



Questions and Answers for the website:

What is an academy?

Academies are still state schools, but they're funded and operated a little differently than maintained schools. Instead of being funded by the local authority, academy trusts are paid directly by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. This means that academies have more control over how they do things than schools that aren't academies. Academies don't charge fees.

What is a multi-academy trust?

We're proposing to join an existing multi-academy trust. This means that we'll be part of a community of schools that are governed by one board of trustees. Each school in the trust will also have its own local governing body, with some delegated governance responsibilities for that particular school. The trust will also employ a team of central staff to support the group of schools and drive school improvement. As part of a trust with multiple schools, our school will have the opportunity to collaborate and share resources with the other schools across the trust.

What are the main reasons behind the decision to join the Halliard Trust?

The decision to join the Halliard Trust was made following a thorough needs analysis conducted by Alderley Edge Community Primary School Governing Body, with the primary aim of ensuring the best possible educational outcomes and support for our children while reducing administrative burdens on our staff. The Halliard Trust was chosen for its track record of excellence and the high-quality support services it offers, including staff training, health and safety expertise, facilities management, IT and budgetary support.

How will joining the Halliard Trust impact our school's relationship with other educational institutions, such as Wilmslow High School?

Joining the Halliard Trust will have no adverse effect on our existing relationships with other educational institutions. We will maintain our strong partnership with Wilmslow High School and continue to be one of their feeder primary schools. Many of the primary schools that feed into Wilmslow High are already in different academy trusts so we will be no different. We will continue to work closely with other schools in the Wilmslow Education Partnership group through the Headteacher meetings, subject leadership groups and enrichment events.

What opportunities will joining the Halliard Trust provide for staff development and training?

Joining the Halliard Trust will provide enhanced opportunities for staff development and additional training aimed at improving outcomes for Alderley Edge Community Primary School children. The trust offers comprehensive training programs tailored to the needs of individual staff members, ensuring continuous professional development and growth.

How can parents and carers participate in the consultation process regarding the school's conversion to academy status?

Parents and carers can participate in the consultation process by submitting their views, comments, and questions via email academisation@aecps.org or attending the scheduled meeting on Monday 27th January 2025 at 6pm.

What are the benefits of academisation for our school?

The benefits for our school will include:

- Even greater teaching and learning opportunities for our children, because teaching expertise and resources can be shared across the trust and there will be more training opportunities for our staff
- Greater freedom in deciding how to spend government funding
- The opportunity to collaborate, so we can have more or enhanced extra-curricular activities, for example
- Greater financial efficiency by procuring goods and services at a larger scale across the trust and sharing staff, including specialist staff who work centrally for the trust, like a school improvement team or pastoral team.

Will the trust or trustees make a profit from the school?

No. Academy trusts are charities, and any surplus or other income must be used to benefit pupils.

Will the trust take any money away from our school?

The Trust takes a top-slice off each school's mainstream funding to pay for central services. As a process, this is similar to the way the local authority "de-delegates" a portion of school funding from non-Academy schools for the same purpose. The current top-slice is 5% of mainstream funding, which is the national average for multi academy Trusts. It is not applied to school-generated income or SEN high needs income.

Will our school get more money as an academy?

The amount of funding allocated per pupil at our school won't change. We'll get the same funds that we would have done as a maintained school. However, we'll be able to negotiate our own contracts for products and services, which means we'll have the opportunity to find better services and prices.

Being part of a MAT does enable access to a range of potential grants available specifically for academies.

As an academy, will our school still be inspected by Ofsted?

Academies are inspected by Ofsted and are held to the same standards as other state-run schools.

As an academy, will our school follow the National Curriculum?

Academies don't have to follow the National Curriculum but the Alderley Edge Community Primary School curriculum will remain as it is and follows the National Curriculum.

As an academy, will our school change our name/logo/uniform?

No. All of these remain at the discretion of the Headteacher. There may be some additions to signage.

As an academy, will our school term times change?

The Head teachers and Governors will continue to set term times to support our families with children at feeder schools as we do currently.

As an academy, will our school provision for special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) change?

We will still have a regional SEND case worker at the local authority but we will have additional resources from the Trust through CPD and supervision.

Will the admissions criteria for joining Alderley Edge Community Primary School change if it is part of a multi-academy trust?

There is no intention to change the existing criteria for admissions to our school. It will remain the same as it is now:

- Cared For/ Previously Cared for children
- Siblings
- Children who live in the catchment area
- Distance

What are the disadvantages of joining a multi-academy trust?

A multi-academy trust is basically a smaller version of a Local Authority. Therefore, there are no really disadvantages however, the Governing Board are keen that AECPS retains the following (which could be seen as potential disadvantages):

- Our ethos and culture (sometimes altered when joining a national multi-academy trust)
- Our ability to follow our own curriculum and the drivers behind our curriculum, as these meet the needs of our children and community (some multi-academy trusts 'enforce' the teaching of a centralised curriculum)
- Control of our finances, decision making on key issues (for example hiring staff)

Will there be an 'impact' on the education of the children at Alderley Edge Primary School it joins a multi-academy trust?

The children will probably see no immediate impact from conversion to an academy within a multi-academy trust. However, over time through enhanced staff development and training along with the

'extra' support a multi-academy trust can offer they should benefit from better academic and social outcomes.

Will the school lose its better staff to other schools within the trust?

Joining a multi-academy trust should promote the development of a teacher within the area of their expertise across schools within the trust through collaboration and joint training. Of course, opportunities may arise for more senior roles within the trust, that staff at Alderley Edge Primary may apply for. This is no different than currently, where staff can apply for any post they like nationally.

Will the trust sell the land for development and move the children to other Primary Schools within the trust or even a new purpose-built school outside the village?

The land would be retained by the Local Authority and not the multi-academy trust. As part of the legal requirements for conversion, the school/multi-academy trust enters into a long-term lease agreement with the Local Authority.