

Thursday 15th February

Dear Parents, Carers and Stakeholders,

Consultation to become an Academy within a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT)

Governors are proposing that Lower Farm Primary School becomes an academy and joins with a group of other schools, already part of a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) called Mercian Trust. You can find out more about the trust at www.themerciantrust.org These schools will be equal partners within the MAT alongside Lower Farm Primary School:

Queen Mary's Grammar School

Queen Mary's High School

Aldridge School

Shire Oak Academy

Walsall Studio School

In considering conversion to academy status and joining the Mercian Trust, the over-riding concerns of governors are to ensure that our school continues to provide the best possible standard of education and care for our children. With this in mind, your views are important to us and we are extremely keen to hear your thoughts.

Key points of converting to academy status and joining a Multi-Academy Trust

- Our school will retain its character and will continue to look, feel and be the same as it is now with the same uniform, school name, school times and holiday pattern. Most of the changes will be behind the scenes.
- The MAT organisation does not affect your choice of secondary school for your child. We will continue to work closely with all our local secondary schools in areas such as Year 6/Year 7 transition and events.
- Mrs Milner and the Governing Body will continue to lead our school on a daily basis as they do now and parents will continue to be represented on the Governing Body. The teaching staff will also remain stable.
- The MAT arrangements will share some services across the schools which will help them be more efficient and ensure that funding is focused on teaching, learning and support for the children.

Academy status is becoming more common and the Government and local authorities have made clear their intention to encourage/support all schools to become academies by 2022 and in particular for schools to form their own Multi-Academy Trusts within groups. As their budgets reduce local authorities are also reducing the services that they have available to schools. Making this change now means we can choose how we want Lower Farm to develop. As part of a group of Walsall schools, we will still continue to have good working relationships with the local authority.

It is our opinion that converting to academy status within a MAT will:

- Help us to develop the highest quality of leadership and management and therefore the highest quality of teaching and learning.

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Name.....Date.....