WEBSITE

As you may already be aware, the governing body of the Over Hall Community School  (Over Hall Academies Limited) has applied and is proposing to join Cheshire Academies Trust. The governing body is now consulting with its community on whether the school’s conversion to MAT status should take place. Further information about what becoming an academy means, and how to comment on the proposals, is set out below.

### Will Over Hall Community School definitely become part of a MAT?

The governing body will submit an application to join the MAT, Cheshire Academies Trust and is working towards a conversion in Spring 2024. However, the school is not obligated to become part of the MAT until the contract between the multi academy trust and the Department for Education (known as the Funding Agreement) is signed.

The academy trust will not sign the Funding Agreement until parents and carers of pupils at the school, staff at the school, and pupils themselves have had the opportunity to comment on the proposals. We have invited the community of staff, parents and carers to share their thoughts or questions via email contact@overhall.cheshire.sch.uk or in writing for the attention of Mr Percival , Chair of Trustees via the school office, about the proposals to become an academy, or to comment on the proposals.  We will also be keeping pupils informed throughout the process.

Any comments or representations which are made about the proposals will be considered by the governing body before it takes the final decision to join the MAT. Details of how to provide comments and representations are set out below.

The governing body will not vote to proceed with academy conversion unless they are content that conversion would be in the best interests of the school, taking account of all of the legal and practical ramifications.

### What is an academy?

An academy is essentially an independent school which is funded by the state. It is independent of the local authority and receives its funding direct from central government.

We are proposing to move from a Single Academy to join Cheshire Academy Trust (a Multi Academy Trust). This means that we will be part of an academy group comprising of Kelsall Primary School, Manor Park School and Nursery, Mill View Primary School, Boughton Heath Academy, Bexton Primary School and Gayton Primary School.

### What are the benefits of being a Multi Academy?

In the school’s opinion the benefits are numerous:

* Give us greater freedoms in developing the school curriculum to make sure that it is personalised to the needs of our students to ensure they are inspired and motivated to succeed.
* Enable us to work together more effectively to improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly as the national arrangements change, for example in the way in which children are assessed.
* Build strong links between our schools and enable us to share best practice and expertise, for example in governance, estates management, bid writing – e.g. for money to make improvements to school buildings and financial planning.
* Enable us to support each other recognising areas of strength to support areas that require development.
* Increase the flexibility of use of our school budget and funds to give us more freedom to spend it to best meet the priorities of the school and our pupils.

### Will the admissions arrangements change?

Over Hall already deals with its own admission arrangements, and the local authority also decides which pupils should be offered places at the school. As a MAT, Cheshire Academies Trust will deal with admission arrangements which is bound by the national School Admissions Code, and School Admission Appeals Code.

The current admission arrangements will remain in place for the time being. If the academy wanted to change its admission arrangements consultation would be required.

### Will staff leave?

If the school moves from a Single Academy to a Multi Academy, all staff currently employed at Over Hall Community School will automatically transfer on theircurrent Pay and Conditions. Any change to Pay and Conditions in the future would be consulted upon with staff representatives.

### Will Over Hall Community School change?

We do not intend to change as a school except in ways which we think will improve the school even more. For students, it is unlikely that they will see much, if any, change in their day to day school lives.

Academies do have the power to vary their curriculums and vary the length of the school day, however, it is not intended to take any such steps at this stage and we would engage with parents/carers, staff and pupils if we did ever intend to make such changes in the future.

### How can I find out more?

We encourage you to email or put into writing if you have any questions, or simply want to learn more.

There is also more information about academies on the DfE website: <http://www.education.gov.uk/academies>

If you can’t find the answer to your question here, or on the DfE website, please contact school via email contact@overhall.cheshire.sch.uk or via telephone and representatives will try to assist.

### How can I make representations?

Representations can be made in writing to:

Mr I Percival

Chair of Trustees

Over Hall Community School

Ludlow Close

Winsford

 Cheshire CW7 1LX

Or by email to: contact@overhall.cheshire.sch.uk

The closing date for representations to be made is Friday 1st September 2023.