

EASTHAMPSTEAD PARK COMMUNITY SCHOOL ACADEMY CONSULTATION FINAL REPORT 20 JUNE 2022

The Governing Body of Easthampstead Park Community School have been carefully considering the best future strategy for the school so that we can build on our achievement of being an outstanding learning community.

We are letting you know that we have applied to the Regional Schools Commissioner seeking agreement for a proposal for Easthampstead Park Community School, to convert to an academy within the Kings Group Academies trust. We hope to be granted an academy order upon completion of our application.

Our school is a community school and we are committed to working with parents and carers and the wider community. We think it is important that everyone can ask questions, explore the proposal in more detail with us, and be involved in the consultation.

The Governing Board of Easthampstead Park Community School conducted a formal consultation process to seek the views of parents/carers, staff and the local community on the proposal to convert to academy and join Kings Group Academies trust.

Formal consultation was conducted from 19th April 2022 to 3rd May 2022 for Parents and Carers.

Formal consultation with the staff was conducted from 19th April 2022 and extended until the final staff meeting held on the 23rd of May 2022.

This provided ample opportunity for stakeholders to submit their views by means of an on-line survey.

Feedback provided for the survey responses is included in Annex 1 of this report

Governors reviewed the survey and the responses. All of your views were taken into account before a decision was made.

Governors agreed that there was sufficient support for the school to convert.

Governors also concluded that the conduct of the consultation process met the requirements of the Academies Act 2010 and the tests for reasonableness.

The consultation process is now complete and the Governors Vote on academisation will be conducted at an Extraordinary meeting.

Easthampstead Park Community School Governing Body

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ANNEX 1

ACADEMY CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

Are your staff aware of the negative impact this decision will have on their working environment?

A separate consultation with the same link to the google form is being completed by the staff in collaboration with the Teachers Union representatives. The EPCS Governing Body has had an Association agreement with Kings Group Academies (KGA) since Feb 2021 allowing staff and the SLT to engage and collaborate with the staff in the Kings Group Academies (KGA). Staff employment and contractual rights are protected under the TUPE process and they should see no change to their working conditions unless consultation processes are enacted and not currently planned.

Besides buying power... what other student benefits will EP get from joining Kings group?

Closer collaborative working between strong schools so that staff can build upon sharing their expertise in order to raise standards for children even further.

- Securing best value for money on products and services therefore achieving greater economies of scale, so that we can spend as much as possible in classrooms.
- Opportunities for the school to apply and benefit from grants and bids that schools do not have access to under local authority control improving the student resources on site .
- Greater collaborative working with a wide range of schools across other trusts and opportunities for other schools to join in order to build capacity even further.

Please watch Mrs Cook's video on the website

Kings make reference to "clear moral purpose" and "British Values and tradition" ...can they elaborate more on this? Do Kings have a morality and values framework that is built on any religious heritage?

Kings Group Academies' moral purpose is essentially the belief that 'all young people can and will achieve'. With regards to British values and tradition, it relates to 'respect, fairness and inclusivity, celebrating equality and diversity and providing opportunities for personal development and success. Students studying within King's group of schools are from a diverse range of cultural and religious backgrounds; they do not have a secular faith approach.

How will the change affect students joining 6 forms in September 2022?

If we proceed, you and your child are unlikely to see any change in your day-to-day experience of school. The students will not notice any immediate difference. They will be in the same school in the same classrooms Transition arrangements are unchanged and we are looking forward to working with students continuing their education in the 6th Form

Can the uniform change not come into place from September to allow those joining the school to just buy a new style uniform and not have to change again next year. Then have a year or 2 grace for the students who are already in the school to gradually replace. The cost to parents is the most worrying element...however bar this I'm very pro the idea! All items will be phased in for students currently attending the school The new intake of 2023 will be the first year in the all-new logo'd uniform

Please refer to Mrs. Cook's video on the website where she explains the process of securing the uniform change with the supplier which occurs a year in advance of the implementation.

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Notwithstanding the fact that we do not have the academy order and would need to complete the consultation first. We are sensitive to the cost pressures parents are under and have allowed for this phasing in uniform will be planned for

What changes will there be to the curriculum ?

Our curriculum is published on the school's website and we comply with the National Curriculum. Currently, there are no plans to change this. We are aware Academies can change the curriculum in response to the needs of the cohort but all Kings do follow NC guidelines.

Will more subjects be added?

There may be opportunities in the future as schools could collaborate and share some facilities but nothing has been planned currently.

<https://www.epschool.org/parents/academy-consultation/>

What happens with school uniforms? Will these change or stay the same?

We honour the individual characteristics of our schools. With effect from September 2023, subject to consultation, the following changes are suggested

- The blazer will remain the same with a new 'iron on' logo
- The skirt, an optional item, will be tartan, with a navy accent
- The tie and PE kit will remain the same, with the new logo added

We will clarify and update the FAQ on the website section after the consultation so all views can be included regarding uniform for you all but rest assured the uniform will be phased in. The school is acutely aware of cost pressures at the moment and if the process is approved, this will be central to arrangements made.

Are there any proposed measures that will be applied?

If we proceed, you and your child are unlikely to see any change in your day to day experience of school. The students will not notice any immediate difference. They will be in the same school in the same classrooms Leaders, teachers and support staff will remain and have their terms and conditions protected as part of the conversion process; the school will continue to have a governing body; all children on roll at the school will continue; times of the school day, term dates and the school's admissions policy will stay the same

I found with an Academy school trips etc were much more expensive which led to my daughter not being able to attend due to me being a single parent working part time.

If we proceed, The Governing Board will continue to endeavour to make trips as affordable as possible with accommodating payment plans and sufficient notice to ensure they are affordable so all students are able to participate in extracurricular learning. The trips currently offered, give parents some time to pay whenever possible over a timeframe.

Will the school still have the same uniform, schedule and teachers?

If we proceed, you and your child are unlikely to see any change in your day to day experience of school. The students will not notice any immediate difference. They will be in the same school in the same classrooms Leaders, teachers and support staff will remain and have their terms and conditions protected as part of the conversion process; the school will continue to have a governing body; all children on roll at the school will continue; times of the school day, term dates and the school's admissions policy will stay the same

Will my daughter be following the national curriculum or an alternative one?

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Currently, the school follows the National Curriculum as do all the Kings schools. We would have flexibility as an Academy to adapt it but it would have to be for the right reason for the benefit of students. Currently, there are no plans to change.

Will the admission criteria to the school stay the same?

Yes, it will.

What changes might there be for my son in 6th form or when my daughter attends- will they be expected to ever travel between sites for lessons?

If we proceed, you and your child are unlikely to see any change in your day-to-day experience of school. The students will not notice any immediate difference. Currently, we do not envisage travel between the sites for 6th Form as Binfield does not have a 6th Form their current Year group is in Year 10. However, this is not to say it may not happen in the future if EPCS needs to ensure we meet students' requirements for an extended curriculum provision for subjects that may be available at another king's Academies site.

Why has the school chosen King's academy group? I've never contacted the school before although my wife has a lot of contacts. We feel strongly that we put our kids into a local school to give them the best in all areas that aren't precious about grades but care about the kids having positive life outcomes.

We have chosen to work with King's as they are in our area, and their group has a similar ethos and vision to our own. We recognise there are differences in intake and community but our ambition for our children is the same. We are here for our local children and this isn't expected to change as the community is very important to us. We do think we can influence as well as be influenced and this is the benefit of sharing our expertise and work with others. The EPCS Governing Body has had an Association agreement with Kings Group Academies (KGA) since Feb 2021 allowing staff and SLT to engage with the other schools in the Kings Group Academies (KGA) and the school has worked closely with the CEO and Chairs of Governors of the schools in the MAT to gauge the trust involvements within operational elements of the school to measure the impact on the day to day running and what would change and impact the school with the conversation. With this experience of working together, we feel that Kings Group Academies (KGA) is the best fit for EPCS with the least amount of changes expected for the school and students.

"In regard to the king's consultation, I have completed the questions on the link but there is no box to explain the views that I've provided.

Thank you for your feedback. The additional comments box was added on 24.04.2022 and your comments were added to the form.

I personally strongly oppose as I do not want EP to share similarities with how Kings operate.

If we proceed, you and your child are unlikely to see any change in your day to day experience of school. The students will not notice any immediate difference. They will be in the same school in the same classrooms Leaders, teachers and support staff will remain and have their terms and conditions protected as part of the conversion process; the school will continue to have a governing body; all children on roll at the school will continue; times of the school day, term dates

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and the school's admissions policy will stay the same. We will continue to strive for an outstanding education for all our children. However, in time the children may notice changes and improvements in the way that they learn, resulting from the greater training opportunities given to teaching staff to innovate and improve the pupil experiences.

I love a community school with a community ethos, that has a long and rich history and it is new academies such as Kings that have benefit to learn from EP rather than the opposite. Kings is categorically a school I would never choose for my children to attend and I don't want EP to lose identity, the identity of which is in the name- Community.

Thank you for your feedback. Our Mission remains "It takes a whole village to raise a child" We seek to develop students who have a strong sense of community, both locally and globally, who are confident, able to lead others and bring about positive change. We work hard to foster a strong three way partnership between parents, students and the school and believe that having these bonds is essential if our pupils are to achieve their full potential. Our sense of community is built around the quality of relationships between staff, students and parents with the emphasis on respect and pride. All members of our community need to communicate clearly and work together. So even though the work "Community" will no longer be a part of the name, it will continue to be the essence of our mission.

Ep is for a pool of children from local estates, not a posh postcode lottery school with a tartan uniform; but the age old crest that stands in it's identity and history. Where the interest is the whole welfare of the student and excellent pastoral care rather than a school seeming to be entirely focussed on high results and archaic discipline.

Thank you for your feedback. Our Mission Vision Values and Beliefs will not change and the new school badge will include the base elements for the current EPCS badge merged with the King's Academy Trust identity, We will continue to strive for an outstanding education for all our children.

EP respectfully allow pupils expression and identity, that I feel will die under the Kings Group. While I support the school in their endeavours and understand there are likely financial reasons, I would appreciate in the open spirit of the school that my post, with my personal opinion is shared, even if comments are turned off- as this is the nature of EP as it stands - expression, involvement, participation.

Thank you for your feedback. All opinions are shared on Facebook however we reserve the right to turn off commenting as we did with regards to the consultation as Facebook is not the platform to have the consultation through comments. You shared on the Facebook Parents group and your feedback has also been included in the additional comments in the google form.

I'm so disappointed that this is chosen as the course of action. I know so many people who are unhappy with Kings and a number that have pulled their kids out. They were terrible when I wanted to discuss my sons SEN and I was treated appallingly! Where Miss Buchanan was amazing but decided EP couldn't accept him so he's going to a specialist school. EP has been amazing for [REDACTED] On paper it may suggest it is a match but they are not inclusive, it is run as a business and this is making me kick myself for not putting myself forward as a governor. I really want to understand better. I don't think that becoming an academy is necessarily in the best interests of the school as being independent is one of the good things about EP.

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Thank you for your feedback The EPCS Governing Body has worked closely with the CEO and Chairs of Governors of the schools in the MAT to gauge the trust involvements within operational elements of the school to measure the impact on the day to day running and what would change and impact the school EPCS with the conversation. The EPCS Governing Body have had an Association agreement with Kings Group Academies (KGA) since Feb 2021 allowing staff to engage with the schools in the Kings Group Academies (KGA) to engage and collaborate with each other."

Will 6th form now be expected to wear a uniform? I have a current year 13 no uniform and a hopeful 6th form attendee, currently in year 11. I don't wish to have the cost implications of buying another set of uniform therefore this will influence my choice to accept a 6th form offer for my child. She is happy at EP, but I cannot afford, or justify another set of uniform. Thank you.

If we proceed, you and your child are unlikely to see any change in your day to day experience of school. The students will not notice any immediate difference. There are no current plans to implement a year 13 uniform.

How many changes will this make, day to day?

If we proceed, you and your child are unlikely to see any change in your day to day experience of school. The students will not notice any immediate difference. They will be in the same school in the same classrooms Leaders, teachers and support staff will remain and have their terms and conditions protected as part of the conversion process; the school will continue to have a governing body; all children on roll at the school will continue; times of the school day, term dates and the school's admissions policy will stay the same.

Will the uniform stay the same?

We honour the individual characteristics of our schools. With effect from September 2023, subject to consultation, the following changes are suggested

- The blazer will remain the same with a new 'iron on' logo
- The skirt, an optional item, will be tartan, with a navy accent
- The tie and PE kit will remain the same, with the new logo added

We will clarify and update the FAQ on the website section after the consultation so all views can be included regarding the uniform for you all but rest assured the uniform will be phased in. The school is acutely aware of cost pressures at the moment and if the process is approved, this will be central to arrangements made

How is this going to benefit the children?

- Securing best value for money on products and services, therefore, achieving greater economies of scale, so that we can spend as much as possible in classrooms.
- Opportunities for the school to apply and benefit from grants and bids that schools do not have access to under local authority control improving the student resources on site.
- Greater collaborative working with a wide range of schools across other trusts and opportunities for other schools to join in order to build capacity even further.

How will uniform be brought in? Hoping it will be phased as I can't afford to replace.

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Or will you be subsidising replacements?

We will clarify and update the FAQ on the website section after the consultation so all views can be included regarding uniform for you all but rest assured the uniform will be phased in. The school is acutely aware of cost pressures at the moment and if the process is approved, this will be central to arrangements made

Why do you want academy status?

There is a direction of travel within UK education which indicates a large growth in the number of Multi-Academy Trusts. Currently, schools have a free choice in the selection of working with a selected MAT or collaborating with other schools to form a new MAT. However, in the future, schools that have not joined a MAT on a voluntary basis could be directed to join another Trust, not of their own free choice. We thought it far better to join a MAT that aligned with our Mission, Vision, Ethos and Strategic direction but also understands and meets the needs of our community.

We chose the school precisely because Mrs. Cook was adamant she did not want to become an academy and said that it would undermine all the hard work her staff had put in to achieve a 'good' Ofsted rating

Mrs. Cook has addressed this statement in her video

If this goes ahead how will it affect students going into sixth form this year?

You and your child are unlikely to see any change in your day-to-day experience of school. Our transition arrangements for our lovely Year 11s are already being planned and we are looking forward to continuing to work with them.

My daughter was wanting to stay at 6th form however now with the academy status pending she wishes to look elsewhere. Every other academy has such a bad reputation in the children's worlds that my daughter is not wanting to be a part of.

Then your daughter certainly should stay on as she will still be a part of our school community and the arrangements we have shared with students as part of their transition will stay the same. Year 11's are working so hard at the moment we want them to do well and the opportunity to support them in the next step of their journey is one we relish. All other 6th Forms apart from GHC are already within Academy chains so perhaps it could be a misunderstanding? Our 6th Form will remain as it is now in respect to our student dress code.

Can you provide full details of the strict rules that the majority of students at EP wont take well to please? It scares me to think of what will happen to the schools reputation when the children who have educational issues have rules tightened and can't cope. I just cannot help but believe its all about money our children's education should not be

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decided on by budgets

If we proceed, you and your child are unlikely to see any change in your day-to-day experience of school. Our behaviour and discipline policy is led by the HT and approved by Governors. It is not expected to change.

I'm sure that many parents are voicing their concerns over changes in school uniform and the additional cost... having just had to buy a full girls school uniform for my trans girl, it would be unfair to have to afford to replace it again with a Kings uniform for their one remaining year in uniform. I am concerned that becoming an academy, particularly with Kings, will undermine all the marvellous things about EP and it will lose its identity. I do understand the desire for security and financial stability which academies can bring. However, I attended the public consultation undertaken by Kings before they built Binfield and was not impressed by them at all then. I cannot imagine that they are any better now. Corporations, no matter how well intentioned, do not belong in the field of education. Too many business based targets are set and the child is no longer the true focus of the task at hand. EP has really made the child the centre of everything they do, not just used platitudes and buzz words.... I don't believe Kings have the same focus.

Thank you for your feedback. The school has a supportive approach to children who self-identify and wish to transition. We have a positive Pride group within the school. This will not change as it is part of our wider care and support measures and recognises the child for who they are. Our uniform will continue to reflect this being non-gender specific and catering to all. Governors are well aware of this and supportive of the school's approach.

I trust EP will make the right decision for staff and its pupils. My concern is that as EP is already a good school and that's down to the staff and their hard work. I hope it does not lose its identity and roots by becoming an academy. I feel the name should be Easthampstead Park Kings Academy rather than the other way or the parents and children get a say in the name change.. I hear that academies really focus in the business side and hope for our school that the educational side is not affected by this. Like I say I trust EP will make the right decision and listen to all comments and opinions to help EP succeed in the future. I am neither for or against EP becoming an academy and this option should be pickable rather than only giving the option of either for or against.

Thank you for your feedback .

I am not happy with the school going as an academy

Thank you for your feedback.

I don't understand why you need to change to an academy the school is doing fine

There seems to be a misconception that you need to be a school with an Inadequate or Requiring Improvement Ofsted rating to become an academy. In order to convert to an academy the school has to qualify. Schools currently able to apply are primary and secondary schools that have been rated outstanding or good with outstanding features by Ofsted.

Any school, primary or secondary, which forms part of a formal partnership is able to apply, providing at least one of the schools is rated outstanding or good with outstanding features. What's more, any school that joins an existing academy with a proven track record of

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school improvement qualifies.

The EPCS Governing Board has had an Association agreement with Kings Group Academies (KGA) since Feb 2021 allowing staff and SLT to engage with the other schools in the Kings Group Academies. We brokered this agreement post C19 realizing that during 2020 LockDown our teachers, staff and students were part of a single entity, One school. Other schools being in an academy or MAT were able to support their staff and students effectively through economies of scale and cross functional support structures across their MAT.

The EPCS Governing Body and the Headteacher have worked closely with the CEO and Chairs of Governors of the schools in the KGA MAT to gauge the trust involvements within operational elements of the school, to measure the impact on the day to day running and what would change and impact the school with the conversation. The Governing Body spent more than a year engaging and acquiring data and answers to multiple questions session with Kings Group Academy executives to ensure that we were considering the academisation the right decision for future proofing the school.

If we proceed , this would be a mutually beneficial conversion for both EPCS and KGA. We are not changing to an academy just to improve and gain benefits for EPCS but also so that Kings Group Academies can learn and benefit from the essence that is EPCS. Throughout the Association Agreement since Feb2021 we have learnt and improved from the collaboration with each other. Students and parents were not aware of the association agreement that gave us a trial to see how we fit with the Kings Group Academies . There was no impact on you or your child. The day to day did not change.

I support the school moving forward to become an academy.

Thank you for your feedback

With evidence showing there is 'No discernible pattern of any impact on results.' For schools like EP (Academy converters which had a 'good' Ofsted result, why would you even consider changing to an academy now?

Thank you for your feedback. Please watch Mrs Cooks's video on our website for the context on why we are considering the change to an academy now. We hope this reassures you and answers your questions

I totally disagree with EP changing to an academy. One of the reasons we chose the school was because it was a community school and for its non-academy status. Please reconsider and stay as an LEA community school.

Thank you for your feedback. Our Mission remains " It takes a whole village to raise a child " We seek to develop students who have a strong sense of community, both locally and globally, who are confident, able to lead others, and bring about positive change. We work hard to foster a strong three-way partnership between parents, students, and the school and believe that having these bonds is essential if our pupils are to achieve their full potential. Our sense of community is built around the quality of relationships between staff, students, and parents with an emphasis on respect and pride. All members of our community need to communicate clearly and work together. So even though the word "Community" will no longer be a part of the name, it will

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continue to be the essence of our mission. The HT has operational control of the school, not the LA - reporting to Governors and I hope you will agree that the structures and support for students in place are secure and supportive. This shouldn't change under an Academy so I hope this reassures you.

What was the reasoning behind coming away from being a council-run school other than you have a similar ethos and would work well together?

Please view Mrs. Cook's video available on our website

When will staff and trade unions be invited to take part in this consultation?

The staff is part of the same consultation as the Parents and Carers consultation. A meeting for staff has been held and papers shared with staff. The trade unions are aware of the consultation having been informed in a Regional Reps meeting chaired by the LA. The union representatives and the staff governor are supporting the staff.

Strongly against

Thank you for your feedback.

I am firmly against Easthampstead School joining the king's academy group. I had specifically chosen not to send my son to King's academy despite having the option. This was due to an unease I and my son felt when visiting the school. We did not agree with the ethos of the Kings Academy group or its structure/methods. It's truly sad to see the Easthampstead Park willing to join a system we were so happy to previously choose not to be part of.

Thank you for your feedback. Please watch Mrs. Cook's video. We hope this reassures you. We are able to influence others and it's lovely to have our work recognized. We aim to be a strong voice within Kings if the proposal goes ahead. Our structures will not change to match KGA Binfield as we are separate schools.

Such a move has my full support.

Thank you for your feedback.

I hope this will benefit students, and staff

Thank you for your feedback. Please watch Mrs Cook's video. We hope this reassure you of the benefits.

None

Thank you for your feedback.

EP could well get the finances needed to update labs etc as part of the Trust, not possible from the LA. Research has shown that the Trust and EPCS share same values. EP would retain its autonomy and the students and parents would notice little difference. EP would still be our community school. Staff would share experiences and good practise with more schools. Every child will still matter. There could be more support.

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Thank you for your feedback.

I am concerned that changing EP to an academy school will impact it standing as a community school. It has been the heart of this community for 50 years, with many generations attending. Its ability to meet all needs, serving a diverse population is unique.

Thank you for your feedback. Our Mission remains "It takes a whole village to raise a child" We seek to develop students who have a strong sense of community, both locally and globally, who are confident, able to lead others, and bring about positive change. We work hard to foster a strong three-way partnership between parents, students, and the school and believe that having these bonds is essential if our pupils are to achieve their full potential. Our sense of community is built around the quality of relationships between staff, students, and parents with an emphasis on respect and pride. All members of our community need to communicate clearly and work together. So even though the word "Community" will no longer be a part of the name, it will continue to be the essence of our mission. Community is our designated school type and it will remain under this heading. We know our community is special and are proud to be recognising the 50 years EPCS has been in existence Part of the desire to collaborate is to remain a strong force for support within our community in the forthcoming decades and build a secure legacy for our children.

I can only assume changing to an academy is to do with money, as EP is already rated as a Good school.

Thank you for your feedback. This isn't the case as there are no direct financial benefits wouldn't it be lovely if there were However MATs can access funding grants for specific Government initiatives that LAs can't so perhaps we might qualify for some of these in the future. Please refer to Mrs. Cook's video on our website

Have you considered the financial impact on some of the families whose Children attend? especially in this current climate with the increased cost of living and energy crisis. The additional cost of more school uniforms, will be a cost many will not be able to afford. My child will be going into year 11, so our journey with EP will come to an end, however I would like the remaining time to be enjoyable, not a time of transition.

Thank you for your feedback. Please refer to Mrs. Cook's video regarding your Uniform concerns we have thought about cost pressures and how these might be supported.

I do not want to join a MAT due to continuing concerns over financial controls within MATS (highlighted by government audits), lack of individuality of schools, lack or loss of local governance and oversight.

Thank you for your feedback. We too have read stories in the press about MAT spending and can assure you Governors have done due diligence on the Trust's financial position as part of the ongoing work. Kings have very few staff to support the running of the MAT and future appointments would be based on the need to support schools and growth. Please refer to Mrs. Cook's video for more information on the uniqueness of EPCs and the retention of the governing body should academisation proceed.

Would it be possible to bring the new uniform in for this year's intake? I understand there

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will be time to change over uniform as its outgrown, but for our children we will be buying new without the possibility of much of it being worn for more than a year or passed down to others which is very wasteful, it would also help to bring that sense of the new Academy right from the start, rather than nothing appearing any different for the first year. Thank you for your feedback. Please refer to Mrs Cooks video where she explains the process of securing the uniform change with the supplier which occurs a year in advance of the implementation. Notwithstanding the fact that we do not have the academy order and would need to complete the consultation first.

What will change in out contracts? As in time off for maternity, etc.

If we progress once we are granted the academy order, the local authority must begin the TUPE process. When TUPE applies the employees' jobs usually transfer over to the new company, employment terms and conditions transfer, and continuity of employment is maintained. Leaders, teachers, and support staff will remain and have their terms and conditions protected as part of the conversion process. No terms or conditions will change as a result of the conversion. Staff who join after conversion will go onto KGA terms and conditions, as will any staff who change roles. Anyone who stays in the same role will stay on their existing terms and conditions. In joining the Trust, EPCS staff would transfer to KGA employment under protection of 'TUPE legislation' this means that their current contract of employment, along with the terms and conditions within it transfer with them. Therefore maternity pay and leave arrangements continue as they are now.

Thank you soooooo much Mrs Cook!!! I wish you had done your little video before the letters came out! As always you have restored my faith in you and your amazing team!!! Bring on the academy!!!

Thank you for your feedback.

Well we keep are same school clothes?

We honour the individual characteristics of our schools. With effect from September 2023, subject to consultation, the following changes are suggested

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- The tie and PE kit will remain the same, with the new logo added

We will clarify and update the FAQ on the website section after the consultation so all views can be included regarding the uniform for you all but rest assured the uniform will be phased in. The school is acutely aware of cost pressures at the moment and if the process is approved, this will be central to arrangements made

"I don't have an negative issue with the school changing to an academy in fact it's a positive! I have seen great changes to schools in the Berkshire and Wokingham areas. My only concern is you have known about this for some time, clearly have as you aware you have stated it in your video, meetings with Kings Academy over the past three years. Not huge issue but you have considered it. The school needs financial injections of support from somewhere. Which I agree !

As for everything else, as long as you all communicate and be committed as you have currently have been, how the school is run is totally amazing ! From parents perspective! Teachers have been great, enthusiastic and encouraging!

You need to openly discuss with your students as for one my son didn't know anything

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about it. I say good luck. Honestly don't change a good thing if doesn't need to (how it's run) I certainly agree you need financial support!

Thank you for your feedback. We have been testing out the relationship for a while and we are acutely aware it's a big decision for both parties and we want to make sure we are all doing the right thing. As you will appreciate the process is lengthy and we have only been able to share our next steps once the LA and the DFE were consulted

Thank you for such a fantastic and reassuring video message last night. I now feel so much more at ease and really welcome the changes and opportunities this may bring the school!

Thank you for your feedback.

Will we be expected to purchase chrome books like the parents of Kings Academy Binfield have been expected to do? Each school has its own curriculum and IT strategy as we have different facilities amongst our sites.

Currently there are no plans to do this. If there where the rationale would be explained to parents who would need to signal their support. Training would also need to be factored in for staff as it would represent a significant change from our current practice.

In relation to uniform and in particular the skirts - currently we can order skirts from Stevensons at a cost of £33 with an alternative more affordable priced skirt from M&S ranging from £12 to £16 (for 2). I have looked at the Kings Binfield skirts on Stevensons website and they are £45 for one. This is an increase of an extra £12 if ordering via the uniform shop. What will the cost be for skirts for EP in this same style? Will there be more affordable and realistic costs for an alternative supplier for parents to be able to even afford more than 1 skirt for their child?

Thank you for your feedback. Please refer to Mrs. Cooks's video on the website where she explains the process of securing the uniform change with the supplier which occurs a year in advance of the implementation. Notwithstanding the fact that we do not have the academy order and would need to complete the consultation first. We are sensitive to the cost pressures parents are under and have allowed for this phasing in uniform will be planned for

I am very much opposed to EP becoming an academy. We chose the school because of Mrs Cook's explanation of why she wanted to keep the school as council run and not accept academy status

Thank you for your feedback. Please watch Mrs. Cooks's video for some context. The government's current white paper has made it clear that all schools need to move to Academy status. Perhaps it is better to choose who you wish to join in a considered way rather than be forced to join any group further along the line. We will continue to participate as all the Academy Schools, Edgbarrow, Sandhurst, Brakenhale, and Binfield do now should we proceed.

"Having read the letter and information provided, I have the following questions and thoughts:

1) for continual improvement, change is inevitable so does the mean there will be further meetings to gain staff voice before the conversion and after the conversion as the trust develops? Will us teachers be given prior notice to these meetings and then be given appropriate time to talk to one another so that we can gather our thoughts, reflect and come up with sensible questions/ ideas so that we are fully involved in exploring this

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together?

We have done some joint work together and would expect to continue to work in a collaborative way should we proceed. Staff input will be pivotal to this process.

2) How often will we see 'partnering' and what shape or form will this take? Have the termly HODs meetings been an example of this and how will the trust ensure that this time is used wisely and all parties learn from this collaboration? Will the termly HODs meetings continue and will there be due credit and recognition given to those of us who contribute well and share good practice with our counterparts?

This isn't part of the consultation but it is good practice to collaborate and share expertise so yes we would see this aspect developing. Plans moving forward would form part of the planning for the following academic year as they would if we were not proceeding.

3) What is the timeline to get accustomed to being part of a trust and what is then the timeline to work with otter MATs?

The timeline for conversion is not set and is dependent on a number of factors: the consultation, approval from the DFE, and agreements between the MAT and the LA. This takes time as there are legal precedents and protocols that need to be followed. Ideally, transfers take place at the start of the academic year or between term holidays.

4) Where the letter has ""been testing out the relationships"", what does this mean, what were the benefits and negatives? What sort of opportunities will be available for a long term HOD be across the trust either same-phase or across-phase? How is the KGA trust and our school looking at key strengths of staff to make the most out of experienced members who have knowledge and skills to give to secure the best for our students?

The staff have been made aware that we are associate members of Kings which has allowed us to collaborate together on a number of initiatives, CPD training, strategy days and forums have all been attended by staff. This is unusual as normally this offer wouldn't be in place during consultation. Staff are contracted to work at this school so we can't predict what opportunities might occur in the future. However, we believe we do have a very good understanding of the strengths weaknesses, and capabilities of our staff through the mechanisms we operate in school. These are operational and have nothing to do with the LA.

5) If there is no LEA involvement, who will be supporting our ETCs and NQTs and do the LEA part after we join the trust?

The same mechanism will be in place as is now reminding you that the majority of secondary schools in LA are already academies so we share the same arrangements.

6) our school has made massive steps in making our training and CPD prog suitable to our context and unique to each department, How do we know we are not going to go backwards on this and lose this uniqueness? Can we have some examples of ""high-quality training""

Training is dependent on needs and those needs are gathered from a range of sources: staff, nationally, etc. We will continue to seek out and collaborate to keep our staff upskilled. Training plans are gathered in the summer term and this work will continue.

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1. Re Benefits of joining KGAT - 1.1) What demonstrable benefits have resulted from the current collaboration between EPCS and KGAT?

CPD development, training for staff on remote teaching. Sharing Strategies for examination success. HT Meetings networking opportunities. Forums SENCO and DSL and PP are all demonstrable benefits.

1.2) What demonstrable benefits have resulted from previous collaborations within KGAT schools?

Difficult to answer except that each school we have visited or attended a network meeting with has behaved in a collaborative way and clearly there is a support network in place

1.3) How much additional money is expected to be available to the school through the "greater economies of scale" over the next three years?

Without referencing the school budget in detail, I can't answer this nor do we have a heads up on Government funding and the APW figure. But clearly, if there is any it will be used appropriately to support schools' needs.

1.4) What additional grants and bids would the school have access to that are not currently available?

At the moment capital funding is dependent on school type, need, and Government policy

How much money would realistically be expected to accrue to the school from such sources over the next three years?

As above

2. Re Governance - 2.1) By what process would decisions be made about allocating funding from government and other sources to individual schools within the KAGT?

Funding is devolved through the mechanism of the school's forum for a small part of the budget mostly using the AWPu funding which all schools get dependent on NOR. You can access the forum minutes online if you wish because they are public meetings.

2.2) What would the role of the governing body be within the new governance structure?

Download the [scheme of delegation](#) on the [KGA Governance](#) page for more information here but there remains LGB in place i.e. our current Governors.

2.3) Currently, if I have an issue with the school that cannot be resolved by the Headteacher or the Governors, I could seek a solution with someone that has been elected by the community. How would such issues be resolved in the new governance structure?

As is now

3. Re Terms and conditions - 3.1) How long will the staff's terms and conditions remain in place following a transfer into the KGAT management system?

TUPE would remain unless your changed job role requires a new contract.

4. Re Teaching - 4.1) How would the curriculum to be taught at the school be decided under the KGAT management system? e.g. Is it envisaged to have a single curriculum that will be followed by all KGAT schools at year 7-13 level?

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No, as each school has contextual reasons that are allowed for through curriculum development There could be some benefits in the future but only if all schools thought so and staff thought a collaboration would benefit.

4.2) How would the curriculum be delivered in terms of departmental planning and plans for individual lessons? e.g. Is it envisaged to have a common set of lesson plans covering all subjects for years 7-13?

As above

4.3) What emphasis does KGAT's management place on the teaching of STEM subjects?

They are fully supportive of STEM subjects

I don't have any questions at the moment but I'm sure some will develop as we progress. I will ask them when they arise if they are not covered in the FAQs.Many thanks.

Thank you for your feedback

Can the academy dictate what exam board the schools use? At GCSE and A Level there is choice in regards to which units we study. Can the academy dictate which units we do and do not cover?

We've worked very hard recently to implement the model/ group practice/independent practice, silent solo, knowledge recalls, etc. into our lessons.

Could this be removed/changed at the request of the academy?

No this is an operational decision for the HT not a strategic one for the Trustees. Teaching and Learning strategy is aligned to our current practice and we have been working collaboratively with Kings this year on developments.

I am struggling to see the benefits of becoming an academy from the three reasons given. I was there at the training and have consulted with 4 other teachers about how they got on with their groups that they worked in. Each member of staff said that our school lead the training and didn't get anything from Kings. The third reason is regurgitated from reason 1 and the 2nd point could well be valid but not a massive positive to go into an academy.

Thank you for your feedback This is disappointing as our staff have led on a number of sessions and the time and effort they put in was valued by the HT and the CPD leads in school. In the future, there is an opportunity to change this. Matt Hall asks for evaluations after training and will reflect staff's concerns. Hopefully those staff who felt it could be better will be willing to lead sessions in the future so they are of more benefit.

"When will Kings Academy work with the unions and BFC HR to agree a Recognition Agreement?

Yes they will and expect to have a recognition agreement in place next year

For how long will pay and conditions be protected after conversion?

Ongoing as this is part of the TUPE process unless your job role changes only at that point, does your contract change.

What are the key differences between the salary structure/pension schemes at KA schools and EP?

The pension scheme is identical as they pay into the Teacher's pension and recognise support staff similarly. Pay scales are the same for BFC in BFC.

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Do schools in the KA group follow a typical term structure of 6 half terms? Is the length of the school day broadly similar across the group and how similar is this to EP?

Yes, the term dates may vary by County as some schools are in Portsmouth and one in Reading. School day times fall under the operational responsibility of the HT and the Governors.

How will the leadership structure and support structure look in two years/five years?"

This is impossible for us to predict all we can say is currently I have no plans to change it

1. How close are the academy trust to getting a recognition agreement in place with the unions?

They expect to have an agreement in place next year.

2. Will staff be expected to teach across schools within the trust?

No, unless they are consulted or want to as some may see it as an opportunity.

After the initial agreement, how long do current contracts remain in place? Will there be any prospect of these changing after say a year after becoming an academy? Will the pay scale remain the same, will blue sky still be used to monitor progress.

If we progress once we are granted the academy order, the local authority must begin the TUPE process. When TUPE applies the employees' jobs usually transfer over to the new company, employment terms and conditions transfer, and continuity of employment is maintained. Leaders, teachers, and support staff will remain and have their terms and conditions protected as part of the conversion process. No terms or conditions will change as a result of the conversion. Staff who join after conversion will go onto KGA terms and conditions, as will any staff who change roles. Anyone who stays in the same role will stay on their existing terms and conditions. In joining the Trust, EPCS staff would transfer to KGA employment under protection of 'TUPE legislation' this means that their current contract of employment, along with the terms and conditions within it transfer with them.

Will blue sky still be used to monitor progress?

There are no plans to change the monitoring software

What is the impact on my pension?

The pension scheme is identical as they pay into the Teacher's pension and recognise support staff similarly. Pay scales are the same for BFC in BFC