

Autumn Term

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Granby Primary School

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GRANBY NEWSLETTER SPECIAL EDITION

From Head teacher, Peter Fowler, and Chair of Governors, Glenys Mulvany, on behalf of the Full Governing Board of Granby Primary School

Dear Parents and Carers

There has been lots of discussion in the media about the Government's desire for school to convert to academies. The current situation is that:

- The Government's white paper, 'Educational Excellence Everywhere' sets out its aim for all maintained schools to have converted, or be in the process of conversion by 2020
- By 2022, local authorities will no longer maintain schools
- School Improvement services will not be provided by the local authority after 2016 – 2017
- The national funding formula is changing and there will be reduced mainstream and high needs funding available
- A 'soft' funding formula will be in place over a two-year transitional period until '18 - '19
- A reformed national funding formula will be in place from '19 – '20 which aims to provide gains for under-funded schools whilst those with better funding will have time to make savings without damaging the quality of their provision
- A Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) will average around 10 – 12 schools, around 1500 pupils
- In the longer term, the average will increase to around 30
- There will be no 'empty' MATs – Trusts with only one school in them

Locally, Leicester City has previously held out against academisation with a keen desire to keep the city community together and retain collaboration. However it is becoming accepted that this is no longer a viable option. As more schools become academies, the authority will struggle to provide central services (some of which have already ceased) which will have a detrimental impact on remaining maintained schools.

Chairs of Governors and head teachers have therefore had to explore the prospect of academy conversion. Granby Governors have done a great deal of work over the last year, looking into what this may mean for our school.

The timing of any decisions about conversion is a critical issue to consider. Many Leicester City schools are currently in negotiations about joining or creating a MAT and it is possible that good MATs may get themselves established with a finite number of partners, closing the door to others. Simultaneously, Leicester City will no longer be providing school improvement support and we need to consider how this might be brought into Granby. Working with schools which have already received an 'outstanding' Ofsted grading might be one way of doing this.



*Peter Fowler,
Head teacher*



Values and ethos

Granby Governors have agreed that if a MAT is to be considered, then the values and ethos of the other schools must dovetail with our own and there must be a synergism resulting from the alliance. At this early stage, it has been agreed that there are currently 5 factors which must dominate any decisions about academy conversion. These are (in no particular order):

- The driver for conversion can only be school improvement
- Ethos and philosophy are core factors in deciding which partners we might want to work with
- We must take every possible step to future-proof any arrangements we enter into
- Children, parents and staff are key considerations in any change of status
- Granby Governors want to remain proactive and in control of the process

We also need to consider questions such as do we want to be in a MAT with other primaries, secondaries or special schools? Could we or should we be a lead school in a MAT—this would require extra work and would take our focus away from school improvement, so we think not.

NEXT STEPS

On reflection, Granby Governors feel that this is the appropriate time to proactively seek to join a MAT arrangement with like-minded schools. Granby's values and ethos would be the guidelines which dictate which partners will be the best fit for our school.

We will therefore actively be seeking partners which:

- have school improvement as the main driver
- are primary schools with a similar nature, values and ethos to our own
- use a flat structure so that no single school or person has a greater sphere of influence than others
- has a written and public statement of commitment to enable all schools to improve their capacity to dictate their own direction
- has chosen Members of the Trust for their particular expertise and independence
- has Trustees who are local people experienced, engaged and committed to the schools and the Trust
- encourages Local Governing Boards retain responsibility for their individual school



Should the school become an academy?

We are consulting with all our stakeholders to collect their views on whether we should become an academy. There are several ways you can contribute.

- Write down your thoughts and opinions and deliver them to reception, where they will be placed in a locked red box, ready to be opened at the end of the consultation period
- Email your views to us at consultation@granby.leicester.sch.uk
- Speak to some of our governors at parents' evening on 11th and 13th October
- Attend a Parents' Action Group meeting at 6.00pm on Thursday 27th October or Friday 28th October at 9.00 am

THE CONSULTATION WILL CLOSE AT THE END OF SCHOOL ON FRIDAY 28TH OCTOBER 2016

For further information please see the Academy Consultation page on our website