

Questions and Answers

Malet Lambert / South Hunsley School / Hunsley Primary New Multi-Academy Trust arrangement

Thank you for visiting our website to find out more about the new Multi-Academy Trust partnership that will be formed between Malet Lambert and South Hunsley School, along with Hunsley Primary.

Malet Lambert and South Hunsley School are very similar in values and aspirations with both schools continuously striving to do the very best for its students to give them an excellent education. Both schools are known for their excellent work and are very popular with parents as a result. Working together in partnership since September 2015 has allowed both schools to recognise their many similarities and, realise that in joining forces, they can further improve the educational experience for all students and staff.

The Board of Directors at Malet Lambert and the Board of Directors for South Hunsley School and Hunsley Primary have met and discussed the partnership arrangement and agree that there is great value in two well established secondary schools with strong reputations working together to improve outcomes for students in Hull and East Riding. The process of creating this formal partnership will take place in the weeks up to Christmas with the hope that the partnership arrangement can commence on 1 January 2016.

We realise that parents, staff and students may have a lot of questions following this announcement. We have begun FAQs to cover key areas listed below. If you feel we have not answered your question or you wish to submit any comments, please submit questions via the contact form on the website <http://maletlambert.co.uk/contacts/new>. The FAQs will be regularly updated as questions are received.

Partnership Arrangements

What are the benefits?

Malet Lambert, South Hunsley School and Hunsley Primary will form a small, local, supportive Multi-Academy Trust which has student aspiration at its heart.

All three schools are already known as having a culture of excellence and aspiration. Both secondary schools have experienced teams who, combined, will bring a great deal of strength, knowledge and expertise to the partnership. This will be applied across all schools to develop a strong educational offer that will enable all schools to achieve their shared goal of giving students the best possible chances to reach their potential.

Importantly, both Malet Lambert and South Hunsley School have made the individual choice to form a new Multi-Academy arrangement and we see this freedom as one of the real

benefits of the partnership. Schools are now being encouraged to enter into Multi-Academy Trusts and, for both schools, it was important to ensure that they maintained the control over who they joined with in such an arrangement. This choice will enable two local schools to continue to build on their successful tradition in a new supportive shared way of working that will bring added benefits and values to each of its students.

More immediately, for Malet Lambert, it will also assist in the appointment of a new Head of School. Working in a Multi-Academy Trust will offer a new Head of School a supportive network and access to experienced Heads of School who can help them quickly establish as part of the team.

Why do we need to join with other schools?

Since the General Election in May, the landscape in education has changed considerably and in the coming years it is likely that more schools will become academies but rather than academies standing alone as single academies, they will join with other academies as formal partners in Multi-Academy Trusts. This process may be by choice or by external direction. At this time, we have a choice about who we partner and we see this as a great opportunity to continue the initial success of the partnership between Malet Lambert and South Hunsley School.

How will the partnership work?

We have agreed to create a permanent partnership where the two schools operate together in a formal Multi-Academy Trust, along with Hunsley Primary. The relationships between schools in the Trust will be one of equal partners with a common goal, working under shared guiding principles, drawing on each others' strengths in order to overcome any weakness and respond robustly to any challenges.

Why does this all have to be completed before Christmas?

Malet Lambert needs to recruit a new Head of School and this is one of the key factors for the pace behind our decisions to form a Multi-Academy Trust. Working together over the last two months has offered a great deal of insight into the benefits that could be realised from a permanent partnership and whilst the process may seem fast it has already been well thought through and considered by the Board of Directors at both schools.

Can I have say in the new partnership arrangements?

We want to involve everybody in the development of the new Multi-Academy Trust. We feel this is a really exciting and unique opportunity for our staff, parents and students and we want everybody to input so we can take this partnership forward and make sure it is recognised for the success that it will be.

Over the next few weeks the Board of Directors at Malet Lambert and South Hunsley School will be working jointly on developing a strong stable shared vision for the future that will allow all schools to prosper and students to flourish. We want to involve parents, staff and students in this process and we have made the following arrangements:

- Question and answer section on each school's website – giving parents, staff and students the chance to submit questions and to keep up to date with answers to any of the questions raised.
- Drop-in Session – parents and staff will have the chance to speak to Directors from both schools in person at a drop-in session that will be organised in late November.
- Multi-Academy Trust visual identity – we will be developing a new logo and branding for our Multi-Academy Trust and we want the views of parents, staff and students as to the logo that they feel will best visually represent the Multi-Academy Trust (this will not replace any school logo). This will be developed as we work through this process and based on the feedback we receive.

Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) and Governance

What is a Multi-Academy Trust?

A MAT is a legal entity that is responsible for maintaining, managing and operating multiple academies within it. A Board of Trustees / Directors is appointed to govern the MAT and delegate responsibilities to Local Governing Bodies. Every academy trust has articles of association, its legal governing document, that sets out the governance composition and procedures for the academy trust and makes sure it operates in a safe and compliant way.

What is the role of the Trust Board in relation to Local Governing Bodies?

The Board of Trustees retains ultimate accountability for each academy within the MAT and sets out the decision making powers that are delegated to Local Governing Bodies for the day to day running of the school (typically this is through a written document called a scheme of delegation, or terms of reference).

Will South Hunsley, Malet Lambert and Hunsley Primary still have their own governors?

Yes. All schools will retain their own Local Governing Bodies, whose membership will continue to include parents, staff and members of the local community.

What are the powers of delegation between the Trust and Local Governing Bodies?

Trustees / Directors have specific legal responsibilities including:

- making sure the Academy Trust complies with the law and its governing document
- acting responsibly, in the interests of the academy trust
- exercising independent judgement

- managing any conflicts of interest
- exercising reasonable care and skill – using relevant personal knowledge or taking professional advice where appropriate
- promoting the Academy Trust's success

Local Governing Bodies have the delegated responsibilities for the oversight of their own school.

What will the MAT look like now and in the future? Will more schools join?

In the first instance the MAT will consist of South Hunsley School, Hunsley Primary and Malet Lambert. In the future, we will be setting up the trust in such a way that will allow other local schools to join if they feel that the aspiration and values of the trust matches their own.

How will the schools benefit from this partnership?

This proposed collaboration will bring significant benefits as two strong, successful, over-subscribed secondary schools and a new primary free school work together more closely. The three schools will each bring their own separate strong identities, ethos and values to the partnership and allow them to learn from each other. Benefits include:

- sharing best practice in teaching and learning leading to improved outcomes for students
- joint training and development of staff at all levels that will lead to a richer experience for students
- develop and challenge leaders and retain talented staff in the trust
- shared expertise in HR, finance and estates, allowing schools to focus rigorously on teaching and learning and student support

Will South Hunsley and Malet Lambert maintain their own identities/ values?

Yes. Both schools will keep their own names, their own logos, their own website and their own uniform. We recognise that every trust school is unique because it has a unique history, it serves a unique community and is full of unique individuals. This will mean that students and parents will notice little difference in the day to day running of each school.

Communication

How will The Trust keep you informed of developments?

Each school will carry on writing to parents and students in the same way that it does now. Any updates on the MAT will be distributed via the schools.

How can I ask further questions?

We will be setting up an area on each school's website where parents can submit questions. There will be a FAQs section which will be updated regularly.

Parents can also continue to express their views about their school in the same way that they do now. The Heads of School remain ultimately in charge of their school.

Decision making

When will the Multi-Academy Trust arrangement start?

The Board of Directors at Malet Lambert and the Board of Directors at South Hunsley School and Hunsley Primary have agreed that the new Multi-Academy Trust arrangement should commence on 1 January 2016. This will be subject to final approvals by the Department for Education and Education Funding Agency.

Who will be responsible for making the decision?

The Regional Schools Commissioner and the Department for Education decide on which schools are eligible to work together in formal partnerships such as Multi-Academy Trust arrangements. Once this has been agreed there are formal processes which need to be followed before final approval can be given by the Secretary of State in the signing of the Trust's Master Funding Agreement and Supplemental Funding Agreements.

How will the decision to join the Trust be made?

The Board of Directors for South Hunsley School and Hunsley Primary and the Board of Directors for Malet Lambert have both agreed the proposal to establish a formal partnership. This will then require further approval by the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Department for Education.

Parental Information

What will be the main benefit for my child?

Joining successful academies in a Multi-Academy Trust will further strengthen each school and will ensure that all students continue to enjoy the best possible teaching, opportunities and resources.

Can my child move between the schools?

The schools will continue to serve their designated catchment areas and the existing admission arrangements will apply.

Will there be any changes to the timings of the school day?

The Local Governing Body can change the times of the school day if it is felt that it would be of the benefit to the students and enhance teaching and learning. There will be no need to change the school day as part of this process.

Will my child's school get to keep all of the money allocated to it from Government?

Each school will have its own supplemental funding agreement with the Department for Education. This money can only be used for the school for which it is intended and this will be dependent on pupil numbers and location.

Will my child's school still be able to directly decide how its funds are spent?

The Local Governing Body will set the school budget. The Trust Board is responsible for the proper stewardship of those funds, including regularity and propriety, and for ensuring economy, efficiency and effectiveness in their use – the three key elements of value for money.

Will my child's school contribute any money to the MAT?

The Multi-Academy Trust employs highly experienced and professionally qualified individuals to lead on shared backroom services across the Trust. This includes services such as Finance, Payroll, HR and Health and Safety. Schools pay a small contribution to the Trust to have full access to Trust shared services and access to professional support, advice and guidance. The contribution is made to the Trust to cover, in part, some of the costs incurred by the Trust for the running of these shared services. The school contribution is less than the cost of employing suitably qualified individuals and running services directly and is also less than contracting the work to a private company.

Will my child's uniform change?

No, not unless the Local Governing Body decides to make a change. Each school will retain its own identity and logo.

Will the curriculum change?

The curriculum changes that are already taking place are in response to national curriculum changes introduced by the Department for Education and reforms to examinations. Any further changes to the curriculum will be decided by the Local Governing Body. This means that the two secondary schools will have differences in the curriculum that they deliver depending on student choice and needs.

Will my child's teachers change?

Teachers will not change as a result of partnership working. A small number of South Hunsley staff (School Improvement Leaders / Specialist Leaders in Education) hold contracts

which allow them to work for a fixed amount of time for the Teaching School. This means that they can be asked to support staff in other schools.

Staffing / Recruitment

Will staff be appointed to the Trust or to any particular school?

The Trust is the employer for all staff. Individual schools will retain the authority to appoint their own staff to their own school. The two secondary schools have already benefited through advertising jointly when both schools require the same post. Where we have done this, the interview panel has included representatives from both schools.

Will staff have to travel between schools or will they be based in any one particular school?

Most staff will be attached to a specific school within the Trust and they may attend Trust-wide training and development at other schools within the Trust. A small number of South Hunsley staff (School Improvement Leaders / Specialist Leaders in Education) hold contracts which allow them to work for a fixed amount of time for the Teaching School. This means that they can be asked to support staff in other schools.

Will there be any job losses?

We do not anticipate any job losses resulting from the partnership and staff will transfer into the Trust on their current terms and conditions.

What will the Leadership Teams look like?

Schools will retain their present leadership teams and there will be a Head of School running each school. In the case of South Hunsley this will continue to be Jonny Uttley and for Hunsley Primary, Lucy Hudson. Malet Lambert will be appointing a new Head of School immediately after Christmas.

Chris Abbott is the Executive Principal of the Multi-Academy Trust.

What is the relationship between the Executive Principal and Heads of School?

The Heads of School are responsible for the day to day decision making and running of the schools and are answerable to their Local Governing Body. The Executive Principal leads on the strategic developments of the trust and is answerable to the Trust Board.

Salary Comparisons

Will terms and conditions change for Malet Lambert staff?

Staff will TUPE into the Multi-Academy Trust with the terms and conditions as they are at the point of transfer.

General Questions

Can the composition of the MAT be changed at some future date if it doesn't work as intended?

Any decision for a school to leave a Multi-Academy Trust would need to be made by the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Department for Education.