



## **FAQs**

### **RE: Academy transfer to Reach South Academy Trust**

#### **What is the Reach South Academy Trust?**

Reach South Academy Trust is a Multi-Academy Trust set up to serve the south west of England. Reach South Academy Trust is part of the REACH family, building on the success of its sister Trust, REAch2.

The Chief Executive of Reach South is Dean Ashton, who lives and worked in the South West region for much of his career- initially as a secondary school teacher, and latterly as the Director of Children's Services for Cornwall County Council.

#### **What is an Academy?**

Academies are state funded schools independent of Local Authority control – in other words the funding comes from Central Government straight to the school and the pupils, without first going via the Local Authority. This means that Head teachers have more control over what they spend their budgets on. Academies are also all-ability, non-selective (assuming there is no selection presently, as is the case with our school), non-fee paying schools.

#### **Will the curriculum change?**

As an Academy, we have the freedom to develop an enriched and nourishing curriculum to best suit the needs of the pupils at each school.

#### **Will admission arrangements change?**

The admissions criteria will be set by Reach South Academy Trust who are the admissions authority for each one of its schools. Reach South Academy Trust will endeavour to ensure the school's admission arrangements are consonant with the Local Authority's arrangements. The admission arrangements for the Academy will be set in line with the National School Admissions Code and the National School Appeals Code.



### **Who sets the future term dates?**

School term dates are set centrally by Reach South Academy Trust. Reach South Academy Trust will endeavour to ensure that school term dates fall in line with the term dates set by Bournemouth Borough Council. In practice, this decision is delegated to each individual school.

### **How will converting to an Academy affect children with Special Education Needs (SEN)?**

Each school has a responsibility for assessing pupils and maintaining their Statements of SEN or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) of the school has a responsibility to identify pupils that might need additional help and then work with a range of school staff and outside agencies to develop an individual education programme that will help.

Schools that convert to become academies have the same responsibilities as previously. In practical terms, this requires new academies to:

- ★ inform parents that their child has SEN and the special educational provision being made
- ★ an unqualified obligation to admit a child to the school if the school is named in the Statement or EHC plan
- ★ appoint a qualified teacher as SEN Coordinator (SENCO) and ensure that any new SENCO would undertake prescribed training.

Academies are required by their funding agreements to consent to being named in a child's Statement unless they can demonstrate that admitting the child would be incompatible with the efficient education of other children and that there are no reasonable steps they could take, together with the Local Authority, to prevent the incompatibility.

### **How do Academies receive funding?**

The Multi Academy Trust is funded for each of its academies by the DfE through the Education Funding Agency. The EFA provides the Trust with a General Allocation Grant (GAG) made up of two components:



- ★ Core funding, which is exactly the same as the funding that school would have received from the Local Authority using its funding formula
- ★ Educational Services Grant (ESG) which is the share of money, based on pupil numbers, which the Local Authority currently retains a share of, to spend centrally on those services that the academy would be responsible for going forward.

The Trust then delegates a budget to the academy so that it can successfully carry out the functions it is responsible for.

In addition, the academy would receive School Standards Grants and School Development Grant in the same way as a maintained school. The Local Authority also continues to fund support for children with Statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. Pupil Premium is passed on directly to the academy in its entirety.

### **What will happen to the Trust Board?**

The BPMAT Trust Board will dissolve after the transfer.

Reach South understands the importance of local governance and each school will still operate with a local governing body.

The broad duties of the Local Governing Body are summarised as:

- ★ To contribute to, and fulfil, the vision and ethos of Reach South in so far as it relates to the Academy, ensuring that the Academy achieves the aims and ambitions it has for its pupils, having regard in particular to the benefits of being part of a family of schools which stresses the importance of collaboration and mutual support;
- ★ To implement and review from time to time the strategic plan for the Academy, focussing on the Academy's performance and achieving sustained school improvement and having regard to any locally agreed priorities identified by the Trust Board;
- ★ To act as a critical friend to the Academy's senior leadership team, being ready to challenge and hold senior leaders to account for all aspects of the Academy's performance;
- ★ To oversee the management of the finances of the Academy, assessing the annual budget prepared by the Academy's Headteacher (with the support of the Academy's senior leadership team) and submitting such for approval by



the Regional Board and the Trust Board, ensuring that the Academy works within its budget and the Academy's senior leadership team adopts and implements appropriate risk and financial management policies and practices;

- ★ To support the Trust Board in ensuring that insurance or equivalent risk protection is put in place and maintained for all risk areas including damage to property, employer liability, public and third party liability and director liability in accordance with any policy issued by the Trust Board from time to time;
- ★ To support the Academy's Headteacher in the development and review (from time to time) of an appropriate staffing structure for the Academy, ensuring there is robust and accountable monitoring of the performance of staff and implementing all and any policies relating to staff adopted by the Trust Board;
- ★ To support the Trust Board in its monitoring and evaluation of the delivery of any central services and functions provided or procured by the Academy Trust for the Academies, reporting any issues or concerns to the Regional Director of Education and, if necessary, the CEO, the Chair of the Regional Board or the Chair of the Trust Board;
- ★ To promote within the organisation and externally the benefits of collaboration with the other Academies and to actively seek opportunities to work together either with the aim of improving economic efficiencies within the Academies or identifying and implementing best practice;
- ★ To develop effective links within the Academy's community, communicating openly and frequently as appropriate and ensuring that the Academy meets its responsibilities to the community and serves the community's needs in relation to the safeguarding and education of its pupils;
- ★ To engage fully and openly with any inspection of the Academy, whether by the Trust Board, Ofsted or any other appropriate public body to whom the Academy is accountable.

**If you have any further questions and would like to contact Reach South Academy Trust directly, please email [info@reachsouth.org](mailto:info@reachsouth.org)**