

# Multi Academy Trust FAQs

## **What is a Multi-Academy Trust?**

A MAT is a single charitable entity which controls a group of academies within the trust. The trust's directors (or trustees) are responsible for overseeing the running of all the academies within the trust. The trust is accountable for all the academies within the MAT; however, before joining the MAT, The Chantry School and Heart of Mercia Trust would agree on the matters that would be handled by the trust, e.g. legal services and financial auditing, and those that will remain the responsibility of the local governing board.

## **What schools/colleges are in the Heart of Mercia Trust?**

Currently, the Heart of Mercia Trust consists of Hereford 6<sup>th</sup> Form College, Worcester 6<sup>th</sup> Form College and King Edward's 6<sup>th</sup> Form College, it is now proposing to develop their trust with secondary partners.

## **What are the benefits of becoming part of this Multi Academy Trust?**

The Governing Body judge that The Chantry School and its community will benefit in the following ways:

- Enhanced educational experiences for pupils through benefits to professional development of teaching colleagues, especially focusing on Y11 work that overlaps with A level and those colleagues at an early stage of their career development.
- Improved transition for those Y11 pupils choosing one of these institutions.
- Formalising school improvement work and accessing specialist expertise, for the benefit of pupil outcomes and experience.
- Improved capacity and resilience for many functions such as IT, human resources, finance and purchasing including economies of scale.
- The opportunity to automatically access capital funding from central government, once the Trust reaches the necessary threshold, and so invest in our site more quickly than would otherwise be possible.
- Improved staff retention and recruitment by creating greater opportunities for staff within the multi-academy trust setting.

## **Is there a possibility other schools will join the Heart of Mercia Trust in the future?**

Yes. This is already part of the Heart of Mercia's plans and is to be welcomed. School to school support and accountability is an important benefit of being part of the MAT.

## **Who will be responsible for running our school?**

The Heart of Mercia will have a Board of Directors including individuals from the Local Governing Bodies of all its institutions. The Trust Board will delegate many powers to a Local Governing Board (LGB), which will have a role similar to that of the current School Governing Board. These powers will be agreed by Governors from all four schools. The vast majority of Governors are likely to be the same people as now.

## **Will parents still be represented on the governing body?**

Yes. The Local Governing Board will have the need for its immediate stakeholders to be involved in the running of their local school.

### **How will parents be affected?**

- Parents will not be affected; however, they may start to see and hear more information about the MAT.
- Parents may notice that correspondence sent by the academy, e.g. letters and emails, will include the MAT's logo.

### **What are the responsibilities of the MAT?**

The main responsibilities of the MAT include:

- Setting the strategic direction for all the academies within the trust;
- Being responsible for the performance of the academies, including monitoring and, where necessary, intervening to improve performance;
- Ensuring that the right structure and organisation is in place to deliver the necessary high-standards for pupils;
- Ensuring value for money, maximising available funds and identifying and securing additional finance and support when required;
- Challenging progress in all aspects of academy operations and providing support and guidance to achieve the highest outcomes; and
- Leading involvement with parents and the wider community to promote the MAT and support the community.

### **Will conversion alter The Chantry School's existing ethos?**

No. It has been very important to the Governing Body to identify a MAT that allows individual and local character and ethos. The Heart of Mercia's values are Educational Excellence, Creating an Enjoyable Experience, Ensuring Students are ready for the real world and Sustainability. These align well with our values and the Governing Body judge that The Chantry School can maintain and grow its own ethos within this framework.

### **Will the admissions arrangements change?**

The Chantry School Trust currently deals with its own admission arrangements. Legally, the Heart of Mercia multi academy trust will become the admissions authority for the Academy. However, the admissions arrangements will all be delegated to the local governing body, and the school would also still be bound by the national Admissions Code, Admissions Appeals Code and the Worcestershire Co-ordinated Admissions process.

### **Will The Chantry School still be inspected by Ofsted?**

- Yes, all academies are inspected by Ofsted using the same framework and timescales as single academy trusts and maintained schools.
- The academies in the MAT will continue to be inspected separately; however, this may change in line with government policy.
- Ofsted will also carry out inspections of the trust as whole.

### **Will our responsibilities in relation to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and exclusions change?**

No. Responsibilities as an Academy in relation to SEND and exclusions will be just the same as they are now.

### **Will term times change?**

No, we will continue to use Worcestershire term dates and stay the same as other local schools. We understand how important this is to families with children at more than one school.

### **Would the school have to change its name, logo or uniform?**

No. All of these will remain the same.

### **What does it cost to transfer into a MAT?**

The cost of the legal work to manage this transfer is in the region of £7,500

### **Will The Chantry School get more money as a Multi-Academy Trust?**

The Chantry School will continue to receive the same General Annual Grant based on the National Funding Formula that it has done previously. There is the prospect that a MAT of sufficient size is able to automatically access capital improvement funding that would otherwise be subject to a bidding process.

### **Will the school lose its financial independence and its ability to manage its own finances?**

All institutions within Heart of Mercia are responsible for managing their own finances. However, there will be MAT oversight of the finances.

### **What is the timescale if the proposal goes ahead?**

Subject to due diligence and legal work the intention is for The Chantry School to become part of Heart of Mercia Trust on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023

### **Will The Chantry School Trust definitely join Heart of Mercia Trust? Can The Chantry School Trust withdraw from the conversion process?**

The Governing Body of the Academy is currently *considering* joining Heart of Mercia; however, the Academy is not obligated to join. Schools are able to withdraw right up to the point that they sign the Funding Agreement. Once this is signed there is a legally binding agreement between the Secretary of State and the academy and the termination process would require a long notice period.

### **Who makes the final decision?**

- The governing board will consult with staff members, parents and local residents in order to make an informed decision on whether or not to join the MAT.
- After collecting evidence the final decision will be made by the governing board.

### **What will happen if the school does join?**

The Chantry School Trust presently responsible for maintaining the Academy will cease to exist once the assets and staff of the Trust are transferred to The Heart of Mercia Trust and the trustees of The Heart of Mercia will have responsibility for the Academy after transfer. The Chantry School as an educational establishment within this Trust will continue in its current form.

### **How can I find out more?**

A meeting will be held at The Chantry School on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> October at 5:30 pm. We encourage you to attend if you have any questions, or simply want to learn more.

There is also more information about multi academies trust on the DfE website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-academy-trusts-establishing-and-developing-your-trust>

If you can't find the answer to your question here, or on the DfE website, and cannot attend the meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> October please email Andrew Dickenson, Headteacher (head@chantryschool.com) who will try to assist.

### **How can I make representations?**

Please complete this online [Consultation Form](#)

Or write to:

Consultation Response

The Chantry School,

Martley,

Worcestershire

WR6 6QA

Responses must be received by 5:00 pm on Friday 11th November.