



Knayton CofE VC Primary School

A Public Consultation

Main points arising from the Public Consultation on
the proposal to convert the school to
academy status

30th January 2017 to 10th March 2017

April 2017 – FINAL

Executive Summary

Consultation Process

- The proposal was to convert Knayton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School to academy status and join Elevate Multi Academy Trust on 1st May 2017 (*Post Consultation Note: As a result of delays in the lease of the land from the local authority, the proposed conversion date has been deferred to 1st July 2017*).
- The consultation was jointly undertaken by the Governing Body of the school and the proposed sponsor, Elevate Multi Academy Trust and took place between 30th January 2017 and 10th March 2017.
- Consultation leaflets distributed to parents/carers, staff, local schools and nurseries and partner organisations. The leaflet issued contained a form for respondents to submit comments.
- Enquiries were encouraged to be raised with the school via reception, via email or by post.
- A page on the school's website, with a feedback page, was set up outlining the proposal for the conversion to Academy Status, as well as a downloadable version of the consultation leaflet.
- Briefing sessions/meetings were held with parents/carers and staff.
- A public drop-in session was arranged for specific queries to be raised.
- Formal TUPE meetings, led by the local authority, were held on 8th February 2017 with staff at the school which were also attended by representatives of Trade Unions and Professional Associations.
- The Sponsor, Elevate Multi Academy Trust, advised that some 'measures' were being declared.

FEEDBACK

- 56% of respondents were in favour of the proposed conversion to academy status.

NEXT STEPS

- There will be public access to the report on the consultation in May 2017 via the 'Academy Consultation' page of the school's website, but there will be no public access to the individual responses received as they are covered by the Data Protection Act.
- The Department for Education will consider the outcomes of the consultation as part of the Funding Agreement sign-off process for the proposed academy conversion of Knayton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School.

Section 1

1.1 Introduction and background

Knayton C of E Primary is a Voluntary Controlled school in Thirsk, North Yorkshire (DfE No. 815/3068) with 125 pupils on roll. It is part of the Diocese of York. The school was awarded Good by Ofsted following an inspection in April 2012. In addition, Knayton is part of The North Star Teaching School Alliance, which is a collaboration of 70 primary schools in North Yorkshire.

The school's Governing Body had been considering for some time the potential of the conversion to academy status and the benefits the school would see as a result of this change. With the encouragement of the Regional Schools Commissioner and other partner schools, governors were keen to establish the Elevate Multi Academy Trust to enable Knayton and other schools to operate within. As a result, the Governing Body sought the views of parents and other stakeholders on a proposal to convert to academy status.

Prior to submitting a request into the Department for Education to seek permission to convert, to assess public opinion, an informal consultation was held between 20th June and 30th September 2016. A staff meeting was held on 20th June whereby the proposal to convert to an Academy and to join Elevate was discussed. All staff were very excited about opportunities that might stem from the proposal. There were no concerns voiced. Staff were all aware that the Governing Body had been exploring this for some time and so knew a lot about the process.

On 28th June the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors sent a letter to all parents (see Appendix A) explaining that Knayton School Governors had agreed to consult on a link with Meadowside CP School as a Multi-Academy Trust. The letter explained about the model being proposed and why the school had decided to join the Trust. The Headteacher made it clear to parents and staff in discussions that they were welcome to email, write to Governors or herself. Due to being such a small school, the Headteacher sees and speaks with staff daily. Parents can access the Headteacher at the school gate each morning.

1.2 About Elevate Multi Academy Trust

Changing our school's status from local authority maintained schools to an academy will give us many of the freedoms we deserve as mature and successful organisations. At the heart of Elevate's ethos is the desire to work in collaboration with each other and other schools, and each school will still be involved in this, whilst each keeping its own distinctive ethos.

We believe strongly that all children have the right to a high-quality, stimulating education, and it is our moral duty to provide this, ensuring that under the new more stringent assessment regime that now exists, that children 'keep up' in their education, and that children, parents and the school all have their own role to play.

Through working together, we can use our money wisely to put more money into teaching and learning. Our key purpose is to provide education for primary-aged children, and Elevate will be a Primary Academy Trust. The Trust has developed a highly-skilled workforce, and all schools are experienced in recognising that its staff has to have a stimulating and supportive workplace as much as the children do.

1.3 Ethos of Elevate Multi Academy Trust

Elevate's mission is 'All achieve together', with well-developed strategic aims to:

- Deliver educational excellence to support every child to thrive and succeed;
- Provide a broad, holistic range of learning opportunities for pupils to allow them to develop their moral, spiritual, cultural and social understanding;
- Forge strong, meaningful partnerships rooted in a shared commitment to improving and supporting schools and the communities they serve;
- Champion a culture of continual professional development that thrives on positive challenge;
- Provide a high-quality fully inclusive school for the local community;
- Be a school which would follow the National Curriculum and give students the best chances of achieving their potential and competing in the local and wider jobs market;
- Provide personalised learning in order to develop young people for transition to secondary education and onwards into the world of work;
- Develop very close links with the local community so that mentoring and experience opportunities would be available for all our students.

At Elevate Multi Academy Trust we are committed to improving the life chances of all children. Where we have the capacity to make a difference, we are morally bound to do so. Members of the Trust strive together for excellence in partnership, so that our children, staff and Academy communities benefit from excellent teaching, learning and leadership.

1.4 Building on firm foundations

At the time of our last inspection, Knayton was judged 'Good'. We have worked hard since that inspection to secure high attainment and progress for children in our school. Despite the recent changes to assessment, our school has attainment and progress which exceeds both local and national averages.

We are part of the North Star Teaching Schools Alliance, based at Meadowside, which has over seventy schools involved in it. This allows for close collaboration and provides training and development for staff.

Our school has innovative and carefully planned curriculums, appropriate to our schools. As an academy we will be free to develop our curriculum without being tied to the National Curriculum. Our school will continue to teach everything expected within the National Curriculum, and pupils will be tested in line with maintained schools (e.g. SATs at Y2 and Y6). As a high-performing school we are well placed to meet the needs of children in the 21st Century.

1.5 Purpose and process for the consultation

The consultation set out to assess public opinion in relation to the proposed conversion of Knayton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School to academy status. The consultation comprised a marketing campaign and quantitative research based upon:

- A consultation period, of six term-time weeks, between 30th January 2017 and 10th March 2017.
- Consultation leaflets distributed to parents/carers, staff, local schools and nurseries and partner organisations. The leaflet issued contained a form for respondents to submit comments. *See Appendix A for full stakeholder list.*

- Communications with parents and the community in advance of and during the consultation process notifying them of the arrangements
- Information was made available on the school's website (www.knayton.n-yorks.sch.uk) setting out the background to the proposed conversion to academy status, a feedback page and a downloadable version of the consultation leaflet - See *Appendix B for the details shown on the website*
- A meeting was made available for parents/carers and the public at the school on 12th January 2017.
- A staff meeting was held at the school on 15th February 2017, attended by 10 teaching and support staff, along with members and representatives from Trade Unions (NASUWT, NUT, ATL and Unison) and North Yorkshire County Council.
- A 'drop-in session' was held on 15th February 2017 for any stakeholder to ask questions.

Section 2

2.1 Overall analysis of responses

In addition to comments received from the public and staff meetings, 9 formal responses were received via the online and paper surveys.

Respondents were asked to indicate which of the following categories applied to them:

| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|--------------------------|-------------|----------|
| A parent/carer | 33% | 3 |
| A member of staff | 23% | 2 |
| A local resident | 33% | 3 |
| Other (please specify) | 11% | 1 |
| Total Respondents | 100% | 9 |

In response to the key question of ***‘Do you agree that the school should become an Academy and enter into a Funding Agreement* with the Secretary of State?’***

| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|----------------|-------------|----------|
| Yes | 56% | 5 |
| No | 44% | 4 |
| Total | 100% | 9 |

Supporting Note: ** The funding agreement is the contract every converting school must sign with the Secretary of State for Education. It’s the formal consent to allow the school to convert and it provides the operating framework for the school, including the commitment to ongoing funding. We are therefore seeking your feedback on whether you support the conversion, and if so, for you to respond accordingly above.*

2.2 Sample additional comments from respondents who agreed that the school should become an Academy

- “Academy status is the way forward. I have no concerns”
- “Excellent opportunities will become available for staff to develop and share best practise. This will lead to excellent teaching strategies being put in place which will in turn lead to better outcome for children.”
- “I know that myself and my Governors support the conversion to Academy status of the schools above. Knayton works closely with the other Thirsk Cluster schools and we are all part of the same Teaching School Alliance. A positive collaborative relationship which can only be strengthened over time.”

2.3 Sample comments from respondents who disagreed that the school should become an Academy

- “Insufficient information to judge future benefits accurately. No overall opinion as to support of the application or not.”
- “As All Schools will not have to become Academy now or in the future, changing something which is working well and has robust checks and balances in place to the unknown and unproven safeguards both financially and educationally.”

Section 3

Next steps

- There will be public access to the report on the consultation in May 2017 via the ‘Academy Consultation’ page of the school’s website, but there will be no public access to the individual responses received as they are covered by the Data Protection Act.
- The Department for Education will consider the outcomes of the consultation as part of the Funding Agreement sign-off process for the proposed academy conversion of Knayton CofE VC Primary School.
- ***Post Consultation Note: As a result of delays in the lease of the land from the local authority, the proposed conversion date has been deferred to 1st July 2017.***

Appendix A: Stakeholder List

- All parents and carers (consultation leaflet sent home with pupils)
- All staff and governors (including those who were absent, on sick leave or on maternity/paternity leave)
- Local primary schools in catchment
- Local nurseries and childrens' centres in catchment
- Local groups who use the school's facilities
- Local Ward Councillors

Appendix B: Academy Consultation details on the website

Knayton Church of England Primary School



Home School Information Learning Parents Class Blogs North Star **Academy Conversion** Contact Us

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For Braille, large print or audio, please [contact us](#).

Diary Dates

MAY

17 - Parent information evening - keep up not catch up 6.30pm

17 & 24 Year 6 Bikability

25 - Rowan Class - Osmotherley residential meeting 3.45 - 4.15

26 - Sports day - 1.15pm

JUNE

7 - New starters Evening (Reception 2017)

8 - Bewerley Park meeting 4.30pm

14 - Rowan Osmotherley trip

21 - Year 5 enrichment day - Thirsk school

26 - Year 5/6 Bewerley Park week

JULY

3 - Year 6 Thirsk Induction Week

12 - Production 2pm & 6pm

13 - Production 2pm & 6pm

21 - School closes at 2pm

ELEVATE MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

ACADEMY CONVERSION

Proposed conversion of Knayton Church of England Primary School to academy status on 1st May 2017

After informal consultation with our staff and parents in 2016 proved overwhelmingly positive, Knayton CofE Primary School applied to convert to academy status in November 2016, following a Governing Body decision to do so. This was subsequently granted by the Department for Education and authorises the school to proceed with a formal statutory consultation process prior to the approval to convert. The school aims to convert in May 2017, as part of a brand new Multi-Academy Trust named 'Elevate Multi Academy Trust'.

We now need to seek the views of the local community, parents, pupils and staff on this proposal. We will be running a consultation process from 30th January 2017 to 10th March 2017 to both help you understand what is being proposed and to gather your views.

Meetings are scheduled which will consist of a brief explanation about what Academy Status would mean for our school, followed by a question and answer session. Representatives from Elevate and the school's leadership team will also be in attendance. The details of the meetings are as follows :

- **Thursday 12th January at 3.30pm** for all parents
- **Wednesday 15th February at 4pm** for all staff
- **Wednesday 15th February between 5pm and 7pm** as an informal drop-in session for parents, local community and staff to ask any question

It is essential that we gather as many views and opinions as possible, and answer any questions as part of the consultation process.

We understand that some parents, carers and other members of the community may not be able to attend the meeting so we have added a link to the Consultation leaflet below which provides information about some of the questions you may have. We have also provided a link below for respondents to provide feedback via an online form.

We look forward to hearing from you and receiving your feedback.

[Click here](#) to access an online response form

[Click here](#) for the consultation leaflet