



# **ORRETS MEADOW SCHOOL**

## **STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION REPORT**

**21<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY 2025**

## **Summary**

This report has been prepared for the Governors of Orrets Meadow School and describes the consultation process that has taken place to inform a decision on the proposed conversion of the school into an academy as part of Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust.

The Headteacher and Governors of Orrets Meadow School have led the process, with support from Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust. Representatives from the school have made clear the implications of conversion through the production of a consultation Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document with an online survey, and at the consultation meeting that took place on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

The aim is to provide governors and stakeholders with a comprehensive overview of the feedback, the merits of the proposal and the considerations vital for your deliberations. With the collective input of stakeholders at the forefront of our efforts, we trust that this report will furnish you with the clarity and confidence needed to make informed decisions that will shape the future of our educational community.

Governors have had a significant time to consider academy status and through their role have an understanding of the school, its systems and support that is not available to all members of the community.

The consultation period ran from 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024 to 20<sup>th</sup> December 2024. However, at the request of a small number of staff, the consultation was extended to 10<sup>th</sup> January 2025 to allow more time for questions and answers. Governors will now confirm whether they wish to move ahead with the academy conversion process.

## **1. Introduction**

Representatives of Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust met with the Governing Body of Orrets Meadow School to discuss the Trust.

As a consequence of this, and the continued debate and growth of academies in England, the Governing Body decided to look more closely into adopting the academy model and whether at this time it would be in the best interests of the children, teachers and staff at Orrets Meadow School.

The stakeholder engagement and consultation activities were designed to inform and seek comment and opinion on the proposed academy conversion from a range of interested parties most closely associated with the school. The key activities have included preparing and disseminating consultation materials, as well as holding face to face meetings. Underpinning the process has been a commitment to communicate with key stakeholders clearly and frequently as to timelines, process and outcomes.

The remainder of this report details the full range of engagement activities that have taken place and an analysis of the responses received and conclusions drawn from this analysis.

## **2. Aims of the Consultation**

The consultation exercise had a number of strategic aims:

- To inform stakeholders of the scope of the proposal
- To ensure that a wide range of stakeholders were able to contribute their views and ideas and ask questions
- Set out the stages in the process for the school to become an academy and join the proposed MAT and the associated timelines
- To collate and analyse the views put forward to inform consideration by the Governing Body

## **3. Consultation materials**

### **a) PowerPoint presentations:**

A series of PowerPoint presentations were developed for each audience to give all stakeholders consistent and relevant information as a starting point to inform the discussions.

### **b) Parents/ Carers Letter:**

To support the parental consultation, a letter for all parents/carers was developed and sent out. The aim of the letter was to allow parents the opportunity of giving their thoughts about the school converting to Academy status and to raise any concerns they had.

### **c) Stakeholder FAQ's:**

A frequently asked questions document (see Appendix 2) was prepared for the parents/ carers consultation events. The aim was to give as much information as possible about all the practical things parents could want to know, ranging from

whether there would be new uniforms to what it could mean for the pupils' learning experience.

d) Website

The school formed a dedicated section on their own website (<https://orrets-meadow.eschools.co.uk/website> ) under the section 'Academy Consultation' and a link to the Oak Trees MAT website: <https://www.oaktreesmat.co.uk/>. All communication materials were posted online including items mentioned within this section of the report.

e) Online Survey

A Google Survey was created and used as an online tool to provide everyone with an opportunity to have their say and to gauge reaction to the proposal for the school to become an academy and to join Oak Trees MAT. Stakeholders had the opportunity to respond anonymously. There was a space provided for any questions and comments.

#### 4. Overview of the Engagement Process

##### 4.1 Attendance at meetings

| Date        | Time            | Event  | Venue       | Number of Attendees | Total Numbers at the School |
|-------------|-----------------|--|-------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| 11 December | 3:45pm – 5:00pm | Staff Consultation Meeting                   | School Hall | 33                  | 56 staff                    |
| 11 December | 5:15pm          | Joint Parent/ Community Consultation Meeting | School Hall | 0                   | 93 parents                  |

Please be aware that informal consultation meetings with staff have been held, before and during the formal consultation process. These meetings are not included in the table provided above

## 4.2 Survey Results

| Format   | Responders:      | Date   | Number of responses |
|--|------------------|--|---------------------|
| Emails   | All stakeholders | 29/11/24 to 10/01/25   | 5                   |
| Survey   | All stakeholders | 29/11/24 to 10/01/25   | 58                  |
| <b>33</b>  |                  |  |                     |
| <b>Stakeholders were asked:</b><br><br>Do you support the proposal for Orrets Meadow School to convert to an academy and join Oak Trees MAT? | Yes              | (of which 11 are support staff, 12 are teachers, 2 are teachers/outreach teachers, 1 School Governor and 7 are members of the community) |                     |
|  | No               | (of which 4 are support staff, 8 are teachers, 1 pupil, and 7 members of the community)  | <b>20</b>           |
|  | Don't know       | (of which 3 are support staff, 1 is a teacher and 1 is a teacher/outreach teacher)   | <b>5</b>            |
| <b>Total</b>   |                  |  | <b>58</b>           |

## **5. Feedback**

Appendix 3 contains all the questions, comments and feedback received from stakeholders from the various media used throughout the consultation period:

- No parents/ carers attended the open meeting; there are a total 93 parents/carers at the school.
- 33 members of staff attended the consultation meeting out of a possible 56 staff at the school. Questions were asked about the protection of staff terms and conditions, admissions, transport, and funding. It can be deduced from this that this part of the engagement process was robust and that all those who wished to were able to express their opinions and raise questions openly and freely throughout the meeting.
- A small number of staff at the meeting requested that the consultation period be extended to allow more time for questions. This was agreed and the consultation period was extended to 10<sup>th</sup> January 2025.
- A total of 58 respondents completed the online survey; nearly six in ten respondents are in support of the proposal for Orrets Meadow School to convert to academy status and join Oak Trees MAT.
- Questions raised by stakeholders through the consultation survey relate to staff terms and conditions, seeking reassurances of maintaining working relationships with federation and LA, the benefits of Orrets Meadow School joining Oak Trees MAT and governance arrangements.
- No parents/ carers completed the feedback forms.
- The responses/ questions received via the online survey and consultation email have been responded to in Appendix 3.

## **6. Conclusions and Recommendations**

On compilation of all feedback and data received, the conclusion that can be drawn is that there are no apparent legitimate reasons why the school should not convert to an academy and join the Oak Trees MAT within the timescales outlined. Any concerns raised were addressed fully by the school and Trust.

Response rates from parents, carers and community members at the school were very low considering the pupil numbers of the school. From this it can be deduced that:

- The online survey suggests that nearly six in ten respondents are in support of the proposal for Orrets Meadow School to convert to academy status and join Oak Trees MAT.
- No attendance at the parent/ community meetings and low response completing the survey would indicate that stakeholders are content to leave these decisions to the managers and leaders of the school.

In conclusion, it is recommended that the school and Oak Trees MAT build upon the support of parents/carers, staff and pupils shown during the consultation period by involving these groups of stakeholders in the development of the school as an academy

Should Orrets Meadow Local Governing Body decide to proceed with joining Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust it is recommended that they continue to engage with staff, involving trade union representatives throughout the academy conversion process.

## **7. Next Steps**

There is a full Governor meeting scheduled on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025. This meeting will provide an opportunity for Governors to discuss the views put forward during the consultation to aid them in the decision-making process and decide what their next steps should be in this process.

### **Appendices** (see separate files):

1. Communications examples
2. FAQs
3. Overview of the Consultation Feedback Received