

Consultation Outcomes Report

November 2021

Introduction

This report describes the consultation process undertaken by the Full Governing Body (FGB) of East Stour Primary School, in its proposal to convert the school into an academy by joining the EKC Schools Trust.

Alongside East Stour's consultation, one other primary school (Palm Bay Primary School) has also been consulting on joining EKC Schools Trust. Four primary schools already form the School's trust - Queenborough, Holywell, Briary and Bysing Wood.

Throughout the consultation period, a range of resources were supplied to parents, staff and stakeholders, and a number of events and activities were offered to ensure as many people were able to feed into the consultation as possible.

The consultation opened formally to parents and carers, staff and other external stakeholders on 18th October 2021. It closed formally on 26th November 2021 to parents and carers, and other external stakeholders. The consultation also finished to staff on 26th November 2021 but a TUPE consultation was then held for staff from the 14th January 2022 to 25th February 2022 to ensure staff were given sufficient time to respond.

Full report

Prior to consultation, the FGB undertook a wide range of due diligence activities. These included (but were not limited to) an Equality and Impact Assessment, due diligence checks on both EKC Group and the other possible MATs.

Following the due diligence checks, the FGB resolved to apply for academy status. The application was submitted, and an Academy Order was granted by the Department for Education. The HT informed staff of the intent to consult around conversion to academy on 11th October 2021.

The formal consultation process for parents and other external stakeholders opened on 18th October 2021. At this stage, a letter containing the proposal and detailing the process to outline feedback on it (such as event details) was issued to all members of staff of East Stour Primary School and our parents/carers. Within the letter a feedback form was included. This contained the key questions stakeholders were asked to respond to. Alongside these letters, a Frequently Asked Questions document was also shared with staff.

A total of 61 completed consultation questionnaire forms were submitted by the end of the consultation period.

Key Themes

Throughout the period of consultation, respondents have expressed views centering around the following themes:

1. The reasons for the school pursuing academy status and why now;
2. The perceived benefits and drawbacks of becoming an academy and the impact this might have on East Stour and its pupils after conversion;
3. The impact on staff at the school;
4. The financial implications of joining an Academy Trust;
5. How the Governance and Management of the school may change;
6. What SEND access the school/pupils will have following conversion.

Results of the Questionnaire

Of the 61 responses to the questionnaire:

- 42 were from parents/carers;
- 19 were from staff.

Of the total respondents:

- 91.8% (56 out of 61) were in favour of East Stour Primary School joining EKC Schools Trust;
- 9.2% (5 out of 61) initially responded as 'No'. Of these all 5 were from parents/carers.

Do you support our proposal to become part of the EKC Schools Trust?	Yes	No
Parents/Carers	37	5
Staff	19	0
Total	56	5

Following individual discussion 4 parents changed their answers to yes resulting in:

- 98.3% (60 out of 61) were in favour of East Stour Primary School joining EKC Schools Trust;
- 1.7% (1 out of 61) responded as 'No'. This was from a parent/carer.

13 comments were made in the free box of the questionnaires. Two of the comments were submitted by staff. All 'no' respondents left a comment explaining their reason.

Summary

Following analysis of the data received from Parents/Carers and Staff there is a majority support (98.3%) for East Stour Primary School to convert to an academy and to join the EKC Schools Trust.

Conclusion

Following the consultation, it is evident that the FGB has a significant mandate from those consulted to now start to work towards joining EKC Schools Trust formally. We will keep parents and carers, and staff informed throughout the process. At present we are aiming to join the Trust on 1 April 2021.