



Academisation Consultation: FAQs

What is ...

... an academy?

Academies are still state schools, but they're funded and operated a little differently than maintained schools.

Instead of being funded by the local authority (LA), academy trusts are paid directly by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. This means that academies have more control over how they do things than schools that aren't academies.

Academies don't charge fees.

... a multi-academy trust?

Academy trusts are not-for-profit companies. They have trustees who are responsible for their performance, in the same way that LA maintained schools have governors.

The trustees are both company directors and charity trustees, and the academy trust employs the school staff.

We're proposing to join an existing multi-academy trust (MAT). This means that we'll be part of a community of schools that are governed by 1 board of trustees. Each school in the trust will also have its own local governing body, with some delegated governance responsibilities for that particular school. The trust will also employ a team of central staff to support the group of schools and drive school improvement. As part of a trust with multiple schools, our school will have the opportunity to collaborate and share resources with the other schools across the trust.

... the benefit of academisation for our school?

The benefits for our school will include:

- Improved teaching and learning for our pupils, because:
 - Teaching expertise and resources can be shared across the trust
 - There will be more training opportunities for our staff

- Greater freedom in deciding how to spend government funding
- The opportunity to collaborate
 - So, we can have more or better extra-curricular activities, for example
- Greater financial efficiency
 - By procuring goods and services at a larger scale across the trust
 - By sharing staff, including specialist staff who work centrally for the trust, like a school improvement team or pastoral team

The reason we're choosing to join Pioneer Learning Trust

As a school, we have been working with the trust for the past 18 months. We have taken on a number of initiatives to improve our school, building on practice we have observed within the Pioneer Trust schools. We have also introduced Values-based Education (VbE) to develop our school's values, as a result of our work with Pioneer. The strengths and expertise of Pioneer will enable Lakeview to continue to grow and improve standards whilst still remaining autonomous and providing an educational choice as a school within Wixams.

Additionally, the Trust has a dedicated Director of Education and the CEO is a National Leader of Education, both of whom facilitate practitioner and leadership development. There is a significant level of support, capacity and capability to hold the school to account and to provide effective development to raise standards and further improve our school.

The Trust continues to demonstrate strong partnership working and is contributing significantly to the local educational landscape in Bedford Borough. With this strong relationship with the Local Authority, who are in full agreement with the academisation, this will only be of benefit to us moving forward.

On money ...

... will the trust or trustees make a profit from the school?

No. Academy trusts are charities, and any surplus or other income must be used to benefit pupils.

... will the trust take any money away from our school?

Lakeview will make a contribution to the central function of the Trust in the form of a 'contribution rate'. Each school in the Trust retains their own school budget and the autonomy to spend this budget to benefit the children in the individual school.

The central team support the school in a wide variety of ways including estates management and finance as well as developing the quality of education through the development of school leaders and the wider staff team.

When our school is an academy ...

... will it still be inspected by Ofsted?

Academies are inspected by Ofsted, and are held to the same standards as other state-run schools.

... will it follow the National Curriculum?

Academies don't have to follow the National Curriculum. Our curriculum will however continue to be taught as it currently is, following the National Curriculum requirements. The curriculum is reviewed on an ongoing basis and curriculum developments occur as improvements are identified.

... will we change our name/logo/uniform?

There are no changes to the school name, logo or uniform. These will remain exactly the same as they are currently with the Lakeview logo.

... will our term times change?

There are no term time changes and all schools follow national guidelines for term times and inset days.

... will our catchment area or admissions policy change?

Academies must follow the same rules for admissions as other state schools. There will be no changes to our catchment area or admissions policy other than consideration is currently underway to see if it will be possible for the nursery provision to be extended to accommodate children from two or three years of age.

How will academisation affect ...

... our pupils?

Parents/carers and pupils won't notice a big difference in the day-to-day operation of the school, but that they'll benefit in the long term from the opportunities provided by academisation.

... our provision for special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)?

Academies have the same requirements when it comes to SEND as other state schools, as set out in the SEND Code of Practice. The Lakeview SEND offer will continue if we become part of a Trust.

... our school staff?

There will be no changes to staff employment rights or conditions and these will be protected should Lakeview become part of a Trust. School is in the process of recruiting to meet pupil needs

and ensure efficient working of the school. At the point of having been granted an academy order, the employer of school staff, the local authority must have started the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) process with staff.