



Lower Park School
Hazelbadge Road,
Poynton,
Cheshire,
SK12 1 HE
Telephone: 01625 872560

Email: head@lowerpark.cheshire.sch.uk
Website: www.lowerpark.school.cheshire.sch.uk
Headteacher: Amelia Lomas

25th April 2023

Dear Parents, Carers and Staff,

Possible Academisation

Over recent years schools have been encouraged by the government to convert to Academy status*, indeed the government published a White Paper in 2022 stating that it was aiming for schools "to be in, or joining, a strong trust by 2030".

The academisation process has been gathering pace in Cheshire East and in July 2022 there were 58 (37%) of schools maintained by the local authority and 98 (63%) academy schools. Many of the academy schools belong to a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT**). Whilst the government has moved away from the 2030 deadline the academisation agenda is still being promoted by the government.

In the autumn of 2022, the Governors of Lower Park wanted to explore the academisation process and review possible benefits for Lower Park School.

A working party examined potential partners based on specific criteria, the priority being a similarity of values and culture to Lower Park. Over the past year we have looked in detail at several local MATs, visited schools, and have had informal talks with potential partners.

We have now reached a stage where we have identified two MATs that we would like to explore in greater depth, namely The Fallibroome Academy and Aspire Educational Trust.

We will be inviting them in to present details of their MAT's ethos, culture, priorities and expansion plans. This is the first stage in the process and no formal decisions will be taken without a formal consultation.

The process to date has highlighted the potential benefits of finding the right partner, namely:

- curriculum freedom but with access to enhanced support and resources
- greater access to specialist resources, HR, SEND, Legal
- collaboration and sharing of good practice across schools from diverse backgrounds
- professional development and training for staff
- career development opportunities
- economies of scale
- specialist building and maintenance management

We have set up an 'Academisation' link on our website and will be populating the pages with FAQs from our staff and community. Staff, parents and carers can ask questions by emailing academisationquestions@lowerpark.cheshire.sch.uk

This is an initial exploration to examine if academisation is right for Lower Park.

Our priority is to maintain what is unique, successful and special about Lower Park whilst continuing to explore and potentially strengthen our links to the wider educational community.

I will keep you informed of progress.

Yours sincerely

Clara Kenyon
Chair of Governors
Lower Park School

***Academy Status**

An academy school in England is a state funded school which is directly funded by the Department of Education and independent of local authority control.

The terms of the arrangements are set out in individual academy funding agreements.

****Multi-Academy Trust (MAT)**

A multi-academy or school trust is an academy trust that operates more than one academy school. The group of schools in a multi-academy trust work together to advance education for the public benefit.