



# CLIFFE V.C. PRIMARY SCHOOL

MAIN STREET, CLIFFE, SELBY, NORTH YORKSHIRE, YO8 6NN

ADMIN @ CLIFFE.N-YORKS.SCH.UK

01757 638426

30/04/2024

## Notice of intention to convert to Academy status

Dear Parents / Carers,

Following on from our previous letter, detailing our prospective move to join Selby Educational Trust (SET) and become an Academy status school, we just wanted to provide further updates on the process.

Our suggested window for comments and questions has now closed and we wish to thank everyone that has contributed to these discussions. Feedback has been unanimously positive and any questions asked have broadly been answered by the previously circulated FAQs document, attached again to this email.

With this positive response in mind, progress will now continue to be made towards an expected 'academisation' date of August 2024.

As part of this process, dialogue has been established with the Mary Waud Foundation, landowners of our site, with a view to fostering their new relationship with SET and we thank them for their support in this transition.

Conversations have also continued with staff, alongside North Yorkshire HR and respective Union representatives and all staff remain unanimous in their support of the move.

Further updates will be sent to you throughout the conversion and we look forward to the new opportunities and support membership will bring both our pupils and staff alike.

Yours Sincerely,

**Mary Lumley**

Chair of Governors (on behalf of the Governing Body)





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## Converting to an Academy - Frequently Asked Questions

### DAY TO DAY CHANGES:

1. *When would Cliffe become an academy?*

It is hoped that our application will be approved in time for the new academic year and that we will convert to become an academy by September 2024.

2. *What changes will the pupils notice?*

As far as our pupils are aware it will be very much 'business as usual'. The move to academy status will not demand a change of staff, the school day will not alter, provision within school will not look any different to our pupils.

3. *Will timings of the school day change ?*

There will be no change to the start or end times of the school day. Equally, before and after school provision will continue to run as it currently does.

4. *What are the advantages of academy status?*

At Cliffe, we believe working together to ensure standards across the Trust are consistently high, is an exciting new proposition, which will allow us to further develop our school. We will continue to work actively with all local schools and current partners, ensuring the best of both worlds.

Selby Educational Trust has made it clear that academy status will not change the things that work well for our school. The government is clear that the greater freedoms enjoyed by academies are designed to allow schools to develop and build on individual strengths in response to the needs of the community. We feel that the additional freedoms and flexibilities would enable the Governors to better secure the long-term future of our school.

In addition to this, we believe that the formal partnership with Selby Educational Trust will have several additional benefits. This includes a more targeted approach to the long-term future, strengthening our local identity, pooling of resources which will improve teaching and management practice across the trust, as well as greater control of our finances to the benefit of all children attending schools within the trust.





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5. *Will a move to academy status mean a new name for the school?*

No, the school will continue to be called Cliffe VC Primary School. Please be assured that the character, ethos and values of our school would remain unchanged.

6. *Will we retain a Governing Body ?*

The Governing Body of our school will remain in place. To help strengthen and inform their expertise they will also work with other Governors and representatives from across the Trust schools.

7. *Will a move to academy status effect our relationship with the Mary Waud Foundation ?*

No, The Mary Waud Foundation's 300 year relationship with the school will not change. The land used by the school will continue to be held in their ownership and representatives from the Foundation will continue to sit on our Governing Body. Any funds donated by the Foundation, such as those that currently finance music lessons for all pupils, will continue to come directly to our school and not split between other SET schools.

8. *Why are we not joining a Trust with schools that are geographically closer ?*

Academy trusts are not always locality based and can have schools which cross borders; indeed, some MATs have schools which cross several counties. We feel it is more important to be part of a trust with like-minded schools, than schools which have the same postal district but a different ethos. Geographically, we are within reach of the other schools in SET and will look to work collectively across training days etc. In terms of vision, we are aligned, and this is crucial to the future success of our school. We are lucky to have a good relationship with the other schools in our immediate area, some of whom are part of different MATs, some are NYC schools and we expect this to continue.

9. *Will we have to change pupil uniform?*

No, we will keep our uniform. There will be no change.

10. *What will be the impact on our children with special educational needs?*

There will be no negative change to the level of support provided. All funding will continue to be allocated in the same way as now and will be provided by NYC. Cliffe School will continue to recognise that every child is different and unique and has the right to be included as a valued, respected, and equal member of our school family.





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11. *Will pupils' education be disrupted by a transition to academy status?*

No. If an academy is approved to go ahead, it will do so with minimal disruption to the staff and children. Most of the changes will take place behind the scenes, with support from a dedicated team from the Trust who have gone through this process before.

12. *If we move to being an academy, will this change what is taught?*

We will continue to offer the full range of National Curriculum subjects. OFSTED continue to inspect academies and their handbook for inspection is the same one as used in any other school.

13. *When would Cliffe become an academy?*

It is hoped that our application will be approved in time for the new academic year and that we will convert to become an academy by September 2024.

## SCHOOL FINANCES:

14. *How is an academy funded?*

Academies receive the same level of per-pupil funding as maintained schools, plus funding to meet additional responsibilities that are no longer provided for them by the local authority. However, academies can often access additional funding sources and make savings through 'collective bargaining' in a way other schools cannot. A percentage of our funding will be retained by Selby Educational Trust to provide services to the academy which we would previously have bought in from the local authority.

15. *Does this improve on current funding arrangements?*

Funding is available to cover the costs of the conversion process itself, which is provided by central government once the decision to convert has been approved.

Converting to an academy will not be to our detriment financially, indeed there may be the potential for some financial gain. The MAT board has access to capacity funding from the Department for Education as well opportunities to bid for capital funding on an annual basis.

However, any decision is not motivated by financial considerations alone but instead with thought to how budgetary changes will improve provision for our pupils.





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16. *Will money raised by the PTA be absorbed by the academy trust?*

No, any additional funds raised by the PTA through their events will remain solely with our school.

## WHAT WILL THIS MEAN FOR TEACHERS AND STAFF?

17. *Who will employ teachers and staff following conversion?*

At present, teachers and staff are employed by North Yorkshire Council. Following conversion, teachers and staff will be employed by Selby Educational Trust.

18. *What are the terms and conditions for staff?*

On conversion to academy status, teachers and staff employed by NYC will transfer with the same terms and conditions, via a formal TUPE (transfer of undertakings protection of employment) process.

19. *Does SET employ non-qualified teachers?*

All class groups of pupils will be registered to a qualified teacher, as is the case in schools currently.

## STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS:

20. *Does Selby Educational Trust have the capacity to support our educational standards?*

SET has established its own school improvement capacity for those schools choosing to become an academy, which includes a lead for school improvement and regular use of education consultants.

Collectively, the team is experienced and qualified to support and challenge the school in data analysis, teaching, behaviour, safeguarding, pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development, special educational needs and disabilities, and leadership and management.

Indeed, SETs CEO, Ian Clennan, is an experienced headteacher, a qualified OFSTED Inspector and is regularly asked by NYC to support their schools.

Schools are far stronger when working collaboratively and the links our school staff will make with the other schools will allow them to use their expertise to benefit others and to benefit from the knowledge and expertise across the trust.

