



Eaton Bank School

Academy Conversion Consultation

In February 2011 the Governing Body at Eaton Bank School established a working party to investigate the implications of the school converting to an academy. On January 16th 2012, they took the decision to begin the process of conversion, by initiating the consultation and by making a formal application to the DfE and the Secretary of State for Education with a proposed conversion date of 1st September 2012.

The Governing Body considered a range of factors prior to making their decision, both about the potential benefits and challenges of becoming an Academy. Our absolute priority is to ensure that students at Eaton Bank are provided with high quality teaching and learning experiences and opportunities that allow them to become successful and responsible citizens.

The reasons why the Governing Body wishes to convert to Academy status are:-

- To improve the resources and facilities at Eaton Bank School for the direct benefit of students by having direct control of the financial resources previously retained by the Local Authority for central spending and services to schools.
- To take advantage of the Academy freedoms that allow for greater flexibility in designing our curriculum and school day, making the process smoother and more responsive to the needs of parents and the school
- To respond to the changes within Cheshire East Local Authority
- To develop strong and lasting community partnerships

Over half of Cheshire East secondary schools have now converted to Academy status or are in the process of converting and we expect that, as a consequence, the nature of provision and support from the Local Authority will undergo unprecedented change as their automatic share of educational funds shrinks further with each conversion. Fortunately the schools in the Congleton borough already have excellent collaborative relationships, supporting each other professionally and commercially. The Business Managers, for example, work closely to ensure that all services procured offer best value. We consider that these local networks put us in a very secure place to continue to develop as we progress through this process.

The Governing Body is consulting with a range of stakeholders, to include Staff, Parents, Carers, local primary schools, Trade Unions, community members and the Local Authority. The purpose of this letter is to ask you to express your views and ask questions about the proposed change to Academy status and to describe to you the next steps that the Governing Body will follow. A meeting is scheduled for members of our local community at 7 p.m. on 1 February 2012 to present information and to allow you to ask any questions.



You can respond to the consultation in any of the following ways:-

By letter: Academy consultation
Eaton Bank School
Jackson Road,
Congleton,
Cheshire,
CW12 1NT

By email: academy@eatonbankschool.cheshire.sch.uk

In Person: At the consultation meeting

Please ensure that we receive your response no later than Friday 24th February 2012. The Governing Body will publish a summary of responses received as part of the process on the school website, www.eatonbank.cheshire.sch.uk. This allows for comprehensive consultation process to take place and for everyone to formulate responses and submit their views. The formal consultation period will end on 24th February 2012.

Further information about Academies and the conversion process can be found on the DfE website (www.education.gov.uk/Academies). The answers to a number of Frequently Asked Questions and any updates will be published on the school website www.eatonbank.cheshire.sch.uk.

Attached are the key steps required for Eaton Bank School to become an academy and some indicated timings. We welcome and encourage everyone's involvement to be part of the future success of the school and to secure a better future for our young people.

Yours sincerely

Ann Webb
Headteacher

Keith Smith
Chair of Governors

Timetable for Academy Conversion

Governing Body Working Party established	February 2011
Start of application conversion process	16 January 2012
Start of consultation process	17 January 2012
Stakeholder meetings	Week commencing 30 January 2012
Consultation process completed	24 February 2012
Feedback analysed and published	2 March 2012
Decision on proceeding with full application	26 March 2012
Conversion process completed	July 2012
Eaton Bank Academy opens	3 September 2012