

Dear Parents and Carers,

As our consultation period closes the Governing Board wanted to provide an update on the next steps in our journey of evaluating the proposal for our school to convert to an academy and join The Learning Trust MAT.

What Happens Next Following the Consultation Period?

We have two immediate priorities which are:

1. Responding to Questions Submitted to the Consultation Inbox

We are now busy completing the process of collating and responding to the 300+ questions that have been submitted so we can publish responses on the website to be available to all parents and the local community.

There are a number of themes within the questions and naturally some duplication, so we plan to respond to these key themes and where appropriate our responses will include signposting to information already provided, or sources of further reading. We will update you when this information is available on the website.

2. Due Diligence (Initial Stage)

We are progressing with the first stage of our due diligence (of which the consultation was part) which will inform the next stage of our discussions and decision making process.

Included in that research is reviewing the questions parents have submitted to highlight any areas where the Board require further information, as well as considering the views that have been submitted (both verbal and written) throughout the consultation period.

Following the completion of these pieces of work, we will be in a position to move on to the next decision point.

What Are the Next Stages?

The Governing Board will review its findings from the initial due diligence work and vote on whether we proceed to the next stage.

Should the Governors vote to progress then the next stage would be to “Register Interest”, where the Department of Education will provide a Project Lead to give professional, tailored support to the Governing Board to guide us through the remainder of the due diligence work.

Registering an interest does not commit the school to becoming an academy or joining TLT; the final decision will be voted on when the Governing Board have satisfied itself that all the necessary due diligence work is complete and have reviewed that information thoroughly.

What is the Meeting Schedule for the Board for the Remainder of the Academic Year?

There are several meetings planned before the end of term. To give context, as well as the work involved in the proposal it has been important to also ensure the day to day responsibilities of the Governing Board are undertaken. This encompasses two Committees as well as the full Governing Board which meet termly, in addition to the extraordinary meetings specific to the academy proposal.

Due to work schedules and existing family commitments of all the governors, we generally meet in the evenings. We must also be mindful that the academic calendar is very busy - particularly in the summer term - and as such this creates a very long day for staff governors (of which we have 3) when they are remaining in school until 8.30/9pm in the evening and their wellbeing remains a key

priority. In between meetings we are also committed to compiling the responses to questions and researching due diligence matters.

What Timelines Are the Governing Board Working To?

We have found it essential to remain flexible and fluid throughout this process, such as extending the Consultation Period and providing additional information to assist parents. However, it is important we maintain momentum and as such we will provide an update on our progress by the end of the summer term.

Finally....

We must stress that at all times the children continue to remain our top priority through ensuring the Senior Leadership Team of the school and all the staff are able to continue their primary responsibilities of educating our children effectively and safely.

Thank you for the questions and comments that have been submitted to date – we appreciate the interest that has been shown. If you wish to submit any further thoughts before the consultation closes tomorrow (21st June), then this can be done by either submitting an e-mail to the inbox consultation@belgrave.cheshire.sch.uk or via the paper form, a copy of which can be printed from page 6 of the Consultation Letter on the website under the section headed Consultation.

Please also refer back to the information on the website to refresh your memory on the details of the original statement and background to the proposal and information subsequently uploaded since the consultation commenced which includes our risk analysis; updated Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) document and newsletter.

To summarise, by the end of term the Governing Board are working towards:

- Responding to the questions submitted through an update in the Consultation section of the school website;
- Progressing with our due diligence on the proposal;
- Reviewing our findings and voting on whether to continue to progress;
- Providing an update of our progress on the above by the end of the summer term.

Kind regards,

The Governors of Belgrave Primary School