



Proposal for Marple Hall School to convert to Academy Status and to form a Multi Academy Trust

Consultation

20th April 2016 to 17th May 2016

Headteacher: Mr Joe Barker

Chair of Governors: Cllr Shan Alexander

The proposal to convert to Academy Status and to form a Multi Academy Trust

The Governing Body is seeking views on the proposal for Marple Hall School to convert to Academy status and to form a Multi Academy Trust. Between January and March 2016 Governors debated the proposal and, in early March, took the decision to open this consultation. A short time later the Government announced that all schools are to convert to academy status by 2022 and that the vast majority of schools will be expected to be a part of 'Multi Academy Trust' - a formal group of schools working together under shared leadership.

More extensive information on academy status and the proposal is available at www.marplehall.stockport.sch.uk

Why convert, and why form a 'Multi Academy Trust'?

The Governors and Senior leadership team of Marple Hall School believe that converting to academy status will:

- 1) **Enable school leaders (Governors and Senior staff) to remain in control of the school's destiny.** In a time of great change to the education sector the school needs to stay autonomous and in the best position to safeguard the needs of our local community.
- 2) **Grant the school the ability to create a curriculum that directly meets the needs of our learners.** Whilst the school will be subject to the same measures as all schools in terms of student outcomes, and no major changes are planned, having academy status gives a school more freedom in the shape and content of the curriculum. Our focus is and always will be the happiness and success of our learners.
- 3) **Give the school greater freedom in securing best value for money by being able to make better use of the school's full funding entitlement.** At present some of the funding allocated to the school is retained by the Local Authority. Academy status also grants access to wider sources of income to support building projects.

More excitingly, we believe that forming a Multi Academy Trust with local schools will:

- 4) **Enable effective collaboration between the strong schools across the local area.** For students, a formal collaboration between primary and secondary schools will improve transition from Year 6 to Year 7.
- 5) **Open up fantastic opportunities for staff to learn from each other,** and to allow all partners to benefit from economies of scale and shared expertise in areas such as finance, IT, SEN support, site maintenance etc

The Marple Hall School Journey

The Governors, staff and students of Marple Hall School are dedicated to the school becoming **truly great – a place of excellence where all learners (young and old) are proud of their school and confident of success.**

Over the past decade the school has made huge strides forward in terms of the quality of teaching, the pastoral care offered to students, the range of curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities and in the quality of leadership across the organisation.

The school has continued to improve since the positive Ofsted report of October 2013. Educational outcomes have risen sharply and the school is now in the top 20% of all schools nationally in terms of the progress made by learners during their time at Marple Hall. In addition, the school has become significantly oversubscribed and is seeing a marked increase in the number and quality of applications to staff vacancies. These are all signs that the overall work of the school continues to improve, and that the school has the capacity to work closely with other schools to further enhance the overall educational experience in the local area.

We believe that the time is right to help secure the future of education in our part of Stockport. We intend to facilitate a co-operative and supportive trust working for the good of all young people in the area. Closer collaboration between primary and secondary schools can only be a positive step and we are excited about the potential of this new venture.



The Consultation Process

The consultation period will last for four weeks, from Tuesday 19th April to Monday 16th May

Who is involved in the consultation?

We aim to consult as widely as possible and hope to gain the views of parents, staff and students at Marple Hall School and those connected with local primary schools.

Consultation Meeting

There will be an open meeting held in the School LRC on **Monday 9th May 6.30pm**

What happens at the end of the consultation period?

All responses to the consultation will be reported to and considered by the Governing Body on 23rd May 2016. If the Governing Body decide that a formal proposal to convert to academy status should be made then the process will begin with the Department for Education and the Regional Schools Commissioner.

Requests for Information and Frequently Asked Questions

The Governing Body is keen to enable all stakeholders to make a well informed contribution to the consultation, but anticipates that it will be impossible to respond to every individual query. Greater detail on the proposal can be found on the school website, and any request for additional information can be emailed to academyconsultation@marplehall.stockport.sch.uk

It may be that all individual queries cannot be answered directly, in which case all common enquiries will be addressed on a 'Frequently asked questions' page found on the school website. This page will be updated weekly throughout the consultation period and already includes answers to several questions such as:

Initial Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. Will the school have a sponsor, and will there be a change of name?

A: No. We will not be sponsored by any outside agency and all schools in the trust will keep their own identity. We won't be changing the uniform, the shape of the day or the terms and conditions of staff either. One of the main reasons for converting is to retain all that is good about the school, not to make change just for the sake of it.

Q2. Isn't it only struggling schools that convert to academy status?

A: No, that was the case when the Academies project first started over 10 years ago, but since 2010 all schools have been able to convert including many of the very best schools in the country.

Q3. In what ways do the leaders of MHS think they can help Primary schools?

A: Our local primary schools are very strong and, in fact, we hope that we can learn as much from them as we hope they can learn from us. We are not interested in creating a model where the Secondary school 'leads' the primary schools - we intend to build a MAT where all the schools lead each other for the common good.

Q4. Will the school cease to have any links with the Local Authority or other secondary schools in Stockport?

A: We certainly hope not. There are already four secondary academies in Stockport, and one primary academy in our local area, and all of these schools have remained very significant voices in the cross-school work that happens on a daily basis in Stockport. We know the value of school collaboration and fully intend to continue to play our part.



Consultation Response Form

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Please return to the following address by midday on Tuesday 17th May 2016

Academy Consultation
Marple Hall School
Hill Top Drive
Marple
Stockport
SK6 6LB

Email: academyconsultation@marplehall.stockport.sch.uk

Name of person responding:

Interest (tick all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Current Marple Hall Student	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parent of a future student
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ex Marple Hall Student	<input type="checkbox"/>	Community responder
<input type="checkbox"/>	Parent of a student at MHS	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parent of a primary age child
<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff Member - local school	<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff Member - MHS
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Please specify:

Please comment on the proposal in the space below. Please attach additional sheets if necessary

