

PARENTS CONSULTATION MEETINGS REGARDING MAC CONVERSION

CONSOLIDATED MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD AT HOLY CROSS, ST NICHOLAS,
ST JOSEPH'S AND BISHOP WALSH CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN SUTTON COLDFIELD ON
14TH MARCH 2013

Present: Mr M Emery (Head Teacher St Nicholas)
 Mr J Farrell (Head Teacher Bishop Walsh)
 Mrs J Deasy (Head Teacher Holy Cross)
 Mr G O'Hara (Head Teacher St Joseph's)
 Mrs P Platt (Chair of Governors St Nicholas)
 Mr T McGuigan (Chair of Governors Holy Cross)
 Dr K Hill (Chair of Governors St Joseph's)
 Mr N Courbet (Academy Conversion Manager – DRB)

Minute Number		Action by
01	Parents were welcomed. All schools' representatives introduced themselves and questions from parents commenced immediately.	N/a
02	Q: Will there be a negative impact of spending time setting up and effectively running a 'business' rather than investing the time directly in the pupils' education A: In terms of setting up, the four Sutton Catholic schools have invested in consultants from DRB to project manage and prevent as much disruption to Head Teachers as possible over the coming months. In terms of running the MAC, the day to day duties of the Head Teachers will remain very similar to their current roles and the MAC is not being viewed as a business in the traditional sense. The pupil's education is of the highest importance. All teachers will remain with the children. Any changes as a consequence of being a MAC will be gradual. We cannot rely on the stability of the local authority moving forward, as it continues to cut spend.	N/a
03	Q: How will you fund for the support required? (accountants, human resources, legal etc) A: Each school already has an office function that covers these sort of tasks so there is no change. The collective system will take advantage of each school's benefit. Grants to fund the employment of consultants etc to start the MAC up has come from the Government	N/a
04	Q: How do we solve any potential disagreements between schools? A: Through taking diligent measures such as financial audits and gaining interim financial assistance, bribery/corruption safeguards, the Board of Directors and using other services such as Birmingham City Council Payroll to handle employee relations. In the future the Board of Directors will search for the best services possible to the MAC and alternatives to BCC. The schools have been preparing for this over two years.	N/a
05	Q: I am concerned over how money will be spent under just one body? A: There will be individual spend as per budget as before, but collective spend will go through the Board of Directors.	N/a
06	Q: I am concerned over the new structure and changes to control? A: Academy Committees will replace the current Governing Bodies. The four Head Teachers will still work together through monthly meetings. Each school will retain its own ethos and identity. The schools are committed to making it work	N/a
07	Q: What are the main advantages? A: - Strengthening the provision of Catholic Schools in Sutton Coldfield - Catholic Education Control (better understanding of pupils as they move into Secondary education) - Formalising good practise - Collaboration (self-improving school network)	N/a

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not converting means we rely on the local authority and we may lose this network - There will be an obligation to help each other - It may be challenging in managing change, but it is worth it if it makes the schools improve. 	
08	<p>Q: Is it of concern that the Board of Directors will account to the Barberi Newman Trust?</p> <p>A: No they are a representation of the Diocese. The Diocese have the same level of control now. They will always be concerned primarily with a Catholic education for pupils which we are happy with.</p>	N/a
09	<p>Q: How will you keep the Catholic population in the schools healthy?</p> <p>A: Through a great education and strong Catholic practise.</p>	N/a
10	<p>Q: Have you looked at any other Multi-Academies?</p> <p>A: Yes, Painsley in North Staffordshire, which was really beneficial and it is now working effectively. Parents/Staff feedback after conversion was that they didn't notice much of a difference</p>	N/a
11	<p>Q: Will staff lose their pension rights as parents have mentioned this in the 'playground'?</p> <p>A: Absolutely not</p>	N/a
12	<p>Q: Will Ofsted inspections be at the same time?</p> <p>A: Ofsted will remain individually assessed as per now, The only change is changing the ownership to the MAC. The Ofsted cycle will stay the same. The old Ofsted will be frozen and a new Ofsted will commence as per the same cycle.</p>	N/a
13	<p>Q: How will funding be split between the schools?</p> <p>A: It is calculated by pupil numbers and age of the pupils and distributed accordingly. The Academy Capital Programme will free up more funds for additional capital spend. The Asset Management Plan document will help dictate needs. Individual schools can still apply for additional funds. The 'topslice' previously taken by the LA will also be distributed from the MAC.</p>	N/a
14	<p>Q: Will the MAC be bound by the National Curriculum?</p> <p>A: There will be flexibility to change areas of the National Curriculum to suit our surroundings, needs of our children and to focus on our levels of expertise. Schools will look for 'best practise' to achieve an outstanding status. Once again, with the LA diminishing, we have to strengthen ourselves to move forward.</p>	N/a
15	<p>Q: Will current extra-curricular activities such as music remain the same?</p> <p>A: There is no plan to change anything, any alternative would be assessed thoroughly as is the case now for all governing bodies of each school.</p>	N/a
16	<p>Q: Will we buy into one catering service provider?</p> <p>A: We will stick with whatever is good for each school, but would be considered is proposed by the Academy Committees and it proved worthwhile for a service change, however, there are no plans for this.</p>	N/a
17	<p>Q: Are there any building plans for after conversion?</p> <p>A: Bishop Walsh – A sports village and an astro turf that could potentially be hired out on evenings etc Holy Cross – A Nursery building if funds were available to accommodate pre-school and after-school. St Nicholas – A school playground but no new buildings St Joseph's – No plans for buildings</p>	N/a
18	<p>Q: Will there be a relationship with other Catholic schools?</p> <p>A: Our primary schools with Good/Outstanding Ofsteds will support our</p>	N/a

	Catholic community where possible. Arrangements could be made on a child by child basis as we do now. Behaviour funding is still available.	
19	<p>Q: Will there be an inflow of new pupils at Bishop Walsh from other Catholic schools?</p> <p>A: Bishop Walsh is for children who apply themselves and there is a limited number of places as a knock on effect of its popularity. We will adhere to the Admission Code.</p>	N/a
20	<p>Q: Will it affect primary children's ability to get into grammar schools etc through changes made to the curriculum?</p> <p>A: Key Stage 1 is compulsory and primary schools will do their best for pupils, no matter which is the preferred secondary school for them.</p>	N/a
21	<p>Q: How will parents be made aware of changes?</p> <p>A: Exactly the same mechanism as before; paperwork/consultation information will be sent to parents. Anything that affects pupils will be communicated to parents via letters and through the internet.</p>	N/a
22	<p>Q: Please explain the structure of the MAC?</p> <p>A: - The Archbishop will oversee the Barbari Newman Trust, which has been set up to assist and given the MACs on behalf of the Archdiocese. - The Board of Directors will be made up of 14 members, including 8 foundation members (4 current Chairs plus 4 additional Governors – this will include a Priest) and 6 elected members (2 staff, 2 parents and 2 Head Teachers)</p>	N/a
23	<p>Q: How will you measure the success of the conversion?</p> <p>A: Through academic results and Ofsted.</p>	N/a
24	<p>Q: How will you be able to identify if it is failing?</p> <p>A: The Board of Directors will assess qualitative and quantitative data. Visibility of the schools will increase the desire to improve.</p>	N/a
25	<p>Q: Is the 1st July 2013 conversion date definite?</p> <p>A: We will be looking to convert on the 1st July subject to consultation and approval from the four governing bodies after the consultation period. If there are any hold-ups such as legal land issues that delay the conversion date this will be communicated to parents when known.</p>	N/a
26	<p>Q: Is money/funding the main reason for converting?</p> <p>A: No, funding advantages are minimal, but there is a 'topslice' benefit which will be used to improve outcomes for the children.</p>	N/a
27	<p>Q: Is maternity pay funding being removed?</p> <p>A: Yes as of April 2013 the local authority will be removing Maternity Pay for ALL schools, therefore the respective schools/academies will be responsible for funding this. This once again highlights issues within the LA, which strengthens our reason to convert.</p>	N/a
28	<p>Q: How is staff morale?</p> <p>A: Naturally some staff are nervous of the change to Academy status. We are putting strategies together so that staff can see the opportunities. Staff do trust the motivations of the Governing Bodies.</p>	N/a
29	<p>Q: Will teachers still be part of Trade Unions and have the ability to strike?</p> <p>A: Yes</p> <p>End of Questions. Parents thanked for attending the consultation.</p>	N/a