



Lavant

C.E. Primary School

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29th March 2023

Dear Parents, Carers and members of the local community

Consultation to Convert to Academy Status

You may well be aware that the Government is encouraging all schools to consider converting to Academy status. After very careful consideration over a number of years, and discussions with the Diocese, the School's Governing Body has decided that they wish to recommend conversion to Academy status with the view to joining the Bishop Luffa Learning Partnership (BLLP). We are writing to consult with staff, parents and local community partners, and would value your views on the matter.

What is an Academy and what are the advantages of conversion?

Academies are publicly funded state schools that are independent of the Local Authority and receive funding directly from Central Government. They follow the same rules as all other state-funded schools over admissions, pupils with Special Educational Needs and exclusions.

A Multi Academy Trust is a company established to be responsible for a number of Academies. Each Academy remains a separate school, but the governors are responsible to a board of Trustees established for the Trust as a whole.

The Government is clear that the greater freedoms enjoyed by Academies are designed to allow schools to develop and build on individual strengths in response to the needs of the community. We feel that the additional freedoms and flexibilities would enable the Governors to better secure the long term future of our School.

Why is this being considered?

The landscape of primary education is fast moving and more and more it seems Multi Academy Trusts are on the cutting edge of educational research. As a successful Voluntary Controlled School, Academy status gives us more freedom to make decisions about how we can best continue to move our school forward. The governors were keen to join a local Trust and by working within the Bishop Luffa Learning Partnership, we will be able to play a part in the development of the Trust and strengthen relationships with other schools as they join. Having spoken to the Trust's leaders and explored with them the opportunities that joining BLLP will provide, we have concluded that working together within the Trust will bring benefits to teaching and learning and thus to the achievement of all our pupils. It will also support us in continuing to promote the Christian ethos of the school to enrich the learning of pupils.

Who will be the members of the local governing body?

On conversion, our governors will remain in place as the local governing body for the school, and two of our governors will be given places on the Board of Trustees of the Bishop Luffa Learning Partnership Academy Trust. Our local governing body will continue to include elected parents and one elected member of staff.

Will any changes to the School be made as a result of conversion?

Whilst we see real benefits in working more closely with the Trust, any changes are likely to be behind the scenes. You and your children will see little visible difference when we become an academy. The school uniform and structure of the day will not change; neither will our term dates or the school's admissions policy which will continue to give priority for places to children living in Lavant. All children and members of staff will continue to be part of our school as they are now.

How to take part in the consultation process

We are holding two meetings for parents on 26th April at 3:20pm (Childcare available) and 6pm (No childcare) which all parents are welcome to attend.

Members of our Governing Body and The Bishop Luffa Learning Partnership will be at both meetings where further information about the proposal will be shared and space provided for you to express your views and asks questions.

You can also ask questions or make comments by completing the form attached and sending it in an envelope marked "Academy Consultation" to school.

We are excited by the opportunities this partnership will bring to our school community and look forward to hearing your views.

Yours Sincerely



Mr. Chris Hawker
Chair of Governors



Mr. Adrian King
Head teacher



Bishop Luffa Learning Partnership (BLLP)

BLLP was established in 2020. Our aim is to provide children with opportunities and experiences that will help them to become happy and successful adults. Our work is driven by a common vision expressed in Jesus' words: "I have come in order that you might have life – life in all its fullness." (John 10:10).

We believe that working together provides benefits for children and their families:

Opportunities:

- Children experience their individual school with its own unique ethos and can also build relationships with students and staff from other schools
- Pupils gain confidence from working with pupils of different ages
- Primary pupils get used to working with secondary pupils and so have an easier transition into Year 7
- Pupils can experience a wider range of extracurricular activities across the Trust
- Children with particular needs and interests can receive specialist support

Confidence:

- Families can have confidence in the stability of their chosen school, as it has the financial backing and expertise of the Trust
- Headteachers are able to focus on delivering an excellent education without being side-tracked by Finance and Facilities Management issues
- Headteachers and Governors can draw on expertise in other schools to develop their curriculum and pedagogy in a way that fits their context.

We are focussed on working with local schools that have a similar ethos and values to us. Presently the Partnership is Bishop Luffa secondary school and Rumboldswyke primary school. We are excited at the prospect of working with Lavant and think that we all have lots to learn from each other.

BLLP Academy Trust is a partnership founded on the principle of sharing our challenges and our strengths to drive continuous school improvement in every member academy.

"They signalled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats full." (Luke 5:7)

Academies: Additional key facts

Curriculum

Academies are required to have a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. For pupils below Key Stage 1 (i.e. EYFS and nursery), academies are required to follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

The curriculum must include:

- English, Mathematics and Science;
- Religious Education; and
- Sex and Relationship Education (SRE).

Academies are required to take part in the same pupil assessment arrangements and to report on the achievement and attainment of pupils in the same way as all other state-funded schools.

Inspection

Academies continue to be subject to Ofsted inspections.

Staffing

The regulations that place requirements on maintained schools do not directly apply to academies. General employment law applies to academies in the same way as to other organisations. The Academy Trust has responsibility for setting pay and conditions. Teachers must be suitably qualified. The Bishop Luffa Learning Partnership Academy Trust employs all its staff on national terms and conditions so there is no change for staff. All teachers employed at an academy have access to the Teachers Pensions Scheme and all other employees at an academy have access to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Funding

The academy trust will receive a General Annual Grant from the Secretary of State calculated as the equivalent to that which would be received by a maintained school taking account of the number of pupils at the academy. Capital funding is also available, channelled through the Academy Trust.

Every academy trust must abide by the requirements of and have regard to the guidance in the Academies Financial Handbook.

SEN

Academies should be fully inclusive local schools and in common with all other schools have a clear legal duty to do their best to meet the needs of children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.

Admissions

Academies are required to provide education for pupils wholly or mainly drawn from the area in which the academy is situated.

Academies must have admission arrangements that clearly set out how children will be admitted, including the criteria that will be applied if there are more applications than available places.

Academies are required to provide education for pupils of different abilities (i.e. they may not select pupils by ability).

The conversion process

There is a defined process, which usually takes around six months, to secure our conversion to academy status, which includes:

- Consultation with parents, staff and other stakeholders
- Agreeing a contract with the Secretary of State to run Lavant Church of England Primary School as an academy within the Bishop Luffa Learning Partnership Trust as a state-maintained school, free to all pupils;
- Consulting staff and their unions on the transfer to a new employer;
- Working with the owners of our site to ensure that it can be used by the Academy;
- Transferring contracts for goods and services.

A grant from the DfE will support the costs incurred, including expertise in managing the process so that your child's education is not disrupted.

Lavant CE Primary School Response Form

Thank you for your interest in our school's conversion to Academy status within the Bishop Luffa Learning Partnership Trust. Having considered the information available, do you agree that the school should go forward in this way?

Yes

No

Not sure

☐☐☐

Please add any comments or questions here,

Please continue overleaf and add an extra sheet if necessary

Please indicate your connection to the school and give your postcode

Parent/carer

☐

Staff member

☐

Governor

☐

Wider community

☐

Other : Please specify

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Postcode

Please return this form by Tuesday 9th May in hard copy to the school in an envelope marked 'Academy Conversion'.