



ST ANNE'S FULSHAW



Styal Primary School  
Valuing the Individual to Believe and Achieve



Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

**Public Consultation regarding the formation of School Academies and a Local Multi-Academy Trust**

The schools in Wilmslow and the wider communities of Handforth, Alderley Edge and Styal have a strong track record of providing excellent education to all our children. All the schools are successful and serve their communities well. Our individual success is supported by strong partnerships amongst these local schools where we strive to provide the highest standards of education and support for the children in our care.

English education policy is now strongly encouraging schools to formalise collaborative working through organisations called Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs). A number of the Local Authority maintained schools within our district have decided to explore whether a geographically-based, community-focused Multi-Academy Trust would be in the best interests of the young people of our district, their families and the wider community as a whole.

The schools involved are Alderley Edge Community Primary School, Ashdene Primary School, Lindow Community Primary School, St Anne's Fulshaw C of E Primary School, Styal Primary School and Wilmslow High School.

We are now seeking views on the establishment of **The Collaborative Educational Trust of Wilmslow**. This will formalise the existing collaboration between these local schools and ensure we can work together, both now and in the future, in the best interests of those within our school community.

Many factors have been carefully considered in developing this proposal: learning outcomes and opportunities, teaching, staffing, finance and governance. The governing board of each school involved remains absolutely committed to its own individual character, ethos and values, allowing us to offer a great education to all learners in our community. We all believe that creating the new trust together and being founding schools will allow us the best opportunity to maintain and further develop the excellent educational opportunities that we currently offer for all of our pupils.

To create a Multi-Academy Trust each school would be required to convert to Academy Status with a funding agreement with the Education and Skills Funding Agency, an executive agency of the Department for Education (DfE). This would mean that these schools would be maintained directly by the DfE rather than the Local Authority. After this, the six schools would join together to form a progressive and forward thinking Collaborative Educational Multi-Academy Trust.

### **National and Local Context**

Over 65% of secondary schools and 22% of primary schools nationally now have academy status. This situation is rapidly changing with a growing number of academy conversions and MATs being planned. In the last few years, four local primary schools have already converted to an Academy or joined existing MATs in the region. This change in school status, nationally and locally, is combined with Local Authorities losing their role in school improvement and with a sharp decline in the support available for schools through the Local Authority. This context, in addition to the rapid pace of educational reform and pressures on school funding, creates both a need and an opportunity for schools to work together to provide school-to-school support and to facilitate school improvement. Establishing a MAT would provide a clear structure and mechanism for our schools to work together and to build upon our existing strengths. We wish to act now to define our own MAT, to base this on our present values and approaches and to control our own direction of travel both now and in the future.

**Our key reasons for seeking academy status and the establishment of a MAT are summarised below:**

- To expand the provision offering a 0-19 education that is truly inclusive, being able to support every child through every stage of its learning journey.
- To create a real family of schools and to develop a 'through school' framework.
- To form a shared understanding of both primary and secondary phases, which will improve transition and accelerate students' progress.
- Develop the shared values of the partnership.
- To deepen our collaboration to secure the best outcomes for all the children.
- To work together to improve teaching and learning and continue to maintain a high quality curriculum in each school.
- To enable the school leadership teams to focus more on teaching and learning and whole school improvement by reducing the administrative burden on individual schools on issues such as policy development and procurement.
- To provide effective school-to-school support by sharing best practice.
- To enhance school improvement within the partnership.
- To pool resources, services and support to ensure the best outcomes for all in our community.
- To respect, maintain and develop each school's individual culture, values, ethos and identity.
- To improve recruitment, retention, Continuing Professional Development and succession planning.
- To achieve economies of scale and to improve value for money.
- To shape our destiny within a changing school system.

## Process

We would very much like to hear your views. You can find more detailed information on the joint webpage <https://sites.google.com/site/tcetwilm/> This information includes frequently asked questions and other useful background.

You can respond to us by:

1. Emailing your school at the relevant school address shown on the above webpage
2. Attending the consultation meeting that will take place at your child's school during the week beginning Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> January. The date for your school will be circulated to you from school very soon.

**Please note the closing date for submissions is 31<sup>st</sup> January 2018 when the public consultation will formally end**

The Full Governing Body of each of the schools involved will review feedback from the consultation and they will decide individually on whether to proceed with the application for academy status. If this proposal is agreed, all schools seeking to apply to convert to academy status and to join the MAT will then work together to further shape these proposals and agree the final MAT structure and its operational arrangements. St Anne's Fulshaw CE Primary School has an agreement in principle to proceed from the Chester Diocese and will need to apply to both the Diocese and the DfE if the Governing Body decide to proceed with the application for academy status.

We look forward to hearing your views.

Yours sincerely,



Head Teacher and Chair of Governors, Alderley Edge Community Primary School



Head Teacher and Chair Governors, Ashdene Primary School



Head Teacher and Chair Governors, Lindow Community Primary School



Head Teacher and Chair Governors, St Anne's Fulshaw C of E Primary School



Head Teacher and Chair Governors, Styal Primary School



Head Teacher and Chair Governors, Wilmslow High School



