

## Multi Academy Trust - Empower Trust

The Governing Body has received notification from the Department for Education that they have approved our application to change the legal category of our school from foundation to that of Academy as part of new Multi Academy Trust named Empower Trust.

### Questions regarding the consideration of Greenacres joining a local Multi Academy Trust

#### *Questions to consider with respect to the academy proposal*

#### **Response to questions**

*What is the difference between an academy and a Local Authority school?*

Greenacres is currently managed by Shropshire Local Authority. As an academy Greenacres will remain a state funded school but will be managed by a Multi Academy Trust outside of the Local Authority. Academies are inspected by Ofsted in the same way as schools.

*What is a Multi Academy Trust (MAT)*

The proposed MAT will include several local primary schools/academies working together to support each other in the interests of every child. The MAT will replace many of the roles currently carried out by Shropshire Local Authority, taking overall responsibility for the standards of education, finances, buildings, payroll and HR, etc. The MAT is overseen by Members and a Board of Trustees. The MAT will report directly to the government.

*Will Greenacres keep its individual school identity?*

Yes. On conversion Greenacres will keep the same name, uniform and teaching staff. All academies within the new MAT will be encouraged to retain their own unique character – every school brings its own unique strengths to the partnership.

*Will children's well-being remain central to Greenacres philosophy?*

Yes. Our values and ethos will remain the same. Children's well-being is also confirmed as being central for all academies within the MAT proposals

*Will my child still have the same class teacher and teaching assistants?*

Yes. The staff will continue to be employed by the MAT.

*Will staff pay and conditions be protected?* Yes. This is confirmed in the proposals. Staff will be employed by the MAT on the same terms and conditions. We want to retain our fantastic staff.

*Has Greenacres been able to influence the MAT Members and Trustees?* Yes. Following consultations MDJS Governing Body has agreed to the appointment of a very impressive group of Members and Trustees to oversee the MAT with a wide range of relevant experience and expertise, including education, MAT, legal, HR, Diocesan and financial backgrounds.

*Will there be clear roles for Greenacres Governing Body to continue to run Greenacres to meet the needs of our children?* Yes. Local leadership is crucial to maintaining the individuality of each academy. The proposals provide Greenacres Local Governing Body with as much autonomy as possible to be able to set its own priorities and set its own budget.

*Will parents be represented on the Greenacres Governing Body? Will the Governing Body continue to reflect the local community?* Yes. There will be parent, staff and community governors on the Local Governing Body. Local representation on the LGB remains central to the MAT vision and aims.

*Will Greenacres funding be affected by converting into an academy?* No. As an academy Greenacres will receive exactly the same level of funding as if it remains as a Local Authority maintained school. Unfortunately all schools and academies will be shorter of money than we would like because of national government school funding arrangements.

*Is the MAT based on a clear financial structure and an accurate understanding of the financial position of all of the schools?* Yes. This is very important. Due diligence has been carried out with respect of current and forecasted budgets for each of the schools based on current and predicted costs. Ensuring financial security is a key priority for the MAT. The MAT is committed to prioritise funding for resources to support effective class teaching.

*How will the new MAT ensure standards of education remain high?* The MAT will appoint a school improvement leader and provide school support. Greenacres would continue to provide training and school improvement services through the North Shropshire Teaching School. We anticipate a second Teaching School will be designated from within the group of schools in Spring 2018, further increasing the MAT's school improvement capacity. This will provide greater capacity than that currently available

through the Local Authority due to central government funding cuts.

*Will the MAT build on current effective school partnerships and the North Shropshire Teaching School Alliance?*

Yes. Building on current partnerships is at the core of the MAT proposal. All potential academy partners are current members of the North Shropshire Teaching School Alliance.

*Will Greenacres continue to work with other local schools outside of the new MAT?*

Yes. Greenacres will continue to work in partnership all local schools as well as those within the proposed MAT. Greenacres will remain part of the SDG.

*Why did we decide to apply to become an academy now?*

Government policy is to encourage all schools to be academies. Due to central government budget cuts and the development of other local MATs, Local Authority services are being reduced. We wanted to take the opportunity to develop a local education system based on Greenacres' principles and ethos, with partner schools of our own choosing, in order to ensure we can continue to deliver a high quality education for the children of Shrewsbury into the future.

*When is the process likely to happen?*

We are aiming to convert to become an Academy around May 2018, as long as everything goes smoothly. There are hundreds of schools doing the same thing across the country so there may be delays.