



An Daras
Multi Academy Trust



Statement for Stakeholders of Lew Trenchard C of E Primary School Conversion to Multi-Academy Trust Status

“Creating a Community of Lifelong Learners”

What is being proposed?

The Governing Bodies of Lew Trenchard C of E Primary are considering a proposal to convert to Academy status in July 2016 and join An Daras (St Stephens and Windmill Academies, Werrington and North Petherwin Schools and St Catherine’s C of E Primary) Multi Academy Trust (MAT). St Catherine’s formal conversion will take place in May 2016 and this will create a group of 5 local primary schools. Lew Trenchard are proposing that they will become the sixth member of this Multi Academy Trust.

Any decision on whether or not to convert to Academy status will be taken by our Governing Body based on what is considered best for our school, our students, our staff and for Lew Trenchard in the wider Christian community. As part of the decision making process, the Governing Body is committed to undertaking full consultation with our stakeholders and will take their views into account before any final decision is taken. The purpose of this statement is, therefore, to introduce the proposals to you, signpost you to where you can find additional information and inform you how you can take part in the consultation.

What is an Academy?

An academy is a state-funded school which operates independently within the requirements of national codes of practice for state schools. **However, unlike a state school it receives its funding directly from central government rather than through a local authority.** Under new legislation introduced by the present government, schools are encouraged to convert to Academies. The current DfE preferred MAT model is for 5 or 6 local schools to join together to create strong and sustainable educational provision within their local context. The two Launceston town schools who originally formed An Daras MAT are rated good and outstanding.

What is a Multi-Academy Trust?

The model involves a family of schools forming a ‘Multi Academy Trust’ (MAT) under a Shared Company. The essential principles of the model are that no schools in MAT are left behind, it involves no external business sponsorship and there will be no change to the distinctive and individual nature of each schools. **Therefore the Christian distinctiveness of Lew Trenchard will remain, as will its ethos and close links with its local community.**

Why convert?

Schools have always operated within a changing educational landscape and the introduction by the government of the Academies programme means that for schools to do nothing is not a viable option. It is the Government’s vision that the majority of schools in England will over time convert to Academy status and will cease to be ‘maintained’ by their Local Authority.

Why join ADMAT?

Lew Trenchard Primary School has previously rejected opportunities to join a local Federation and a Cooperative Trust of schools. The governors believed that either arrangement would have resulted in a loss of the individual character and autonomy of the school. However, the governors have seen how the educational and political climate has changed and believe that our school would benefit from joining a group which possesses the integrity and expertise that can help to maintain the school’s good reputation and development. A number of options have been considered and key criteria have been that the MAT should be comprised solely of schools from the primary school sector and that it should be locally based and reflect the character community.

It will be beneficial to our school to work closely with a group that includes another Church of England School. The Head Teacher of St Catherine's C of E Primary currently is a member of the Board of Directors of ADMAT.

St Catherine's was part of the original MAT proposals and had intended to convert alongside Windmill and St Stephens. Some legal reasons linked to the trust deed of church schools prevented them initially from moving forward. However, these have been resolved and they have received support from their Diocesan Board to move forward provided that the MAT upholds certain principles. The MAT has agreed to ensure that the academy is conducted in accordance with the principles, practices and tenets of the Church of England both generally and in particular in relation to arranging for religious education and daily acts of worship and in having regard to any advice and following any directives issued by the Diocesan Board of Education.

Outlined below are the **ADMAT Vision and Aims**

Vision Statement

To be the primary gateway for life-long learning ensuring every child in the Multi Academy Trust is equipped for present and future success.

Core Aim

We are committed to improving the life chances of children by delivering high quality academic, social, economic and experiential learning to raise aspirations and contribute effectively to positive personal development.

We will achieve this by;

- Accelerating and sustaining children's progress towards higher achievement.
- Ensuring achievement gaps for disadvantaged children are addressed.
- Ensuring children are equipped for the next phase of learning.
- Creating an enjoyable and creative curriculum that meets the learning needs of children.
- Providing for children a safe, stimulating, caring but challenging learning environment.
- Encouraging children's active participation in outdoor and sporting learning opportunities.
- Working positively with stakeholders and partners to provide an integrated educational experience for children and families.

ADMAT Governance

The model proposed see **APPENDIX 1** will ensure that each school will maintain its own distinctiveness. This will be the responsibility of the **Local Governing Advisory Body (LGAB)** Local Governing Advisory Bodies lead local improvement, prioritise school initiatives and monitor impact.

- **LGAB creates individual school Vision and Aims, agrees policy and sets targets**
- LGAB participates in all committees and ADMAT directors board
- **LGAB safeguards the individuality and ethos of each school**
- LGAB has a major role in ensuring teaching and learning is of high quality
- LGAB preserves effective parental involvement and parent voice
- LGAB ensures a local user driven model of effective governance is maintained
- LGAB participates in local school staff recruitment and wider MAT recruitment
- LGAB contributes to local budget setting through the annual improvement plan process
- LGAB contributes to wider MAT strategic development through the MAT committee system (the LGAB has its own Terms of Reference)
- LGAB responsibilities are clearly devolved through the ADMAT Cyclical Governance Plan. They meet twice a term.
- LGAB are essential to the ongoing success of individual schools as well as the MAT as a whole
- LGAB committee has the Head of School/Head teacher as an integrated member who reports directly to the LGAB
- LGAB has the opportunity to participate in annual Performance Management of HoS/Head Teacher

What will change?

Conversion to Academy Status for Trust schools is not too difficult. The Governing Body of Lew Trenchard School already manage the school finances and have responsibility for employment and admissions. Under the proposed model Governance of our schools would remain largely unchanged as the majority of governors on the Local Governing Bodies at Lew Trenchard would be appointed as currently and there would be staff and parent governors as now.

The only difference would be the establishment of an overarching **Multi Academy Trust Board of Directors** consisting of representatives from each School Local Governing Body and members of the local community.

ADMAT Governance- Board of Directors (BoD)

- BoD structure ensures ADMAT Articles of Association/funding agreements are met
- BoD is recruited and approved by the ADMAT members
- BoD have with specific skills providing accountability and effective high quality strategic leadership across the MAT
- BoD structure ensures the LGAB are effective and rigorous by devolving key leadership responsibilities to the LGAB
- BoD is responsible for meeting the LGAB identified needs of each individual school
- BoD provides quality assurance of LGAB priorities
- BoD provides a central decision making body to ensure central ADMAT services meet the needs of individual schools

We now have the opportunity to work together in a supportive Multi Academy Trust which builds on the collaborative structures that have been outlined. This will give extended opportunities to share good teaching and learning, join together to buy resources and develop a collaborative way of working for the benefit of all our children and families and create a pathway for the long term sustainability of all of our schools.

We have a vision for education that goes beyond individual schools and changes our perception from 'my school', to 'our schools'. The challenge for us all is 'How can we share our gifts and talents to ensure all education for all of our children is 'outstanding?'

A number of other elements would remain unchanged. An Academy would still be bound by the statutory codes for Special Educational Needs and the Admissions criteria and catchment areas for each school would remain unchanged. There are no planned changes to the pay and conditions of staff, to the start and finish times or length of the school day and no change to the school's policy on pupil discipline or the school uniform.

Our schools will continue to offer a broad and balanced curriculum. However, an Academy is not bound by the prescriptions of the national curriculum and Governors are conscious that this freedom could offer an additional safeguard from an imposed wider national agenda or curriculum which may not accord with the local contextual learning requirements of pupils in the Launceston area. At Lew Trenchard we have a vision for Christian education that will remain a distinctive element of the school.

All our schools have excellent relationships with their Local Authority and work well in partnership with other local schools. That commitment to wider partnership working will remain and we will work with our Local Authorities across a wide range of providers in an atmosphere of mutual support.

Appendix 1 shows the operational structure for the Multi Academy Trust (MAT). Rather than having separate schools led by head teachers, there would be an Academy Board of Directors responsible for the strategic operations. These would be implemented and managed by an Academy Leadership Team of Executive Head, School Improvement Officer, Business Manager and possibly a Premises Manager. A school specific leader - Head of School - would sit on the Local Board of Governors to help direct school improvement in each individual setting and facilitate the retention of that setting.

How will the consultation work?

The consultation period will run from Friday 29th January 2016 to 9:00am on 29th February 2016. The Governing Body is consulting with all our combined stakeholders including:

- The Exeter Diocesan Board of Education
- School Governors
- Parents and known future parents
- Pupils
- Staff including Staff unions and associations
- The Devon Local Authority
- Elected representatives (local MPs, Councillors)
- The wider local community including voluntary groups associated with the Schools
- The feeder schools for secondary education - Okehampton, Launceston and Tavistock College

How can I make my views known?

You are invited to submit your comments and views using the following e-mail headteacher@lewtrenchard.devon.sch.uk

In addition, you are welcome to attend the Consultation events listed below. Any views expressed at the meetings will be captured and included in the final considerations of the Governing Body.

Stakeholder Consultation Meeting Timetable:

All at Lew Trenchard School on Wednesday 24th February

Administration staff, teaching and support staff - 3.45pm
Parents and other community stakeholders - 4.45pm

Before I give my views where can I find out more information?

Further information generally on Academies look on the government website.

<https://www.gov.uk/types-of-school/academies>

Finally

We feel it is important to emphasise the distinctiveness of joining the An Daras Multi Academy Trust proposal.

It is underpinned by a commitment to work for the good of all schools within the MAT, to ensure that none are left in a vulnerable position and **our individual identity, characteristics and ethos are maintained and strengthened.**

Furthermore, our schools will maintain their commitment to working with others within and beyond our local area for the benefit of all concerned.

The freedoms, with the resources, that Academy status will bring would be major factors in enabling our schools to continue to provide the best possible education for our young people and to serve our wider local community.

ADMAT WILL NOT:

- Impose a single MAT wide learning pedagogy approach
- Change successful and unique curriculum provision at individual schools
- Impose a standard website or uniform across MAT schools
- Impose a model of decision making for individual LGAB
- Reduce staff training opportunities
- Ignore parent and pupil voice for individual schools
- Make important local decisions without full liaison with the LGAB of individual schools

The Benefits

Being in a MAT brings financial benefits to all member schools as there is less duplication, larger reserves to invest.

Academies continue to be better funded than maintained schools.

EFA grant funding is accessible through a points scoring system to allow for major capital projects and the MAT has experience of this process.

Major resource items e.g. IT and minibus provision can be ordered as multiples thereby reducing purchase costs.

Through appropriate succession planning and effective staffing structures reductions in staffing costs is achievable e.g. MAT school leadership costs for the five year span 2014-2019 will have been reduced by £100,000. This saving can be reinvested into direct learning provision for pupils.

Staff CPD can be delivered more effectively and at reduced cost through ADMAT combined INSET. Wider high quality services (e.g. legal, HR, finance, insurance) can be accessed at a lower cost for individual schools through the use of MAT contracts.

The ADMAT Business Plan is currently projecting achievable long term building and resource improvements over the next 3 and 5 years.

Thank you for taking the time to read this consultation letter.

Appendix 1

ADMAT Members Individual school nominated member				
ADMAT Board of Directors Education Directors, Business Directors, Community Directors, Premises Directors, Local Governing Body Directors				
ADMAT Operations Team Executive Head Teacher, Academy Improvement Officer, Academy Safeguarding Officer, Academy Business Manager, School Leaders				
ADMAT Committees Improvement and Strategic Development, Resources and Staffing (including Audit), Local Governing Bodies				
School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4	School 5
Local Governing Body	Local Governing Body	Local Governing Body	Local Governing Body	Local Governing Body
School Leaders	School Leaders	School Leaders	School Leaders	School Leaders
Pupils, Parents and Staff	Pupils, Parents and Staff	Pupils, Parents and Staff	Pupils, Parents and Staff	Pupils, Parents and Staff