



Executive Headteacher: Steve Robinson

6th October 2016

Dear Parents/Carers

Proposed Conversion to Academy Status

As you may be aware, increasing numbers of schools across Sheffield and the country have converted to academy status over recent years. It is the Government's declared aim that all schools become academies.

We have been considering our position on this for the past year and we are determined to make the right choice for us, keeping our identity and commitment to our community. We want to join with a like-minded group of schools who can work with us to improve our school in the future. We have therefore met with several regional and national multi-academy trusts to consider what they can offer.

As a result, we have applied with our local family of schools to become an academy under the Academies Act 2010 and are proposing to join L.E.A.D. Academy Trust, one of the highest performing multi-academy trusts (MAT) in the country.

We would like to invite you to a meeting on Wednesday 19 October 2016 at 6.00 pm to meet with us and representatives from LEAD to learn more about the proposals and to make any comments you might have.

This meeting forms a key part of our consultation process, and we have set out further information below.

What is an academy?

An academy is still a state school, but it is independent of the Local Authority (Sheffield City Council) and receives its funding directly from central government. As an academy, we have greater autonomy and control over many aspects of our work which we will exercise in partnership with LEAD Academy Trust.

What will becoming an academy mean for us?

- As we will receive our funding directly from the government it is likely that we will receive more funding as none of it will be retained by the Local Authority, and by joining with LEAD we will be able to benefit from joint services and contracts to reduce costs.
- We will have more autonomy over the curriculum that we teach and we do not have to teach elements of the national curriculum if we do not think they are appropriate.
- We will have more freedom working with LEAD to develop innovative ideas that build on the partnerships we have established with our partner schools in recent years.
- Working with LEAD, we can share good practice, adopt the best ideas and work together to achieve the best outcomes for our school community.

We have worked closely together with our family of schools for a number of years to improve provision and outcomes, as well as to enhance the experiences for children and young people in our community. We see this move to become an academy within the LEAD Academy Trust as a way to continue this path and accelerate improvement more rapidly.

Admissions arrangements will remain as they currently are, managed by the Local Authority. Our staff will transfer under the new arrangements, so you will not see any changes to your child's teachers, other than normal movement at the end of the year. There will be no requirement to change the uniform or the school badge/logo, but if we decide to do so we will only do that following consultation with our parents and school community.

Who are LEAD?

According to the Department for Education "The L.E.A.D. Academy Trust is one of the strongest sponsors operating in the East Midlands, with a track record of successfully improving underperforming schools..." and has been ranked among the top ten performing academy trusts/local authorities in the country for the past two years. They are based in the Nottingham area and want to develop a Sheffield hub.

We have included some information from LEAD on our website – "Frequently Asked Questions".

How can I comment?

Any comments or representations made about the proposed academy conversion will be considered by the governors and LEAD Academy Trust.

If you want to respond in writing, please send your comments to:

Mr K St Clair
Chair of Governors
Birley Community Primary
Thornbridge Avenue
Sheffield
S12 3AB

The closing date for comments on the proposals will be 11 November 2016.

Given how closely our family of schools has worked together over recent years, we believe it is a logical next step to join with a successful regional partnership, LEAD Academy Trust. Our intention is to continue the improvements we have seen in recent years, by building on that success with the knowledge and experience of LEAD. We see this as an exciting prospect for the future.

We look forward to discussing these proposals with you and hope that you feel you have the information you need. If you need anything further, do not hesitate to contact me at the school.

Yours sincerely



STEVE ROBINSON
EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER