



# The Federation of The Downs & Northbourne Church of England Primary Schools



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14/06/18

Dear Parents / Carers

Thank you for taking the time to make comments or pose questions as part of Northbourne's academy proposal. Please find below the parental questions posed on the consultation response forms.

As of Monday 4<sup>th</sup> June

<b>Yes</b>	16	<b>Not Sure</b>	6
<b>Don't Mind</b>	8	<b>No</b>	9

## Parental questions raised via academy consultation

1. Will we have to share Forest School with all the other schools?  
No. Each school retains the use of its own individual site and preserves its unique identity. This includes specific assets such as Northbourne's Forest School and Hornbeam's swimming pool.
2. Who decides on the allocation of funds?  
Each individual school will be funded directly from the DfE according to the National Funding Formula. This is calculated exactly as it is currently, minus any de-delegated KCC monies.
3. Would we lose identity, independence and governance?  
Each school would retain their local governing body and therefore our identity and independence. Provided the school is successful, the Trustees will not be involved with local decisions about staff, curriculum or use of finances. This will be written into the Scheme of Delegation.
4. The Deal Learning Alliance already allows schools to share resources.  
The DLA currently share training opportunities for staff and curriculum enrichment opportunities for children. This will not change, but we would be able to save on much greater costs, such as payroll, Personnel packages, energy providers, software licenses, hardware purchases etc.
5. When will you be informing new parents?  
We will be talking to all parents during the New Entrant Meetings. We could not talk to them before this as they are not registered at any school.



6. Do the Boards of Governors and Trustees have an expense account?  
No.
7. If a school is sued for gross negligence, would this affect the entire Trust, or just the specific school?  
The Trust would take the ultimate responsibility for the outcome of a claim, and will take out insurance to cover this risk.
8. Is there an independent complaints board or ombudsman if parents have queries over the way the Academy Trust is run?  
All organisations have to have a clear system for dealing with complaints – and if parents were not happy with the way a complaint had been dealt with they could raise that with the DfE. Parents can raise concerns about the effectiveness or management of their child’s school with OfSTED – and this does not change.
9. Is it proposed to move all the schools onto one site?  
No. We will all remain on our current sites.
10. Will Snugbugs/Wrap Around Care still be offered?  
There is no reason for the current arrangements to be changed, as they are mutually beneficial. In fact, this process should finalise the legal position of Snugbugs, something that both we and Gill Harris (Manager / Owner of Snug Bugs) have been striving to do for a number of years!
11. Will class sizes increase?  
The number of children that we are able to accommodate will not change . The Local Authority remains responsible for coordinating admissions to schools.
12. How are the Diocese Trustees and others appointed? Are they elected? How long do they serve? What say do we have in this?  
The Diocese do not appoint Trustees. They appoint 3 Members, who are responsible for ensuring that the Trust is working within its legal and statutory duties. These three members are identified by the Diocesan Board of Education and they and those identified locally have to fulfil a certain skill set in order to ensure they can undertake this role. Trustees usually serve for a period of 4 years. The Trustees are originally recommended by the Steering Committee of the proposed Trust, they also must have certain skills, such as finance, education, HR etc. Parents do not vote for these positions, as this would be influenced by the local governing bodies who continue to have elected parent governors.
13. Is this a “fait accompli”?  
No. We have chosen to consult with parents at this stage, earlier in the process than the DfE recommend. This is because our Governing Body wish to have some feedback about possible concerns and questions etc, at an early stage. No final decision has been made, as we are still gathering information and legal advice. Parents will be kept informed at all points along this journey.
14. Will the school bus be affected?  
No. The Local Authority will still retain responsibility for home to school transport and therefore for children living in outlying areas.
15. Will the terms and conditions for the staff change?  
No. They will remain with their current Terms and Conditions.



16. Will staff be moved between schools?

Staff will only move between schools if they wish to move and generally at the end of an academic year, as is the case now. Obviously teachers are able to resign and move to other schools according to their Terms and Conditions.

17. Do you anticipate any additional schools that are not primary schools eg: pre-schools or secondary schools joining the MAT?

Pre schools cannot become academies. We do not envisage secondary schools joining DEALT. DEALT will undertake due diligence on any school seeking to join, and that school would also have to commit to upholding DEALT's values and operating within our Scheme of Delegation.

Thank you for all these questions. Please do continue to keep us informed of your thoughts and questions. We value your opinions and will take them into consideration throughout the process.

Yours sincerely,

Dr.A Eyden  
Chair of Governors.

