



Frequently Asked Questions

What will happen if the school decides not to become an academy?

The current Management Partnership and long term plans of entering into a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) are strategic measures taken by the Governing Board to ensure continued 11-19 education provision for the young people of the Axe Valley.

Should the current Management Partnership dissolve in December 2016 without a commitment to continue into a MAT, the school will be at serious risk of losing its sixth form due to low numbers in addition to being financially insecure as a stand-alone school.

Is the school at risk of being asset stripped?

The proposed MAT partnership is for the benefit of both The Axe Valley Community College and Holyrood Academy. It is not in the interest of either party to sell off parts of the school. Recent investment in the Artificial Grass Pitch and new Art and History blocks will be more attractive to future students and will ultimately benefit both schools by increasing uptake of school places.

Who will own the school buildings and land?

The local authority will still own the buildings and land but they will be required to grant a 125 year lease to the academy trust as long as the buildings and land are used for educational purposes.

How will the academy ensure that central government money will be spent on school buildings and pupils?

Accountability will be through the Board of Directors and 'best value for money' still counts.

How will changes in the needs of the community be managed in the long term?

The current fall in rolls is due to historical birth rates across the south west and is a transitory phenomenon. With rapid building in the TAVCC catchment area, rolls are expected to increase in future years. The current school site could accommodate up to 1000 pupils.

Budgets have and will continue to be projected over a five year period taking into account as many changes in circumstance as possible. The governance committee and management team will respond to changes as they happen to ensure a continued quality education for the young people in the community.

Who receives the funding for an academy within a MAT?

Under a MAT structure, the general annual grant in respect of each academy would be received by the MAT and would be under the control of the directors. This funding can be pooled and applied across any academy within a MAT as required. This can assist in ensuring the ongoing viability of an academy through fluctuations in revenue and expenditure.

What if an academy felt that its funding was being unfairly allocated to other academies in the MAT?

The directors of the MAT have an obligation to act in the best interests of the MAT as a whole. They therefore need to have due regard to the funding needs and allocations of each individual academy. If a particular academy felt its general annual grant funding was being deployed unfairly, its Headteacher could ultimately appeal to the Secretary of State for Education who could impose a restriction on how the funding is applied.



Will the academy have the funds to continue SEN support?

SEN funding will come directly from the government through the Education Funding Agency. Funding allocated to a named child would continue to be funded directly by the local authority.

Is the proposed academy committed to fully qualified teachers?

The school is committed to providing the best quality teaching for our students. This could be from Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs), experienced Qualified Teaching Staff, Teachers' Assistants and Trainee Teachers. Quality of teaching will be monitored and improved if necessary.

Will there be redundancies amongst teaching or support staff due to duplication?

Each school in the partnership will still have to function as an educational establishment employing both teachers and support staff to make that happen. At Axe Valley we are currently operating with a very lean work force and we envisage employing more staff in the future, not less.

Many of the areas that could be combined, such as Human Resources, are currently bought in from outside providers and would therefore not result in any redundancies due to duplication.

Will the Academy continue to liaise with the local authority?

The school will continue to liaise with the Local Authority where the latter has a statutory duty to ensure standards of education for its population (for example, Children in Care).

Will the school still receive advice and support from the local authority?

As an academy the school will be free to seek advice and support from any party. That might be through Local Authority partners such as Babcock or it could be other education services providers. This will be based on competitive tender, quality of service and best value for money.

Will admissions continue to be nonselective?

We will continue to be committed to offering high quality education to all the children and young people in our community commensurate with our equality policy.

Will students be taught at another centre?

The 11-16 provision will continue to be taught in Axminster. Some less popular sixth form courses such as modern foreign languages may be taught collectively to students of both schools in the partnership but this could equally mean Holyrood students being taught at Axe Valley as well as Axe Valley students being taught at Holyrood.

Will academy conversion mean we have to pay transport costs to get our children to school?

It will remain the responsibility of the local authority to ensure that all 11-16 year olds are transported to and from school if they meet the criteria for free transport. Transport costs for 16-19 year olds will need to be met by the individual families unless they fall into an eligible category to receive free transport.

How can I find out more about academies?

The Department for Education website is a very good source of information relating to academies.

www.education.gov.uk/academies