

Balfour Junior School

Conversion to Academy

Background

- Balfour Junior and Infant Schools decide jointly to apply to change to a two-school trust (academies)
- First meetings with parents and staff
- Application to DfE
- DfE advised to put the application on hold pending Ofsted inspections of both schools

Interim - schools

- Infant school headteacher retires and a new headteacher is appointed
- Junior school continues as usual but with academisation in mind
- Ofsted inspections of both schools take place; both are judged good

Interim - government

- General election
- Statements from DfE about academisation
 - Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) preferred
 - Minimum and maximum sizes strongly suggested

Various announcements and meetings

Locally, Junior School has discussions with other Academies and MATS, and with the Infant School

Factors taken into account

- DfE suggested various areas to consider
 - Ethos
 - History
 - Geography
 - Balance
 - Structure

We had already used these criteria when considering options

Balfour Junior School

- Decision taken in February 2016 to apply to join the Fort Pitt and Thomas Aveling Academies Trust as a converter academy - name to be Balfour Junior Academy
- Initial expression of interest made
- Medway Local Authority 'tips' into 50% of schools being academies – in May 2016 Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) advises that all schools in Medway will have to convert
- Discussions with RSC and application taken to his advisory board
- Academy Order made by RSC on 21 July 2016 and sent to Chair of Governors 22 July 2016
- Process begun in earnest in September 2016 – planning for conversion on 1 January 2017

What will this mean for you and our children

- Business as usual
- Headteacher and staff continue as usual
- There will be curriculum changes – but set by DfE, not FPTA Trust
- Badges, headed paper etc will change as we order new supplies – old uniform will still be acceptable
- For staff – opportunities for professional development within and outside the Trust
- Continue to work with feeder infant schools
- Continue with Medway admissions

For staff

- Staff will be TUPE-d across from Medway to FPTA
- Eventually, HR processes common across the Trust
- CPD opportunities within Trust greater than before, but maintaining outside opportunities too

Questions and Comments

- We welcome constructive comments and questions, either in person, via the suggestion box in reception or via the school office addressed to the chair of governors
- Any questions now? We will be here for a short time if you don't want to stand up in public

Governance

- The current Governing Body will cease to exist on conversion and responsibility for the school transfers from Medway LA and the governing body to the FPTA trust
- Initially, a local committee of the Trust will continue with local decisions, with representatives to the Trust, no change to headteacher or staff, no change to curriculum except those normal to progress/DfE.
- Much good practice already in place, and MATs nationally are developing models supported by DfE/RSC and NGA (National Governors' Association)