

Loudwater Combined School

Parents' Consultation Meeting about the School's proposal to join the Oxford Diocese Bucks Schools Trust.

Attendees: Larissa Bashir (Governor), Steve Andrews (Y6 parent and Governor), Kathryn Mallia (FS parent), Kimberley Bevan (FS parent), Leah Emery-Barnard (FS parent), Nicky Springle (Y3 parent), Shelley Sheppard (Y1, Y3 & Y5 parent), Leanne Vaux (Y2 parent), Rachel Burch (Y4 parent and governor), Sarah Staines (Y1 & Y6 parent), Paula Wakelin (Y4 parent), Amy Porter (FS, Y2 & Y5 parent), Michelle Franklin (Y1 parent), Andrew Scrimgeour (Y1 parent), Kelly Leary (Y4 parent), Prijo Taylor-Lewis (Y2 & Y6 parent), Nancy Smith (Y1 & Y2 parent), Amanda Peirce Collinao (Y6 parent & Governor), Belinda Welland (Deputy Head teacher), Jackie Olcot (Key Stage One Leader), Paul Randall (Chair of Governors), David Cousins (CEO ODBST).

7th March 2019

Presentations were made by Clare Cunnington and Paul Randall before handing over to David Cousins (CEO of the Trust). There are links to these presentations below.

Questions from Parents

Is there a fee to join?

The school receives a grant to cover all of the legal costs associated to the MAT conversion.

Are the funds ring-fenced for each school?

Yes

Does the funding for Special Educational Needs, Pupil Premium etc change?

It doesn't change. This money is not part of the school budget. It is received directly from County. Governors, Head Teacher and Local Authority remain in control.

What about Sports Premium funding?

The same as Special Educational Needs and Pupil Premium funding.

We have heard the pros. What are the cons?

When you move into an academy it is irreversible.

What started the school to look into academies?

The Government wanted all schools to convert by 2022. This is now not a requirement at the moment. The school feels that it is prudent to look now while we are in control of the situation.

What is the timescale?

There is a lot of work to be done but conversion could be around November 2019.

Has the decision already been made to join the ODBST?

No the decision has not been made.

Will the MAT spending money on other schools, affect our school's budget?

No

Does it matter financially what time of year the school becomes a member of the MAT?

No

It has been said that the process is all about the children so why would the cost of maintaining the building affect your decision for us to join?

The MAT has to assess how much of a financial risk a school might be. Once the process has started then it is all about the children.

Do you have a view on changing the number of school days or timing of holidays?

The MAT would not expect a school to change. Their expectation is that the school will fit in with the rest of the local school community.

The Oxfordshire branch of the trust has grown phenomenally over the last few years. How would a similar growth of the Bucks branch affect the school?

The Oxford branch has 33 schools and they could confidently support a similar number in Bucks. The Department for Education's view is that Trusts should be of a medium size. As the Trust grows then geographical hubs would be set up.

Is there sharing of best practice?

Yes. At a recent Trust training, four middle leaders were able to share their expertise with all the schools involved.

The Trust supports teachers. Do you give the children the opportunity to share resources?

It was not something that had been thought of but it was definitely worth looking into.

If we are training teachers to be better teachers, will we lose them?

The school feels that this will make the school more attractive to other teachers because of the high quality of training available.

Can the curriculum be changed to allow other subjects?

Only if the school budget allows it. There should be an emphasis on widening the curriculum and making cross-curricular links.

If we are widening the curriculum, how will that affect tests eg SATs, 11+ etc?

There will be no effect on the 11+ transfer test. However if the curriculum is widened, research suggests that this has a positive impact on pupil outcomes.

Funding for improvements – Is it a grant or loan and does it have to be paid back?

The MAT receives a grant from the Government. Match funding is available through the MAT.

Funding – does it go up as the number of schools go up?

No – it is calculated on number of pupils in the schools.

Who is the Trust answerable to?

The Department for Education and the Secretary of State.

Do all schools have their own bank account?

Yes

Does the money earn interest?

No – it not in there long enough.

The consultation continues until 5th April – is that the deadline for us as parents to respond?

Yes. If parents have any further questions these can be submitted to the school office:

office@loudwater.bucks.sch.uk or to the governors' email address:

governors.loudwater@gmail.com or to David Cousin at the Trust: david.cousins@oxford.anglican.org

Further information can also be found on the Trust's website: <https://www.odbst.org.uk/>

The presentations can be found on the school website: