**Multi Academy Trust Parent Consultation Meeting**

**Who is present?**

Gayton Primary School Headteacher & Senior Leadership team.

Members of the governing body

CEO and Director of Operations for Cheshire Academies Trust

**What are Gayton Primary School’s main reasons for investigating becoming an academy and joining a MAT?**

Primarily to ensure that we achieve the best possible outcomes for the children of Gayton Primary School.

The conversation has returned to the governing board following the Government agenda concerning the conversion of maintained schools to academies and the depletion of local authority funding and services.

As parents will be aware, Gayton Primary School have been involved in a soft federation with local primary schools. There have recently been changes within the federation prompting governors to look at the best outcomes for pupils.

Gayton was approached by Cheshire Academies Trust having already worked with the Chief Executive Officer, Steve Ellis, as an external advisor for the last 3 years. The governing board wanted to investigate the opportunity.

**What can working within a MAT provide?**

* Enhanced pupil outcomes
* Enhanced school performance
* Enhanced opportunities for staff
* High quality leadership
* Improved quality of teaching and learning
* Training opportunities to enable improved quality of teaching and learning
* Opportunities for collaboration
* To create a bespoke curriculum
* Safeguarding the school’s long-term performance
* Economic benefits through centralised services
* Improved provision of central services
* Safeguard the schools long term sustainability
* Opportunities to enhance school governance

**What are our deal breakers?**

* Maintaining our identity and control of this
* Similar profile schools
* Quality of central service provision
* Financial Health
* Collaborative opportunities
* Support to improve our income generation
* Maintaining local governing board
* MAT Exec team that we can work with

**Why Cheshire Academies Trust?**

Over the last 3 years Gayton, the Governing Board, the Head Teacher and staff members have worked with Cheshire Academies Trust and CEO and developed a working relationship and experienced how the MAT works. The CEO has a working knowledge of Gayton and Gayton has a working knowledge of the Trust.

**Reasons for choosing CAT**

* Shared ethos, vision and culture with the ability to determine our own
* School improvement approaches - ability to prioritise what is important to our pupils
* Curriculum is ours
* Primary only trust
* Collaboration - opportunities for both pupils and staff
* Unity and autonomy
* Ability to maintain identity, CAT understand the community is at the heart of their school’s identity
* Access to subject specialists

**Finance**

* Budget remains ours
* Support to fulfil financial and reporting requirements
* Improved central services provision

**What will change for parents and pupils?**

Essentially Gayton will look and operate, to parents and pupils, as it always has, there will appear to be very little change however the opportunities for the pupil will be increased and improved.

**What next?**

The Governing Board will investigate taking the next steps to become an academy and to pursue due diligence with Cheshire Academies Trust Investigations.

At every stage of this process we are asking the key question: **Is CAT the best choice for Gayton Primary School and our pupils?**

**Questions**

1 Why move away from Wirral?

The choice of MAT is about choosing the best opportunity for Gayton based on the criteria above. The choice is not about moving away from Wirral but about what we think is the best opportunity for our pupils and our school.

2 Do other MATs work across counties?

Within the MAT the schools currently operate in Cheshire East and Cheshire West. There are examples of many MATs throughout the country that operate in different counties.

3 Will school improvement opportunities be determined by the MAT?

No, the school improvement plan and key priorities are determined at a local level.

4 As the other schools are Cheshire based schools how will this impact Gayton and our secondary school system?

At Gayton we live in an area where the 11+, for many children, determines our pupil’s secondary school destination. Joining CAT will not change this or the school’s approach to this. The key driver for investigation academisation and beginning our investigations with Cheshire Academies Trust is better outcomes for our children to ensure that children continue to the next stage of their school life at the best school for them.

5. Have other MATs been investigated?

Yes. The governing body of Gayton has considered converting to an academy before and has over the past 6 years worked collaboratively with other schools and MATs.