



A Coastal Alliance Co-operative
Trust Foundation School



Briary Primary School

Briary Community Campus

Greenhill Road West

Herne Bay

Kent CT6 7RS

Telephone: 01227 373095

Facsimile: 01227 742946

www.briary.kent.sch.uk

Mrs N Murrell

Acting Headteacher

Mrs T Cripps

Acting Deputy Headteacher

04 September 2019

Academy Conversion Consultation notification

Dear Stakeholders

Following a meeting and vote by the Full Governing Body, we have decided to open a formal consultation with you to consider the conversion of the school into an Academy as part of the East Kent College (EKC) Schools Trust. Academies are state funded schools which are independent from the local authority (Kent County Council), and instead receive funding directly from the Department for Education.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Trust is Mrs Tammy Mitchell, someone well known to us at Briary. From 2010 until 2015, Mrs Mitchell was the Headteacher at Swalecliffe Primary School. She left Headship to take up a role within the Local Authority as an Improvement Advisor and was instrumental in supporting and developing collaboration amongst the local group of primary and secondary schools who formed the Coastal Alliance. During this period, there were significant changes within education including the introduction of a new primary National Curriculum in 2014 and subsequent changes to assessment within the sector. Mrs Mitchell provided support and training to the Coastal Alliance during this time of immense change. Prior to taking up her current role, Mrs Mitchell, as Senior Improvement Advisor for East Kent, supported and worked closely with the Leadership Team at Briary to drive the uplift in standards and support us in becoming a strongly 'good' school.

There are four schools currently working to join the EKC Schools Trust. These are Briary Primary School, Bysing Wood Primary School, Holywell Primary School and Queenborough Primary School.

Why are we thinking of doing this?

As a Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team, we believe that becoming an Academy with this particular Trust, is the best choice for our school, and as key stakeholders we now want your views to inform our decision making.

The key reasons for this decision are all related to ensuring the best possible quality of education and outcomes for our pupils. Over the past year we have seen a significant decrease in support and challenge from visits from our Improvement Adviser due to less resource in the LA and as a strong school, we welcome a high level of external support and challenge. The Trust we are proposing to join is providing a significant school improvement package which

will not cost our school and will include visits, training, moderation and other school improvement activity.

Working with a number of like-minded schools within the Trust, whilst maintaining our positive collaborations and links more locally, are a real strength for this decision.

As you will be aware, finances are very challenging across the sector and the Trust we have selected is a partnership organisation alongside a very large group of Further Education Colleges. Through this partnership we will have access to a whole range of services that will have a very positive impact on our financial position.

We have also considered the very important, and perhaps most significant aspect; the impact on learning and curriculum. The EKC Schools Trust will be providing our teachers and pupils a range of curriculum enhancing opportunities through visits, events and opportunities for your children.

These key reasons, alongside the autonomy this Trust will provide and shared visions and values, have led us to make this informed decision.

What would the changes be?

As parents and stakeholders in our community, we can understand that you'll be interested in finding out what the changes would be, and how things might affect you. EKC Schools Trust has developed a website at ekcschoolstrust.co.uk which you can view to find out more about the Trust, and see some FAQs. If you are unable to access this online, we have a leaflet available from the school office. The key changes are below:

1. The first thing that will change, is that the school will change its status from Foundation school within the Coastal Alliance Co-operative Trust to an Academy school within EKC. We intend to still work closely with the schools within CACoT.
2. The Trust would become the employer of all staff but just as they do now, your Governors would be responsible for staffing your school.
3. The Trust would take charge of all of the land and assets from the Local Authority, safeguarding the school in the future and ensuring the management of the buildings and assets are fit for purpose for the education of your children.
4. The school can continue with its own strategic vision for growth and continue to ensure excellence in teaching, learning and assessment but will have a greater ownership over what is taught and how it is delivered so that the people who know your children best can determine what they learn.

What won't change?

EKC Schools Trust believes that our school should remain locally managed, with no changes to any of the day to day activities. That means that while the Trust can enhance what we do, there are a number of things which wouldn't be changed. A few of these are set out below:

1. Our Governing Body would still make local decisions – the school's current Governing Body would be changed to become a local board for the school, with delegated authority to make management decisions. It would feed into a larger EKC

Schools Trust Governing Body which would give strategic direction to the wider Trust and provide added scrutiny of each school. However, all the decisions about how your school is run, how the curriculum is designed, how behaviour is managed, the teaching policies and procedures will all remain the responsibility of the Governors.

2. The local brand of the school would remain the same – EKC Schools Trust believes it can enhance service delivery but doesn't want to change anything else. It believes in the local management of the school, and in allowing us the freedom to continue as we do already.
3. There won't be any expensive changes to uniform – we know that it's important you aren't affected by this change, so there'll be no costly new uniforms required, and there won't be any other changes that would cost you anything more.
4. School holiday dates, term times, school day times and all organisational decisions will be decided by Governors and the Headteacher to meet the needs of our local community
5. The school will continue to set its own admissions criteria, able to accept and grow provision in line with the needs of the community.

When can I give my views?

The formal consultation period opens today 4th September 2019 and will remain open until 3.00pm on 2nd October 2019. We want to ensure you get every opportunity for you to ask questions, have time to meet and talk with us and to give us your views, which is why we've chosen to consult so extensively. During this time, we will be holding meetings with parents, staff and other stakeholders in order to fully explore the proposal to become an Academy.

As a part of the process we would like to invite you to attend an information meeting about Academy conversion where you will have the opportunity to express your views and raise any questions. This will be held on Tuesday 24th September 2019 at 6.30pm.

There will also be other opportunities to speak with Senior Leaders at the Meet the Teacher on Wednesday 11th September 3.00pm – 4.00pm, send any questions to your Class Rep who will be attending a Parent Forum on Wednesday 18th September or attend the MacMillan Coffee Morning on Friday 27th September, 9.00am, where there will be staff available.

We would also invite written comments on the proposal to convert to Academy status and join the EKC Schools Trust. We have created a short form on the attached sheet for any comments. Please submit written feedback to our school office FAO Mrs Sheppard or email consultation@briary.kent.sch.uk

Following the consultation period, the Governing Body will consider all of the feedback and views it has received during the consultation and will then make the final decision on whether to legally complete the process.

Yours sincerely,



Chair of Governors



Acting Headteacher of school