



E-mail: [office@norwell.notts.sch.uk](mailto:office@norwell.notts.sch.uk)  
E-mail : [office@st-matthews.notts.sch.uk](mailto:office@st-matthews.notts.sch.uk)  
Web site: [www.norwellandstmatthews.co.uk](http://www.norwellandstmatthews.co.uk)

Executive Head Teacher: **Kathryn King 01636 636244 / 01636 821217**

---

28<sup>th</sup> March 2024

**Letter from the Chair of Governors regarding conversion of Norwell and St Matthews to Academy status with MITRE.**

Dear Stakeholder,

I am writing to you regarding a decision taken at a recent meeting of The Kite Primary Federation's Governing Body. The Governing Body has recently been considering the future of our schools, including the partnerships we form with others in the local area to ensure that our schools continue to offer the very best possible education. This has included meeting with representatives of a number of Multi Academy Trusts, hearing how they work with their member schools.

I am pleased to let you know that, after our careful considerations, the Kite Governing Body has resolved to explore converting each school to academy status and joining a Multi Academy Trust, with the Minster Trust for Education (MITRE) our preferred option. MITRE is a local Church of England Multi Academy Trust who have been supporting both schools with CPD (Continuous Professional Development) and with whom we have formed a successful partnership. We therefore believe that building upon this relationship will support our schools moving forwards.

Before the Governing Body applies for an academy order there will be a formal period of consultation with the local community, staff, families and children who attend the school. All submissions made during this consultation period will be considered before any further action is taken.

I am writing to confirm that the consultation process regarding whether our schools' conversion to academy status should take place will open on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.

In this letter you will find information about why we have started this process and additional details about the consultation process itself and how you can let us know your views. Please take a moment to read this information, which is also available on the Kite Federation website (<https://www.norwellandstmatthews.co.uk/our-governing-body/>)

Details of how respond to our consultation are given at the end of this letter.

If Norwell C of E Primary School and St Matthews C of E Primary School convert to Academy status, they would wish to do so as part of a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) involving schools whom we feel are similar in ethos and values to our schools. Governors feel that this is the right thing for the schools because they believe passionately in local people/Governors being in control of their own destiny to realise the benefits of collaboration for everyone concerned.

### **What does the consultation involve?**

During the consultation, we will be communicating with students, staff, parents and carers of current and future students, the local community and other stakeholders of both schools, with the consultation period beginning on **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April until Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April.**

### **Will Norwell C of E Primary School and St Matthews C of E Primary School definitely become an Academies?**

The Governing Body is in the process of submitting an initial application to convert to Academy Status. However, both schools are not obligated to become Academies until the contract between the Governing Body and the Department for Education is signed. The Governing Body will not sign an agreement until all interested parties have been consulted and their views considered.

### **What is an Academy?**

An Academy is essentially an independent school which is funded by the state. It is independent of the Local Authority and receives its funding direct from Central Government. Previously, Academies have tended to replace schools which have poor results or otherwise needed to improve significantly. However, under the Academies Act 2010, all schools are able to become Academies. Up until recently, the government was promoting all schools to become academies by 2030 through its White Paper but recently decided not to pursue this policy. Even though this is the case, academisation provides good opportunities for schools to work collaboratively to provide a stronger school system.

### **What are the benefits of being an Academy?**

- The ethos and identity of Norwell C of E Primary School and St Matthews C of E Primary School would be preserved
- Academies receive their funding from Central Government – this means that Academies receive more funding because none of it is retained by the Local Authority for provision of central services.
- Academies have more freedom over the curriculum taught – this means that, if they wish, academies do not need to teach parts of the National Curriculum which they do not consider appropriate for their students.
- Academies are free from Local Authority control – this means that Academies have more freedom over how they conduct themselves
- Academies can set their own pay and conditions of service for their staff – they have the freedom to alter the pay and conditions of their staff (subject to normal employment law protections for staff) and therefore can provide staff with better pay and conditions than previously offered, should they choose to. It is the expressed intention of the Governors that no current member of staff will be worse off as a result of the conversion, should it go ahead.

### **What are the compelling reasons for joining a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT)?**

- As part of a MAT, we could agree a strong, shared strategic vision across all the schools in the partnership.
- Because a MAT is accountable for the outcomes of all the students in the partnership, it can be an excellent mechanism for ensuring that support and challenge are directed to where they are needed most.
- Being part of a MAT would enable the schools to create structures to help sustain and strengthen the partnership work of the school.
- Schools within the MAT would work collaboratively to improve provision and standards for students
- The central funding agreement can make it easier to pool resources and achieve economies of scale in contracting.

### **Other issues regarding becoming an Academy**

As Academies, we would be directly liable for matters such as insurance, employment liabilities, pensions, health and safety and property maintenance. As mentioned above, Academies receive more funding from Central Government to help them to meet these additional costs, which would allow us to buy services from the very best providers, including the Local Authority.

### **Will admissions arrangements change?**

As Academies, we would deal with our own admissions but would still be bound by the National Admissions Code. If, in the future, the Academies wished to change their admission arrangements, consultation would be required.

### **Will the staff terms and conditions change?**

If both schools convert to Academies, all staff currently employed by the Norwell C of E Primary School and St Matthews C of E Primary School will transfer to the new Academy on their current pay and conditions. Although Academies have more freedom to amend those pay and conditions, the Governing Body of the Kite Primary Federation is supportive of current pay and conditions.

### **Will our schools change?**

Any school is constantly looking at how it can improve, and we are no different. However, in terms of the ethos, values and character of the schools, we can assure you that nothing would change. We would not be looking to change our name, uniform or logo. Our school holiday patterns and school year would remain unaffected. For the students and staff, it is unlikely that they would see much, if any, change to their daily routines.

### **The Consultation Process**

There will be a number of opportunities for you to express your views about the move to Academy status, as outlined below:

On Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April at 6pm in the school hall at Norwell C of E Primary School, there will be an open for all stakeholders. All are welcome to this open meeting. Kite staff, governors and a representative from MITRE will be available to answer your questions.

Students will also be kept informed through assemblies and through representatives of the school council.

Further information is available on the Kite Federation website.

To respond to this consultation on whether the conversion of the school to academy status should take place, representations can only be considered by governors if made in writing to:

Norwell C of E Primary School  
School Lane  
Norwell  
Nottinghamshire  
NG23 6JP

St Matthews C of E Primary School  
Mill Lane  
Normanton-on-Trent  
Nottinghamshire  
NG23 6RW

**Please mark your envelope 'Norwell C of E Primary School Academy Consultation' or 'St Matthews C of E Primary School Academy Consultation'.**

Or by email to: [office@norwell.notts.sch.uk](mailto:office@norwell.notts.sch.uk) or [office@st-matthews.notts.sch.uk](mailto:office@st-matthews.notts.sch.uk)

Although individual responses will not be sent, all representations will be considered by governors.

### **How can I find out more?**

There is more information about Academies on the DfE website: <http://www.education.gov.uk/academies>

The closing date for representations to be made, and the end of the consultation process, is **Midday on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April.**

Yours sincerely,

Sue Sinclair (Chair of Governors)