



Woods Foundation Church of England Voluntary Aided School Multi-academy Trust (MAT) Consultation

Friday 8th November 2024 – Friday 20th December 2024

Proposal

The Governing Body is proposing that Woodborough Woods Foundation Church of England Voluntary Aided School becomes an academy and joins the Archway Learning Trust.

Consultation

We are now initiating the consultation process with key stakeholders. Stakeholders are invited to submit comments and questions. The responses to this consultation will be used to determine the final decision on whether to proceed with the proposal to join Archway Learning Trust.

As a Governing Body we are seeking the views of the groups and organisations below.

- Pupils, parents and carers
- Staff and their union representatives
- The Local Authority (Nottinghamshire County Council)
- The Diocese of Nottingham and Southwell
- Local schools
- The local community
- Other interested parties

We hope this consultation document and the information found via our respective websites will help you to formulate your own views on this important proposal.

The consultation process will start on **Friday 8th November** and conclude on **Friday 20th December**. Questions and comments regarding the consultation can be submitted as follows:

- **Online From:** <https://forms.office.com/r/R5KLy4LipZ>
- **Letters:** marked 'Private and Confidential – MAT Consultation' and handed (or posted) to: Wood's Foundation Church of England VA School, Lingwood Lane, Woodborough, NG14 6DX.

In addition, consultation meetings will be held at the school as follows:

- Staff: Wednesday 13th November (at 3.45pm)
- Parents/carers and local community: Wednesday 20th November (sessions at 4.00pm and 7.00pm)

If you wish to attend the parent, carer and community event, please register here by Tuesday 19th November: <https://forms.office.com/r/2PYGEwgEAA>.

Consultation documents will also be available on our website: www.woodsfoundation.notts.sch.uk

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is a multi-academy trust?

A multi-academy trust (MAT) is a charitable trust which is responsible for the operation of more than one academy.

The people in charge of running the Multi-Academy Trust are the company directors, who are responsible for strategic oversight and management. They are also charity trustees and must comply with duties under company law, charity law and education law to promote the success of the academy trust. They determine the policies of the trust, monitor the effectiveness of each academy within the MAT, manage central services where appropriate and report to the Secretary of State. They work to ensure that each academy is performing to the best of its ability and gets the support it requires.

The role of the Members of the MAT is largely limited to appointing and removing directors and making key decisions such as amendments to the Articles of Association and changing the name of the academy trust.

Each of the academies in the trust usually has its own local governing body which has authority delegated to it by the Trust Board.

2. What was our selection process in choosing a MAT?

When choosing a MAT, Church of England schools are expected to choose from one of the local church MATs. Some of these MATs also include community (non-church) schools. Consequently, there were five MATs from which we were able to choose:

- Archway Learning Trust
- Aspire Multi-Academy Trust
- Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham Multi-Academy Trust
- Minster Trust for Education
- Transform Trust

Governors have undertaken a range of activities over the last 18 months. This includes:

- Undertaking background research, including attending a presentation from the Diocesan Director of Education, so that governors could understand the benefits of academisation, what we would want from a MAT and the characteristics of the school that we would not want to lose.
- Carrying out 'desktop' due diligence activities on each of the five MATs based on publicly available information (e.g. websites, performance tables and other Department for Education information, Ofsted reports, financial statements)
- Attending presentations from each of the five MATs and asking a range of questions afterwards
- Shortlisting MATs on the basis of the information gleaned so far
- Visiting two schools that are members of each of the shortlisted MATs to see the schools in action, speak to headteachers, to school staff, to trust staff and to governors.
- Utilising all the evidence gathered to identify a preferred MAT

The Governing Body has deliberately taken time to carry out this process. This was to ensure it was a thorough process and resulted in the right decision. This extended time has also ensured that Woods staff could focus primarily on bringing about the necessary improvements in the quality of

provision for children at the school. The school is now in a position of strength, having recently been judged as a good school by Ofsted. The Governing Body is keen to ensure that it remains that way. The school has previously got into difficulties because it stood still and did not remain responsive to the changing world of education. As such, the Governing Body is looking to take this step to safeguard the future of the school.

3. Who are Archway Learning Trust?

Please follow the link below to find out more about the Archway Learning Trust:

www.archwaytrust.co.uk

4. Why Archway Learning Trust?

The Governing Body is keen to belong to a MAT with a clear strategic direction and Christian vision and values like those at Woodborough Woods. It is important that there are opportunities for development at all levels to secure even higher achievements, while still retaining a strong self-identity and autonomy in key areas.

The Governors believe on balance that Woodborough Woods needs would be best served by joining the Archway Learning Trust because of:

- the structured support that will add to and improve what Woodborough Woods currently has achieved
- the continuous professional development (CPD) and diverse range of high achieving schools, which will enable us to improve in more areas
- the opportunity to contribute to growing the primary arm
- the opportunity to contribute to the development of other Trust schools, as a high achieving, outward facing school.
- being listened to – leading to the bespoke nature of support at all levels.
- the capacity of the Central Team in all areas (safeguarding, school improvement, HR, Finance, IT)
- the support and challenge for the local governing body

5. Whose decision is it whether or not to join a MAT?

The decision to join a MAT and which MAT to join rests with the Governing Body, with approval also being needed from the Diocese and the Regional Director, who acts on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education.

6. Has the decision already been made to join a MAT?

No. The Governing Body is currently seeking views from all stakeholders and these views will be considered before any final decision is made.

7. Who will the Governing Body be consulting?

The Governing Body will be consulting with all staff at the school, parents and various other stakeholders, other local schools and other community members.

8. How can I share my views?

You can share your views through the following means:

- **Online Form:** <https://forms.office.com/r/R5KLy4LipZ>
- **Letters:** marked 'Private and Confidential – MAT Consultation' and handed (or posted) to: Wood's Foundation Church of England VA School, Lingwood Lane, Woodborough, NG14 6DX.

9. The question I want to ask is not in the FAQ document. How can I ask my question and get an answer?

Questions can be submitted through the online form or by letter as described above. Questions can also be asked at the in-person events for staff and parents.

10. Can other schools join the MAT at a later date?

Yes, other schools can join at a later date. However, at the early stage of growth, Woods can be influential in the future growth of the primary arm of the MAT.

11. What changes will parent/carers see?

There will be very little visible change as a direct result of joining Archway Learning Trust, with the school continuing in much the same way as it does now on a day-to-day basis. Over time, the opportunities that being part of a MAT brings will enhance the opportunities for children.

We would welcome your views, whether positive or negative, on the proposal. The consultation period will run from Friday 8th November and Friday 20th December. Comments must be received by the end of this consultation period.