



How will this change impact West Ashtead

1. What are the benefits to pupils of our school joining a MAT?

The Government is clear that greater freedom enjoyed by Academies are designed to allow schools to develop and to build on individual strengths in response to the needs of the community. By joining a Multi Academy Trust we believe the advantages include:

- Sharing best practices: it is easier to share and implement best practice through member schools. For example, Central Resource Base:
- Sharing resource pools allow easier forward planning and unexpected short term demands can be met more easily. For example: planning for changes within the curriculum or assessment criteria to responding to staff absences.
- Specialised Staff can be shared: specialist teachers of music, sport and drama, for example, can be shared by all the schools in the MAT as well as subject and leadership specialists.
- Enhanced Procurement: with a higher number of schools procuring services or goods together this increases the purchasing power of the Trust.

2. Who will be responsible for the running of our school?

Mrs Hall, our headteacher, would still be responsible for running the school. Mrs Hall will be supported by an Academy Committee. Their role is similar to that of our current Governing Body and their duties will be delegated to them by the Trust Board. The Trust Board will have overall responsibility for the running of all of the schools in the Multi Academy Trust. Further information on this can be found on the LEO Academy Website - [LEO Academy Governance](#)

3. How will my child be impacted?

The children will not notice any immediate difference; they will be in the same uniform, in the same classrooms with the same teaching staff. However, in time, the children may notice changes and improvements in the way that they learn and greater opportunities in areas such as Sport, Music and IT.



4. Would the School change its name, logo and uniform?

The school will retain its uniform and logo. Our name will change slightly to become West Ashtead Primary Academy.

You can see how the other schools in the LEO Trust have retained their individuality [here](#).

5. How will admissions to the school be affected?

Admissions will still be via the current coordinated Surrey process. Parents will still apply for a place at our school using the online Surrey application form as they would now.

6. Will the Curriculum change?

We are very proud of our broad, balanced and creative curriculum. Our main consideration is to continue with our strong curriculum and we believe LEO Academy Trust will support us with this. Our responsibilities in relation to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) will remain as they are now.

7. Will FOWA be impacted by the conversion?

We are very lucky to have an active and supportive Parents Association. Our relationship will not change and their fundraising efforts will continue to be used to support the pupils at West Ashtead.

8. Does becoming an Academy change the relationship with other schools and the community?

We are committed to being at the heart of our community. We will continue to collaborate with other local schools outside of the LEO Trust and the wider community. We will still attend local sporting and community events.



The Academy Conversion Process

9. What is an Academy?

An academy is a state school that is run by an Academy trust. The Academy Trust enters into an agreement with the Secretary of State for Education that sets out its responsibilities and accountabilities for the effective running of the Academy. The Academy is funded directly by the Government and not through the Local Authority. The trust is given exempt charitable status, which means it must operate much like a charity.

10. What is a Multi-Academy Trust?

A Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) is when 2 or more Academies come together in partnership. Within a Multi-Academy Trust all schools are governed by one academy trust board. Each school retains its own local governing body, which is represented on the Multi-Academy Trust board. The schools' local governing bodies operate subject to the control of the Trust which has ultimate responsibility for the running of the individual academies. The Trust is accountable and responsible for the performance of each of the academies and may delegate its decision-making powers to the governing bodies of the individual academies. As the Multi-Academy Trust is a single entity, schools can achieve strong collaboration and drive up standards by providing a cohesive strategy and vision across all of the schools working together.

11. Is this the right time to consider converting to an Academy?

Yes. The Government sees schools coming together as academies in MATs providing mutual school to school support and benefiting from economies of scale of joint working arrangements as the best way for schools to be successful.

The Governing Body considers this option to convert as part of our duty to improve the quality of education we can provide for our pupils and community. We currently have the privilege of choosing to convert and choosing which MAT we can join.

12. Has the decision to convert to an Academy already been made?

No. Until the views of our parents, staff, the local community and other stakeholders of our school have been obtained, a final decision will not be made.

13. What are the risks of becoming an Academy?

The change to Academy takes the schools out of Local Authority control, but does not exclude the school from Local Authority support. Our school has a good relationship with the Local Authority and it is envisaged that this will continue.



Our school will still have the opportunity to work with other schools outside of the Trust. We wish to maintain our positive working relationships with other local schools.

The Governing body will undertake Financial, academic and legal due diligence on the LEO Academy trust and they us prior to the final decision being made.

Academies and Multi Academy trusts are subject to strict financial control by HM Treasury through the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). Academies have to produce independently audited annual accounts that are lodged with Companies House as a matter of public record.

14. What is involved in becoming an Academy?

The Governing Body has voted for this proposal in principle and approached the Secretary of State for Education for their approval. The School and LEO Academy will meet with parents, pupils, staff and the Local Authority to gather views before a final decision is made. Should we decide to proceed, the Secretary of State will need to approve (or not) our application. The legal documents are then drawn up and signed.

15. How will being an Academy affect staff?

Currently, the employer for staff is Surrey County Council. After conversion all staff will be employed by the LEO Academy Trust. Staff are protected to transfer under the same employment terms and conditions, including pensions. Their continuity of service is protected, and all staff will be consulted in accordance with the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations. A full consultation is also being undertaken with staff. The CEO of the LEO Academy Trust will meet with all staff to discuss the conversion.

Where can I find out more?

To find out more about The LEO Academy: <https://www.leoacademytrust.co.uk/>

To respond to our consultation: [West Ashtead Primary School Academisation Consultation](#)