



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What will joining Truro and Penwith Academy Trust mean for children at the school?**

- Their curriculum, school identity, finances and day to day management of the school will be overseen by the local governing board which will have representation by parents of pupils at the school.
- There will be opportunities for them to benefit from the world class facilities, for example, for sport and drama, at the Truro and Penwith College sites.
- Their teaching and learning will be enhanced by the staff having support from other good or outstanding schools and their head teachers.
- The children will benefit from the school being able to access opportunities being created for the Trust schools through its close association with Cornwall Teaching School and Truro and Penwith College.

### **What autonomy would the school retain?**

- The school retains full autonomy over its identity, style, individual distinctiveness, name, uniform, curriculum and finances and all day to day running of the school.
- The governors of the school retain responsibility for curriculum and financial performance of the school. Their responsibilities and accountabilities are clearly set out in a Scheme of Delegated Authority (SODA).
- The management of the school deploy the staff. There will be opportunities for staff to work in other schools sometimes, where it is in the interest of their individual professional development, and the interests of the school.

### **What will school improvement look like – links with other school? Will there be opportunities to share resourcing?**

- All schools in the Trust have a bespoke improvement and development programme specifically geared to their needs
- The programme will have a number of elements including a school to school development framework with head teacher support and challenge, and opportunities for focus groups of key professionals in school to meet and share good practice, for example in Early Years, mathematics, English and Special Educational Needs.

### **Curriculum - will all schools cover the same?**

- No. Academies are not required to teach the National Curriculum but rather a broad and balanced one that includes English, mathematics, science, languages and promotes the spiritual, social, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. Within the Trust individual academies will be responsible for their own curriculum development in accordance with the Scheme of Delegated Authority and in line with aims and values of the Trust.
- The Trust firmly believes that the governors and the management of the school should decide on the curriculum which best suits its children and local community.
- The Trust will not prescribe what to teach, or how to teach it although clearly all schools are expected to respond to statutory guidance on the curriculum
- The relentless focus of the Trust is on its schools providing the very best curriculum offer for its children and their communities and to aim to achieve the highest possible standards of teaching and school performance.
- The Trust will encourage curriculum innovation and sharing of good practice.



## Frequently Asked Questions: Parents and Carers

### **What is an Academy?**

Academies are state schools which have the freedom to determine their own policies on such things as the curriculum taught, school hours and term dates. This is enabled by the Academies Act 2010. Academies are managed by their own Academy Trust and receive funding directly from central government.

### **Who runs an Academy?**

The academy is run by an Academy Trust. This is a legal body which operates as a charitable organisation and a company limited by guarantee. The Trust has a formal agreement, or contract with the Department for Education.

### **Are there any rules relating to admissions that academies and maintained schools have to follow?**

Yes. Academies have to follow the law for school admissions, special educational needs and exclusions as if they were a maintained school.

### **My child has special education needs. How can I be confident that they will be given the same level of support, attention and care?**

The Academies Act 2010 requires Academies to follow the same statutory framework for special needs as local authority schools. The school will receive funding for children with statements of special educational needs in the same way, whether they are academies or local authority schools. If children have statements with an enhanced package of support, both types of school will get additional funding directly from the local authority, again, in the same way.

### **Are there any rules relating to admissions that academies and maintained schools have to follow?**

Yes. Academies have to follow the law for school admissions, special educational needs and exclusions as if they were a maintained school. Academies cannot select pupils on the basis of ability.

### **What inspection regimes and assessment data information do academies have to provide?**

All academies are inspected by Ofsted using the same framework and timescales as for maintained schools. Academies will still have to take part in national tests and in teacher assessments of pupils' performance as they apply to maintained schools. The results are reported in performance tables in the same way as they are now, i.e. against the school where tests were conducted.

### **How will the uniqueness of each school be preserved?**

The Trust is about providing the highest quality teaching and learning opportunities and celebrating the individuality of each academy within the Trust. It is not about making all academies the same. Whilst there will be some things that will be coordinated across the Trust, most academies will be able to operate as they currently do. There is no expectation for uniforms, for example, to change.

## Frequently Asked Questions: Staff

### **What is an Academy?**

Academies are state schools which have the freedom to determine their own policies on such things as the curriculum taught, school hours and term dates. This is enabled by the Academies Act 2010. Academies are managed by their own Academy Trust and receive funding directly from central government.

### **Who runs an Academy?**

The academy is run by an Academy Trust and the Trust is the named employer of staff. This is a legal body which operates as a charitable organisation and a company limited by guarantee. The Trust has a formal agreement, or contract with the Department for Education.

### **What happens to staffing and governance?**

Governors retain responsibility for curriculum and financial performance and management structures remain the same. The Trust will ensure that the local governing board has sufficient capacity and a shared aspiration for high standards. The Trust Board maintains oversight of the performance of all the schools in the Trust and the Scheme of Delegated Authority (SODA) sets out the 'who does what' arrangement between the Trust Board and the Local Governing Boards.

### **What happens to pay and conditions including pensions?**

Rules for conversion to academy status mean that Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment (TUPE) regulations apply and all staff will transfer on existing terms and conditions to the Trust as the employer. Academies are not bound by the Standard Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document therefore the Trust is responsible for setting the pay and conditions of its staff. Truro and Penwith Academy Trust will be honouring the national teachers' pay and conditions and Teachers' Pensions Scheme arrangements for as long as they continue to exist and will also ensure that the Local Government Pension Scheme arrangements stay in place for non-teaching staff. As part of the conversion process, the LGPS scheme's administrators will undertake an actuarial assessment to determine how much the Trust will need to contribute. There are currently no plans for systematic change / re-negotiation of contracts and conditions for staff who TUPE across however it may be necessary to iron out anomalies and promote equality. The Trust approach to this will be based on its underlying values. The Trust is committed to doing everything it can to retain and reward good staff. Full union recognition agreement and acknowledgement of union duties and reasonable time off for trade union duties will be given.

### **How secure is my job?**

Local governing boards will be responsible, according to their Scheme of Delegated Authority, for appointing teaching and non teaching staff to their academy and for deciding the staffing structure that best meets the needs of the academy within available budgets. Staff performance and reward arrangements remain the responsibility of the Head. The Trust does not routinely redeploy staff from their existing schools. One employer across a family of academies can facilitate opportunities for personal and professional development through, for example, the focus groups established for mathematics, English, early years and SEND. Cornwall Teaching School works closely with the Trust to meet the needs of staff employed within individual academies.

### **What are the statutory requirements with regard to the TUPE process?**

There is no statutory obligation for the governing body to consult unless it is planning to make changes to working conditions or staffing before the transfer. However it is best practice to consult staff and their representatives and to allow 30 days for this consultation. In all cases there is a statutory obligation on Cornwall Council, as the current employer, to inform employee representatives (i.e. the recognised union or if there isn't one, elected representatives) of certain matters in writing. These are i) the fact that the transfer is to take place; ii) the date of the transfer and the reasons for it; and iii) the legal, economic and social implications of the transfer for any affected employees and the measures which the employer envisages it will, in connection with the transfer, take in relation to any affected employees or, if it envisages that no measures will be so taken, that fact. Schools will be supported with this process by the Trust.

### **How will it work for new staff?**

New staff will be employed by the Trust and therefore could work at more than one academy. It will be clear at appointment where the main base will be e.g. a group of academies may choose to employ a counsellor.