

NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL - CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Mousehold Infant and Nursery School
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9th February 2018

If you would like this letter translated please ask at the school office.

A Consultation about the Proposal for Mousehold Infant and Nursery School to become an Academy as part of the Inclusive Schools Trust (IST)

Why is Mousehold Infant and Nursery proposing to become an Academy?

We would like to academise from a position of strength. We have seen it as a priority to become more outward facing over the last few years and know that strength and stability come from working with others to avoid becoming too isolated. This secures sustainability and good outcomes for our children who will experience schooling within the same Trust throughout their primary years.

We have been taking notice of the strengths, developments and partnerships between schools in our community and the Education landscape is changing. Our feeder junior school, George White Junior, is already part of the Inclusive Schools Trust and this will really strengthen the consistency and partnership between both schools whilst keeping our unique ethos at Mousehold.

The other schools within the trust are schools Mousehold already works very closely with. These are Lionwood Infant and Junior (part of our cluster of schools) and Drayton Infant School. Inclusive Schools Trust also have a newly designated Teaching School and as an outstanding school Mousehold are keen to work collaboratively to improve outcomes for children. Our children will benefit from well trained staff who have accessed quality training and new experiences through the trust. This is a very exciting time for Mousehold. Inclusive Schools Trust have shown a keen interest in wanting Mousehold on board.

How will the Trust (IST) work?

The Trust was founded by Lionwood Infant and Nursery School, Lionwood Junior School (The Lionwood Schools Federation) and George White Junior School.



The Inclusive Schools Trust will achieve the following benefits:

- Access to locally based leadership and school improvement expertise to continue the drive for improved performance in teaching and learning;
- Sharing of best practice across all schools in the Trust;
- Greater resilience to future risks by joining a Trust containing a handful of schools rather than a much larger trust.
- Opportunities for children, parents and staff to benefit from shared services.
- Improved recruitment and retention of the most skilled teachers and leaders attracted by the opportunities that a wider successful trust organisation will bring.

The Inclusive Schools Trust is very clear that the individual ethos and character and good practices of each school will be maintained.

What is an Academy?

Academies are publicly funded independent schools that are not managed by a local authority, but their funding and accountability is directly with the Department for Education (DfE).

When will Mousehold become an Academy?

If the Department for Education agrees for Mousehold Infant and Nursery school to join IST we would expect that the process will take 6-12 months and the planned conversion date would be determined by the DfE in consultation with the school, Trust and Local Authority but we would aim for late Autumn Term 2018

Why is there a consultation?

The Academies Act 2010 requires either the school or the sponsor to consult “such persons as they think appropriate” on whether the school should become an academy. The Governing Boards of all schools has agreed to consult with all key stakeholders about the academy conversion including parents, staff, pupils and governors over a 4 week period from **9th February to 9th March 2018**.

The Trust will have both Members and a board of Directors with representatives from Mousehold.

What form of relationship will exist between the Local Authority and the school?

This is for individual Academies or Multi Academy Trust's to determine – there is no statutory requirement for any formal relationship between local authorities and academies. Academies are directly funded and accountable to central government (Department for Education via Education Funding Agency).

The Local Authority retains statutory duties for aspects of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), admissions coordination and provision of home-to-school transport. Local Authorities are also expected to play a key strategic role locally in areas such as promoting high standards, pupil place planning, admissions and sharing good practice.

Will the school change its name and uniform as some Academies have done?

No. The school will not change its name or uniform after it becomes an academy.

Will our responsibilities in relation to Special Educational Needs and exclusions change?



No. Responsibilities as an Academy in relation to Special Educational Needs and exclusions will be just the same as they are now as a maintained school.

Can a child with an EHCP (Education Health Care Plan) nominate an academy as their school of choice?

Yes. These arrangements and related processes must at all times comply with the School Admissions Code and responsibilities as an Academy in relation to Special Educational Needs will be just the same as they are now as a maintained school.

Does becoming an Academy change the way in which exclusions are dealt with?

Academies are required by their Funding Agreement to follow the law and guidance on exclusions as if they were maintained schools. This includes reporting exclusions to the Local Authority. However, Academies do not have to consult the Local Authority before deciding to exclude a pupil and they can arrange their own independent appeals panel.

Are Academies subject to the same Ofsted inspection regime?

Schools converting to become an academy will continue to be inspected in the normal way.

What are the governance arrangements for the Inclusive Schools Trust?

The Inclusive Schools Trust will have five members and a board of eleven trustees in line with DfE recommendations. Both groups can include governors from the schools within the trust as well as community representatives or professionals with the key skills and experience to lead the Trust well. These will continue to be unpaid volunteers with a focus on the best possible education within our communities. As with current governance, employees (such as a Headteacher) can make up a minority of trustees.

What is the process for Mousehold Infant and Nursery School to join the Inclusive Schools Trust?

The Inclusive Schools Trust is a multi academy trust, which is both a charitable trust and a company limited by guarantee. The conversion process includes the following key legal processes:

- Applying to the Department for Education (DFE) to become an Academy.
- Transferring the employment of the staff from the local authority to IST following a statutory process (TUPE);
- Agreeing a Commercial Transfer Agreement for the transfer of assets and contracts from the local authority to IST; and
- Arranging a 125 year lease for the land and buildings with the local authority.

How do I find out more about the proposals?

Come along to one of the consultation meetings being held at Mousehold on:
Wednesday 7th March 2pm and 6pm



These will provide an opportunity for you to ask questions and make comments. Representatives from the Trust, our own Governing Board and senior staff will be there to meet you and answer questions regarding this proposal.

Please come along to one of the above meetings to ask any questions or make comments.

You may also use the following questionnaire to let us know your views. Please return it to the School office by 9th March 2018.



Mousehold Infant and Nursery School. Academy Consultation Questionnaire

1. Please circle which best describes you:

I am a:

Parent

Employee at the school

Local business/organisation

If other please specify _____

Comments:

