

## Academy information

### What is an academy? Are academies bound by the same rules and regulations as other schools?

An Academy is an independent, non-fee paying state school, which is funded by and accountable to the Department of Education, rather than being under Local Authority (LA) control. Academies are run by Academy Trusts, which own/lease the premises and assets and employ the staff. Redhill would operate as an affiliated school of Thomas Telford Multi Academy Trust (TTMAT).

Like all schools, academies are required to offer a broad and balanced curriculum, provide an education for pupils of all abilities and educate pupils who are drawn from the local area. However, academies do have greater additional freedoms compared to LA controlled schools and these are intended to help the school to innovate and continue to raise standards. They are still subject to the same laws, regulations and codes when it comes to admissions, exclusions and SEN provision.

Independence does not mean isolation. Academies benefit from strong partnerships and strong governance. The framework provided by TTMAT, enables schools to benefit from shared resources and expertise so that they can offer enhanced learning opportunities for children and professional development opportunities for staff.

## Consultation and Conversion Process

### How long will the consultation process last?

The consultation process will commence with parents and staff on the 5 January 2018 and will last until the 26 March 2018 at 5pm.

### What does the conversion process involve?

After carrying out its own due diligence, the Full Governing Body (FGB) must take the following steps:

Submit an application to the Head Teacher Board/DfE

Formal notification of intentions to Staff & parents

Obtain notification of the decision by Head Teacher Board

Commence formal consultation process with all stakeholders

TUPE consultation process involving unions

Provide a report to the Governing Body of the consultation findings and the Governing body to decide whether to continue. In addition, TTMAT board members must approve the conversion.

### How can I share my views?

The consultation process, agreed by the Governing Body, has been designed to gather as wide a range of views as possible. It is important to have your say.

- Emails can be sent to: [redhillparents.enquiries@taw.org.uk](mailto:redhillparents.enquiries@taw.org.uk)
- Letters should be marked Private and Confidential – ‘Academy Proposal’
- The proforma attached to the letter sent to parents can be completed
- A meeting specifically to discuss the conversion will be held in late February, date tbc.

## Information about Thomas Telford Multi Academy Trust

## **What are the aims of the TTMAT?**

The key aim for TTMAT is to provide academic environments where students have the opportunity to achieve their personal best and where individual talents, in all forms, can be maximised. Students will enjoy conditions that enable them to be successful and confident learners who make progress. Each Academy will offer a broad curriculum that includes the national curriculum and opportunities to specialise in certain fields, such as Business, Physical Education, Science and Technology.

## **How many schools are currently in the TTMAT and what are the further plans for expansion?**

TTMAT currently consists of three secondary academies, Madeley, Sandwell and Walsall and has plans to grow no larger than 8-10 schools across the primary and secondary sector. This will include Thomas Telford School in due course.

## **Who are the members and who are the trustees?**

**Members - Keith Jackson Terry Last Peter Mitchell CBE Georgina Ruoss Sir Michael Wakeford**

**Trustees - Roy Harrison OBE Andrew Smith William Brewis Clive Tonks Robert Taylor  
John Bowater Sue Williamson Charles Whittington Vivienne Evans**

## **Rationale for the conversion**

### **What are reasons and benefits of converting to TTMAT?**

- TTMAT would help us to achieve the best possible outcomes for the children and young people in your school.
- Thomas Telford's proven track record of excellence and at the forefront of educational developments nationally.
- The potential for collaboration would help raise/support continual improvements in pupil attainment. TTMAT provides a structure within which we could pool our expertise and work with primary and secondary colleagues to strengthen teaching and learning.
- There is an increasing body of evidence that formal collaborations between schools, such as MATs can bring substantial benefits through collaboration and sharing of best practice
- TTMAT ethos and vision aligns with the ethos and vision of our school.
- Geographically close to enable sharing of human and capital facilities and create strong collaborative relationships.
- The School would retain budgetary control and no top slicing for central services required by TTMAT.
- Autonomy would remain with the Local Governing Board. More choice and freedom over decisions than other MATs explored.
- Can assist and benefit from the teacher training programme that they run.
- Offers staff professional development opportunities and supports succession planning.
- Enhance the strong Leadership: School leaders and teachers could combine their knowledge and planning abilities to work on challenges and solutions together.
- Strategic Management: Governors and trustees can draw on each other's experience to formulate strategic approaches
- Shared Staffing: Human resources within schools can work across multiple sites, this can appease recruitment challenges and offer more varied opportunities to staff.

- **Specialist Resources:** With combined funding in the trust, specialist knowledge can be bought in many different areas, both academic, extra-curricular and operational.
- **Professional Development:** This can be organised across multiple schools thus spreading the cost per school and upskilling as many individuals as possible per session.
- **Economies of Scale:** The trust are able to purchase as a whole thereby achieving economies of scale not accessible by the schools as individuals. With ever tightening budgets, this can help schools maintain and build upon the resources and standards they aspire to.
- **Reduction of administrative burden** on individual schools on issues such as policy development and procurement, allowing school leadership to focus on school improvement
- **To shape our own destiny** within a changing school system
- **Allows us to retain own identity** and running of the school – TTMAT structure would allow us to protect the uniqueness of the school whilst adding capacity and accountability
- **TTMAT provides the right balance** of support, rigour and challenge to move the school forward towards our aim of delivering outstanding education to the children

## **Resources**

### **Are there any changes to the funding arrangements for the school?**

Academies are funded using the same funding formula as maintained schools, so whilst there are some small differences around (for example) charging for some local authority services, the principle is that an Academy should be in a similar financial position to a maintained school. An Academy is no longer directly financially accountable to its local authority and if part of a multi-academy trust (MAT), its accounts are reported as part of the MAT accounts rather than forming part of the local authority accounts.

However, with greater control over the whole budget, a reduction in delegating funds for Local Authority services, we will have more freedom to procure services from other providers and to realise cost efficiencies across the Trust. TTMAT does not top slice the schools budget who are in the Trust for running central services. This is a unique position for a MAT.

### **Who will own the land and buildings?**

All assets and liabilities transfer to TTMAT and the LA lease the land to TTMAT for 125 years.

### **Are there any costs to school to convert to an Academy?**

Yes but the DfE currently pay a flat-rate grant of £25,000 to cover costs and the conversion is not expected to impact on the school's budget.

### **What happens to all the staff?**

All members of staff would remain in post under the current terms and conditions. We are committed to excellence and professional development for staff, and we would certainly encourage the retention and ongoing development of all school staff.

## **Governance and Leadership Arrangements**

## **How will Redhill Primary School be run if it becomes an Academy? How will governance work within the Trust? Will the current governing body continue?**

The school would continue to have a local governing body with people with the requisite skills for effective administration of a school; who represent the interests of the local community, including the business community and represent parents. Therefore, there would be no changes to the composition of the governing body, as agreed as part of the school's scheme of delegation. The local governing body would have the responsibility for the day-to-day organisational matters with oversight from the Trust Board. The Trust Board would have a strategic role/oversight for all affiliated schools. The Trust would become the direct employer of staff and have responsibilities for standards and safeguarding and be accountable for the Academy's finances.

## **Educational Provision**

### **Will there be change to the curriculum?**

No this is not a requirement of joining the Trust.

### **Will the SEND provision change?**

No. Our SEND Policy would remain as it is currently. We would continue to provide the same outstanding provision and offer for all pupils with special educational needs and indeed the funding for this element would continue to be provided by the Local Authority. The staff within our SEND team would not change and therefore the daily experience for our SEND pupils would be no different.

## **Organisational Matters**

### **Will the school need to change its name?**

We believe that it would be important that the school enjoys the shared sense of identity if we were to join TTMAT as well as retaining the essence of what makes us unique. Therefore a slight change to include Academy may be made.

### **Will there be a new uniform?**

The school is proud of its individual identity and uniforms. The Trust respects this and wants to support continuity. There are no plans to change the uniform other than a possible name change to logos.

### **Will the admission arrangements for the school remain the same?**

Yes. No changes are proposed to the admission criteria or catchment area. The school would continue to be inclusive and serve the local community admitting local children as they do now. The Local authority will continue to co-ordinate the admission arrangements for entry into Reception.

### **What will the relationship be between Redhill Primary and the LA?**

Our school would continue to be part of the council-wide provision for the children of Telford and we would preserve the partnership with the Local Authority and other schools.