

Three Spires Trust Consultation - Collective Feedback

Wade Federation Consultation Feedback

The King's Kidsgrove and St Thomas'

Wednesday 27 January 2021

10:15am

Unions Schools Change Forum

- Question** **How involved have staff been in making the decision on which Trust to join?**
Answer This has been a long journey for the Wade Federation schools one which we have been on for over 2 years. It has been transparent and staff have been engaged throughout. We are keen to develop our practices and share with others in order we continue improving and delivering the very best quality of education for young people. There have been a variety of meetings during the time which included formal consultation meetings nearly a year ago.
- Question** **I'd be interested to hear where you have got to in the process for example will the schools be all through? Is this a one school MAT?**
Answer The two schools will remain as two and we won't be going all through. We will continue to work as one and support each other as one school for example we will still have one local governing body. The MAT will initially have 4 schools in the Trust with two schools in Wolverhampton proposed to join. This includes S. Peter's CE Collegiate school and The King's CE School.
- Question** **Please can you tell us a bit about your pupils, your community and catchment?**
Answer St Thomas is a popular school which is well regarded by families and growing. Partnerships are strong and we benefit from joint staff development and governance. The King's has a contented staff and the school hopes to sustain that. The 6th form is growing and the school is reaching its full pupil numbers in year 7 consistently. The community is broader than Kidsgrove for the secondary as children do travel to be with us.
- Question** **How do St Thomas feel about being the only Primary school in the MAT?**
Answer It is the next stage in our development and is natural progression one which excites us and will generate further opportunities for the school. Primary practitioners will have lots to share with secondary colleagues that will help inform their practice particular in areas such as transition and outdoor learning.
- Comment** **Thank you I am very reassured for support staff. Consideration of T's and C's across two local authorities will be needed going forwards.**
- Comment** **I am very encouraged by the transfer 'as is' and the continuation of facilities time funding**

Comment **NASUWT will write to the Trust with their questions.**

Question **Would the Trust be interested in a school / being represented on the school forum to represent faith schools?**

Answer Yes of course we would be happy to explore this further with you.

The King's Kidsgrove and St Thomas'
Monday 1 February 2021
3:30pm
Staff Consultation Meeting

Question **Will anybody be taking a salary / money from the schools?**

Answer The Trust will have a requirement to employ specific roles for example we must have an appointed Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer and there will be costs the Trust has to meet for example for services it must provide linked to areas such as external audit, clerking, training etc. The Trust will seek a financial contribution to this cost through a central charge and each year the Trust Board will write to each school to confirm how that funding has been used ensuring transparency and appropriate use of public monies.

Questions **Will our terms of employment and pay structure stay the same?**
Will this affect our pensions?
Will they still be government pensions?

Answer Your terms and conditions of employment will remain the same and transfer as is. The only minor change for colleagues employed at the Wade Federation will be your pay date which will move to be the 28th of the month (from the last Wednesday of each month). All pensions will continue as they are now, same personal contributions and same providers i.e. Teachers Pension Scheme, Local Government Pension Scheme and the nursery pension scheme.

Comment **The exciting thing is we are shaping something from the outset**

Question **Will you honour School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD)?**

Answer Yes, we will and the nationally recognised burgundy and green books. Trade Unions will be recognised and we will enter into a formal recognition agreement with unions going forward.

The King's Kidsgrove and St Thomas'
Tuesday 9 February 2021
6:00pm
Governors Consultation Meeting

Question What are parents views at the moment?

Answer Overall parents are supportive of the proposal. Feedback via the google survey has been significant whilst attendance at the consultation meeting last week was limited to a small group.

Question What happens to the federation on transfer?

Answer Legally the federation ceases to exist however, many of the practices will continue as part of Three Spires. We will continue to have one local governing body and finance will be managed across the two to ensure the capacity is always there particularly for St Thomas as a much smaller school.

Question How confident are we other Primaries will join?

Answer We are considerate to the fact that the Diocese has one primary MAT already, St Chad's and we do not wish to duplicate their offer however, we do recognise that for some Primary schools Three Spires offers a different alternative for example the relationship between feeder primaries and secondaries which are in the Trust. We also welcome all schools with faith or no faith and for these reasons we believe we have different but yet complimentary offers for primary schools and to date two schools have already registered an interest to explore joining the Trust. The two Trusts are meeting regularly and will work together going forward.

Question What are the risk to the schools?

Answer Letting go of something which works to something which is new.
Maintaining capacity
Leadership & governance – different levels of delegation and autonomy

Question What is invitational in a school?

Answer We welcome everyone to work together and will look outside our own organisation.

Question What is the layout of Three Spires Trust? Governors, is it still us at transfer? How will it work in practice?

Answer This is a journey and there will be a period of transition in the first term, year and beyond. Many of the governing body we anticipate will be members of the new governing body when the schools join the MAT and we will work with the Chair of Governors to facilitate as smoother transition as possible. The detailed structure is outlined in the presentation and we are currently consulting on the detail surrounding delegation and the governance handbook. This will go to the Board in March for approval and will then be circulated as a final set of documents.

**The King's Kidsgrove and St Thomas'
Monday 1 February 2021
5:30pm
Parent One Consultation Meeting**

Comment I am quite excited by what I have heard, it has been explained clearly, however, I can see it is a big job!

Question If community schools (non faith) join the Trust how does the diocese propose to work with these schools?

Answer We will work in much the same way as we will with all schools and embrace the opportunities of joint working, sharing best practice and improving life chances for children and young people. We will develop our offer post conversion of the initial four proposed to go in on day one and work together with community schools to ensure we have an offer which meets the needs of all.

The King's Kidsgrove and St Thomas' questions and comments received from online Google Survey responses

Comment Information given is not balanced. Biased towards how great it is with no potential downside pointed out at all

Question Will my current employment status stay the same and will my current salary and pension status be protected?

Answer Yes your employment status remains the same with your role, pay grade, pension, continuity of service and contractual policies all transferring with you to the Trust. TUPE protects at the point of transfer and until such a point you secure a new role in the organisation or changes are proposed from the employer. Any changes have to be declared now and we have highlighted only one which is to change the pay date for staff to the 28th of the month.

Comment I think this is an exciting opportunity for both staff, students and their families to be part of

Comment It is clear from the direction of policy from central government that all remaining local authority schools will require academisation in the very near future. Three Spires Trust provides the opportunity for our church school to take control of its own destination and together with schools across the Diocese, preserve character education and our Christian distinctiveness.

Question Will my current job status, salary and contract stay the same? Will my pension be protected?

Answer Your terms and conditions of employment will remain the same and transfer as is. The only minor change for colleagues employed at the Wade Federation will be your pay date which will move to be the 28th of the month (from the last Wednesday of each month). All pensions will continue as they are now, same personal

contributions and same providers i.e. Teachers Pension Scheme, Local Government Pension Scheme and the nursery pension scheme.

Comment **Concerns over how other schools have fared after becoming academies. In particular the former Maryhill School. After a few years money seems to run out. Same now happening at Hempstalls. The name Three Spires sounds like a branch of Wetherspoons!**

Question **Are/will any terms and conditions change?**

Answer At the point of transfer the only change is your pay date to the 28th of the month. We have signaled intention to explore moving payroll to one provider in year one and to standardise staffing policies in the first two years through the measures proposed. All other contractual matters will remain the same as they are now.

Comment **You should make the uniform more affordable so that parents can get replacements at places like Next and Asda**

Comment **I like the uniform, it's just so expensive to buy**

Comment **Should have a school sweatshirt**

Comment **Girls skirts are ridiculously short. This needs changing as soon as possible. Thankfully my child is male or I would of refused to send my child to this school purely for that reason.**

Comment **The school shouldn't have changed its name in the first place (Clough Hill).**

Comment **St Thomas school has an amazing reputation and this is ultimately down to the school having fantastic staffing and resources. The staff go above and beyond for the children and it concerns me as a parent that changes within the school might mean that staff structure changes. I think it is really important that staff are kept in their current roles and under current contracts not only so they can continue their amazing work but also to retain as many staff as possible. I also think that the uniform should remain the same I myself attended St Thomas' over 20 years ago and in that time the uniform remains the same and I think it is iconic to the school.**

Comment **I do not agree that the academy will be allowed to change term dates as there are other local schools that siblings may attend and this could create an issue.**

St Peter's Consultation Feedback

St Peter's Collegiate
Wednesday 3 February 2021
2:30pm
Unions Consultation Meeting

Question **Which Trust have you come from Mr Arnold?**

Answer Senior Deputy Head Thomas Telford and Marches Academy Trust

Question **What was the method of communication to staff for this meeting?**

Answer A letter was issued on the 25 January and a virtual link was forwarded to staff

Question **Where is S Peter's financially, Ofsted wise etc?**

Answer Finances are in a much better position. The school had a Section 8 visit in the third week of new leadership starting. There are many green shoots but further improvement is needed.

Question **The school needs consistency, how will members be satisfied it won't be a bumpy ride?**

Answer Its about professional practices and framework which gives a happy school. We are an ethical MAT with good and consistent practices underpinned by our Christian values. Children are at the heart of this and this proposal will provide the School stability and support.

The due diligence will look at every school, where improvements are needed to develop practice and we will use that to plan together.

Question **External Catering / employed cleaning – who employs the staff in these areas?**

Answer Catering is external and cleaning staff are employed.

Question **When was it agreed by governors to join Three Spires?**

Answer This was agreed in May 2020.

Question **Will the school be buying in to facilities time in the future?**

Answer Yes we are committed to recognition and ensuring all schools contribute to facilities time.

S Peter's Collegiate
Thursday 4 February 2021
3:30pm
Staff Consultation Meeting

Question **Why are we not joining one of the existing MAT's in the Lichfield Diocese?**

Answer The Diocese considered the needs of all schools across a large geographical coverage. The do not wish to create large Trusts that replicate the size of a local authority and believe that Trusts with smaller numbers are better served. It is also

the case that the Diocese does not have a MAT for its secondary schools to join and this was the opportunity to respond and meet that need for further collaboration.

Question **What is the rush? Why are we proposing to join a Trust soon after appointing new leadership?**

Answer This has been something which has been explored for some time however, the Department for Education (DfE) only officially approved everything to progress on the 18th December 2020. The 1st April is the date set by the DfE and one we must try work towards. The school also needs to respond to the outcomes of the section 8 visit and ensure it has robust solutions in place for the long term good of the school. The Regional Schools Commissioner also feels that the school will be much stronger amongst a family of schools in a MAT rather than stand alone.

Question **How will the childcare voucher scheme work?**

Answer It will work as it is now. Staff accessing the same scheme.

Question **What type of changes can we expect?**

Answer At the point of transfer we are not proposing to make any immediate changes. We have declared three measures of intent which include a possible change in payroll provider in the first year, continuation of a childcare voucher scheme and standardisation of staffing policies in the first two years.

Question **What is the consultation timeline should new changes be proposed?**

Answer This would depend on what any changes were however we would like to stress we are unaware of anything further at this stage so it is highly unlikely.

Question **Can current pay positions be changed? Can you reduce our pay?**

Answer Your existing terms and conditions of employment will transfer to the new employer under TUPE and the Regulations also impose limitations on the ability of the new employer to vary terms and conditions thereafter. In particular, the new employer should not vary contracts where the sole or principal reason is:

- The transfer itself; or
- A reason connected with the transfer which is not 'an economic, technical or organisational reason entailing changes in workforce'.

There is no intention for terms and conditions to be changed in the future, however if the new employer wanted to make changes these would need to be consulted with staff (and their representatives) as required by employment law. It should be noted that this is no different to your current employer making changes to your terms and conditions now - there would need to be a clear business case to support the change, and staff and their representatives would need to be appropriately consulted, and due process followed.

Question **Why are we now joining a MAT?**

Answer The Regional Schools Commissioner, Diocese of Lichfield and Governing Board believe it is in the best interests of the school to join a MAT. This will enable the school to make the rapid improvements it needs to address issues raised in its Section 8 Ofsted visit in 2020 as well as concerns which exist within the DfE and

Education Skills Funding Agency. Ultimately a MAT will enable the school to move forward more quickly which can only benefit pupils and staff.

Question **Is there a possibility that admin will be centralised for all schools and staff will be asked to move?**

Answer No this isn't something we are looking at. Each school requires resource on the ground locally.

Question **Will the name cease to exist?**

Answer No. We have asked the school to consider changing the word School to Academy in their title so you would be known as St Peter's CE Collegiate Academy.

Comment **General point, many staff have moved from MATs due to poor treatment, poor financial decisions, redundancies and reduced process**

Question **Is there another opportunity to meet, consult and discuss?**

Answer Of course. We have a number of options for staff to consult including this meeting, through your trade unions, direct with us by emailing and requesting a further meeting. We also have an online survey which you can respond to and ask any questions as you think of them.

Question **Is there any intention to relocate schools?**

Answer No the school will stay where it is.

St Peter's Collegiate
Monday 8 February 2021
5:00pm
Governors Consultation Meeting

Question **The King's Wolverhampton was not part of the original proposal. Why has this changed?**

Answer The dialogue surrounding the forming of Three Spires Trust is something which has been happening for over two years and over the last 12 months particularly this has evolved to the proposal which is what we are today consulting on. As the King's has a Direct Academy Order placed on it the DfE determine the best 'home' for the school and they have determined that should be with Three Spires.

Comment **I feel this meeting should have happened first. There has been no consultation about this since meetings last year and this is disappointing.**

Question **When will we see the financial data and outcomes of due diligence?**

Answer Due diligence is underway at the moment and part of that process is looking at individual school finances. The outcomes will be shared with the Trust Board, and individual schools leaders and governors. Alongside this work the Trust is collating data linked to proposed school budgets and central charges so this can be shared with all schools. There is a finance working group which are meeting weekly which

all schools are represented on which altogether means we will have a detailed financial to share during March.

As you are aware there is a significant building works issue at The King's and we have submitted a capital grant application to the DfE to try secure the funds required to make the building good. We will know the outcomes of this early in March and we have confirmed throughout the consultation that funds must be in place / confirmed before the school joined the Trust.

Question Who is doing the due diligence?

Answer John Naylor from the Diocese, Stephen Collyer, John Taylor MAT and Thomas Telford MAT are conducting the due diligence now focusing on finance, leadership, safeguarding, curriculum, staffing and school organisation - this will be completed at the end of February.

Question How does the funding work? Both centrally and another overhead

Answer The MAT will have one bank account and the Trust will be funded direct from the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). Each school will have its own budget and will plan that annually and oversee it through the associated delegations included in the scheme of delegation and supporting policies.
The Trust will issue a charge of 4% of pupil funding annually to each school and that will pay for central services / costs which include; salaries of central resource, service level agreements with John Taylor and Thomas Telford MAT's, HR services, clerking, payroll, internal and external audit etc.

Question When are we expecting the due diligence data?

Answer By the end of February / early March 2021

Question What does the budget look like in a MAT?

Answer The overall MAT budget is the sum of all the individual school budgets. The MAT itself does not receive any additional monies unless these are awarded or secured under grant applications/funding. The Trust is working on a three year budget now to ensure robust financial modelling is in place.

S Peter's Collegiate

Thursday 4 February 2021

5:30pm

Parent One Consultation Meeting

Question My daughter is in Year 7 will she be expected to go across sites with The King's?

Answer No. Children will remain at their current schools

Question School buses, will they continue as is?

Answer Yes they will.

Question Will staff move between the schools to teach?
Answer There is no expectations staff will move between sites however, there may be opportunities which could be facilitated i.e., professional development or for moderation activities but no one will be forced to go teach elsewhere.

Question Leadership is all aligned but the Headteacher here is interim is that right?
Answer Yes that is correct. Mr Arnold is acting Principal for 2 years.

Email received
28 January 2021

Question Hi, unfortunately I am unable to edit the form attached to the letter on the S. Peter's school website so I hope this is ok. I am a parent of a child in Year 7 at S. Peter's. I am very concerned about them becoming part of an academy trust with King's school. One of my concerns is are children going to have lessons on both school sites? As currently my daughter catches a school bus to S. Peters and there would be no way for her to be able to get to King's school as there isn't a school bus from our area as we live in. My other concern is that King's school only received a 'requires improvement' rating for its last Ofsted- one of the reasons I chose S. Peters to apply for a Year 7 place for my child was because it had a good Ofsted and good GCSE results. I would want some reassurance that S. Peters being joined with other schools in the academy trust which are of a lower standard wouldn't effect St Peters levels of teaching and standards.

Answer(s) Answers to some of the questions have already being picked up in the parent feedback above. With regards reassurance on standards and school support we are clear that all schools have strong teaching and learning and areas of good practice and one thing we are looking forward to is ensuring we can share this between us, learn more from each other and together ensure the very best standards for all children in the Trust. Where there are gaps and areas for development in any school we will work with that school to develop that practice in a supportive role.

St Peter's Collegiate questions and comments received from online Google Survey responses

Question I feel the explanation that is given in the frequently asked questions section of the school website does not really give a full explanation of why S. Peters have chosen to join with these other schools as part of a MAT. Yes, I understand the financial cost savings from bulk buying of certain inventories across the trust, but what are the positions of these other schools in terms of financial security, examination outcomes and pupil numbers? Will S Peters Wolverhampton staff, under new terms of employment, be expected to support failing schools across the MAT?

Answer As a Church of England secondary school in the Lichfield Diocese the school wished to ensure it worked with like minded schools that would protect our Christian ethos and values. This Trust is the natural organisation to join as we have established relationships, our values are protected and it provides a stable and secure environment for staff and pupils to continue to flourish together. There will be no new terms and conditions of employment for staff in the school.

- Comment** **It would be very sad to lose the Christian ethos of St Peter's in any way.**
- Question** **What changes we can expect in respect of governance & finance?**
Answer There will be a Trust Board which is ultimately accountable for the educational and financial performance of the whole organisation, The Board delegates responsibilities through what is called a Scheme of Delegation to Local Governing Bodies. The configuration of the local governing body may well be different to that in school at present. The Trust has determined there will be approximately 9 Members but this can be flexible to meet the need of each school. There will be staff and parent representation and we also are looking to identify a community champion, there will also be approximately five Parish appointments. Finance is answered on page 9.
- Comment** **The pros and cons and the reason behind this suggestion. Any communication until more recently has been put on the website but no sign post to say it is there.**
- Comment** **No information provided of the organisation and wider impact**
Response Copies of the information presented at meetings has been uploaded on the school website
- Question** **Why is this being looked at and what are the implications for schools involved. More written information required to read through at our discretion to formulate opinions.**
Answer It is very difficult for schools to work on their own in isolation and St Peter's as a stand alone academy can benefit from so much more within a MAT. There have been a number of changes and challenges in school over the last 12 months and we believe joining Three Spires will provide stability, consistency and high quality processes which will enable the school to accelerate its progress for all learners. The main impact surrounds governance and leadership and finance. Initially there will be an extra layer of governance that will provide greater scrutiny and accountability and for finance the school will contribute to some new costs but we hope equally will save costs as well. The Trust are clear as much money as is possible must hit the classroom.
We will add some links to useful documents/information on your school website for you to read at your discretion.
- Question** **Why is this necessary? Our school is one of the highest performing schools in the borough.**
Answer The government policy is it wants all schools to become academies and more recently it has indicated that groups of schools working in multi academy trusts are much stronger together and this has been evidenced over the recent year with the Covid 19 pandemic where schools in Trusts have felt extremely well supported and have benefited from the closer collaboration. The time is right for the school to work with others share our best practice and also to learn from others with one goal which is to improve life chances for children and young people.

- Question** **How does it impact on education and management?**
- Answer** When the school joins the Trust the staff and management team will remain as it is now, but governance will change. We will work with the governing body to secure permanent long term leaders for the school (rather than interim), we will share best practice that we can bring back to the classrooms at St Peter's and professional development opportunities will be enhanced.
- Comment** **Do you support the proposal for the school to join a multi academy trust? I would require the above additional information about the other schools within the MAT before I could honestly answer this question.**
- Comment** **The primary school my children attended joined an academy trust, the ethos of the school changed as did most of the staff. We were really unhappy and had our daughter not been in her final year and also lockdown, we would have moved her.**
- Question** **It will lose its identity and become corporate - will it have its own head or a head of school with an executive head above - this would not be in the best interest of the school?**
- Answer** The school will retain its own values and identity including the school name. St Peter's is a large school and will certainly retain a Headteacher at a local level.
- Comment** **Support a MAT but not sure about the schools you're joining**
- Question** **What is the impact on St Peters? What are the advantages of being a multi academy trust?**
- Answer** The school will mainly see changes at a governance level initially and then over time we anticipate opening up many opportunities for joint projects, curriculum planning and professional development for staff. We would like students to be able to work together on projects and generally open up new opportunities for all. The advantages of a small multi academy trust are vast. Some would say that whilst this Trust may be small in terms of school numbers in terms of pupil numbers, there will be in excess of 2,800 pupils with a combined budget of approximately £18 million which is not that small! Advantages include:
- Continuity, consistency and protection of the school values, identity and its church of England distinctiveness
 - Professional development for staff
 - More attractive to recruit to and to retain staff
 - Collaboration which is embedded
 - Economies of scale
 - Enhanced curriculum opportunities through freedom to innovate
 - Access to capital investment we otherwise would not be able to access
- Question** **St Peter's is a long standing excellent school in Wolverhampton. We don't want it to lose any of its Christian ethos. Losing the name could possibly do this. St Peter's has expanded during the last few years, to the detriment of the pupils. Standards in behaviour and attention to the individual young person have slipped as a result. We hope that this new academy status will not mean that the strict criteria of places offered to children by governors will be further depleted. What will/has happened to Foundation Governors? Staff Governors? Parent Governors? These**

	brought balance to the decision making in the school. We would be disappointed if these continue to be 'removed'.
Answer	The school is already an academy but stands alone joining Three Spires will bring greater scrutiny, rigour and capacity to the school to ensure standards do not slip. Regarding the Governors Three Spires has approved a model which will see staff, parents and parish/foundation all represented.
Question	How does this impact on the school? What are the benefits and the cons so information provided is transparent?
Answer	The biggest impact on the school will be in governance and leadership. The governance dissolves as is when the transition to the Trust takes place and will be replaced by a local governing body. For leadership there will be increased capacity and expertise, a professional sounding board with someone to go to for advice and support as required. As the school is an academy already the changes day to day for staff and pupils will be minimal however we hope in the long term there will be increased opportunities that will benefit everyone and make the school a truly outstanding provider.
	Above we have highlighted some of the advantages to the school joining a MAT. Cons could include:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A perceived lack of autonomy / control - Decisions will be made (in some cases) by others - In the short term there may be some one off additional costs to facilitate the transition
Question	Who will the other schools be in the trust? Why given that Kings is run very similar do they have more funding?
Answer	The other schools are; The King's CE School, Kidsgrove, St Thomas CE Primary School, Kidsgrove, The King's CE School, Wolverhampton and St Peter's. The King's do not have more funding than St Peters as the bigger school as pupil place funding is at the same level.
Comment	You need to be totally transparent with parents about this as for too long we have been kept in the dark. The diocese needs to ensure that the leader of the school is a practicing Christian not a nominal one
Question	Will there be any changes to teaching staff, lesson plan, funding, will class sizes increase?
Answer	The current staff and structure will transfer as is to Three Spires and there are no plans to change this. The curriculum, funding levels and class sizes will all be as they are now.
Comment	The school has more than a 100 year history. It would be unacceptable to throw it all away now.

- Question** I'm not happy about St Peters joining forces with a school like Kings, I would like to know why the school even needs to join a multi academy trust, since it has always upheld a good reputation as a school of excellence on its own.
- Answer** All four schools proposed to join the Trust bring a significant amount of experience and high quality practice that will see everyone students and staff benefit.
- Comment** Really have not received enough information to answer most of these questions. Which is always a concern as we begin to wonder what are we not being told, what is being hidden.
- Comment** Support MAT in general which is a good idea, not sure about the schools you are joining though. More information about how this benefits the school and the children would be good. What other schools bring to the MAT and what we offer.
- Comment** More specific information at a much earlier stage
- Comment** Lack of information about governance
- Comment** The school should reestablish itself under the LEA
- Comment** It feels like such an uncertain time to make any more changes.
- Comment** As parents we hope that being part of a MAT will bring greater stability to the leadership of the school which will allow for further improvements. We also hope that, in time, it can facilitate a much needed new building.

The King's CofE School, Wolverhampton Consultation Feedback

**The King's Wolverhampton
Wednesday 3 February 2021
1:15pm
Unions Consultation Meeting**

- Question** **Making the building fit for purpose, what will be happening?**
Answer As you are aware the school has struggled with its new building for many years and the faults with the building are very expensive to put right. This alongside the build contractor no longer trading means it has been very difficult to get answers and for solutions to be provided. The Trust is working with the school, local authority and DfE to try find a solution which will mean that:
- a. the school can be repaired to a high standard and these faults are rectified
 - b. the Trust can accept the school without the financial challenges the building has left
 - c. leaders can focus on teaching and learning and student progress and not have to worry about the building concerns it currently faces daily
- Question** **The weaknesses that schools have, what have you found at the moment?**
Answer The biggest weakness is its building and as a result this has meant additional financial pressures. Admission numbers are low but equally steadily growing again so this is improving finances too. We would like to note that there are also many strengths at the King's (and at all the schools), the school has its values at the heart of everything it does, there are state of the art facilities and the staff, pupils and parents that we have spoken to are extremely complimentary about the work in school – there is much to build on and there is much we will learn from the school too.
- Question** **Who are Three Spires Trust? And how established are you?**
Answer Three Spires Trust is a new multi-academy trust founded by the Diocese of Lichfield. Since approval from the DfE in December to open the Trust we have moved quickly to engage and to develop our systems and processes ready for schools joining. Members are in place, Trustees have been appointed and governance structures agreed ready for implementation. We have appointed an interim Chief Executive, Mrs Verow who is also the Executive Headteacher of the King's Kidsgrove. We are working with Headteachers and Chairs of Governors to ensure we are ready to welcome schools from the 1st April. There will be a period of consolidation and transition once in the Trust to ensure systems are embedded.
- Question** **What are the implications for members?**
Answer At the moment we are not proposing changes as a result of the transfer however we have indicated three areas for future review in our measures letter this includes;
- 1. The intention to move to one payroll provider in year one;
 - 2. To standardise staffing policies in the first two years; and
 - 3. To ensure a childcare voucher scheme is in place for all staff in all schools

- Question** **How did the invite to staff go?**
Answer The Headteacher informed staff w/c 18.1.21 at a briefing, a formal letter was issued inviting staff on the 25 January and the virtual invitation for the meeting today was issued this week in advance.
- Question** **Have you sent a questionnaire re unions membership?**
Answer No. This was something the Trusts lawyers requested in a legal document and we have subsequently advised it is not required or expected.
- Question** **Job evaluation S Peter's/The King's using the local scheme. What might happen going forward?**
Answer We need to confirm this but would envisage certainly in the short term that we continue to use the local scheme so as to provide consistency of approach as is now.
- Question** **Finances - We were told £2m at the time. How much is Wolverhampton putting on the table?**
Answer Th £2m is a conservative estimate of the repair work needed at the King's which has turned out to be £4.2m+. We will work with the Local Authority and DfE to secure the best solution for all.

The King's Wolverhampton
Wednesday 3 February 2021
3:45am
Staff Consultation Meeting

- Question** **Why is this conversion moving so fast? It appears to be unheard of TUPE and academisation moving at this speed?**
Answer The decision around the speed of travel was made by the DfE and the Headteacher Board when approving our application. We acknowledge there is a lot to do in a short space of time however it is achievable. We are working together and regularly reviewing what is realistic and will continue to do so. There are other factors for the King's as we have been advised that to try and secure the capital funds the school requires we need to have the school in by the 1st April. We will continue to monitor this closely and support colleagues in school with additional capacity where required to meet deadlines.
- Question** **What are the benefits of moving at this speed? It feels like this will create a huge bag of issues that would prevent this conversion from being as smooth as possible for all concerned?**
Answer The main benefit is a seven figure contribution to repairing the buildings. As we have said this is not guaranteed however we have submitted a business case and we await feedback in March.

Question	What has brought us to where we are today?
Answer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ofsted 2017 inadequate judgement, standards behaviour and outcome • Summer 17 great results and most improved school in the area • Massive improvements made by everyone since • Building inadequate, costs are way too high • Difficult to market against Ofsted legacy • Budget this year in surplus position • Year 7 applications increasing by over 40% • Ofsted 2018 improvements and RI awarded, we received a good for Leadership and Management and 6th form • SIAMS inspection would be excellent • Academy Direct Order will not be lifted • Only way to access funding for building
Question	What is the 5 year plan for the Trust?
Answer	There will be two years of consolidation and 3 years of growth initially anyway. We will grow at a rate that does not over extend capacity perhaps one or two schools maybe per year will then join the Trust. We compliment St Chad's the diocese primary MAT, and see both primary and secondary growth
Question	The survey asks about changing the name of the school. Why do we want to add the name Academy and not School?
Answer	The proposal is an option and something that signals the change in status. It is something we are exploring as part of the consultation and we will consider all feedback before making a final decision.
Question	What is the percentage of the school's budget that you will take and what services will you provide?
Answer	The Trust is proposing a charge of 4% of pupil funding annually to each school and that will pay for central services / costs which include; salaries of central resource, service level agreements with John Taylor and Thomas Telford MAT's, HR services, clerking, payroll, internal and external audit etc. We are working with the schools to finalise the list of services to be included.
Question	Do we believe there is a need for 2 CofE secondary schools within a mile of each other?
Answer	Absolutely yes. The Diocese welcomes both schools and together they cover a large geographical area so there is demand for both. The schools also welcome all children and do not admit based on faith; this will also continue.
Question	Can we set our own terms and training dates?
Answer	Yes these will be determined locally.
Question	What does ETO stand for (in relation to TUPE)?
Answer	Economic, Technical or Organisational

Question Can you confirm how long it will last?
Answer TUPE does not have a prescribed life span although it is thought that after 12 months post transfer areas may be diluted i.e. changes take place in policies. That doesn't mean it will happen but it is a guide. In theory TUPE can stay with you for the duration of your employment. Any change in role at the school will often mean a new contract of employment and at that point your TUPE entitlement finishes.

Question Does previous experience in another school count?
Answer Your continuity of service will transfer with you so yes previous experience counts.

Question What happens if the DfE don't agree to fix the roof and building problems?
Answer There is no guarantee of funding – just a guarantee our bid will be considered, and we should know the outcome by the end of March. If the decision is that there is no funding and we must reapply we will do so. The school will remain a voluntary aided school maintained by the local authority. Three Spires will continue to work with the school and support it in any way we can.

The King's Wolverhampton
Thursday 11 February 2021
6:00pm
Governors Consultation Meeting

Question Why the rush?
Answer Prior to the meeting the Principal had shared the grant application Three Spires had prepared. This document outlined the need and subsequently the reasons why we needed to press ahead with facilitating a conversion date of the 1st April. In summary we are led to believe the funds are available this financial year and we do not know if that will be the case next financial year.

Question Who would the funds for capital works be passed to should the application be successful?
Answer The funds would be transferred to the Trust.

Question What happens if the school gets nothing?
Answer It will take longer to facilitate the transition to academy status and joining Three Spires. Please be assured we would not walk away.

Question Once we know the outcome of the capital application – what is the process then?
Answer This will be determined by the DfE in consultation with the Trust. There may be conditions linked to any grant award.

Question How likely is it that the building repairs will go ahead?
Answer At the moment we would say 70 – 30 in favour of securing the funds to facilitate the work.

- Question** **Who will do the work if we secure funds for the repairs and who would project manage it?**
- Answer Again at this stage we do not know and these will be conditions set by the DfE of any award of funds. In terms of project management as a minimum we would definitely ensure we had someone internally to project manage from the school/Trust side.
- Question** **There is a rumour the school is facing closure and there are many conspiracy theories i.e. we are asset stripping, only need one CofE school in the area etc. How do we allay these concerns?**
- Answer The Trust is not engaged in asset stripping and are committed to ensure all schools flourish. We need to ensure joint messages from the Trust and school as we move forward.
- Comment** **It feels like we are not worthy of joining your Trust**
- Response You are absolutely worthy and have much to offer other schools too.
- Question** **If we are not part of the Trust how can we feel a part of it?**
- Answer We will still include the school in as much dialogue and development as is possible as we recognise this will support future transition but also work of both organisations now.
- Question** **How can we guarantee we will be an equal partner?**
- Answer All schools proposing to join the Trust are being treated equally and we are not differentiating between any. You will all have the same governance structures, delegations of authority and you are all contributing to every discussion whether formal working groups, responding to requests for help, attending meetings etc.
- Question** **Will we have to have new vision and values?**
- Answer No. We appreciate how much work the school has put in to developing your own identity and recognise how important this is to the school community. All we ask is that the school contributes to the overall Trust vision and values as it develops.

The King's Wolverhampton
Wednesday 3 February 2021
5:30pm
Parent One Consultation Meeting

- Comment** **I have heard bad things about academies and how finance is managed, it concerns me as a parent that this isn't in the best interests of the school.**
- Response Unfortunately many things in the news / public domain are there because of something negative happening. Yes, there have been some concerns raised about academies, trusts and financial mis-management but that is no different to schools more generally. This Trust has strong leadership and management in place. The Board is an experienced group of professionals who have also worked in the education arena for some time and it is hoped that together risks will be mitigated against, systems will be in place and we will have lots of good news stories and best practice to share.

- Question** **The school name will not change but if the word academy is added surely the badge will change?**
- Answer** It isn't yet determined if the word Academy will be added or not. If it is there would be no expectation that the school badge was changed that would be for the school to decide. The Trust would not expect for example that new uniforms were a requirement because of a word change.
- Comment** **The staff turnover has really steadied in recent years.**
- Question** **Why are there only 2 parent nominations on the governance stricture but the parish has 5?**
- Answer** As the schools are voluntary aided there is a requirement to ensure the parish has the greater number of nominations and that the Christian distinctiveness is protected.
- Question** **The King's is multi faith. I've not heard much about it. Can you expand on how all faiths and non faiths will be welcomed?**
- Answer** Apologies if that has not been made clear and yes, people of all faiths and none will be welcomed to join our school community whether as a student, employee, volunteer, community member or visitor. The Trust does not distinguish between faiths and we wish to share our vision and values as widely as possible for the benefit of all.
- Question** **I was one of the parents who said I'm not sending my son there. Three years on he's having an amazing time. Lots of plans, long way in a short space of time. Is the Trust going to take that away?**
- Answer** No this won't be taken away. We want to build on all the great things that happen in school and embrace new opportunities together to make it even better. We will collaborate and share in order to only ever make further improvements.
- Question** **Building and roof is £4-6m in work. Where does the money come from?**
- Answer** This is to be confirmed but we hope from the Department for Education. The local authority will also be contributing to the works. We will know more in March and will update everyone further when we know.
- Question** **When you join and pool resources it usually leads to redundancies is that something realistically that could happen?**
- Answer** We have no plans to make any redundancies as part of the transition to the Trust. Schools always plan ahead and they have finite budgets which they must operate within and we would hope as The King's continues to grow these budgets will be greater and that it is further recruitment not redundancy which would be required.
- Question** **Do the responsibilities not lie with the government for the building being sorted?**
- Answer** Unfortunately it is not the straight forward. The contracts were overseen by the local authority with a company which no longer exists. The Trust is working with the school, local authority and government for finding a solution.

Question **Name of the school, does it change if opinion changes?**
Answer We ask the question to determine if there is appetite to explore change it is not to determine if change will happen. The feedback will inform final discussions between the school and Trust.

Question **Is it a done deal?**
Answer The Secretary of State has determined The King’s must become an academy and must join a Trust and they have identified Three Spires as that Trust.

Question **What evidence is there of the impact of academies joining and doing better?**
Answer There is a lot of research out there which offers a variety of insights into the impact of schools when they have become academies. We have highlighted a few links

[The Economic Benefits of Joining a MAT - Education Policy Institute \(epi.org.uk\)](http://www.epi.org.uk)
[Multi-academy trusts: benefits, challenges and functions report \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](http://publishing.service.gov.uk)
[Guidance-Paper Taking-the-next-step-joining-a-multi-academy-trust 2.pdf](#)

The King’s Wolverhampton questions and comments received from online Google Survey responses

Question **I would like to know what this means for my child's education?**
Answer Day to day your child should notice no difference in that they will attend the same school, in the same uniform with the same staff, timetable and school holidays as they do now. There are no plans to change anything that would have a negative effect on children directly. We do hope that together over coming months and years that there will be more opportunities for students at all the schools who are part of the Trust with joint projects, enhanced curriculum and high quality professional development for staff etc.

Question **We are undergoing the process. However, it is not clear what academisation means for the future quality of education for the children at The Kings, and what support will be put in place for staff, pupils and parents to ensure the transition is undergone smoothly.**
Answer We hope that during the consultation you feel you have had an opportunity to find out much more. Copies of the presentations shared at meetings have been available on the school website and we have ensured that this document as part of the final consultation report is shared with everybody so you can see answers to all questions asked. We hope by coming together under one Trust we will be stronger together, we will learn from each other and improve practice and opportunities. We have offered a range of support during the transition to support pupils, parents and staff and we will continue to do this throughout the transition and when the school joined the Trust.

- Question** It is possible parents will not want the added expense of buying new uniform, especially if they have more than one child at the school. For Yr 7's and any Year who have had to buy new uniform in September 2020, this may be particularly upsetting financially, given the issues surrounding Lockdowns and Covid.
- Answer** There is no intention to change the uniform as a result of a change in status to an academy. We are conscious of the additional expense this would incur and would stress there will be no change.
- Comment** The school has thrived before, it can thrive again without an academy pressure
- Comment** Whatever decision is made, it should benefit all children and all staff, not line people's pockets
- Comment** I think it's a massive move forwards
- Comment** I need more information about what this means for The Kings School please
- Comment** The Academy process needs to be a fair one and it needs to be clear that all schools are equal and will receive the same support and treatment.
- Question** More information required on the subject of our senior leadership team, will they be able to continue to run our school as a separate entity, to carry on the fantastic job they are already doing?
- Answer** The leadership will remain the same in the academy as it is now. The school will maintain its individual identity, vision and values and in addition will be supported by a wider group of schools working together to achieve that vision.
- Comment** Finally! The school needs the support of Three Spires Trust. I feel Governors have been too slow to recognise the benefits of joining multi academy trust.
- Comment** The King's Church of England school has worked extremely hard to develop its reputation in Wolverhampton; to develop its curriculum and standards and provide a high level of pastoral support for students. It has a distinctively Christian Ethos which I feel is very important to be maintained.

All schools Parents meeting.

Tuesday 9 February 2021

5:00pm

Parent Two Consultation Meeting

Question **What are the quality benefits of working together?**

Answer We will work together and focus on quality first by planning and delivering best practice and creating opportunities for all. The sharing of performance data, benchmarking information and cross MAT moderation is a bonus as it supports in any deficiencies that we may find i.e. teacher recruitment.

The secondaries can also learn a lot from primary too. They have excellent areas of expertise for example in transition and outdoor learning.
Being part of a Trust enables us to focus on a solid partnership.

Question **How does funding work?**

Answer Funding comes into the Trust centrally and they distribute the agreed budgets to each school for them to manage as they do now in school. This is done through a framework of authority and delegation set by the Trust. Expenditure is monitored and reported against through a variety of structures including a Scheme of Delegation, Financial policies and the governance structure. Each year the Trust reports to each local governing body where central monies have being spent and how this has benefited the school.

Comment **I commend this journey it is a step in the right direction.**

Questions received from Three Spires Trust Consultation email account

Question **I have several questions including the following: the speed at which the MAT is being organised, the board, the impact on S Peter's and the school community, confusing prior information, concerns as a potential parent.**

Answer We hope through the consultation process we have managed to respond to your questions and minimise the concerns you have about this proposal. The initial speed is determined by the Department for Education. The Board membership will grow slowly and Trustees will be appointed based on their skill set. We apologise if you felt prior information was confusing it was not intended to be so.

Question **Why is this conversion moving so fast? It appears to be unheard of TUPE and academisation moving at this speed. What are the benefits of moving at this speed? It feels like this will create a huge bag of issues that would prevent this conversion from being as smooth as possible for all concerned.**

Answer The proposed conversion date is determined by the DfE in consultation with the local authorities and the Trust. TUPE should be a minimum of 2 weeks and can last anything up to 6 months+ however it only tends to be longer if there are a number of proposed changes effecting many staff and this is not the case for this proposal. The conversion process varies and is usually 4-6 months and we sit in that

timeframe. The schools will only convert to the Trust if everything is in place legally and the Trust is keen we get this right.

- Question** **Will our terms of employment and pay structure stay the same? Will this affect our pensions? Will they still be government pensions?**
- Answer** We can confirm that your terms and conditions will remain the same except for a change of pay date for staff at the Wade Federation. We have indicated three measures of intent and these have been shared with all staff. Pensions will remain the same for all staff, you will remain with the same providers making the same contributions as you do now.