

Academy Status 'Fact Finding' Information Evening (19.5.11)

Questions raised & Answers provided at the meeting

- Q How would conversion affect your relationship with feeder schools and the Admissions Policy?**
A The school does not intend to change the current arrangements with feeder schools or Admissions.
- Q Where do you get the advice re TUPE transfer – is it DfE?**
A There are many companies who are in business to offer such advice. We would look into buying in the expertise.
- Q If we convert where would we get guidance, advice and information on White Papers etc. from?**
A DfE communicate directly with all schools currently and there is no reason for this to change.
- Q With regards to the new responsibilities the Governing Body would take on, is there a forum for Academy advice for Governors specifically other than the DfE?**
A There are many companies who are in business to offer such advice. We would look into buying in the expertise.
- Q This is a school not a business. How do you ensure this is maintained with all the added business responsibility?**
A The school is currently a business and we have our own expertise on site with Local Authority / external support now.
- Q It would appear that we would need to buy in expertise?**
A Yes it would be our intention to buy in expertise to help with our 'fact finding' remit.
- Q Who would be responsible for the transportation of pupils to school?**
A The Local Authority is responsible for transporting pupils to their feeder schools now. This would not change.
- Q This new format for Academies has sprung from the Coalition Government. What happens if the Government changes?**
A That is something that will be investigated, but the Academy Funding Agreement is for 7 years in the first instance.
- Q What benefit would we get from becoming an Academy when it seems we would have to buy in more services and Governors would have to accept more responsibility?**
A The freedoms of Academy status are:
Freedom from Local Authority control
Ability to set staff pay and conditions
Freedom from following National Curriculum
Ability to change length of term and school days
Greater control over the school budget and access to the funding the LA currently spends on our behalf
- Q So why are we looking into Academy status – is it purely financial?**
A This really links into the question above. Academy status has such a high profile at the moment it is the responsibility of the Governors' to thoroughly investigate any likely opportunities for the benefit of the pupils in our school.
- Q Where would we get funding for Capital projects from?**
A The Department for Education (DfE).
- Q Can you get a loan as an Academy school?**
A Yes.
- Q What would happen if our school went into a deficit as an Academy?**
A We would not go into deficit.
- Q Is there a chance we would look at extending the age range of pupils if we went to Academy?**
A Anything is possible but there are many factors to consider in this e.g. more staff, accommodation etc.
- Q Do we have access to other sources of funding currently?**
A No not really apart from specific small pots we can bid for and our invaluable Parents Association who work very hard to support us.