

REPORT ON CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSAL TO CONVERT TO ACADEMY STATUS AND ESTABLISH THE EQUALS TRUST

1. Background

The Governing Bodies of seven Nottinghamshire schools are individually and collectively considering a proposal to establish a new multi-academy trust, to be called the Equals Trust, and for their schools to convert to academy status.

- Burton Joyce Primary School
- Cropwell Bishop Primary School
- Crossdale Drive Primary School
- Heymann Primary and Nursery School
- Keyworth Primary and Nursery School
- Robert Miles Junior School
- Tollerton Primary School

The six Governing Bodies (Burton Joyce Primary Primary School and Cropwell Bishop Primary School are federated and therefore have a joint Governing Body) decided individually in January and February 2016 and jointly on 25th February, 2016 to consult upon the proposal for the schools to convert to academy status and establish a multi-academy trust. This decision came after a rigorous investigation of academy status by the Governing Bodies.

The Academies Act 2010 requires each Governing Body to carry out a formal consultation on this proposal. This report describes the consultation activities undertaken by each Governing Body, the feedback from this activity and makes a recommendation about the outcome of consultation.

2. Purpose of Consultation

It is recognised by the Secretary of State and the DfE that the Governing Body and leadership team of a school is best placed to assess the benefits of academy status and to decide whether it is appropriate for their school. Therefore the purpose of consultation is for each Governing Body to present the proposal to stakeholders, to gather feedback on the proposal and to understand the level of stakeholder interest, support and objection. Each Governing Body can then determine whether there is any significant stakeholder objection to academy status that would cause them to reconsider.

The Academies Act 2010 sets out clearly the duty to consult with 'appropriate stakeholders' and the Governing Body took their responsibility to consult extensively very seriously. This consultation is separate from the statutory TUPE consultation to be led by Nottinghamshire County Council as the current employer of staff.

3. Consultation proposal

For Burton Joyce Primary School, Cropwell Bishop Primary School, Crossdale Drive Primary School, Heymann Primary and Nursery School, Keyworth Primary and Nursery School, Robert Miles Junior School and Tollerton Primary School to convert to academy status and establish a multi-academy trust.



4. Consultation Process

The academy consultation ran from Tuesday, March 29th until Friday, May 6th, a period of four (4) academic weeks.

The six Governing Bodies agreed to coordinate the consultation process and publish individual consultation packs based on a common content. Joint consultation meetings were also arranged.

A summary of the consultation plan identifying the different stakeholders, how those stakeholders were consulted and what information was to be provided, is overleaf.



Stakeholder	Approach	Information
Parents of pupils attending Burton Joyce Primary School, Cropwell Bishop Primary School, Crossdale Drive Primary School, Heymann Primary & Nursery School, Keyworth Primary & Nursery School, Robert Miles Junior School and Tollerton Primary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter and FAQs sent to all parents on Tuesday, March 29th • Joint consultation meetings: April 18th 6.00pm at Robert Miles Junior School; April 19th 6.00pm at Burton Joyce; April 20th 2.00pm at Cropwell Bishop and 6.00pm at Heymann; April 21st 2.00pm at Keyworth and 6.00pm at Tollerton • Survey distributed after consultation meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent & Carer Letter • Consultation FAQs • Consultation survey • Consultation presentation
Staff employed by Burton Joyce Primary School, Cropwell Bishop Primary School, Crossdale Drive Primary School, Heymann Primary & Nursery School, Keyworth Primary & Nursery School, Robert Miles Junior School and Tollerton Primary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter, FAQs and questionnaire sent to all staff on Tuesday, March 29th • Joint consultation meetings: April 20th 4.00pm at Cropwell Bishop Primary School for staff at Cropwell Bishop, Heymann, Burton Joyce and Robert Miles Junior; April 21st 4.00pm at Tollerton for staff at Tollerton, Crossdale Drive and Keyworth • Survey distributed at and after staff meeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff letter • Staff Consultation FAQs • Consultation survey • Consultation presentation
Unions & professional associations for staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint letter with copies of staff letters, consultation FAQs and survey sent to representatives on Wednesday, March 30th • Invited to attend both staff consultation meetings on Wednesday, April 20th and Thursday, April 21st. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Union letter • Staff letters • Staff Consultation FAQs • Consultation survey
Other local schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint letter sent to Headteachers of local schools Tuesday March 29th. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community letter • Consultation survey
Local MPs and Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter and questionnaire sent to local politicians Tuesday, March 29th 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community letter • Consultation survey



The range of documents and information were published on the school websites with the URLs below:

Burton Joyce Primary School

<http://www.burtonjoyce.notts.sch.uk/news/?pid=6&nid=1&storyid=76>

Cropwell Bishop Primary School

<http://cropwellbishopschool.co.uk/newsletters-and-letters/whole-school-letters/>

Crossdale Drive Primary School

<http://www.crossdaleschool.com/cms2014/index.php/easyblog/newsupdates>

Heymann Primary & Nursery School

<http://www.heymann.notts.sch.uk/page/?title=MAT+Consultation&pid=120>

Keyworth Primary & Nursery School

<http://www.keyworth.notts.sch.uk/news/?pid=3&nid=1&storyid=127>

Robert Miles Junior School

<http://www.robertmiles.co.uk/?p=11789-more-11789>

Tollerton Primary School

<http://www.tollerton.notts.sch.uk/academy-consultation/>

5. Consultation meetings

5.1 Joint parent consultation meetings

A total of 65 parents and carers attended the meetings over 4 days. A breakdown of attendance at each meeting is given below:

April 18th 6.00pm at Robert Miles Junior School: 13

April 19th 6.00pm at Burton Joyce Primary School: 11

April 20th 2.00pm at Cropwell Bishop Primary School: 6

April 20th 6.00pm at Heymann Primary & Nursery School: 10

April 21st 2.00pm at Keyworth Primary & Nursery School: 13

April 21st 6.00pm at Tollerton Primary School: 12

Parents and carers asked a number of questions about the reasons for and benefits of the proposal, as well as more specific questions about strategy, teaching and learning, governance, finance, staffing and school management.

A combined Q&A document from all meetings is attached as appendix A.

5.2 Joint staff consultation meeting

A total of 75 staff attended the meetings about 26% of all staff. Their questions were broad-ranging and are listed in the combined Q&A document in appendix B.



6. Consultation surveys

A total of 107 questionnaires were received across the 7 schools by the end of the consultation period, broken down by response to the proposal as below.

SCHOOL	STAKEHOLDER	YES	MAYBE	NO	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
BURTON JOYCE	PARENTS & CARERS	9	5	2	1	17
	TEACHERS	2	0	0	0	2
	SUPPORT STAFF	3	0	0	0	3
	TOTAL	14	5	2	1	22
CROPWELL BISHOP	PARENTS & CARERS	1	3	3	2	9
	TEACHERS	1	0	0	0	1
	SUPPORT STAFF	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	2	3	3	2	10
CROSSDALE DRIVE	PARENTS & CARERS	0	1	2	0	3
	TEACHERS	1	0	0	0	1
	SUPPORT STAFF	1	1	1	1	4
	TOTAL	2	2	3	1	8
HEYMANN	PARENTS & CARERS	8	3	1	0	12
	TEACHERS	0	0	0	0	0
	SUPPORT STAFF	1	0	0	0	1
	TOTAL	9	3	1	0	13
KEYWORD	PARENTS & CARERS	3	1	1	0	5
	TEACHERS	0	0	0	0	0
	SUPPORT STAFF	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	3	1	1	0	5
ROBERT MILES	PARENTS & CARERS	11	3	1	2	17
	TEACHERS	2	1	0	0	3
	SUPPORT STAFF	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	13	4	1	2	20
TOLLERTON	PARENTS & CARERS	12	1	1	0	14
	TEACHERS	7	1	0	0	8
	SUPPORT STAFF	3	3	0	1	7
	TOTAL	22	5	1	1	29
TOTAL	PARENTS & CARERS	44	17	11	5	77
	TEACHERS	13	2	0	0	15
	SUPPORT STAFF	8	4	1	2	15
	TOTAL	65	23	12	7	107



- The total number of parent and carer survey responses (77) is equivalent to around 4% of pupil numbers. This is not unusual for a large primary school consultation.

The breakdown of parent and carer survey responses by school, based on their individual pupil numbers is given below.

SCHOOL	NO. OF PUPILS	RESPONSE RATE	YES	MAYBE	NO	DK
BURTON JOYCE	353	5%	3%	1%	1%	0%
CROPWELL BISHOP	198	5%	1%	2%	2%	1%
CROSSDALE DRIVE	193	2%	0%	1%	1%	0%
HEYMANN	531	2%	2%	1%	0%	0%
KEYWORTH	130	4%	2%	1%	1%	0%
ROBERT MILES	245	7%	4%	1%	0%	1%
TOLLERTON	195	7%	6%	1%	1%	0%
TOTAL	1845	4%	2%	1%	1%	0%

- The total number of teacher survey responses is equivalent to around 10% of total teacher numbers, which is lower than is usual for a primary school consultation.
- The total number of support staff responses is equivalent to around 12% of total support staff numbers, which is about typical for a primary school consultation.

6.1 Summary of survey responses

A number of points to be noted:

- The parent and carer YES/NO responses, as a proportion of the total number of parent and carer responses, were 57% and 14% respectively.
- The total YES/NO responses as a proportion of the total number of responses, were 61% and 11% respectively.
- All schools received a selection of favourable comments on their completed survey forms, for example: "positive and happy environment" (Burton Joyce), "feeling of community" (Cropwell Bishop), "we like the community feel" (Crossdale Drive), "approachable staff" (Heymann), "a friendly, inclusive school" (Robert Miles Junior), "a friendly and generally happy place to be" (Tollerton) and "friendly atmosphere and a good standard of education" (Keyworth).
- 87% of teachers that responded were in favour of the proposal, which is extremely positive. There were not any NO responses from teaching staff.
- Among the 15 responses from support staff, 8 were YES and 1 was NO.

6.2 Consultation responses for Burton Joyce

- Of the total 22 responses received, 14 were YES and 2 were NO.
- Parent and carer responses expressed support for the school leadership team. The 2 NO responses were both received from parent and carers who have reservations about the academy system. 9 YES responses were received from parents and carers,
- The 2 teacher and 3 support staff responses were all YES and in favour of the proposal.



- In addition to the responses shown in the table, a questionnaire was received from a Headteacher at a local school from Burton Joyce's family of neighbouring schools. This response was YES and commented on the strong working relationship between Burton Joyce and the family of schools and in particular how this had improved since federating with Cropwell Bishop.

6.3 Consultation responses for Cropwell Bishop

- Of the 10 responses received, responses were split fairly equally between YES, NO, MAYBE, DON'T KNOW.
- Among parents and carers, of the 9 responses received, 1 was YES and 3 were NO. Comments were favourable towards the school and in particular the staff and leadership team, but concern was expressed that the school would lose its small village school feel. One parent wrote a detailed explanation of their objection to the proposal that Governors will wish to read.
- The one teacher that did respond was a YES to the proposal

6.4 Consultation responses for Crossdale Drive

- Of the 8 responses received, 2 were YES and 3 were NO.
- Among parents and carers, 1 was MAYBE and 2 were NO. Those that were NO had positive comments about the school but also concerns that the school would change as a result of the proposal. In particular, they expressed concern that the school would be more about business and finance than education.
- In addition to the responses shown in the table, a questionnaire was received from the Headteacher at West Bridgford Infant School, part of the Rushcliffe Learning Alliance (RLA) in favour of the proposal. A noteworthy comment was: "I have worked with staff from all schools as part of the RLA. All the Headteachers have high quality learning experiences at the heart of what they do. They all aim for excellence. They have positive attitudes to partnership working as a means of improving outcomes and provision for children".
- The one teacher that did respond was a YES to the proposal.

6.5 Consultation responses for Heymann

- Of the 13 responses received, 9 were YES and 1 was NO.
- Among parents and carers, of the 12 responses received, 8 were YES and 1 was NO.
- There was no response from teachers and the only response from support staff was a YES.
- In addition, a letter of support was received from R. McDonough, Principal at The West Bridgford School (secondary) for which Heymann is a feeder school.

6.6 Consultation responses for Keyworth

- Of the 5 responses received, 3 were YES and 1 was NO.
- All responses were from parents with no questionnaires received from teachers or support staff.
- The NO response received gave the reason as being against 'the privatisation of education', but added, "...I do believe you have the best interests of the children at heart".



6.7 Consultation responses for Robert Miles Junior

- Of the 20 responses received, 13 were YES and 1 was NO.
- Among parents and carers, of the 17 responses received 11 were YES and 1 was NO. The NO response explained that the parent/carer is against academies but also commented, " I love that Robert Miles Junior finds the best in each pupil and works hard to bring that out".
- Of the 3 responses from teachers, 2 were YES and 1 was MAYBE.

6.8 Consultation responses for Tollerton

- Of the 29 responses received, 22 were YES and 1 was NO.
- Among parents and carers, of the 14 responses received 12 were YES and 1 was NO
- Of the 8 responses from teachers, 7 were YES and 1 was MAYBE. Staff were supportive and one member of staff expressed the view that, 'From a teacher's point of view the chance to share and collaborate with other like minded individuals is very appealing". Several teachers also expressed a desire that the individuality and ethos of the school be maintained.
- Of the 7 responses from support staff, 3 were YES and there were not any NO replies

7. Consultation summary and recommendation

The consultation with the key stakeholders of Burton Joyce Primary School, Cropwell Bishop Primary School, Crossdale Drive Primary School, Heymann Primary and Nursery School, Keyworth Primary and Nursery School, Robert Miles Junior School and Tollerton Primary School has been comprehensive.

The level of engagement by parents, carers and staff of all seven schools has been quite low. This makes it hard to interpret the survey responses except to conclude there is very little objection to the proposal.

Therefore the Governing Body of Burton Joyce Primary School and Cropwell Bishop Primary School is advised that the consultation has not demonstrated any significant objection that should cause them to reconsider the proposal for the school to become an academy and establish the Equals Trust.

Similarly, the Governing Bodies of Crossdale Drive Primary School, Heymann Primary and Nursery School, Keyworth Primary and Nursery School, Robert Miles Junior School and Tollerton Primary School are advised that the consultation has not demonstrated any significant objection that should cause them to reconsider the proposal for the schools to become academies and establish the Equals Trust.

APPENDIX A: Combined Q&A from joint parent consultation meetings

APPENDIX B: Combined Q&A from joint staff consultation meetings



APPENDIX A

PROPOSED MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

ACADEMY CONSULTATION

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS FROM PARENT & CARER MEETINGS

Introduction

The seven schools proposing to establish a multi-academy trust ran a coordinated programme of parent consultation meetings as follows;

Monday, April 18 th	6pm	Robert Miles Junior School (RM)
Tuesday, April 19 th	6pm	Burton Joyce Primary School (BJ)
Wednesday, April 20 th	2pm	Cropwell Bishop Primary School (CB)
Wednesday, April 20 th	6pm	Heymann Primary School (H)
Thursday, April 21 st	2pm	Keyworth Primary School (K)
Thursday, April 21 st	6pm	Tollerton Primary School (T)

This document is a summary of the questions asked at those meetings, the answers given and where helpful further answers have been added. The acronyms after the question indicate at which meeting a question was asked. The questions have been collated into themed sections.

A. STRATEGY & PLANNING

1. How did the seven schools come together? (RM, BJ)

The Headteachers of the seven schools have been working together for a number of years on various projects through local partnerships such as Rushcliffe Learning Alliance and Toot Hill Teaching Schools Alliance. The Headteachers felt that their schools shared similar vision, ethos, values and approach to education and started discussions about a multi academy trust at least twelve months ago.

2. Why can't the benefits of partnership be achieved without creating a MAT? (BJ)

There are three advantages of a MAT over informal partnerships. First, all Headteachers and staff will be working for the same organisation and therefore have a shared responsibility for outcomes for all schools and children. This strengthens mutual accountability, support and challenge. Second, the MAT will be smaller than existing partnerships and so can make decisions and implement plans more quickly while having sufficient size for economies of scale. Third, the MAT will be a single legal entity making it possible to enter into commercial agreements with other organisations to secure efficiencies.

3. Did you consider joining other MATs for example with a mix of secondary and primary schools? (T)

The schools individually and collectively did consider and investigate other existing multi academy trusts. The Headteachers and Governing Bodies believe first establishing their own MAT would ensure that the Trust's ethos and values were more closely aligned to those of the seven schools, second that being a primary only MAT would have greater benefit for the schools and third that the governance could be designed to meet the schools requirements for balanced autonomy.



4. Have you spoken to other MATs about their experiences and advice? (K)

The investigation and consideration of other MATs gave the Headteachers a clear sense of the different ways a MAT could be established and what would be appropriate for the seven schools. The schools also chose to appoint an experienced project manager that had been involved in establishing many MATs and could therefore share good practice and options for the schools to consider.

5. Will the MAT expand to include other schools? (RM, H, K)

The schools expect it will take at least a year for the Trust to settle down. So new schools are unlikely to join until the second year. There is an expectation from the DfE that the Trust will take other schools and support under-performing schools. However, that will be a decision for the Trust Directors and will be based on compatibility of vision, ethos, values and approach and the capacity and capability of the Trust to support other schools.

6. Have other schools been identified to join the MAT? (H)

No.

7. Why hasn't Willowbrook joined? (K)

Keyworth, Crossdale Drive and Willowbrook had initial discussions about a local Keyworth village partnership in 2015. It was amicably agreed that the schools would explore their own options.

8. What are the disadvantages of the proposal? (K)

The main disadvantage is that once a maintained school becomes an academy it cannot revert to being a Local Authority maintained school.

If the school were unhappy within the MAT, it could seek to join another MAT if the Secretary of State consented. That is why the governing bodies of the seven schools are carefully considering the proposal and why there is much detailed planning about the MAT governance, leadership and management before any final decision.

9. How do Burton Joyce/Cropwell Bishop Federation Parent Governors feel about the proposal? (BJ)

Initially, the parent governors were concerned about the impact of further change given that the two schools had federated and come together under an Executive Headteacher and single Governing Body. The priority is that the schools retain their community ethos and values and child-centered approach. Having considered the proposal they are confident this will be retained. They can also see the benefits for teachers that may be the only teacher of a year group in a small school, having the chance to work with colleagues from other schools to share ideas and best practice and provide mutual support. *(Note this is based on the response of the two parent governors at the meeting.)*

10. What happens if one school decides not to proceed? (T)

It is highly probable that the MAT would still go ahead. Not going ahead would still leave that school with the challenge of responding to Government policy that all schools should become academies by 2022.

11. How will the next steps and possible implementation be announced? (H)

The schools will publish a summary of the questions and answers from all six parent consultation meetings on Friday, April 29th. Similarly, a summary of the two staff consultation meetings will also be published.

Once Governing Bodies have considered and approved the consultation report at their meetings on May 16th the reports will also be published by each school, probably with an announcement of the Governing Body decisions.

The working group will consider how best to communicate further decisions and progress to all stakeholders



B. TEACHING, LEARNING & SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

12. Will schools still follow the National Curriculum? (H, K)

The schools will still be judged on pupil outcomes and overall performance. So, the curriculum will continue to be broad, balanced, appropriate to each school. It will continue to be closely aligned to the National Curriculum but not restrictively so.

13. Will the schools still be inspected by Ofsted? (T)

Academies are inspected in the same way as maintained schools. The Secretary of State has announced that schools and academies judged to be '*Outstanding*' will no longer be subject to routine school inspection. The performance of all schools will continue to be monitored and if there are signs of deterioration, or other factors are a cause for concern, these could trigger an inspection. There are plans for MATs to be inspected but it is not clear whether this means all schools are inspected at the same time.

Current policy is that academies are not inspected for the first two years after conversion unless there are causes for concern.

14. How will staff find the time to collaborate? (T)

Those staff that have been collaborating already, for example between Burton Joyce and Cropwell Bishop and Keyworth and Crossdale Drive, have found it spreads the preparation workload and actually saves time in the long run. This preparation is already done outside classroom teaching and contact time so greater partnership working should reduce the burden and pressure on staff.

15. What will the impact of the MAT be on specialist subjects, extra-curricular activities and pupil support? (T)

The schools have already seen how they can jointly commission support for curriculum areas such as PE. This could easily be extended to other subjects such as languages or music and after school clubs. As a MAT of seven schools they will be able to offer greater volume of work, which will more attractive to freelance and supply staff.

The schools are particularly interested in securing high-quality support for a range of pupil support across the SEN spectrum such areas such as speech and language therapy and support for pupils with behavioural problems.

16. How will the MAT protect schools from the deluge of daily Government announcements and policy changes? (H)

As a group of seven schools the MAT will be able to coordinate and share responsibility to respond to policy, saving time and effort.

C. GOVERNANCE

17. How will Members and Directors be appointed? (H) How many Directors will there be? (K)

The working group of Governors and Headteachers from the seven schools has already agreed that the Trust Board of Directors should have the right blend of expertise and skills across education, child well-being, finance, HR, property, legal affairs and strategy. Subject to Governing Bodies approval there will be a total of eleven (11) Directors, ten (10) appointed by the Members and the CEO.

Existing Governors have been invited to self-nominate to be either or Member or Director. A short-list will be agreed by the working group and presented to Governing Bodies for approval at a joint meeting on May 16th.

The Members are not actively involved in the day-to-day running of the Trust but have an important role as guardians of the Trust vision, ethos and values. They can appoint and remove Directors and only they can agree changes to legal documents such as the Articles of Association. Therefore, the working group



will consider very carefully who the Members are and will seek people with a track record of involvement in school governance and community-led values.

18. Could the number of Members be increased from five to seven as there are seven schools? (K)

DfE guidance is that there should be no more than five (5) Members but this will be considered further by the working group.

19. What happens if a Director resigns? How will they be replaced? (K)

The remaining Directors will consider the skills and expertise that need to be replaced and invite nominations from Governing Bodies. Nominations could be for people not currently involved in any of the schools. The Directors will then make a recommendation to the Members to appoint.

20. Are Members & Directors paid? (H, T)

No with the exception of the CEO who will be an employee of the Trust as Headteacher and CEO.

21. Who is the Trust accountable to? (H)

The Trust is accountable to the Secretary of State for Education for the performance of the Trust and its member schools. The schools will still be subject to inspection by Ofsted. As Accounting Officer, the CEO has *'a personal responsibility to Parliament and the EFA's Accounting Officer for the financial resources under the Trust's control and must be able to assure Parliament and the public of high standards of probity in the management of public funds.'* (Academies Finance Handbook 2015)

22. Will there still be Parent Governors? If, so how many? Will there be LA Governors? (K)

Although the recent White Paper suggest that MATs will be given the freedom not to have parent governors, the recommendation to the working group will be that each Local Governing Body has at least two Parent Governors. If the working group agrees then this proposal will be presented to Governing Bodies for approval on May 16th.

There are no longer LA Governors as the Local Authority won't have the right to appoint Governors. However, those people serving as LA Governors will be invited to continue as community governors (officially terms Trust Governors)

23. Will business interests that might want to influence the schools be involved in the Trust (K)?

No.

24. Will the minutes of the Trust Board be published? (H)

The working group will consider this question carefully although there is no legal or regulatory obligation to do so.

25. What do parents do if they are unhappy with a school within the Trust? (H)

Parents would first use the Trust complaints procedure. If at the end of this process, they were still unhappy they could contact Ofsted or the Department for Education.

D. LEADERSHIP

26. Who will be the CEO? Will the Trust have an all powerful Executive Headteacher in charge of all schools? (RM, BJ, H, T)

No. The Trust is very much based on all Headteachers being equal and retaining responsibility to run their schools. The Headteachers will form a Trust Leadership Group to plan and manage the programmes to raise standards. The Trust will, however, be appointing one of the Headteachers as Trust CEO to manage



its day-to-day operation. This will be part-time role for a fixed term alongside the appointee's current Headteacher role with appropriate support to ensure their school is supported.

27. How will Headteacher be recruited should one Head leave? (H, K)

It will be proposed to the working group and Governing Bodies that the Local Governing Body will establish an appointment panel with a mix of that school's Governors, Trust Directors and Headteachers. The appointment panel would oversee the appointment process and make a recommendation to the Board for approval.

28. How will the MAT affect the relationship between Robert Miles Junior School and the Infants? (RM)

The Junior and Infants School will continue to work in partnership as they have done, particularly on transition of pupils between Years 2 and 3. Joining the MAT will not make any difference.

29. Will the leadership structure in Burton Joyce change? (BJ)

No. Burton Joyce and Cropwell Bishop will continue to each have a Head of School

E. FINANCE & PROPERTY

30. How will the school's finances be affected? (RM) How are conversion costs being met?

The schools will each receive £25k conversion grant to cover those costs. The schools will also receive a one-off grant of £95k to support the establishment of the Trust. After conversion the MAT will receive an Education Services Grant of £77 per pupil to cover the new costs of running the Trust. Overall, the schools will be marginally better off as academies although still subject to the ongoing squeeze on budgets.

31. How will the Trust finances be managed? (CB)

The Trust will have a Finance & Audit Committee with a responsibility to make sure the Trust finances are run effectively, efficiently and compliantly. They will organise for the Trust and school accounts to be independently audited and the Trustees Report and Financial Statements to be published. They will also oversee an internal audit programme to ensure schools comply with the Trust's financial regulations. The CEO will be the Trust Accounting Officer with a specific responsibility to oversee the appropriate use of public funds and write an annual statement confirming this is the case. The Trust will appoint a Trust Finance Manager who will manage the Trust finances day-to-day working with finance staff from each of the schools.

32. How will school budgets be set? (H)

Each Headteacher will retain responsibility to develop their school budget. They will consult with colleague Headteachers to identify opportunities for joint commissioning or resource sharing if appropriate. The budget will then be reviewed by the Local Governing Body and proposed to the Finance & Audit Committee.

The Finance & Audit Committee will then review all the school budgets as part of a consolidated Trust budget. They will then recommend the Trust budget to the Board for approval.

33. What is joint commissioning? Will the schools still buy services from the Local Authority? (K)

Joint commissioning is when the MAT buys services on behalf of the schools. The MAT will be able to secure savings against seven schools buying individually because it will be a single contract with a single point of contact.



34. What happens if a school has a deficit? Will funds be diverted from other schools? (T)

One of the principles that the working group and Governing Bodies will be asked to consider is that 1) each school is responsible for setting and managing a balanced budget and 2) no funds are diverted between schools.

35. Who owns the school land? (H)

School land will continue to be owned by Nottinghamshire County Council. The Trust will enter into a 125 year lease with a peppercorn rent, which contains obligations for the Trust to maintain the estate.

36. How will SEN funding be affected? (T)

No change from maintained school SEN funding.



APPENDIX B
PROPOSED MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
ACADEMY CONSULTATION
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS FROM STAFF MEETINGS

Introduction

The seven schools proposing to establish a multi academy trust ran a coordinated programme of staff consultation meetings as follows;

Wednesday, April 20th 4pm Cropwell Bishop Primary School

Thursday, April 21st 4pm Tollerton Primary School

This document is a summary of the questions asked at those meetings, the answers given and where helpful further answers have been added.

1. Will the MAT expand to include other schools? How many schools could it be?

The schools expect it will take at least a year for the Trust to settle down. So new schools are unlikely to join until the second year. There is an expectation from the DfE that the Trust will take another schools and support under-performing schools. However, that will be a decision for the Trust Directors and will be based on compatibility of vision, ethos, values and approach and the capacity and capability of the Trust to support other schools.

The DfE suggest that MATs should ideally be between 10-15 schools.

2. How will Members and Directors be appointed? (H) How many Directors will there be?

The working group of Governors and Headteachers from the seven schools has already agreed that the Trust Board of Directors should have the right blend of expertise and skills across education, child well-being, finance, HR, property, legal affairs and strategy. Subject to Governing Bodies approval there will be a total of eleven (11) Directors, ten (10) appointed by the Members and the CEO.

Existing Governors have been invited to self-nominate to be either or Member or Director. A short-list will be agreed by the working group and presented to Governing Bodies for approval at a joint meeting on May 16th.

3. Will there still be Parent Governors? If, so how many?

Although the recent White Paper suggest that MATs will be given the freedom not to have parent governors, the recommendation to the working group will be that each Local Governing Body has at least two Parent Governors. If the working group agrees then this proposal will be presented to Governing Bodies for approval on May 16th.

4. Who will be the CEO? Will the Trust have an all powerful Executive Headteacher in charge of all schools? Will the CEO structure be forever?

No. The Trust is very much based on all Headteachers being equal and retaining responsibility to run their schools. The Headteachers will form a Trust Leadership Group to plan and manage the programmes to raise standards.



The Trust will, however, be appointing one of the Headteachers as Trust CEO to manage its day-to-day operation. This will be part-time role (perhaps one day per week) for a fixed term alongside the appointee's current Headteacher role with appropriate support to ensure their school is supported. At the end of the fixed term the Trust will review the arrangements and decide what is best for the next phase of the MAT.

5. How will Headteacher be recruited should one Head leave?

It will be proposed to the working group and Governing Bodies that the Local Governing Body will establish an appointment panel with a mix of that school's Governors, Trust Directors and Headteachers. The appointment panel would oversee the appointment process and make a recommendation to the Board for approval.

6. Are primary only MATs unusual? Did you consider joining other MATs for example with a mix of secondary and primary schools?

No. The majority of primary schools are in primary MATs. The schools individually and collectively did consider and investigate other existing multi academy trusts. The Headteachers and Governing Bodies believe first establishing their own MAT would ensure that the Trust's ethos and values were more closely aligned to those of the seven schools, second that being a primary only MAT would have greater benefit for the schools and third that the governance could be designed to meet the schools requirements for balanced autonomy.

7. Will the schools still be inspected by Ofsted?

Academies are inspected in the same way as maintained schools. The Secretary of State has announced that schools and academies judged to be '*Outstanding*' will no longer be subject to routine school inspection. The performance of all schools will continue to be monitored and if there are signs of deterioration, or other factors are a cause for concern, these could trigger an inspection. There are plans for MATs to be inspected but it is not clear whether this means all schools are inspected at the same time.

Current policy is that academies are not inspected for the first two years after conversion unless there are causes for concern.

8. Who owns the school land?

School land will continue to be owned by Nottinghamshire County Council. The Trust will enter into a 125 year lease with a peppercorn rent, which contains obligations for the Trust to maintain the estate.

9. How will school holidays be affected?

Each school will continue to plan its holidays within the Local Authority recommended parameters. There may be slight variations between schools due to local arrangements between families of schools.

10. How will future pay awards be decided?

The Trust is committed to the principle that staff pay will be at least on par with employees of maintained schools. The Trust cannot automatically adopt future national collective agreements on pay and conditions because it will not be represented at those national negotiations.

However, the Trust will seek to adopt the national and local agreements for annual pay awards agreed between unions and employers for teachers and support staff respectively. It will have a separate agreement to recognise and consult with Trade Unions on pay and conditions.

11. What if a member of staff is on a temporary contract?

If a member of staff has a temporary contract that spans the proposed conversion date of September 1st 2016 then that contract will transfer across and continue until its termination date. If an employee has a temporary contract that expires before then the contract does not transfer across.



12. Will teachers move between schools?

Teachers and other staff will continue to work in the school they currently do and their contract of employment naming the school will transfer across.

However, there are three circumstances where staff may work in another school. First, is when a job at another Trust school is advertised and an employee applies for and is appointed to that role. Second, when a staff member voluntarily agrees to a secondment or temporary placement. Third, there may be new posts created in the future that are Trust-wide and any staff member appointed to such a post would be expected to work across schools.

13. Will the Trust change staff terms & conditions? (H)

Staff have already seen their pay, terms and conditions change as employees of the Local Authority.

When a school becomes an academy, staff are legally protected to transfer under the same employment terms and conditions. Like any employer, the Trust could propose to change terms and conditions in the future. As now, there are clear policies on consultation with staff on any proposed changes and rules on salary protection. Because the staff will transfer under TUPE they have the protection that their terms and conditions may never be changed to their detriment if the main reason for the change is the TUPE transfer itself.

However, the Trust will seek to adopt the national and local agreements for annual pay awards agreed between unions and employers for teachers and support staff respectively, and will continue to recognise and consult with Trade Unions on pay and conditions.

14. How will Continuity of Service be affected?

Continuity of Service is protected and continues through the transfer of employment. The Trust will recognise the continuity of service of new employees joining the Trust.

According to information provided by Unison if a member of staff returns to a Local Authority school within five years then their Continuity of Service will be recognised. Otherwise currently, there is no legal obligation for a Local Authority or another academy trust to recognise continuity of service for all aspects of employment. Importantly, however, your previous service will be recognised by any local authority or academy trust for the purposes of pensions and redundancy payments.

So if you take a job with a school outside the Trust your continuity of service may be broken. Your new employer may treat you as a new starter for the purposes of enhanced sickness and maternity or paternity benefits. unless you negotiate an alternative agreement with them. It is recommended that before accepting any future offer of employment you should check that the new employer would recognise your continuity of service.

15. Which policy would apply in the future if there were redundancy?

It is understood that policies relating to redundancy are contractual. Therefore, the relevant policy at the point of transfer would apply: in this case the Nottinghamshire County Council policy at August 31st 2016.

16. What happens to TAs at the top of their pay scale? Is there a chance of change?

The contract of employment that transfers sets out the pay scale for that post and it is that contracts across. The Trust is likely to continue with the equivalent of the Local Authority pay scales so unless the post was changed the pay scale would remain the same.

17. How will the next steps and possible implementation be announced? (H)

The schools will publish a summary of the questions and answers from both staff consultation meetings on Friday, April 29th. Similarly, a summary of the six staff consultation meetings will also be published.



Once Governing Bodies have considered and approved the consultation report at their meetings on May 16th the reports will also be published by each school, probably with an announcement of the Governing Body decisions.

The working group will consider how best to communicate further decisions and progress to all stakeholders.



F. STAFF & EMPLOYMENT

37. How do the staff feel? (BJ, H, K) Is there a risk staff might leave the schools as a result? (T)

The staff are being consulted in parallel with parents and carers so it is too early to say definitively what their views are. The proposals have been discussed by Headteachers and staff for some time already and so far the staff seem cautiously supportive. No staff have indicated they will leave as result of establishing the MAT.

38. Will staff pay be affected by conversion? (BJ)

No. Staff terms and conditions are protected at the point of transfer of employment from the Local Authority to the Trust. The schools have committed that in the future MAT staff would have pay, terms and conditions on par with employees of maintained schools.

39. Will teachers move between schools? (RM, BJ, H, T)

Teachers and other staff will continue to work in the school they currently do and their contract of employment naming the school will transfer across.

However, there are three circumstances where staff may work in another school. First, is when a job at another Trust school is advertised and an employee applies for and is appointed to that role. Second, when a staff member voluntarily agrees to a secondment or temporary placement. Third, there may be new posts created in the future that are Trust-wide and any staff member appointed to such a post would be expected to work across schools.

40. Can the CEO move people around? (H)

No.

41. Will the Trust change staff terms & conditions? (H)

Staff have already seen their pay, terms and conditions change as employees of the Local Authority.

When a school becomes an academy, staff are legally protected to transfer under the same employment terms and conditions. Like any employer, the Trust could propose to change terms and conditions in the future. As now, there are clear policies on consultation with staff on any proposed changes and rules on salary protection. Because the staff will transfer under TUPE they have the protection that their terms and conditions may never be changed to their detriment if the main reason for the change is the TUPE transfer itself.

However, the Trust will seek to adopt the national and local agreements for annual pay awards agreed between unions and employers for teachers and support staff respectively, and will continue to recognise and consult with Trade Unions on pay and conditions.

42. Will there be development opportunities for support staff? (T)

Yes. Already the MAT is planning to create a new part-time Trust Finance Manager, subject to agreement by the working group and Governing Bodies. If agreed current finance staff will be invited to apply and that group are pleased that this new opportunity is available to them. Further support and development opportunities will be put in place

G. SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

43. How will admissions be affected? (BJ, H)

The current admissions policies continue although the Trust becomes the admissions authority instead of the Local Authority. The Local Authority will still coordinate the admissions process to primary schools and parents and carers will still apply via the Local Authority.



The Trust has the same responsibilities to comply with the admissions code and any future changes to a school's admissions policy would need to be consulted upon. The Local Authority changed the admissions policy for September 2016 to remove siblings as an over-subscription criteria, which has meant some parents have not been able to send their children to the same school. This is one change the Trust might consider but would only come into effect for September 2018 entry.

44. How will school holidays be affected? (K,H)

Each school will continue to plan its holidays within the Local Authority recommended parameters. There may be slight variations between schools due to local arrangements between families of schools.