

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS - STAFF**

### **Pay and Conditions:**

#### **Would the Multi Academy Trust employ specialists to cover the whole trust?**

This would depend on the nature of the post and whether it is needed locally, across the hub or across the Trust

#### **How long does TUPE protection last? Will pay and conditions change? How long will employee pay and conditions stay the same after conversion?**

TUPE is in place to protect pay and conditions on transfer. Any changes in the future will be consulted on. The Trust's ambition is to be the employer of choice.

#### **What impact will the Multi Academy Trust conversion have on the pension scheme for support staff? Will our pensions be affected?**

There is no intention to change this for existing staff although there may be opportunities for other options if staff would prefer to be in a different scheme.

#### **Will the academy schools follow the Teachers' Pay and Conditions document? Is that the case for pensions? Sick, maternity pay? Working hours? CPD entitlements? Will the academy recognise previous teaching service?**

TUPE will ensure particulars of employment will be protected at the point of transfer. Should there be the need for change in the future (positively or negatively) there will be consultation. There is no intention to bring detriment to staff conditions. The Trust wants to be the employer of choice.

#### **Will I need to sign a new contract when I become an employee of the Multi Academy Trust?**

No

#### **Would I be employed by the school or by the hub?**

You will be employed by the Trust

#### **Will we still be paid from Cornwall Council?**

No, the Trust will pay your salary

#### **Will all schools pay into a fund to cover pensions and /or redundancy?**

The trust will continue to pay employer contributions for pensions and make provisions for redundancy

**Once conversion has taken place, are teachers guaranteed their current positions or will there be movement between schools?**

If their current post remains available in their existing school, we will not insist on staff moving to another a school. The emphasis is on opportunities for career and professional development. If the Trust needs someone to be flexible with location this can be done in two ways – either through a colleague volunteering for this, or newly recruited staff having this built into the conditions of their role. Legally, if it is a reasonable alternative to redundancy, you can be required to move schools. Current MAT models elsewhere have shown that MATs often offer great stability as we are able to retain roles within the Trust.

One of the benefits of working in a Multi Academy Trust is sharing best practice and collaborative working. We would not expect unreasonable travel across the Trust.

**Will it mean more redundancies?**

The reason for redundancies occurring in schools is when the funding reduces and affects what we can offer in a school. Several of our schools have been in this position already. We anticipate that the budget savings we will make as a MAT will enable schools to sustain more of our workforce than we would by remaining as maintained schools. However, as is now the case, we cannot guarantee there won't be redundancies. We anticipate that any economies of scale through staffing will be achieved over time as people move on to other jobs.

**“Seek to honour pay and conditions” makes me very nervous.**

Because nationally pay and conditions continue to change, it isn't possible to give a blanket reassurance that nothing will change. Just as with the establishment of the Co-operative Trust, staff were told that P&Cs would continue as before, up until and unless the national picture changed. All schools in the trust have continued to honour the sentiment of this agreement and this would hopefully continue to be the case but no organisation currently operating in an education environment can predict too far ahead.

**Will I have to apply for a new job role after my existing job role finishes with the pupil I am supporting?**

Usually when this happens in a school, the head teacher examines the needs of the pupils coming through the school and if there is still a need for the post redeploys existing staff. If there is no need, the post ends – either the temporary contract ends or a redundancy process is put in place. The benefit of the Multi Academy Trust is that there may be other opportunities for redeployment rather than the job ending.

**Will staffing structures be available showing responsibilities and the payment attached to each post?**

Non-teaching roles job descriptions and grades for each role across schools are freely available and advertised with each vacancy, as are teaching/leadership posts.

Each school has its own staffing structure and over time we would review these.

**Childcare vouchers - will my voucher scheme be safe for the next 2 years under TUPE?**

Yes

**What is the current thinking of the intended board on the role of Trade Unions?**

Trade Unions play an important role and the collective bargaining agreements in place with county for union representation would transfer as part of the TUPE process.

**What changes do you envisage the conversion having on secretaries working practice i.e. LFS?**

At this current time no decisions have been made in respect of changes in working practice. If there are to be any changes these will be communicated to all secretaries and it will ensure that a plan will be in place so there is no disruption e.g. if the LFS SLA was no longer purchased.

**What training will the secretaries receive for any changes that they will be expected to put into place?**

If there are any changes training will be provided to secretaries.

**Where do you go for training, moderation and advice outside of the Multi Academy Trust?**

As now, we utilise a range of training both within and beyond our existing trust – this would continue to be the case

**Other:**

**Would parents still have a free choice over schools under the MAT?**

Yes. Our admissions policies will not change

**How can staff become involved in the decision making process? Are there opportunities for staff at all levels to be part of this?**

In terms of the journey towards setting up the Multi Academy Trust it is important that all staff get involved in the discussions in their schools – hence the staff meetings and the opportunities to ask questions such as these. The questions raised here, or emailed to us via Karen Teague, are being used to help us to shape the final model. We want this to work well for everyone. There will be a formal consultation stage later this year.

For the future there are opportunities for staff to be a part of the school's forum which enables all stakeholders to have an ongoing say in the work of the Trust.

### **Finance and Budget: Please see the FAQ parents section**

**Will each school manage its own budget? How will this work if that's not the case? How are funding proportions decided between the 17 schools?**

Each school budget will have a percentage top sliced to pay for central services; the rest of the school's budget is allocated to that school.

**What happens if a school needs extra funding, e.g. to support a child with additional needs and they have no money left in their budget?**

As now, schools need to ensure that they make budgetary provision for such matters. If the needs require an ECH plan, we will apply to county in the usual way.

**What happens if the academy needs to make money saving decisions, who decides? CEO – Ultimately the Head of Helston. How can they make considered choices on budget? Are budget decisions going to be made on the basis of pupil number?**

The Trustees have the responsibility to ensure financial probity. Any decision taken will be in line with the co-operative values.

**Is our school financially responsible for future financial mismanagement of other schools?**  
No

**How would the school source finances for building works in the future?**

There are funding streams from the EFA to finance expansion or improvement to buildings. As a MAT of our size, with our number of schools, we will be given an annual grant linked to the Condition Improvement Fund. This allows us to decide how to allocate the resources for building work without having to apply annually as other academies have to do.

### **The Model:**

**Why 17 schools? Seems like a huge number of stakeholders. Why so many schools in the MAT? I know some have 3 or 4. Bigger numbers of schools, less voice?**

The Schools in the Co-operative Trust have worked really well together and the head teachers and governors want this to continue. The Regional Schools Commissioner has been very clear about the viability of a MAT being linked to its size, primarily based on pupil numbers. Smaller MATs are beginning to join larger ones in order to make things work effectively. In early conversations we did discuss establishing smaller groups but there was little appetite for that approach. If we started with smaller MATs we would eventually need to join them together and there would be no additional funding for this to happen.

Each school will have its own Forum to ensure that schools maintain their unique ethos and have their voice heard. Each Forum will have representatives on the Hub Council which will have a clear scheme of delegation from the trustees to govern the work of the schools in that hub.

**Are Directors/Governors fully aware of their level of accountability?**

Yes they are – they understand it is a huge commitment and they are willing to undertake this important role. They are all experienced governors, with a range of business and education backgrounds.

**Support for Pupils:**

**Within the MAT when statements have gone how are we going to support these pupils?  
Where does the TA fit in?**

As co-operative schools, our values include equity and equality. The support for pupils with educational special needs are really important. The allocation of funding for children with ECHP plans will continue as will the expectation that schools provide the first £6,000 of provision for these pupils. Schools will still manage their budgets and need to make provision for these children. This is a challenge as a maintained school. We hope that through economies of scale in purchasing services and resources, overall we will be better off and our finances will go further. TAs will continue to be an important part of the schools' work force.