



Dream, Believe, Achieve



LEAP MAT Consultation – Update 8 January 2018

The following document has been compiled following the Governors' review of the responses to the consultation. It incorporates a summary of points raised together with relevant additional information. (4 responses were received)

Please provide examples of Academies that have become MATs and by doing so have provided better outcomes for the children?

As with maintained schools and stand-alone academies, the performance of MATs across the country is varied. In terms of successful MATs across the country, one of the most consistently high performing is the Harris Federation, (<http://www.harrisfederation.org.uk>). More locally, Gulval School have made excellent improvements since joining their MAT, ALAT (<http://alat.org.uk>). Their final Ofsted inspection before conversion was 'Inadequate', but since joining ALAT, they have been graded as 'Good' and have shown improvements in academic results and rising pupils numbers.

Also, there is a lot of research suggesting what factors contribute to make a successful MAT, which I have provided below.

The 'Ambition School Leadership Trust' suggests that academies within a close proximity tend to form more successful MATs. They also state that MATs that consist of academies with a mix of phases are more likely to show improvement in performance. The proposed academies in LEAP are geographically very close and include academies that cater for children from EYFS - KS4.

'Optimus Education' believes that one of the keys to successful MATs is the relationships between the schools. We already have strong links with the majority of schools in LEAP and are already working with them regularly.

The 'Sutton Trust' states that high performing MATs are 'those who have expanded in line with capacity, often at a slower pace'. This is one of the contributing factors that has led us to LEAP. There are MATs in Cornwall that have over 20 schools, but we feel that initially starting a small MAT with schools we know and trust is the right thing for Ludgvan School.

How much of a top slice from schools funds will be used now and in the future to fund the MAT?

Initially there will be no 'top slice' taken from the school's budget. The majority of the conversion cost is being covered by a conversion rate so there will be limited initial outlay. In future, the Board of Trustees will take responsibility for any financial decisions that

affect all academies in the MAT. These decisions will be taken in the best interest of all schools.

Please can you explain the governance arrangements for the MAT?

Ludgvan School will still retain a Local Governing Body (LGB). As a successful school, they will retain much of the control and will still be responsible for holding the school to account and ensuring the best provision is in place for our pupils. In addition to this, there will be a Board of Trustees that will initially consist of at least one member of each school's LGB alongside appropriately skilled local individuals.

How long would it take to reverse a MAT to enable an amicable separation if outcomes are not being met? My understanding is in excess of 7 years.

Should the school decide they wish to remove themselves from the MAT, they would need to contact the Regional School Commissioner (RSC) and ESFA and present a business case stating the reasons for the school wanting to leave. The Regional School Commissioner will consider each case on an individual basis. There is no guarantee that the academy would be able to leave the MAT.

How will parents and carers be kept informed as the consultation progresses and will parents/ carers have oversight of the final terms and conditions before signing to provide feedback?

There will be a page on the website which will be updated with relevant information and will be accessible to all stakeholders. We will be holding an additional consultation meeting on Thursday 18th January at 6:30 in the school hall. Throughout the consultation period, all stakeholders are invited to send in their questions via email (principal@ludgvan.cornwall.sch.uk) or request to meet with a member of SLT or Governing Body via the school office.

Please can you explain why the timeframe for making such a substantial decision is only 6 months, leaving limited opportunity for meaningful engagement and time for contemplation by the governing body?

Whilst not overly lengthy, the timeframe is not a concern. Although there may only be 6 months between now and a decision being made, discussions have been on-going between Senior Leaders since prior to the summer holidays and a number of Governor's meetings have already been held to discuss this proposal. We will be ensuring that we carry out due diligence and that enough time is allowed so that all members of the Governing Body feel confident to make a decision.

How does converting to a MAT affect lines of accountability?

Multi academy trusts are directly answerable for their outcomes to the Secretary of State and the Department for Education just as are stand alone academies. Ofsted inspects

schools within MATs in the same way that stand-alone academies are inspected. Lines of accountability will therefore be more rigorous as all current systems will remain in place, but the MAT's Board of Trustees will provide further challenge and support.

Can we have more information about the sustainable benefits for our school?

We have learned, through our various partnerships thus far, that collaborative working with other schools can provide improved educational experiences for our own pupils through teaching and learning, an enhanced and engaging curriculum, staff development and opportunities for progression, and streamlined services (including finance, human resources, legal services, school improvement structures, and governance arrangements). As part of due diligence senior leaders from all 3 schools have created short and long-term MAT development action plans. The following aspects are potential sustainable benefits of working in partnership...

- *Build on established and successful school improvement partnership projects - further increasing capacity across the MAT to develop excellence in teaching and learning within our own 5 schools.*
- *Pedagogy – the MAT will offer a unique opportunity to focus on pedagogy across phases.*
- *Standards – maintain high performance and respond quickly and effectively to dips/issues with a wider base of specialist staff.*
- *Subject specialist teaching development –develop subject expertise across phases through bespoke projects e.g. development of KS2 Science*
- *Curriculum development – e.g Review MFL provision across KS2 and KS3 and provide relevant CPD and development of cross phase curriculum packages by cross phase teams of staff with specific collective subject/pedagogy specialisms*
- *Improve transition KS2 - KS3 - Greater fluidity of staff, resources and facilities between year groups.*
- *Increase enrichment opportunities for children - Improve Primary pupils' access to secondary school Sports/Arts facilities and opportunities for KS3 and 4 students to become "Young Leaders" in the primaries, providing mentoring/coaching roles.*

Are there any legal/personnel/financial/educational issues currently in any of the schools, which would disadvantage any of the other schools?

The MAT process so far will involve due diligence analysis of legal, personnel, financial and educational contexts in each school.

This will include sharing of:

- *budgets and all financial commitments.*
- *assets information.*
- *personnel information.*
- *leadership and management policies and practices.*
- *school improvement plans,*
- *future ambitions and aspirations,*
- *pupil outcomes and educational standards.*

How will the MAT impact on our relationship with other schools in the locality?

- *Our positive relationships with the other primary and secondary schools in Penzance will continue through maintaining our joint school improvement activities and sharing staff training. In addition our joint participation in community events and celebrations will continue. (It is of note that many other local primaries have been in separate MATs for several years, and this has not negatively impacted on their relationship with the other schools in Penwith)*
- *The Headteachers of all schools in Penwith will continue to meet regularly.*
- *New opportunities for pupils/staff/parents generated by the LEAP are likely to positively benefit pupils/staff/parents in the other school communities.*
- *Transition to secondary school will be strengthened due to cross-phase nature of LEAP and all existing transition work with other local secondary schools will continue to be engaged with successfully.*