

CLUTTON PRIMARY SCHOOL



ACADEMY STATUS

PARENT CONSULTATION

WEDNESDAY 21st January 2015

Headteacher – Michelle Parsons

Welcome

Confirmation of purpose of the meeting

Introductions

Chair of Governors – Kate Wilson

Background information – *the story so far...*

Headteacher – Michelle Parsons

Explanation of rationale for proposed transfer

FAQs

Questions

Opportunity to put questions to School,
Governor and MSNSP representatives

Our Vision

- To be the best that we can be - an outstanding school
- Achieve the best education for our pupils and the children in the wider community.
- Operate a fair and open admissions policy - accessible to all children.

How will we achieve this vision?

- High quality teaching.
- A rich and relevant curriculum.
- An expectation of high quality achievement.
- Providing excellent educational experiences
- All children have high levels of literacy and numeracy.

- Setting the highest expectations of all staff and the highest aspirations for all children.
- Ensuring best practice is spread effectively.
- A drive for continuous improvement.
- Promoting children's SMSC development.
- Pupils thrive in a supportive, highly cohesive learning community.

In pursuit of this objective the school will:

- Ensure all children feel safe and thrive.
- Secure the long-term financial sustainability, to at least maintain the current classes, but ideally to increase admissions to serve more children whilst optimising class sizes.
- Retain the post of a Headteacher.
- Retain the school's expectations and standards for all school staff.
- Retain the identity and autonomy of the school to ensure future decisions remain with the School Management Team and the Governing Body.

- Seek to increase admissions to serve more children and yet optimise class sizes.
- Seek to set up an additional classroom space with appropriate teaching staff.
- Seek to improve and repair the building, including the long standing relocation of the office reception area.
- Identify and obtain wider resources for increasing the opportunities and experiences for the children.
- Innovate in the delivery of education through CPD, knowledge transfer and maximising the use of technology for staff and pupils.
- Foster links with other schools, including continuing support of the S4CE partnership and the local Teaching School.

What is an Academy?

- Academies are publicly-funded independent schools.
- Academies don't have to follow the national curriculum and can set their own term times. They still have to follow the same rules on admissions, special educational needs and exclusions as other state schools.
- Academies get money direct from the government, not the local council. They are run by an academy trust which employs the staff.

Why should primary and secondary schools work more closely?

- Vision - outstanding education for all in the local area
- Better transition
- Shared teaching
- Shared professional development
- Shared facilities
- Economies of scale

Why be a partner with Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership?

- We want a shared approach to improving education locally
- Local dimension – the majority of children from Clutton School transfer to Norton Hill.
- The secondary schools can learn from the best primary practice
- Dips in pupil progress as they transfer to secondary could be reduced
- Economies of scale allow for improved facilities, services, etc across all schools.
- Access to specialist teachers and support staff – teachers of reading, mathematics, etc.

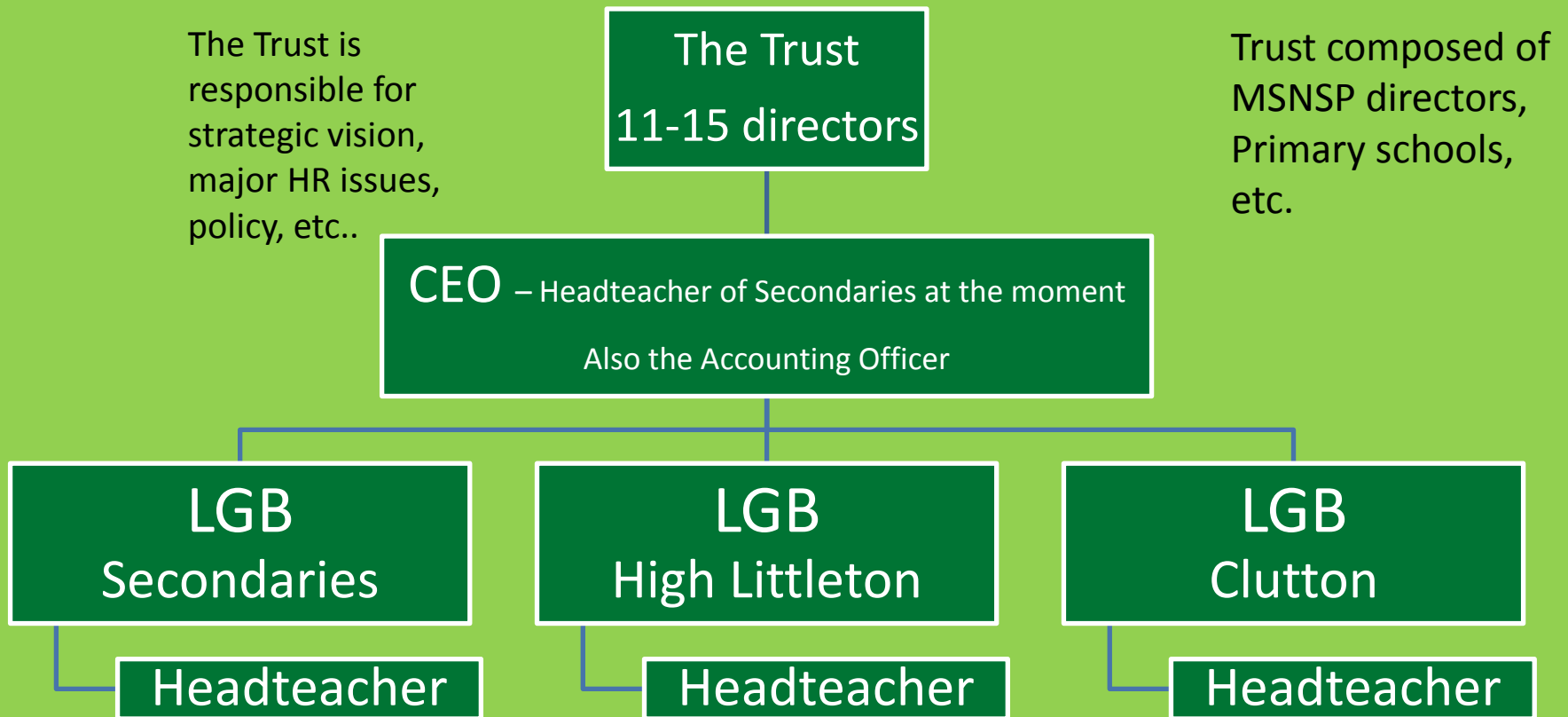
How will it work?

- Clutton School converts to academy status
- Clutton joins the MSNSP as an equal partner.
- Clutton keeps autonomy – Local Governing Body, Headteacher, budget, etc
- We all work together for the benefit of all children locally

What's in it for our children?

- a shared approach to improving education locally.
- improved transition for Year 6 pupils most of whom attend one of the two MSNSP schools.
- greater economies of scale to allow capital investment in buildings and facilities at Clutton School.
- increased access to specialist facilities including those used for science, sport, technology and art.
- access to specialist teachers.
- better teaching and learning across all the schools in the partnership with Clutton benefiting from expertise in Science for example and Norton Hill and Somervale School benefiting from our expertise in the teaching of literacy.
- support with the procurement of service such as school meals, site management, health and safety, finance, etc.

Organisation Diagram



Each LGB has a clear TOR and strategic responsibilities for education, finance, premises, etc

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Will the name of the school change?**
 - We will not be changing the school name.
- **Will the school change its uniform?**
 - We will not be changing the school uniform.
- **Will term dates and school day times change?**
 - We have no plans to alter the times of the school day or term dates, keeping these in line with most Bath and North East Somerset schools. However, we may consult with the MSNSP schools to align our INSET days to make it easier for parents.
- **Will the curriculum change?**
 - We would have greater freedom and autonomy over our curriculum. This will enable us to continue to develop our creative curriculum over the next few years should we so wish and the freedom to review any proposed changes by government and to decide whether they are right for the children at our school.

- **Will the admissions policy and criteria change?**
 - We are part of admissions within Bath and North East Somerset and would remain so. This means we would adhere to the LA Admissions code, for example, we would not become selective.
- **Will the school use pupil selection to maintain high standards and results?**
 - We are a village school that has always endeavoured to provide a place for every child who lives in the parish of Clutton, and this would not change. Although we would be able to control our own admissions, we would not use the conversion to an Academy to change the way we organise them.
- **Will the school receive more money from the government?**
 - At present Bath and North East Somerset retains a proportion of our funding to provide some central LA services. As an academy we would receive that money directly and will be able to choose who to buy those services from and how they should be best deployed for the specific benefit of children at our school. By becoming part of the MSNSP, we would be able to take advantages of economies of scale to maximise our resources.

- **Will the Senior Leadership Team spend more time running the business side of the academy instead of focusing on the teaching and learning?**
 - Setting up and running an academy will require extra administrative work particularly in the early stages. However, much of this will be taken on by the administrative staff at the MSNSP schools. The Senior Leaders at our school will continue to be fully focused on delivering high quality teaching and learning.
- **How will the school be accountable financially?**
 - We will be governed by the rules and regulations for charitable trusts so we will be required to produce and file annual accounts, as part of the Multi-Academy Trust.
- **Will the school get support towards the expenses of academy conversion**
 - We will shortly be receiving a £25,000 grant from the DfE to cover the legal costs of the conversion.

- **What is the Local Authority view on academies?**
 - Academy status offers schools an opportunity to develop a new relationship with the Local Authority with the Local Authority becoming the commissioner and schools the providers of education. We envisage that we will continue to work very closely with the Local Authority.
- **Does the loss of the current role with the Local Authority leave us on our own?**
 - As a successful school for many years we have not relied on the support of the LA as much as many other schools. For example, we have called relatively infrequently on the services of Behaviour Management, Educational Psychologists, and other services. We will still be in a position to buy in the LA services as and when required rather than being tied in, or alternatively, look elsewhere if we feel there are better service providers. As we develop stronger partnerships within the MSNSP, we will definitely not be on our own.

- **Will the structure of the Governing Body change?**
 - The structure will be maintained as it is now, with a balance of foundation, parent and LA appointed Governors.
- **What is a MAT?**
 - A Multi Academy Trust (MAT) is governed by one trust and a single board of directors. There are representatives from each school on the Trust Board. The MAT would have local governing bodies for each of its academies, which would continue to work in much the same way as now.
- **What would our partnership with MSNSP look like as a MAT?**
 - Representatives from the schools in the current MSNSP and Clutton Primary School would be on the MAT Trust Board. The Trust Board would be responsible for policy and the strategic vision of the MAT. The Trust Board would delegate the strategic responsibilities for education, finance and premises to the local governing bodies of the MSNSP schools and Clutton Primary School. The MSNSP and Clutton would retain their respective Headteachers.

- **Can you revert to LA control once you have become an academy?**
 - The rules from the DfE state that a school would be required to maintain its academy status for at least 7 years.
- **What support will there be for children with special educational needs?**
 - SEN support for children with statements and ‘Looked After children’ will still be provided by the LA who have a statutory responsibility for this and would continue to monitor us to ensure that we are doing all we should.
- **Do we need, or are we seeking a sponsor for the school to become an academy?**
 - As an ‘good’ school we do not need a sponsor. As a charitable trust we would be entitled to receive donations to school funds.
- **Will the school still have Ofsted inspections?**
 - Academies are subject to exactly the same system of Ofsted inspections as Local Authority Maintained Schools.

- **Has the decision to convert to academy status already been taken?**
 - The legal process to becoming an academy has started with a special resolution, made by the Governing Body, to make an application to convert. This has triggered a full consultation across the school community. A final decision to convert will only be taken once the consultation has been concluded. It is feasible that the governors could reverse their current thinking if information came to light which made it not in the best interest of the children and the school.
- **If the governors decide to convert when would it happen?**
 - We have indicated in our application a conversion of 1st March 2015.
- **Who are we consulting with?**
 - We are consulting with parents and carers, staff and their representatives, the children, the Local Authority, other local schools, local community groups and any other interested parties.

- **Why do we need to change?**

- We don't need to change. However, in the current financial and educational climate, where the landscapes of primary education are rapidly changing, we feel that we would like to be in control of our own destiny, especially if the government decides to force every school to become an academy and then chooses who they will partner up with.
- Some of the smaller schools in our Local Authority are facing the potential need to federate with other schools, with many already having gone down this route. This would mean sharing a Headteacher with another school. We do not feel that this would be the best outcome for our school.
- The Governors feel that the opportunity to become an equal partner in the MSNSP directly benefits the children at Clutton School, both currently and in the future.

- **Have members of staff been consulted?**
 - We are consulting with the staff. Meetings have been held already.
- **Will staff terms and conditions of employment change?**
 - Staff will transfer across under normal TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)) rules. Terms and conditions would remain the same. In the future we would have the freedom to enhance terms and conditions if it was thought appropriate.
- **Do the school leadership and governing body have the capacity and expertise to take on the additional responsibilities of academy status?**
 - The governing body has a wealth of professional expertise which it adds to that of the school leadership. The MSNSP already contains three academies and they have the required knowledge to complement our existing skills base.

What happens now?

- Continue consultation with all stakeholders including children, parents, staff and union representatives, other local primary schools, the Local Authority, local community groups and other interested parties.
- Governing Body of Clutton School make final decision.
- Conversion to academy status takes place on 1st March 2015.