

## Frequently Asked Questions:

## For Parents

### General Questions

#### ***What is a MAT?***

- A MAT is a Multi-Academy Trust. It is a legal entity that governs a group of schools through a single set of directors. It is set up by a group of schools, usually a local collaboration, that share a common ethos and vision.

#### ***Why are schools forming MATs both locally and nationally?***

- Changes in the educational landscape mean that the role of the Local Authority is diminishing and the Government see the long term future for schools as developing collaboratively through local groupings. Schools can use the strong collaboration and accountability afforded by the MAT to drive up standards and share best practice and services across the trust, replacing aspects of former local authority support.

### Specific Questions

#### ***Why do we want to set up a MAT?***

Through setting up a MAT with other local schools we stand to gain through:

- Sharing expertise, resources and best practice and raising standards across key stages.
- Greater purchasing power for contracts meaning cost savings through economies of scale.
- Forming a local MAT will give us the structure to share our ethos and vision with our local community.
- Across the Country academy chains and trusts are rapidly expanding. Such collaborations may impact on our future admissions and we believe we must explore all options moving forward. The MAT offers us the strongest framework and with local schools.

#### ***Why Whixall and Prees?***

- We have a close working relationship and a similar ethos.
- We are in a close geographical location.
- We anticipate that we could be approached by other local primary schools to join the Multi Academy Trust in the period ahead, but we believe in starting small and piloting the concept of MAT tightly on a manageable scale.

#### ***Will the schools lose their individuality / identity?***

- A key principle of our MAT is that member academies maintain their own character. By working in partnership, all members of the trust can achieve higher standards and efficiencies.
- Both schools have a common commitment to developing the whole child and promoting creativity as well as raising standards. We would be building on our family ethos.

#### ***Will there be a loss of autonomy for the local Governing Bodies?***

- It will be up to the trust board of the MAT to decide how much power is delegated back to the local governing bodies, so ultimately they may be very similar as now.

***Will working with other schools mean lowering our own standards or possibly detracting resources from our own school?***

- Sharing expertise can only improve our standards and resourcing.

***Whose decision is it whether or not we become an academy?***

- The decision to apply to become an academy rests with the school's Governors. The decision as to whether the application is accepted rests with the Department for Education and the Regional School Commissioner for the Midlands. As we are a Church of England foundation, we also need the consent of the Diocesan Education Body to proceed.

***Is everything already decided?***

- **No. Applying or even having the application accepted in principle does not automatically mean that the schools will become an Academy. There is a period of roughly four months for further development, consultation and consideration of the issues. At any point up to the signing of the Funding Agreement, the Governors or the DfE could decide to abort the process.**