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6<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Dear Member of Staff,

## **CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED ACADEMY CONVERSION**

Following many months of research, the Governors at Irby Primary School have taken a decision to consider applying for academy status and join Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust (“trust”). You can find out information about the trust at [www.oaktreesmat.co.uk](http://www.oaktreesmat.co.uk). We believe this would benefit our pupils and staff enormously.

### **RATIONALE**

The current educational climate is changing and many schools nationally are choosing to take advantage of academy status. Many schools wish to make the move now to determine their own destiny and to make the changes when it is right for their own school.

As a consequence of the national picture and continued debate and growth of academies in England, the governors have spent some time looking more closely into whether an academy model would be in the best interests of the children, teachers and staff at Irby Primary School. The governors are keen that Irby Primary School has full control of when and how they go forward with academy status, without pressure from Government departments. As one of a number of schools currently considering academy status, our governors consider that joining the trust now will be a positive step for the school.

### **THE PROPOSAL**

The governing body at Irby Primary School believes that the best plan for the school is to become an academy and join Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust.

The trust was established in June 2017, with four schools joining initially: Poulton Lancelyn Primary School, Egremont Primary School, Stanton Road Primary School and Great Meols Primary School; Church Drive Primary School joined later in 2019; and Brackenwood Junior School joined in 2021. The most recent school to join the trust is Greasby Junior School, which converted on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023, bringing the total number of schools in the trust to seven. The trust was set up to enhance the good working relationships and practices built up over a number of years between the schools; all current schools were judged at least to be ‘good’ in terms of OFSTED category.

The trust has received significant interest from other schools across the area who would like to join; demand has been especially high from those schools that are judged to be good or outstanding by OFSTED. Strengthening our partnerships with these schools would have clear benefits for Irby Primary School and the additional support available through a trust model would be one of the advantages of becoming an academy.

The proposal is that Irby Primary School converts to academy status and joins the trust on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024.



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## QUESTIONS AND FEEDBACK

Governors are now entering into the consultation phase. They realise that the debate around academies has been prominent in recent times and would like to make sure that the entire school community has an opportunity to ask questions about what academy status means for Irby Primary School. The consultation period will run from **6<sup>th</sup> March 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023**.

The governors (along with the senior leadership team) will be holding meetings to give you the opportunity to talk about academy status, what it means for the pupils, parents/ carers and the staff and to answer any questions that you may have. The meeting will be held at school as follows:

### Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023

- Staff meeting 4.00pm – 5.00pm

We have included a feedback form (Appendix A) with this letter - we would be grateful if you could submit any responses to the governors by **31<sup>st</sup> March 2023** by email at [consultation@irby.wirral.sch.uk](mailto:consultation@irby.wirral.sch.uk). You can also leave any paper feedback forms in the box at the school office, forms received will be kept anonymous. We would welcome any questions, comments, or concerns you may have.

We also enclose a copy of some frequently asked questions, which you may find of interest. Information about the consultation and the feedback form can be found at <https://www.irbyprimary.com/> under the academy consultation section of the school website. Any future information, feedback or responses can also be found on this website. The consultation letter will be available on the school website (under the academy consultation section) on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

In order for us to gather as broad and deep a range of opinions as possible, we strongly urge you to participate by attending the meeting. If you are unable to attend the meeting, but would like further information you can contact school in the following ways:

- Telephone: 0151 648 2944
- Email: [consultation@irby.wirral.sch.uk](mailto:consultation@irby.wirral.sch.uk)
- Suggestions box: Leave paper feedback in the school office at the main entrance

Finally, we would like to thank you for your continued support of Irby Primary School. We believe that we are a wonderful school and we are committed to ensuring that we provide the very best for our pupils.

Yours faithfully,

**Richard Dixon**  
Headteacher

**Graham Barley**  
Chair of Governors