



**Rolls Crescent Primary School**

APRIL  
2016

ROLLS CRESCENT PRIMARY SCHOOL  
CONSULTATION ON CO-OPERATIVE  
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST STATUS

This and all other documents are available on our Website:

[www.rolls-crescent.manchester.sch.uk](http://www.rolls-crescent.manchester.sch.uk)

## **The purpose of this booklet**

This booklet launches a formal consultation with Rolls Crescent's parents, carers, staff and other community partners (for example local nurseries and high schools) on whether or not to form a Multi Academy Trust in collaboration with two pre-existing partners.

The aim of this booklet is to provide you with an explanation of what this change would mean for the school. You will have the opportunity to ask further questions and give your feedback at our Parents Meetings. You can also submit an electronic or written response at any time.

The Governors are keen for as many people as possible to take part in the consultation process and voice their thoughts about the future of the school.

**After the five week consultation period there will be a Full Governing Body meeting at which the Governors will consider all your responses and will decide whether to continue with the work necessary to convert to Cooperative Academy status, prior to making their final decision.**

This booklet is broken down into several sections:

- A brief on the national situation
- A reminder of the current position of the school
- An explanation of what a Co-operative Multi Academy Trust is and how this differs from our current position
- An explanation of what this would mean for Rolls Crescent Primary.
- Answers to some frequently asked questions
- Information on how you can ask further questions and make your voice heard in the consultation process
- A proposed timetable of events.

## The Current Situation Nationally and Locally for Education

We are working in a period of challenge and change to the Education system, with changes to:

- curriculum
- assessment
- funding arrangements
- how schools are judged and held accountable.

We are proud to be a good school and want to continue to improve. We are always looking for ways to move forward and build on our success.

The Government, as well as the other leading political parties, have made clear their commitment to all schools becoming Academies and for this reason we believe the number of academies will continue to rise at a significant rate.

## The Current Position of Rolls Crescent Primary

Rolls Crescent Primary has been working alongside Chorlton Park and Old Moat Primary Schools since 2014. The school shares an Executive Headteacher, David Watson, and the Board of Governors oversees the development of Rolls Crescent. All 3 schools have a separate budget.

The budget for each school is allocated by the Local Authority who retain an element of this budget to provide some limited services. Schools which receive their budget from the Local Authority are known as **maintained schools**.

Whilst each school has retained its own distinct identity, working alongside Chorlton Park and Old Moat has enabled Rolls Crescent to benefit from shared expertise, shared resources and shared success. This partnership has been advantageous for all three schools and would continue by becoming part of a Co-operative Multi Academy Trust.

## What is a Multi Academy Trust?

The Department of Education describes an Academy Trust as, a state school that is independent from the Local Authority. This gives Academies more flexibility and freedom than maintained schools.

A Multi Academy Trust is where two or more different schools become academies in their own right, retaining their separate identity and yet legally joining together with some joined elements of governance. Academies are charitable companies limited by guarantee and an Academy Trust would own the site and becomes the employer of school staff. If we were to become an Academy, Rolls Crescent would keep its own budget but gain flexibility around resources, facilities, learning opportunities, staff training and community activities.

## What might our MAT look like?

Our Multi Academy Trust would not be a merger, but a partnership. By working in partnership with Chorlton Park and Old Moat we would have the opportunity to use resources more efficiently and effectively for the benefit of the children, which would be tremendous. We would also have the opportunity to maximise expertise and best practice for the benefit of all schools involved.

At present, we have worked successfully with Chorlton Park and Old Moat on many levels. Primarily, we have had the opportunity to share the executive Headteacher, Mr Watson, who has a proven record of effective leadership, which is recognised nationally as well as locally. Mr Watson has been the head teacher of an outstanding school, is the Strategic Director of the Manchester Teaching Schools Alliance, is the North West Regional Teaching School representative and is a National Leader of Education. His experience and connections ensure we keep up with all current educational initiatives and keep Rolls Crescent at the forefront of education. Mr Watson also has a clear vision for all his schools that matches our own; a vision based on strong principles and values and a belief that every child can succeed and deserves the best opportunities we can provide. The links we have forged with Old Moat and Chorlton Park have provided opportunities for staff, all levels, to network effectively and share effective practice to support improvement in all our schools. Working with Mr Watson and the staff in Old Moat and Chorlton Park has benefitted Rolls Crescent significantly in our drive for school improvement and continued links would only strengthen the progress we have made. The Multi Academy Trust could also lead to other schools joining Rolls Crescent, Old Moat and Chorlton Park Primary which would further strengthen the partnership.

## What is a **Co-operative** Multi Academy Trust?

A Multi Academy Trust in the Co-operative Model is slightly different to a Multi Academy Trust because it offers a unique opportunity to create a strong ethos of co-operation that can drive community engagement and democratic accountability.

Co-operative schools are run using the same values and principles as co-operative enterprises throughout the world. They are democratic organisations where staff, parents and other stakeholders can have a voice by becoming members.

The Co-operative Model will provide the local community with a stronger voice and help shape future developments leading to a strengthened relationship between the school and its community. The local community can bring expertise and experience which will also strengthen our governance.

## The Co-operative Values

During our research we found the Co-operative Values fitted our School's Vision and Values as well as reflecting the values of our wider school community.

### Co-operative Values

**Self Help** - people help each other whilst helping themselves by working together for mutual benefit

**Self-Responsibility** - individuals within the co-operatives act responsibly and play a full part in the organisation

**Democracy** - a co-operative will be structured so that members have control over the organisation, one member one vote

**Equality** - members will be treated justly and fairly

**Solidarity** - members will support each other and other co-operatives

**Ethical Value** - in the tradition of their founders, co-operative members believe in the ethical values of: honesty, openness, social responsibility, caring for others.

### Our Vision

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- Developing good citizens
  - Igniting learning
  - Promoting excellent teaching
  - Growing exceptional leaders
  - Focusing on performance
  - Providing public value

### Our Values:

Respect, Care, Courage, Trust and Fairness

## Academy Powers and Responsibilities



### Funding

At present, our school receives its funding from the Local Authority but as an Academy it would receive funding directly from central government. Academies receive the same level of per-pupil funding as maintained schools plus additions to account for services no longer being provided by the Local Authority.

### Admissions, special education needs and exclusions

All schools are bound by the National Code of Practice on Admissions and we would work with the Local Authority on co-ordinating the Admission process with parents.

### Community

Academies have to ensure the school is at the heart of the community, collaborating and sharing facilities with other schools and the wider community.

### Staff

Academies directly employ their own staff, including teaching staff, and have the freedom to determine terms and conditions.

### Curriculum

Academies do not have to follow the National Curriculum; however this is unlikely to have any impact on the way that education provision is delivered at our school. As an Academy we would have greater freedom to share and define the curriculum that best meets the needs of our children and builds on the successes we have achieved so far.

### Legal Status

Academies are set up as charitable companies limited by guarantee. The Co-operative Multi Academy Trust would also become the legal owner of the school property.

## **Why Governors believe being an Academy will benefit the children at Rolls Crescent Primary**

The school senior management team and the governing body have seriously considered all aspects and implications of converting to an Academy. We are united in wanting to ensure that the ethos of the school and self-governance for the school is maintained. We also want to secure the future for Rolls Crescent.

### **Capital Funding**

As an Academy, Rolls Crescent would be able to bid for Condition Improvement Funding directly to the Education Funding Agency for projects between £8,000 and £4,000,000.

### **Funding**

As a maintained school we are funded directly from the Local Authority. Recently there have been severe financial constraints and cuts faced by local government and many services traditionally provided by local authority have either been reduced or have been completely phased out. We want to take control of our future and prepare for when the Local Authority will no longer be able to support us and we feel that a Co-operative Multi Academy Trust would enable us to do that.

The additional money the school will gain as a result of being funded directly from the government would allow us more freedom to allocate our budget to meet the specific needs of our children and with the curriculum choices we make. The buying power of being part of a larger organisation will be greater and should lead to more efficient spending.

### **Collaboration**

Rolls Crescent has a long history of successful collaboration. We value our relationships with neighbouring schools, with schools that we are linked with and with the wider community. This will enable us to offer wider development opportunities to our staff. As an Academy we would like those links to continue and strengthen as we work together in the interests of local children's education.

### **Make-up of a new Co-operative Multi Academy Trust Governing Body**

An Academy has one Governing Body which challenges and supports both the Co-operative Multi Academy Trust and the individual schools.

As an Academy, the Governors will have greater responsibility than at present for the running of the school. We are keen to ensure that the experience, knowledge and commitment of all the current Governors are maintained for continuity and smooth transition.

## Answers to questions that may come up through the consultation

### **Will the staff have the same employment rights if we become an Academy?**

The Governors feel very strongly that staff national and local terms and conditions of employment and union rights need to be fully preserved if we were to convert to Academy Status. This is morally right and also pragmatic if the school is to continue to recruit high quality staff.

In practice, all staff will transfer their employment from the Local Authority to the Academy Trust. Their Terms and Conditions of service will be protected under 'transfer of undertakings' legislation known as TUPE. It is the intention of the Governing Body to fully endorse continued union recognition rights. Pension schemes are currently run by external bodies and there would be no change to these arrangements.

### **Will the school day change?**

School will keep the same timings, as this seems to be working well. If there was ever a view to change timings of the day, it would be a matter for consultation before any decision was taken.

### **Will Ofsted continue to inspect all schools who are part of the MAT separately?**

Yes.

### **If we are not an Academy, what are we at present?**

We are a community school. This means we are accountable to the Local Authority, who has statutory powers to intervene if standards are not as expected. Equally, our budget from the government is sent to the Local Authority who then determines how much of that budget is sent on to the school and how much is held back to fund local services; known as 'top slicing'.

### **Why a Co-operative Model?**

During our research we found the Co-operative Values fitted our school's Vision Statement as well as reflecting the values of our wider school community. We also feel that by becoming a Co-operative Multi Academy Trust we will ensure these values underpin any changes to the school in the future.

### **Where can I obtain further information?**

The Department for Education website has further information and links to other sources of information, about academies: [www.education.gov.uk/academies](http://www.education.gov.uk/academies) and on the Academy Consultation section of the school website: [www.rolls-crescent.manchester.sch.uk](http://www.rolls-crescent.manchester.sch.uk)

## Timetable for the development of the Co-operative Multi Academy Trust

<b>July</b>	2015
The Governing Body took the decision to explore opportunities to develop the School and consider the benefits of an Academy. We undertook research and invited in speakers who were specialists in the field of Academies.	
<b>November</b>	2015
The school registered an interest in the Academy process with the Department for Education (DfE) which does not commit the school to anything but grants access to information and support from the DfE to help inform the decision making process.	
<b>March</b>	2016
The Governing Body examined options for the future and took the decision to take the Co-operative Multi Academy Trust question out to stakeholders in a full consultation.	
<b>March / April</b>	2016
A Governing Body Steering Group agreed the consultation process and documentation to be sent out to all parents, carers, staff and partners.	
<b>May</b>	2016
<p>The formal consultation process on Co-operative Multi Academy Status was launched by Rolls Crescent Primary School. It will begin on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2016 until Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2016 and in this time there will be briefings, question and answer sessions, opportunities for written feedback and a follow up meeting to clarify any issues and concerns raised in the process. Parents and carers can also submit comments electronically or in writing.</p> <p>We want as many parents and carers to get involved with the consultation process and so have arranged a number of meetings and parents are encouraged to attend meetings at either school in order to ask questions and make comments:</p> <p><b>Meetings at Rolls Crescent Primary School</b> Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2015 3:15 pm Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2015 6 pm</p>	
<b>May/June</b>	2016
<p>Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2016 is the deadline for all responses to be made to the governors. Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2016 The full Governing Body will meet to consider the feedback and finalise the decision on whether to continue with the work necessary to convert to Co-operative Multi Academy Status. This work would include, for example, legal issues related to the transfer of the school land and buildings. Governors will submit a report on the consultation process to the Department for Education.</p>	

**From Governors of the Rolls Crescent Primary School  
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