

Kew Woods consultation on becoming an academy and joining The Southport Learning Trust

Please note that these notes are recorded following attendance at the meeting and are to be taken as notes and not minutes and are produced from recollection of the note taker as to what was discussed.

Date:	26.6.18
Present	Christina Jackson (Headteacher) Phil Power (Chair of Governors) Ian Raikes (Executive Headteacher of Southport Learning Trust) Jo Bassey (Staff governor at Kew Woods) Brian Brumant (Governor at Kew Woods) Liz Collins (Governor at Kew Woods) Vicky Copeland (Governor at Kew Woods) Simon Staniforth (Governor at Kew Woods)
Meeting Held:	Kew Woods Primary School

CJ introduced the Chair of Governors and Executive Head of Southport Trust

PP gave an introduction and thanked parents for attending

The following questions were raised by parents:

1. There is no proven benefit of going to academy - has an analysis been done on getting funding in to the school?

IR stated that the primary benefit is being able to bid for large sums of money such as the Condition Improvement Fund and School Improvement Funding.

2. Would we not be better off staying with the LA in terms of buying power (procurement)?

IR Being an academy especially as a member of a MAT gives you good bargaining power. As an academy you can go into the wider market to buy services and develop closer relationships with suppliers and strive for better value for money. The Trust has a Business and Finance Director for this purpose.

3. Why choose to team with a secondary school? Will money be wasted – ie: pay rises

I.R. explained how Greenbank got to the point of academy status. Within this it was mentioned about how the funding system works and the benefits of being a Trust in accessing funding for example only academies can access a funding pot called

'Condition Improvement Fund' which the two schools in the trust have been successful in gaining funding for a new multi-purpose pitch and a new roof. IR explained how the Members and the Trust Board are voluntary and from the local community with a variety of skills. Staff terms and conditions will remain the same when they TUPE over.

PP and IR led a presentation (see attached).

The following questions were then raised by parents:

4. Will there be a change of school year/term dates?

PP No we will still coordinate with Sefton Local Authority in the interest of our stakeholders

5. Why join Kew Woods with Greenbank's trust? Did we consult with any other schools?

CJ The governors discussed options with the DfE about Kew Woods becoming a single academy or an empty multi-academy trust. These options were not available due to capacity. The DfE advised to consider joining a local trust. The only local trust is The Southport Learning Trust. Governors contacted the Trust and discussed the option of joining.

6. What if we get to the point of needing to raise funds ie: selling off land?

IR The trust would not sell off land as it is intended for school use.

7. At what stage did we consult with the LA.?

CJ The LA held a meeting with all primary and secondary heads over a year ago where they invited representatives from the Diocese, Archdiocese and the Regional Schools Commissioner to talk to heads and governors about future direction. Since this point the governors have been looking at the best option for Kew Woods. The local authority contacted myself in September 2017 to ask if Kew Woods was converting to an academy. I responded not yet but we were looking into it and would keep them informed.

8. Have we consulted with other primary schools?

CJ At network meetings there have been opportunities for schools to discuss.

9. If the benefits of converting to an academy are so obvious why aren't other schools doing it?

IR The majority of secondary schools are academies in the local authority.

CJ More primary schools are now academising. Holy Trinity, St. Thomas, Litherland Moss have converted to academy status. Shoreside is currently in the process of converting.

12. Why did new parents (Sept 18 intake) only hear about it from the local newspaper?

CJ Letters were sent out to current parents on Friday 8th June. Admin posted out the letter to new parents. Unfortunately the press accessed the letter over the weekend and published the story online before most new Reception parents had received their letter.

13. Will class sizes change?

CJ Class changes will aim to be 30 pupils per class as they are now. Sefton will organise admissions still.

14. Will we still be answerable to Ofsted?

CJ Yes. We will be due an Ofsted inspection 2 years and 1 day after the day we convert to academy status.

15. What will happen to our Apple accreditation?

CJ Kew Woods will remain the school with the Apple accreditation in the Trust.

16. Is it likely that the capacity of the school will increase?

CJ My understanding is that the Trust is happy to keep the capacity of the school as it is now. IR agreed.

One parent stated that many parents did not attend the meeting as they felt academisation was a done deal and it was going to happen regardless, so there was no point in attending meeting.

Both PP and CJ said they would be disappointed if this was the case as we have good relationships with parents and the letter stated that this was a consultation process. CJ stated she had been around school speaking to parents at sports day, productions and assemblies and parents had not raised concerns.