



Cambridgeshire
County Council

Education,
Libraries & Heritage

Hartford Infant and Juniors Schools
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Infant Co-Headteachers: Mrs E Clayton and Mrs R Lee
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12th September 2016

Proposed Conversion to Academy Status

Dear Parents/Carers

We are writing to inform you that following agreement by the Governors our schools are now actively pursuing conversion to academy status. We have concluded that conversion would be a positive move for both schools. If successful, we would aim to become academies by January 2017.

There are many reasons for converting to academy status. However, primarily we are doing this now because we feel that it is an ideal opportunity for both schools to work closely together to secure excellent standards in education for the community we both serve.

In this letter we would like to provide you with as much information as possible, so that you may better understand the importance of the schools taking this opportunity.

We are consulting about joining The Cam Academy Trust (CAT) which is a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) currently comprising five schools. Four of these schools are Secondary Schools, and one is a Primary School. St Peter's School in Huntingdon has also recently finished a consultation to join CAT and joined the trust on 1st September. We feel this is a great opportunity to develop stronger links between schools in the area. After conversion to academy status both Infant and Junior Schools will retain their current names and respective ethos, values and identities.

The period of consultation will be from **12th September 2016 to the 7th October 2016**. The Headteachers and Governing Bodies of both schools will meet staff on Tuesday 20th September at 3.30pm and with **families of children at the school on Tuesday 20th September at 6.30pm**.

You can also express your views in writing marked 'Academy Conversion' to the following email addresses:
Infant School - academyqueries@hartford-inf.cambs.sch.uk
Junior School - academyqueries@hartford-jun.cambs.sch.uk

Following this period of consultation, the governing bodies of both schools will decide whether or not to convert. This decision must be taken in the interests of present and future pupils. You will be informed of the decision as soon as possible.

The following section may answer any questions you have about academies:

What are Academies?

Academies are publicly funded schools, which are not controlled by the Local Authority and therefore have additional independence in a number of important areas. This greater independence brings increased responsibilities and opportunities to build upon our current success and ensure that we continue to improve our service to families in our local community. You can view further detail on academies at the Department for Education website at: <https://www.gov.uk/types-of-school/academies>

What is a Multi-Academy Trust?

A Multi-Academy Trust builds on the principles above and is where two or more schools have converted to academy status together. A single academy board (a company limited by guarantee) is formed to provide the strategic leadership and oversight of each school in the Trust. Each school will retain its Local Governing Body which will operate in much the same way as it does at present.

(continued overleaf...)

What Is The Cam Academy Trust?

The Cam Academy Trust was set up in 2011 to oversee the conversion of Comberton Village College to academy status. Its role is now to ensure excellence for all in each of the Trust's academies. This currently comprises St Peter's School, the South Cambridgeshire village colleges in Comberton (including Sixth Form), Cambourne and Melbourn Village College as well as The Voyager Academy and Sixth Form in Peterborough and Gamlingay First School. Full details about the Trust can be found on the website at <http://www.catrust.co.uk/>

Why Convert To Academy Status?

There is a clear national agenda for schools to become academies. The Government is determined to push this process at a local and national level. We wanted to ensure that we retained control over this process without having a decision made for us about which Trust to join and when. We wanted to be in a position to ensure that both Schools would be able to join the same Trust at the same time to fully meet the needs of our shared community.

Why Join The Cam Academy Trust?

Both Schools have been looking carefully at the possibilities for conversion to academy status. We have looked at a range of Trusts to evaluate which one would offer the best opportunity for children at our Schools to succeed. The 5 Core Values at The Cam Academy Trust most closely meet our Schools' aims and objectives. Additionally, The Cam Academy Trust were clear about the way they would support both Schools to work closely together while retaining their individual status and identity. The Cam Academy Trust gave us the clearest assurances about how they could support both Schools in raising academic achievement and in anchoring both our Schools in the heart of our community. The Cam Academy Trust also has a clear strategy for supporting Primary Schools in particular, and we are excited about becoming part of that process.

What Might Change?

Accountability would be direct to the Department for Education rather than the Local Authority. There would be some additional financial performance management reporting to satisfy the requirements of Companies House and the Charities Commission. These changes will be managed centrally and not by individual schools.

What Would Stay the Same?

Essentially, children, parents and carers will not notice any surface changes. Both Schools will retain their own distinctive characters and identities; including their own uniform, logo and websites. Most importantly, our Schools will keep their own ethos, aims and values.

What Happens Next?

We are now entering a consultation period running from 12th September 2016 to 7th October 2016. During this period we will be consulting with parents, carers, staff, unions, the Local Authority, the local community and local schools. It is our intention to hold an Open Evening to provide more information and the opportunity for you to ask questions. Should you have any comments or further queries then please e-mail us by 7th October to: academyqueries@hartford-inf.cambs.sch.uk or academyqueries@hartford-jun.cambs.sch.uk

We will update our Frequently Asked Questions section with any concerns that might emerge during the consultation phase. This is an extremely exciting opportunity for both Schools and we would welcome your engagement as we progress on our exciting journey.

Yours sincerely



Mrs J Watkin-Tavener
Chair of Governors
Hartford Infant School

Ms V Baker
Chair of Governors
Hartford Junior School