

BIDDULPH SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP TRUST

(a mutual co-operative membership trust)



JAMES BATEMAN
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL



Woodhouse
Middle School

Public Consultation: Booklet 1

‘Changing from Community School to Foundation School Status
and Acquiring a Charitable Trust’

The Reason for the Consultation

The Governing Bodies of a number of Biddulph schools are proposing to change their status from community to foundation school, and at the same time to acquire charitable status as a Shared Co-operative Trust, to be known as the Biddulph Schools Partnership Trust.

What we would like you to do

We would like to know what you think of our plans, so we invite you to take part in our public consultation. You can do this by:

- a) Reading this booklet (you may also wish to read Booklet 2, which provides answers to a number of commonly asked questions. Copies of this are available at your school).
- b) Completing the Questionnaire and returning it to your school.
- c) Attending one of the consultation meetings, applicable to your school.

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Section 1 – Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Governing Bodies of the following Biddulph community of schools are each proposing to change their status from a community to a foundation school and at the same time to acquire together a charitable trust to be called The Biddulph Schools Partnership Trust.

The schools are:

James Bateman Junior High School
Knypersley First School
Moor First School
Oxhey First School
Squirrel Hayes First School
Woodhouse Middle School.

- 1.2 The proposed date of implementation is April 1st 2012.
- 1.3 Our partnership of schools supported by the Trust will work together to improve standards, outcomes and services for children, young people and their families within our local communities in the Biddulph Area. Headteachers believe strongly that by working together they can achieve significantly more for their schools than they can by working alone in order to create long term and sustainable partnerships. They would therefore like to build on the work begun informally thus far by forming a Co-operative Trust to support and secure their work.
- 1.4 As Foundation schools and members of a Shared Trust our schools will continue to be part of the local authority family of schools, but the change of status will allow us to be supported additionally by a charitable trust.
- 1.5 It is expected that other education providers may become associate partners in the Trust in due course.
- 1.6 As a result of the change, the Governing Body of each school will gain new powers and responsibilities. It will become the employer of all staff at the school, although existing pay and conditions will remain unchanged, as the school will remain in the maintained sector and continue to be subject to national pay and conditions.

- 1.7 The Governing Body will also become responsible for pupil admissions, but will work jointly with the Local Authority to administer the provision of pupil places within the requirements of the National Schools Admissions Code.
- 1.8 The Trust will also hold the land and capital assets in trust for the school, although the Governing Body will retain day to day responsibility for managing these assets in the same way as they do now.
- 1.9 You will have the opportunity to comment on these proposals through the consultation which runs from noon on 9th January 2012 to noon on 21st February 2012. We would emphasise that no decision has been made as yet and we would welcome suggestions that might help us to improve our proposals, as well as challenging them.
- 1.10 When the consultation period is over, each Governing Body will then consider the outcome independently and decide on whether they should go ahead to the next stage: publish Statutory Proposals for their own school on changing category and acquiring a charitable trust - or remain as a community school.
- 1.11 After considering the outcome of the consultation, one or more of the schools may decide not to proceed to Statutory Proposals. However this does not prevent the other named schools from continuing to publish Statutory Proposals if their Governing Body wishes to proceed.
- 1.12 In order to make the change, Governing Bodies are therefore legally proposing to change status from a Community School to a Foundation School, and at the same time formally to acquire a Co-operative Trust – to be called The Biddulph Schools Partnership Trust.



Section 2 – Vision and Values

- 2.1 By acquiring a Trust, supported by a range of partners and stakeholders who are united behind these vision statements, the schools hope to not only transform the life chances of every student that passes through the schools, but to have lasting positive impact on the wider community as well. We aim to provide the best education for all students in our area by working together to provide a personalised education for all, as well as promoting community cohesion.
- 2.2 Working as a Learning Community has helped schools to develop a common set of aims and values. Headteachers and Governors from Biddulph schools meet together regularly to share ideas and to share training. Learners from within the community take part regularly in activities organised by the schools working together. This has helped all of our schools to improve.
- 2.3 Becoming a Shared Trust will help us to clarify our vision and aims, continuing to raise expectations and standards across the partnership, and make our existing collaboration more sustainable. We believe that to meet the needs of the community we need to work together as a community. As a group of schools we know that we can achieve more by working together than we can by working alone. A Shared Trust would help to make that belief a reality.
- 2.4 Key aims for our Trust are to:
- Ensure consistently high expectations across all of our schools: among learners, staff, parents and carers.
 - Enable all pupils to benefit from high quality teaching and learning.
 - Work effectively with parents and carers, professionals and the wider community to promote health and well-being, in order to create the right conditions for learners to thrive.
 - Make efficient use of all resources available to us and thereby maximise the benefits for learners.



- Work with external partners to widen the range of opportunities available to our workforce and our young people.
 - Improve social cohesion within our community by strengthening our commitment to co-operative values including respect, social justice, fairness and democracy.
- 2.5 As a Co-operative Trust, the Trust will adopt the values and principles of the Co-operative Movement (see Appendix B).
- 2.6 Co-operatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, co-operative members believe in the values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.
- 2.7 We have chosen to become a Co-operative Trust because these are the values and principles which we feel should underpin our work; with each other and with our young people.



Section 3 – What Will the Trust Do?

3.1 What will be the Trust's particular focus?

By developing an ethos of co-operation and local democracy the proposed Trust is inclusive, community focused and centred on working together to raise levels of achievement and aspirations for children, young people and their families.

The Trust aims to raise attainment by:

- a) Improving the quality and consistency of teaching
- b) Increasing aspirations among pupils and parents, and all those who work with children
- c) Harnessing resources efficiently in the interests of learning
- d) Creating the right conditions for effective learning

3.1.1 Improving the Quality and Consistency of Teaching

- As a Trust we will:
- Look to recruit the brightest and the best to work in our schools
- Seek to retain and develop talented professionals within our schools
- Encourage teachers and school leaders to share their expertise for the benefit of all members of our Learning Community
- Provide professionals working in our schools with the best we can afford in terms of training, facilities, resources and support

3.1.2 Increasing Aspirations

As a Trust we will:

- Encourage parents and professionals to have high expectations of our young people, and enable them to have high expectations of themselves
- Enable those who attend Trust schools to acquire the skills and attitudes they need to go through life as a life-long learner
- Foster creativity and innovation in our young people through an exciting and challenging curriculum
- Create among learners a sense of local pride and the possibilities afforded by the wider world

3.1.3 Harnessing the resources of the community

As a Trust we will:

- Work together as a group of schools to ensure that the whole of our commitment to learning is greater than the sum of its parts
- Work with parents and carers to help them to make their contribution to learning
- Work with community organisations to extend what schools can offer
- Work with external partners to support our work in a variety of ways

3.1.4 Improving conditions for learning

As a Trust we will:

- Work to ensure that children arrive at school ready and willing to learn
- Work to improve attendance, so that all children are in a position to learn
- Work to improve behaviour through clear and consistent expectations and a curriculum which encourages children to learn
- Work to improve continuity in learning, so that learners do not lose momentum or interest when they change classes or schools
- Work with partners to improve the health and well-being of learners
- Provide a stimulating educational environment in which both learners and teachers can work effectively

3.2 What will each partner bring to the Trust?

Biddulph High School

Biddulph High School has a long track record of high quality teaching and learning, resulting in proven success in self improvement and outstanding pupil achievement. This was recognised by the 'Outstanding' judgment made by OFSTED in 2010.

The school has over 15 years of experience in supporting teacher training with 5 Higher Educational Institutions and has a teaching staff who are exceptional at coaching and mentoring other teachers.

It also has a history of educational research with Nottingham University, and the Teaching Development Agency.

We have very experienced senior and middle management teams who have a track record of supporting the development of other schools across Staffordshire, both through individual mentoring and coaching of staff and Headteachers and through presentations at county conferences.

At Biddulph High School we employ a Business Manager and a school Finance Manager who have many years of experience in managing contractual, budgetary and Health and Safety issues. Being a large educational institution with a large financial turnover gives the school power through economies of scale to gain advantageous financial arrangements with contractors. Over the last 15 years the school has been engaged in many onsite building developments which has allowed our administrative staff to become experienced managers in all aspects of project development. This expertise and experience could now be used to benefit the schools in the proposed Trust.

Staffordshire Local Education Authority

The Local Authority has supported the participating schools to seek Shared Trust status, and will continue to provide technical and specialist support.

Negotiations will take place with a number of different service teams within the Local Authority to provide bespoke services to the Trust in support of schools. The Local Authority may also have the opportunity to commission work from the Trust in order to achieve its own objectives.

The Co-operative Movement

Has extensive experience in supporting educational establishments to develop and embed a co-operative 'values driven ethos' across the School and across the curriculum. It will also help bring a global dimension to school and community perceptions, through national and international links with other co-operative educational institutions and organisations. Initially, it will be represented by The Co-operative College. Being a co-operative trust school will also allow us to become a member of the National Co-operative Schools Society, which is a fast growing national schools organisation which will be of great assistance as we face into the rapidly changing educational landscape facing all mainstream schools. Equally important, we will also be able to participate in a strong international network of co-operative schools and colleges. The Co-operative Movement will appoint one trustee.

Other Partners

The Trust is keen to explore links with other potential partners from the public, voluntary and commercial sectors who can help to further its aims. Charitable status and existing partnerships will help significantly in identifying suitable partners. We believe that engaging members alongside the organisational partners is essential if we are to achieve our vision of transforming educational opportunities for all in the community we serve.

3.3 How will the Trust make a difference?

3.3.1 By focusing collective attention on achievement.

The formation of the Trust will focus the minds and energies of all partners on the task of raising attainment and increasing opportunities for achievement across the Trust.

3.3.2 By bringing coherence and continuity to learning: 3 – 19 years.

At a time when Local Authority services are rapidly diminishing and schools will increasingly find themselves working alone, the Trust provides the means of bringing local schools together to serve a common purpose and to provide continuous pathways to learning from early years to adulthood and beyond.

3.3.3 By making efficient and effective use of resources.

The Trust will provide schools with significant collective bargaining power in their negotiations with suppliers of goods and services. This will enable them to secure best value and prioritise funding for teaching and learning.

The Trust will also encourage schools to pool expertise and resources to enable them to maximise the benefits for staff and students.

3.3.4 By providing the motivation of membership.

A number of partnerships (not least the Co-operative Movement) have demonstrated the value of treating customers and employees as members. The Trust will extend the offer of membership to parents/carers, learners, employees and the wider schools community... both individually and on a group basis. This will have the value not only of identifying specific benefits for each of these 'constituencies', but also enlisting their support in achieving the aims of the Trust.



Section 4 – How Will the Trust Work?

- 4.1 The Trust will be a charitable, not for profit organisation, meeting the legal and other requirements of the Department for Education (DFE). It will carry out its duties in relation to schools as set out by the DFE, specifically by appointing a minority of the members to the Governing Body of any supported school (see Appendix) and by holding the land and assets in trust for the community.
- 4.2 The Trust will be legally established and regulated (as with all charities) by the Charities Commission and registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee with Companies House.
- 4.3 Trustees will not be able to derive an income from the Trust, but the Trust may become an employer as it develops its work. Any income generated by the Trust must only be used to support its charitable aims. The Trust will not seek to alter the individual characteristics of the partner schools and it will not seek to change the character (religious or otherwise) of a partner school.
- 4.4 The Trustees will meet a minimum of 3 times a year (co-ordinated with existing school governance arrangements as required).
- 4.5 The Trust will work with other people and organisations, as appropriate, to carry out its work. As the Trust develops, it may be appropriate to consider additional partners. There will be a clear process involving existing Trustees to ensure that any future partner will comply fully with the vision, values and aims of the Trust.
- 4.6 The Trust will be made up of representatives from schools, partners and members. For details of the proposed structure of the Trust see Appendix C.
- 4.7 The Trust will appoint a minority of Governors (probably two), at any school for which it acts. (see Appendix D).
- 4.8 The Trust will have an ethos of co-operation and democracy consistent with co-operative values. It will seek to empower learners and their community. The Trust will help young people prepare for the challenges facing them as global citizens.



Section 5 – Foundation Status

- 5.1 To facilitate the organisation of the Trust, community schools are required to alter their status to become Foundation schools. In acquiring foundation status, the Governing Body and not the Trust will take on new responsibilities including responsibility for the employment of staff and the admission of pupils and students to the school. In addition, the Trust will hold the land and assets in trust for the school. Each Governing Body will retain day to day responsibility for managing these assets, as is presently the case.
- 5.2 The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 provide for all the rights, powers, duties and liabilities to transfer existing staff from the Local Authority to the Governing Body.
- 5.3 Existing and new staff will continue to work under the terms of the 'School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document' (STPCD). Each school's Governing Body will set out the terms and conditions for new support staff which will be no less favourable than those enjoyed by existing staff. All staff will therefore enjoy as a minimum the same terms and conditions of employment as in any maintained school.
- 5.4 Schools will continue to teach the National Curriculum and be inspected by Ofsted at appropriate times.
- 5.5 Each Governing Body will continue to have day to day control of the school's land and assets (which the Trust will hold 'on trust' for the school) as is presently the case.
- 5.6 The Trust will work in collaboration with the Local Authority in ensuring strict adherence to the National Schools Admissions Code while reserving the legal right to review admission arrangements if deemed appropriate.



Section 6 – What Trust and Foundation Status will mean for:

- a) Parents and Carers
- b) Learners
- c) Employees
- d) The wider community

Admissions

- 6.1 Each school will remain part of the Local Authority's family of schools. We will continue to have a fair admissions policy and not introduce selection by ability or according to which particular school a child attends.
- 6.2 Parents will apply for places at a Trust school as part of the local authority process, and schools will continue to work with the local authority to ensure that pupil places are given fairly in line with the published admissions criteria. However all Trust School Governing Bodies reserve the right to review admissions arrangements as deemed appropriate.

Composition of Governing Bodies

- 6.3 We do not propose changing the number of elected Parent Governors. The current situation of appointing Community, Local Authority and Staff Governors will be maintained. However the Governing Body will now have a minority of governors appointed by the Trust. This will help to ensure that there is a strong link between the Trust and each school Governing Body. (For proposed composition of Trust Governing Bodies, see Appendix D)

Membership of the Trust

- 6.4 All parents, carers and pupils attending a Trust school may become full members of the Trust. This is also true of all members of staff employed by Trust schools and members of a range of community organisations supporting the work of the Trust.
- 6.5 We are planning to establish a Trust Forum whose members, including parents, staff, learners and representatives of community organisations, are elected. The purpose of the Trust Forum will be to hold the Trust to account, to help shape policies and to appoint a minority of trustees.
- 6.6 In keeping with the Co-operative tradition, we will be looking to identify a range of benefits to members which would be consistent with the aims of the Trust.

Employee Terms and Conditions

- 6.7 The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 provide for all rights, powers, duties and liabilities to transfer existing staff from the Local Authority to the Governing Body of each school. Employees will be employed by their school's Governing Body instead of the local authority.
- 6.8 Trust schools will continue to recognise the same unions and staff associations. The existing rights of teachers will be fully protected if schools acquire a Trust. Trust schools will continue to be bound by the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

- 6.9 Each Governing Body will set terms and conditions for its own support staff. However, terms and conditions will be safeguarded as per the prescribed regulations and they will maintain the same employment rights as Local Authority employees.
- 6.10 Employees will still be represented on all Governing Bodies, elected by their colleagues, as well as there being representatives from parents, the community and the local authority as is currently the case, together with the additional foundation governors nominated by the Trust.
- 6.11 Under the terms of the Trust, all staff will continue to enjoy as a minimum entitlement the same terms and conditions of employment as staff in any maintained school.

Section 7 – The Consultation Process

- 7.1 We would like to know what you think about the proposals contained in this booklet.
- 7.2 You can take part in the consultation by
- a) Attending a consultation meeting (please see below).
 - b) Attending a public meeting within the community.
 - c) Completing the Questionnaire and returning it to your school.
- 7.3 The full consultation meetings programme is as follows ...

Consultation Arrangements for All Six Schools

Moor First School, Oxhey First School, Woodhouse Middle School

<u>Venue</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Audience</u>
Information Session			
Woodhouse	23rd January 2012	2:30pm	Unions
Middle School		4:00pm	Staff
		5:30pm	Public Meeting
		6.30pm	Parents/Carers

James Bateman Junior High, Knypersley First School and Squirrel Hayes First School

<u>Venue</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Audience</u>
Information Session			
James Bateman Junior High	24th January 2012	6.30pm	Parents/Carers

- 7.4 You can comment on the proposals at any time from noon on 9th January 2012 to noon on 21st February 2012.
- 7.5 After the consultation is closed, all comments oral and written will be considered and a report will be prepared for each Governing Body. These reports will be made available on the school website. Individual reports will not be published but will be made available to the Governing Body and will be available for inspection by the public on request. The Governing Body will then hold a meeting to review the report and all the comments made before reaching an informed decision.
- 7.6 Each individual Governing Body may decide to
- a) Issue Statutory Notices about a change from Community to Foundation Status and the adoption of a Trust;
 - b) Modify the proposal in the light of suggestions made during the consultation and, if the changes are significant, consult again on the changes;
 - c) Decide not to proceed and to remain as a Community School
- 7.7 If an individual Governing Body decides not to proceed it does not prevent other schools from proceeding after they have made an informed decision to do so. The outcome of consultation for each school is mutually exclusive.
- 7.8 If a Governing Body decides to proceed and issues Statutory Notices, there will be another chance to comment on any formal proposals which might be made before any final decision is made.
- 7.9 The proposed implementation date for the Trust is 1st April 2012.
- 7.10 Copies of all of the consultation documents can be obtained from the individual schools.
- 7.11 If you have any queries about anything you have read here, please contact your local school (full details on the back page of this booklet).

Contact Details of Consulting Schools

James Bateman Junior High School

Mrs T Price, Park Lane, Knypersley, Staffordshire ST8 7AT.
01782 297912 | office@jamesbateman.staffs.sch.uk

Knypersley First School

Mrs A Rourke, Newpool Road, Knypersley, Staffordshire ST8 6NW.
01782 297900 | office@knypersley.staffs.sch.uk

Moor First School

Mrs S Mayes, School Lane, Biddulph Moor, Staffordshire ST8 7HR.
01782 512350 | office@moor.staffs.sch.uk

Oxhey First School

Mrs S A Oxley, Pennine Way, Biddulph, Staffordshire ST8 7EB.
01782 513000 | office@oxhey.staffs.sch.uk

Squirrel Hayes First School

Mrs E Smith, Springfield Road, Biddulph, Staffordshire ST8 7DF.
01782 297886 | office@squirrelhayes.staffs.sch.uk

Woodhouse Middle School

Mr M Hall, Woodhouse Lane, Biddulph, Staffordshire ST8 7DR.
01782 297875 | office@woodhouse-middle.staffs.sch.uk

Section 8 – Appendices

Appendix A – List of Consultees

- 8.1 We are keen to consult widely about this proposed change to ensure that all interested parties have their say.
- 8.2 As part of this consultation, we are therefore consulting with the following:
- a) Learners currently at each school applying for a change of status;
 - b) Parents and carers of those learners;
 - c) Teachers and support staff currently employed at these schools;
 - d) Staff, parents and carers at other Biddulph schools;
 - e) Staff and users of local Children’s Centres;
 - f) Local teacher associations and trades unions and trades unions representing support staff in our schools;
 - g) Staffordshire local authority and other neighbouring authorities;
 - h) Serving local MPs and local councillors;
 - i) Other neighbouring schools which might be affected by the proposals;
 - j) Local community and voluntary groups, including nurseries, child care providers, sports and leisure providers;
 - k) FE and HE institutions;
 - l) The Primary Care Trust and local health care providers;
 - m) All local religious groups.
- 8.3 If you feel that there are other stakeholders who should be contacted, please inform your school.

Appendix B - Co-operative Values and Principles

The Values and Principles embraced by today's worldwide co-operative movement have evolved from the ideals of the early co-operators of the 18th and 19th centuries. They are embodied in the Statement of Co-operative Identity published by the International Co-operative Alliance.

For more information about the origins of co-operation, please visit the National Co-operative Archive.

Co-operative Values

Co-operatives throughout the world share a set of values that give them their distinctive character.

Self-help

In co-operatives, people help each other whilst helping themselves by working together for mutual benefit.

Self-responsibility

Individuals within co-operatives act responsibly and play a full part in the organisation.

Democracy

A Co-operative will be structured so that members have control over the organisation... one member, one vote.

Equality

Each member will have equal rights and benefits (according to their contribution).

Equity

Members will be treated justly and fairly.

Solidarity

Members will support each other and other co-operatives.

Ethical Values

In the tradition of their founders, co-operative members believe in the ethical values of:

- Honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others



Co-operative Principles

these are guidelines by which co-operatives put their values into practice.

1st Principle: Voluntary and Open Membership

Co-operatives are voluntary organisations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

2nd Principle: Democratic Member Control

Co-operatives are democratic organisations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary co-operatives members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote), and co-operatives at other levels are also organised in a democratic manner.

3rd Principle: Member Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their co-operative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the co-operative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any of the following purposes: developing their co-operative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the co-operative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

4th Principle: Autonomy and Independence

Co-operatives are autonomous, self-help organisations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organisations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their co-operative autonomy.

5th Principle: Education, Training and Information

Co-operatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-operatives. They inform the general public - particularly young people and opinion leaders - about the nature and benefits of co-operation.

6th Principle: Co-operation Among Co-operatives

Co-operatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the Co-operative Movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

7th Principle: Concern for Community

Co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

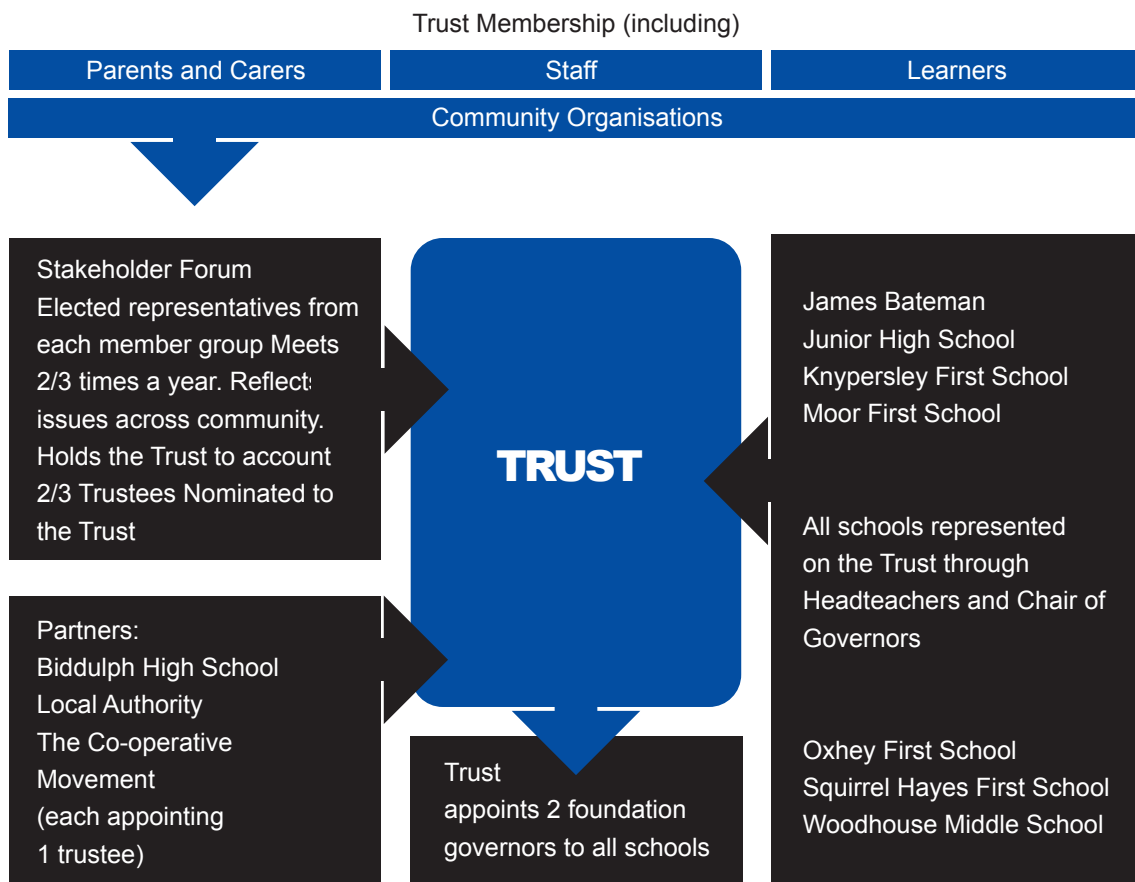


Appendix C - Proposed Trust Structure

As part of the consultation process, we are keen to develop a Trust structure which will be properly representative of all members and stakeholders, represent external partners appropriately and enable all of our schools to be represented equitably.

In putting this together we need to build on existing governance arrangements whilst creating a structure which is realistic. We have no wish to create an unwieldy and bureaucratic structure which is not fit for purpose.

The diagram below is an early attempt to show the relationship between wider membership, schools and their Governing Bodies, and proposed external partners. Further work is needed here and this will have priority in our consultation process.



Under this structure, Headteachers would continue to meet 6 times a year as they do at present. The Trust will meet termly. On a termly basis an extended Partnership Board would meet as the Trust Forum to review the work of the Trust and Raise any issues which stakeholders have about the operation of the Trust.

Associate members

Appendix D – Governing Body Structure

The current structure of appointing Community, Parent, Local Authority and Staff Governors will be maintained. However the Governing Body will now have in addition a minority (probably two) governors appointed by the Trust.

Local Authority nominated Governors must number at least one and be no more than one fifth.
Parent Governors must be at least one third of the Governing Body.

Staff governors must be at least two, but no more than one third. If there are three or more staff governors then one must be a non-teacher.

Community governors must be at least one tenth.

There must be a minimum of two Foundation Governors (Trust appointees) and a maximum of 45% of the Governing Body.

The Governing Body will undergo minimum changes in order to comply with the appropriate legislation.

NB. Each Governing Body shall appoint two trustees, being the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors (or nominee).

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