



STAMFORD PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Mrs S Price

15th June 2023

Regarding: Stamford Park Primary School **Consultation on Proposed Conversion to Academy Status**

Dear Parents / Carers,

The Governing Board of Stamford Park Primary School (SPPS) is beginning the application process to become an academy. SPPS is applying under the Academies Act 2010 and is proposing to join the Hamblin Education Trust (HET). Part of this application process is a consultation (lasting four weeks) with parents, carers and stakeholders.

This application has come after ten months of discussion, research and meetings with a number of Trusts, with experts and with the Board. We would like to share the information that we have learned on our journey together and answer some potential questions that may come to mind for you. You will also find at the bottom of this letter information about the process and the next steps for us.

What is an academy?

An academy is essentially a school which is independent of the local authority and receives its funding directly from central government. It is proposed that SPPS will become an academy as part of the HET (Hamblin Education Trust). This means that the school will be part of an academy group currently comprising of Altrincham Grammar School for Boys (AGSB) and North Cestrian School (NCS), and any schools that may join the HET in the future.

How will this change my school on a day-to-day basis?

There are no changes to the school on a day-to-day basis. Our uniform, our signs, our additional clubs, our timetable, our staff and our intake remain the same. We will continue to have the autonomy we value so highly, whilst also being open to changes we may choose to make (see next question for more information).

What are the benefits of being an academy?

In SPPS's Governing Board opinion, the main benefits are that:

- academies are independent of local authority control - this means that academies have more freedom as to how they conduct themselves; for example, how we choose our contractors, how we choose to adjust our curriculum to work for our children (see below for further information) and how we choose to spend elements of our funds to best benefit our children.
- academies receive their funding directly from central government - this means that academies effectively receive more funding because none is retained by the local authority for the provision of central services. An academy can therefore choose exactly what to spend its money on. We would pay a certain amount into the HET fund for their services (including



finance overview and audit) but this is a smaller amount than what we currently pay to Trafford Council.

- there are a number of uncertain financial elements coming as the future looms – school budgets are going down and pupil numbers are remaining the same. We feel that we are ‘better together’ with other, well-run, well-respected, local schools as we prepare to look ahead for how to keep SPPS with the same morals, ethics, teaching standards and aims for all our children. We want SPPS to continue teaching for another 117 years and we see this as the next step for our longevity and legacy.
- SPPS will benefit from the experience of the HET in areas such as curriculum development, teaching best practice and high-level support.
- as part of a ‘small Trust,’ SPPS will have access to much bigger funding pots and grants to help bring our building up to the standard and usage we have all wanted it to be at for the past few years. We feel confident that we can get more work done in a timelier manner to finally get on top of the many issues our school building faces. We would no longer be on a long list of projects Trafford Council are trying to work through; we would be in control of our own buildings.

Are there any disadvantages to becoming an academy?

We have considered several points and had multiple discussions around all elements of this change but at this time we do not see a disadvantage in becoming an academy or in joining the Hamblin Trust.

Will SPPS definitely become an Academy?

The governing body has started the application to convert to academy status and is working towards a conversion for 2024. However, the school is not obliged to become an academy until the contract between the HET and the Department for Education (DfE) (known as the Funding Agreement) is signed.

Neither the HET nor the DfE will sign the Funding Agreement until parents and carers of pupils at SPPS, staff and others, have had the opportunity to comment on whether SPPS’s academy conversion should take place, and until the governors of SPPS finally resolve to convert to an academy. Details of how to provide comments and thoughts are set out later in this letter.

There is also a process of due diligence that will happen over the coming months for both SPPS and the HET – which means should either ‘side’ find any issues or concerns, it could pause, or stop the application. If this happens, we will update you.

Will the admission arrangements change?

There is no intention to change the current admission criteria should SPPS become an academy. There is no intention to change the current admission criteria for AGBS or North Cestrian either.

Will the plans affect staff?

If SPPS converts to an academy, all staff currently employed by the local authority will automatically transfer to the new academy on their current pay and conditions. Mrs Price has spoken separately to the staff.

Will SPPS change?

We see the changes as being positive for our building initially. As we progress with the HET, we will also see positive changes and experiences for our pupils – understanding the conduit to moving into

secondary education, building on the national curriculum to make it more relevant for our children and better opportunities for our staff to learn and continue to be challenged in their specialist areas.

We do not intend to change SPPS except in ways that we think will improve the school.

How can I find out more?

We would like to invite parents / carers of SPPS pupils to a drop-in session at SPPS on Monday 3rd July from 6.30pm – 7.30pm, to learn more about the proposals to become an academy, or to ask questions on the proposals.

We are also holding meetings with staff during this period and will be answering any questions they may have.

Please visit our website at <https://www.spprimary.org.uk/page/?title=Academisation&pid=1223> where you can find further information about the proposed academy conversion and the process that the governors of SPPS have gone through in determining the future of SPPS.

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

How can I make representations?

To respond to this consultation on whether SPPS's academy conversion should take place, or to voice any concerns you may have, we would invite parents / carers to write to:

**Academy Consultation
Stamford Park Primary School
Cedar Lane
Hale
Altrincham
WA15 9JB**

Or to email the school at:

academyconsultation@spprimary.org.uk

The closing date by which representations can be made is Thursday 13th July at midday.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs. S Price (Head Teacher) and Mrs. E DeAbaitua (Chair of Governors)
on behalf of the Governing Body of Stamford Park Primary School