guarantee of capital levels in future: current applications very oversubscribed.



The Principle of Funding

- Becoming an academy “should not bring about a financial advantage or disadvantage to a school” (DfE).
- However, academies have greater freedoms on how they use their budgets.
- This is specifically in relation to the top-up funding they receive to meet additional responsibilities that are no longer provided for them by the Local Authority.



How Funding is Calculated

- The funding for academies comes from the DfE (via the Education Funding Agency (EFA)) in the form of a grant - the General Annual Grant (GAG).
- This is calculated and paid over the academic year rather than the financial year.
- It consists of two parts
an amount equivalent to the school's current delegated budget share (by far the largest part of the GAG).
additional money (known as ESG) to cover those central services the Local Authority no longer provides.



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Deficits and Surpluses

- Deficits and surpluses transfer with the school on conversion.
- If an academy opens with a deficit then the EFA would repay the Local Authority.
- The academy would then be required to agree with the EFA a plan to repay it from GAG instalments.
- Academies are not allowed to run a deficit without remedial action.



One-off Costs of Conversion

- A school in the process of converting receives a one-off grant of £25K.
- This is intended to cover the legal costs incurred by the school, and the accountancy and project management costs incurred by the school.



Process

- RSC (Regional School's Commissioner) and the Headteacher Board. They then decide whether or not the academy will be approved.
- Governors do have to consult parents/staff on the academy conversion.
- Academy notice issued.
- Funding agreement issued.
- Conversion date.
- Open as a new school.



Why Convert?

- Derby City is one of the worst performing local authorities in the country.
- Extra funding pots accessible for buildings etc.
- The autonomy to 'run our ship' on a day to day basis to ensure our pupils get the best education.
- Joint procurement of service to get better value for money.
- Increase our school budget so we can use it to the best of the pupils.



- Increase support from other schools in the MAT.
- Share our knowledge with other schools that are classed as 'failing'.
- Derby City increasing financial pressure and reducing services.
- Recruitment, retention and growth of staff in the trust.
- Sharing teaching and learning developments in the trust.
- Tailor made staff development programme that adds real value to the education of the children in the trust.
- **By converting we would be taking the future in our hands.**



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GCSEs

GCSEs – **Derby 54.2%** (A*-C)

National 59.3% (A*-C)

Derby placed 143 out of 152 local authorities.



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KS2 Results 2016

Percentage of children in reading, writing and maths achieving the expected standard.

- KS2 – **Derby 48% (Expected standard)**
National 53% (Expected Standard)
Lawn 91% (Expected standard) – top 10% of schools nationally.

Derby placed 132 out of 152 local authorities.



KS1 Results 2016

- KS1 – Derby 49% (Expected standard)
National 60% (Expected Standard)
Lawn 57% (Expected standard)

Derby placed 132 out of 152 local authorities.



Y1 Phonic Results

- Y1 – Derby 78% (Expected standard)
National 81% (Expected Standard)
Lawn 95% (Expected standard)



EYFS Results 2016

- FS2 – Derby 66% (GLD)
National 69% (GLD)
Lawn 78% (GLD)



Why do results matter?

Derby is one of the worst performing LAs in the country and doesn't seem to be getting better.

White paper – All schools to become academies by 2020. All failing local authorities to have school improvement removed and schools to become academies? (Is this still true)



What next for Lawn?

1. Convert to academy status with other schools and form a new MAT.
2. Convert to academy status with an already formed trust – local/national
3. Stay as a local maintained school and hope not to get left behind.



What's happening in Derby?

- Some schools are already exploring options to join together to form new MATs.
- Some schools are joining existing MATs, LEAD, Northworthy, Greenwood, Spencer trust, Derby Diocesan, Landau Forte, Believe, QEGs, Education Development Trust, Catholic trust, Harmony, and more.



What would you as parents/staff prefer?



Questions?

- FAQ will be distributed.

