



Joining together
to build our future



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

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 both 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 details on academies at the Department for Education website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/academies-and-free-schools>

Why convert to academy status?

Firstly, becoming an academy would allow us to strengthen cohesion with the schools in our area. We know that many Primary Schools are actively looking at the options available to them and we now feel that we have sufficient information available to us to take this step. It is also important to mention that the Department of Education now stipulate that Local Authority controlled schools **are unable to convert to academy status as a standalone school**. We must therefore either join an existing MAT or form a new MAT.

Secondly, there would be greater flexibility in how we spend our funding. At present the Local Authority retains a small percentage of our budget to provide centralised services. As an academy, we would be able to determine for ourselves which, if any, of those services we want the Local Authority to provide. Any funding saved would then be available for redistribution.

Finally, despite government announcements that not all schools will be forced down this route, academies are becoming a growing reality across the country and schools are now having to consider, very seriously, how they will deliver high-quality education in the future. Many of the traditional services provided by the Local Authority are being withdrawn as a result of enduring funding pressures and this situation is only likely to worsen. It is the governors' considered view that the time is now right for our school to seize the initiative and take control of our own destiny.

In our case, we are looking to join an established, local Multi Academy Trust (MAT). You can find out more information about the Brampton Manor Trust by following this link:

<http://www.bramptonmanor.org/Brampton-Manor-Trust/>



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What is a Multi Academy Trust (MAT)?

A Multi Academy Trust is where a group of schools is governed through a single set of members and trustees. There are two ways of being part of a MAT:

- The group may be an existing academy chain which a school elects to join or which sponsors a school
- A number of schools come together to set up a new Multi Academy Trust with remit, governance etc. decided collectively.

What are the benefits of being a MAT?

- The governance of a MAT is carefully chosen ensuring a balanced and broad skillset. This will ensure high quality leadership with a clear focus on teaching and learning, strategic development and accountability
- A strong governance will ensure we can build sustainability through strategic succession planning
- Efficiencies can be made in administrative functions and joint procurement which will enable us to channel these savings directly to the classrooms.

Are there any disadvantages to becoming an academy?

As an academy within a MAT, the central board of members and trustees will be accountable for all the schools within the MAT (including any other schools that may join the MAT at a future date). This means increased responsibility. However, as part of our conversion to become an academy and join a MAT, we will ensure that careful decisions are taken to ensure that the right governance structure and systems are in place to operate successfully.

Why join this particular MAT?

- All three schools have similar educational philosophies and aim to provide the highest quality education for the children of East Ham;
- Brampton Manor Academy is the 10th highest performing secondary schools in the country based on progress at GCSE level;
- since becoming part of the Brampton Manor Trust, Langdon Academy has seen huge improvements and are now in the top 6% of schools nationally for progress at GCSE;
- the expertise across the trust will provide strong professional development, collaboration opportunities, support and challenge for staff and leadership, which would be positive for pupil outcomes;



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- having more control of our allotted budget will enable us to be more efficient and focus more of the money to directly impact upon pupils' learning and
- we believe that closer working relationships with both schools within the trust would impact positively on transition for our Year 6 children who are transferring to those schools.

What might change?

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

In the years ahead, the education system faces a significant number of changes which may be of concern to some. These changes will affect us whether we become an academy or not. However, we believe that we manage change well, and that in joining together with like-minded schools, we will be able to strengthen our ability to meet future challenges with a single, stronger voice.

What would stay the same?

Upon joining the MAT, we will retain our own autonomy; our distinctive character and identity including our own uniform, logo and website. Most importantly, we will keep our own ethos, aims and values. Additionally:

- The day to day teaching and operation of our school will not change as a result of joining this MAT
- Our curriculum and building will not change as a result of joining this MAT
- Parents' choice of secondary school for their child to follow onto at the end of year 6 will remain unaffected. Joining Brampton Manor Trust does not guarantee a place at either of the secondary schools already in the MAT, but Brampton Manor Academy is the closest school to Brampton Primary School and the same rules about parental preference will still apply.