

Alburgh with Denton Church of England Primary School

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Thursday 20th January 2022

Dear Parents/Carers

CONVERSION TO ACADEMY STATUS WITHIN ST BENET'S MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

This letter is to inform you about our plans for Alburgh with Denton Church of England Primary School to become an academy within a larger organisation set up by St Benet's Multi Academy Trust. We are pleased that this will happen within St Benet's Multi Academy Trust as it is the preferred option for the school.

The proposed date for academy conversion is 1st April 2022.

Some more information about academies and about St Benet's Multi Academy Trust is attached to this letter. Academy status will change some things behind the scenes but otherwise you and your children will see very little difference when we make this change. We will still work with other local primary and secondary schools. We will have a little more freedom to decide how all our funding should be spent. The name of the school will change to Alburgh with Denton Church of England Primary Academy, but the uniform will not change and we will not change term dates or the school's admissions policy.

The advantages of working as part of St Benet's Multi Academy Trust are that we can continue to function as an autonomous school but also be able to play a full part as both a contributor and a receiver of support and challenge from colleagues. We will be joining a group with shared values to ourselves.

We hope that you will continue to give the governing body and the staff your support in driving our school forwards.

If you have any questions or comments about the school becoming an academy, please contact us by email: office@alburgh-with-denton.norfolk.sch.uk and we will respond. There is also the opportunity to meet with Richard Cranmer via Zoom at 6.00pm on Monday 21st February for a Q&A session.

Yours sincerely

Hayley Sonnex
Headteacher



PROPOSAL FOR ALBURGH WITH DENTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL TO CONVERT TO ACADEMY STATUS WITHIN ST BENET'S MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CARERS

What is an Academy?

Academies are state maintained schools free to all children. They have to follow the same rules as all other state-funded schools over admissions, pupils with Special Educational Needs and exclusions. They are still inspected by Ofsted.

Although academies do not have to follow the national curriculum this is unlikely to have any impact on the way that education is currently delivered in the school as a balanced curriculum which is judged against national standards, must be provided. However, we do pride ourselves on our cross age and cross-curricular working and feel that we might have the opportunity to develop this further, particularly as we have the chance to work alongside other smaller schools within the Trust.

Not all academies are the same. We see no need for change to the day to day running of our school and we think that becoming an academy now within St Benet's Multi Academy Trust is the best way to ensure that we can do that.

What is St Benet's Multi Academy Trust?

St Benet's Multi Academy Trust has been established by the Diocese of Norwich as a company to be responsible for a number of academies. The Directors have an agreement with the Secretary of State for Education to support and manage a number of individual academies. St Benet's Multi Academy Trust offers "A safe haven for schools wishing to preserve their Christian heritage, ethos and values; maintain their distinct identity, character and autonomy; prize their place and contribution within the pattern of local provision through inclusive service to their community; and to continue to celebrate a holistic approach to educating and developing the whole child."

St Benet's Multi Academy Trust are appointed by the Diocese of Norwich. The Trust also provides a range of services for its academies, including finance and HR support and meetings for head teachers and governing bodies to support them in continuing to improve outcomes for pupils.

Responsibility for leadership and management of each academy remains with the governing body and the head teacher. St Benet's Multi Academy Trust maintains local governing bodies which includes staff and parent governors, in all of its academies. As within any Multi Academy Trust overall responsibility for governance sits with Trustees. There will continue to be elected parent and staff governors.

What impact will this have on Alburgh with Denton Church of England Primary School?

Governors believe this will have a very positive impact and we are confident the relationship and benefits will develop over time. Membership of St Benet's Multi Academy Trust will help to secure the future of our school. Alburgh with Denton Church of England Primary School has always valued the close relationship with the church - our links are close and strong. Becoming an academy within a church trust would support and strengthen these links.

We will not make any major changes. Although the school will be called Alburgh with Denton Church of England Primary Academy, there will be no change to the uniform, the admissions arrangements or to the times of the school day or terms. All children and all members of staff will continue to be part of the school.

So why make the change?

Academy status gives us some additional flexibility in deciding how best to meet the needs of your children. We are pleased that this will happen within St Benet's Multi Academy Trust as this is the preferred option for the school.

When will these changes take place?

The next few months will be very busy as we continue to seek guidance and clarification, including meetings with the local authority, analysis and settlement of accounts and budgets, negotiation of key support services, financial preparation and asset registration and legal matters. The Trust will support us in these processes and if all goes well we anticipate conversion will take place on the 1st April 2022..

How can I find out more?

If you have any specific comments or questions about the academy conversion or what this will mean for our school or for your child, please email the school via office@alburgh-with-denton.norfolk.sch.uk and we will respond.

