



# Parent Consultation Evening: Tues 13<sup>th</sup> March 6pm

*Proposal for Lower Farm to become an  
academy and join the Mercian MAT.*



# What is a Multi Academy Trust?



- ▶ A group of schools choosing to join together and work more collaboratively, forming a Trust - outside of Local Authority control.
- ▶ Trust Members - strategic oversight, conscience.
- ▶ Board of Directors (Trustees) - policies, monitoring, central services, report to Secretary of State.
- ▶ Local Governing Bodies still exist for each school and report to Board of Trustees.
- ▶ The Trust is accountable for each individual school - autonomy and consistency for individuals.



## Why does Lower Farm want to join the Mercian Trust? Key Drivers.....



- ▶ This is the direction of travel for schools - more collaboration, reduced Local Authority services and support.
- ▶ Lower Farm would be **choosing** to join the Mercian Trust - as the first Primary School we would have an opportunity to shape and lead the Primary Phase of the MAT.
- ▶ Lower Farm would be working with people we trust with similar vision and values for our children - a strong moral purpose.
- ▶ Maintain high quality teaching and learning and work with other schools to have wider impact and benefit our pupils.



## The benefits.....

- ▶ Economic benefits, centralised services
- ▶ Opportunity to focus funding where it is most needed
- ▶ Increased and flexible staffing resources
- ▶ Share best practice
- ▶ Succession planning - retaining and developing effective staff, including leadership.
- ▶ High quality staff development



- ▶ Enrichment opportunities for pupils
- ▶ Greater community involvement
- ▶ Strong focus on collaborative school improvement - impacting on pupil outcomes
- ▶ More effective Governance



# The risks.....



- ▶ First, the risks of the current situation. The biggest challenge that schools face is sustaining performance and standards when dealing singlehandedly with a combination of:
- ▶ The increasing financial pressure, squeezing staffing and resources
- ▶ The difficulties in retaining, developing and recruiting high quality staff and leadership
- ▶ The cost and availability of relevant, impactful professional development
- ▶ The continuing decline of Local Authorities' (LAs) capacity to support schools
- ▶ The need to respond to a continually changing educational landscape



- ▶ Ultimately, any school that gets into difficulty faces the risk of being taken over by another MAT - without choice.
- ▶ Joining a MAT now, with like-minded schools, whilst all of those schools are performing, helps mitigate against this risk.



## Why the Mercian Trust MAT?



- Remain local but also grow and expand to support a wider network of schools.
- We can retain our own unique characteristics and our own local Governing Body.
- The values of the Mercian Trust support the aims and values of Lower Farm - pupil centred.





## What next?



- ▶ If the consultation period is positive we hope to convert to an Academy and join Mercian Trust in September 2018.
- ▶ No difference on a day to day basis if the conversion and joining Mercian Trust goes ahead.
- ▶ The focus will always be on improving outcomes for our children.
  
- ▶ *No decisions have been reached yet.*