



Kew Woods Primary School

Consultation on Kew Woods Primary School becoming an academy and joining the Southport Learning Trust

8th June 2018

Introduction

Over the past eighteen months, the Governing body of Kew Woods Primary School has been exploring a range of options to secure the best future for our school. The changing educational landscape has seen a shift of responsibility and accountability from the Local Authority to the School, a reduction in funding, and a complete reform in curriculum and assessment. To be able to sustain and improve the quality of education we have to embrace new ways of working.

Kew Woods has worked successfully in partnership and collaboration with many local primary and secondary schools; working highly effectively as part of three local networks. For the past two years we have been accredited as an Apple Regional Training Centre and have trained teaching staff across Sefton Local Authority on how to utilise technology effectively in the classroom to raise standards.

The Governing Body believes the best way of maintaining standards in the future is for our school to form a local school partnership. We firmly believe that formal partnerships with other schools through joining a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) has clear benefits for the students and staff at Kew Woods Primary School. This formal partnership will allow a greater capacity to successfully navigate the changing landscape and allow us to continue to improve. This includes the opportunity to share good practice across institutions, centralise key services and generate opportunities to develop and attract expert staff and governors.

We have identified Southport Learning Trust as the MAT we would like to join. The Governing Body believes that this would be a positive step as we would be working with like-minded schools in our local community who share our commitment to securing the best outcomes for our pupils.

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Key differences that would come with Academy status as part of a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT):

- The basis for the running of the school will be through a Funding Agreement with the Department for Education.
- The school will cease to be maintained by the Local Authority but will instead be funded and maintained directly by the Department for Education. This will mean that the school will retain a portion of its budget that is currently retained by the Local Authority. The school as an academy and member of a trust will be able to apply for substantial additional funding such as the Condition Improvement Fund to improve the school buildings.
- The MAT, which is a charitable company limited by guarantee, will enter into the relevant land agreements under which the school will continue to occupy its existing site.
- The MAT will be the conduit for funding, with each school within the MAT being funded on the basis of its pupil numbers (similar to the current arrangement for us as a maintained school).
- A proportion of the overall budget will be retained centrally by the MAT for common services and contracts to establish value for money and generate economies of scale.
- The Governance of the MAT is distributed as below:
 - A small group of Members who hold the directors of the Trust accountable;
 - A Board of Directors responsible for the overall strategy of the MAT and responsible for all the schools within the MAT;
 - Local Governing Bodies which will be responsible for school-based issues and who will report to the Board of Directors. Local Governing Bodies will be represented on the Board of Directors and its Committees, and thereby influence and contribute to the decision-making and strategies of the Trust as a whole.
- The school staff will become employed by the MAT. The employment rights of all members of staff will be protected by the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) Regulations 2006. This means that staff will transfer to the MAT under the same terms and conditions of employment. Pension rights and continuity of service record will also be preserved.
- Multi-Academy Trusts must still comply with the admissions, exclusions and SEND laws and relevant codes of practice as we have to now as a maintained school.

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- Academies are permitted certain freedoms, for example, from following the National Curriculum. In practice, all schools continue to be overseen by Ofsted and children will continue to be subject to national SATs at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.

I would like to assure all parents that by consulting on this issue now, Kew Woods Primary School is able to maintain more control over its ultimate destiny and protect those aspects that drew you to the school in the first place.

It is the belief of governors and staff that this development will only enhance the educational experience and opportunities for all children at our school even further. As a school that is rated 'Good' by Ofsted 2017, and improves year on year, Kew Woods is in a strong position to be able to choose its future direction and by applying to become an academy is able to choose the Multi-Academy Trust that it would like to be part of.

We are committed to ensuring that in making this change, the ethos, values and individuality of Kew Woods Primary School will be retained. Although we will be part of the Southport Learning Trust we will continue to be named Kew Woods Primary School and our uniform and logos will not change. Our creative curriculum with critical skills, extra-curricular programme, school day, pastoral support and guidance and general organisation of the school will not be affected. The teaching and the resources currently provided to Kew Woods School will all continue. There would be no staff changes as a result of a change to become an Academy.

This letter is part of our consultation process which ends on **9th July 2018**. Any responses must be received by then. The next step will then be a meeting of Governors on **16th July 2018** to consider all responses and make a decision about continuing with the process.

We welcome any comments or questions parents may wish to make in writing to the Clerk to the Governing Body, Mrs McKenzie, at Kew Woods Primary School or by e-mail admin.kewwoods@schools.sefton.gov.uk

If you would like to hear more about the proposal and ask questions, there will be a meeting of parent/carers on **Tuesday 26th June at 6.00pm** in the school hall.

This letter is also published on the school website – www.kewwoods.co.uk

Yours sincerely

Phil Power
Chair of Governors

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