

Manchester Communication Academy - Multi-Academy Trust proposal

Senior Leaders and Governors at Manchester Communication Academy are aware that education is experiencing a time of economic and strategic challenge. We are facing tighter budgets from central government and austerity measures have resulted in reduced services being available to schools.

Schools across the country are being encouraged to work more closely together, to provide mutual support and share expertise across partnerships, with the added benefits of creative solutions that reduce back-office costs. With this in mind the governors are looking to create a multi academy trust as they believe that this would be a positive and proactive step that would help to address all of these issues. Initially this only affects the 2 BT sponsored academies – Manchester Communication Academy and Manchester Communication Primary Academy.

What is a Multi-Academy Trust?

A Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) is a group of Academies forming a legal partnership. They are overseen by Members and a Board of Trustees to take strategic decisions across the group of schools and academies. Under this Board sit the Local Governing Bodies of each individual school, who still retain autonomy in making decisions that affect the children in that school or academy.

What are the benefits of a MAT?

There are a number of benefits linked to the quality of education, including sharing expertise across the MAT for curriculum design, school improvement strategies, subject specialisms, resources and staff development. Shared expertise would also benefit effective leadership, governance and policy design. Academies receive an additional grant in recognition of the fact that they will have greater costs in some areas, as they may not be able to tap into a range of Local Authority services. These additional costs can be offset, however, by

aligning services and contracts across the Trust, resulting in some overall savings. This could include aspects such as Human Resources, Legal Services, IT provision, Administration and Site Management.

What would stay the same?

- The day-to-day running of the schools would remain largely unchanged.
- Each Local Governing Body would continue to monitor the quality of education, safeguarding, and Health & Safety in its own school or academy.
- Each Local Governing Body would continue to have parent and staff representation, as it does now.
- The MAT would also maintain the current positive working relationships with the Local Authority and other schools and academies within the City.

What would change?

- The MAT would make decisions for the benefits of children and families across the Trust, in order to meet the needs of the whole local community
- Manchester Communication Primary Academy would benefit from staff expertise in subject specialisms at secondary level and a range of more innovative transition activities to support the move from Year 6 into Year 7
- Manchester Communication Academy would benefit from staff expertise in Years 5 & 6, to support the highest possible standards of attainment as children transfer to Manchester Communication Academy
- The senior leaders of both academies would work more closely together to plan training and curriculum development. They will also benefit from peer challenge within a culture of mutual support and trust

- There would be economies of scale that generate savings across the MAT for a range of services

What happens next?

As part of the decision-making process, the Governing Body are committed to a full consultation with our stakeholders and will take their views into account before any final decision is taken. The purpose of this statement is, therefore, to introduce the proposals to you, signpost you to where you can find additional information and let you know how you can take part in the consultation process

We would like to invite all staff, parents and carers of Manchester Communication Academy and Manchester Communication Primary Academy to write to the governors with their views to ensure any decisions made are based on informed feedback. You can do this at MAT@mca.manchester.sch.uk, or in writing to the school addressed to 'MCA Governors '.

In addition we will be holding an 'Information & Discussion Evening' to provide information to stakeholders regarding the proposal and to discuss any issues together with governors. The meeting will take place at Manchester Communication Academy on Monday 15th June at 5pm.

It is important for parents to be aware that no final decision has yet been taken – your views will have a strong bearing on what governors ultimately decide to do. The consultation period will close on 19 June 2015. Governors will then review the responses before making their decision.