

### **What is an Academy?**

Academies are publicly funded independent schools, free from local authority control.

Academies have an Academy Trust which is responsible for the land and assets of the Academy.

### **What is the role of the Academy Trust?**

An Academy Trust is a charitable company responsible for the running of the Academy and has control over the land and other assets. It has a strategic role in running the Academy, but delegates day-to-day management of the school to the governors.

### **What will the responsibilities of the governing body be?**

The governing body will be responsible for establishing the Academy Trust. The Academy Trust will then enter into a funding agreement with the Secretary of State for the running of the Academy. The Academy Trust (made up of members) will be responsible for appointing the governors (also known as directors or Trustees) to the governing body of the Academy. It is the governing body that manages the Academy on behalf of the members of the Academy Trust. The key responsibilities are to:

- ensure the quality of educational provision
- challenge and monitor the performance of the Academy
- manage the Academy Trust's finances and property
- employ staff

It will be for the members of the governing body of the school to decide and agree, in discussion with the Secretary of State, who among them would wish to be members of the Academy Trust and which of them would wish to be governors of the Academy Trust (note that it is possible to be both a member and governor).

### **What freedoms do Academies enjoy?**

Academies can benefit from greater freedoms to help the school innovate and raise standards. These freedoms include:

- freedom from LA control
- financial freedom (direct funding from central government)
- ability to set their own pay and conditions for staff
- freedoms around the delivery of the curriculum
- ability to change the lengths of terms and schools days

### **What these freedoms would mean for Tring School?**

The principal difference for the school would be freedom from local authority control and direct control over all our finances.

### **What are the financial implications for Tring School?**

Academies should receive the same level of per-pupil funding as they would receive from the local authority (LA) as a maintained or foundation school. They also receive funding to meet their additional responsibilities that are no longer provided for them

by the LA. This means that we would receive the full amount of funding available to the school without any being 'top sliced' by the local authority. With full funding, the school would then have the freedom to choose which services to 'buy in' from the local authority (or elsewhere). We calculate that this direct funding approach would increase the school's budget by over £400,000 for the first year after conversion to an Academy.

### **Do we intend to change staff pay and conditions?**

There would be no change to staff terms and conditions. All existing staff will be covered by TUPE – Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) regulations.

### **Do we intend to change the school curriculum?**

Academies have greater legal freedom to develop their own curriculum and move beyond the national curriculum. At Tring School we are constantly seeking to improve our curriculum so that it meets the needs of all our students. This will continue if we become an Academy.

### **Do we intend to alter the lengths of terms or school days?**

At this point in time we have no intention of changing either the length of the school day or the length or timings of school terms.

### **Do we have to support other schools?**

One of the conditions of converting to Academy is that we support a local school to help raise standards. Our designated school to support has yet to be confirmed.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Will the name of the school change?**

No, there is no requirement to change the name of the school (e.g. to incorporate the word 'Academy').

### **What happens about exclusions?**

Academies must provide full-time off-site education from the sixth day of a fixed period exclusion. This is currently the case for all maintained schools and will not change if we convert to an Academy.

### **Will we retain our specialist Humanities specialism?**

Academies will be in exactly the same position as other schools regarding specialist status. Tring School will therefore remain as a specialist Humanities college.

### **What funding will be available to help schools convert to an Academy?**

Schools converting to Academy status will receive a grant of £25,000 to assist with any cost incurred, although we do not yet know whether this amount will cover all costs. If costs are less than this amount schools will retain the difference.

### **Do academies have to have an external sponsor?**

There is no requirement for the new style academies to have an external sponsor.

**How will converting to an Academy affect SEN support?**

Our excellent SEN provision will continue with students being supported throughout the school. The ARP (Communications Base) will continue to support students with specific needs. Academy status will not affect the admission of students who nominate the school on a statement.

**Who would own the land and the buildings?**

The land and buildings would be transferred from the local authority to the Academy Trust.

**What changes will there be on a day to day basis?**

There will be very little change to the way the school is run on a daily basis. However, the increased revenue will enable us to maintain, and improve, the high standards at Tring School.