

# **gail khan**

ASSOCIATES



Lindley Junior School



Reinwood Infant & Nursery School



Salendine Nook High School Academy



Moorlands Primary School



Reinwood Junior School



Spring Grove Junior, Infant & Nursery School

# Consultation Report Heritage MAT

---

March 2024

Contents	Page
<b>Introduction</b>	3
<b>Consultation methodology</b>	6
<b>Overview of the Consultation Feedback received</b>	7
<b>Conclusion and recommendations</b>	11
<p><b>Appendix 1</b> - Direct Letters/emails</p> <p><b>Appendix 2</b> - Stakeholder Consultation Presentation</p> <p><b>Appendix 3</b> - Staff FAQs Video</p> <p><b>Appendix 4</b> - Parents &amp; community FAQs Video</p> <p><b>Appendix 5</b> - Governors FAQs Video</p> <p><b>Appendix 6</b> - FAQs &amp; Overview of the Consultation Feedback Received</p>	

## 1. Introduction

The Governing Bodies of four maintained schools and Trustees of two single academy trusts in Kirklees have previously passed resolutions to commence exploring academy status and a proposal to move towards forming a new Multi-Academy Trust which would be called Heritage MAT. The proposed mission being:

***‘Through collaborative approaches and strong leadership systems, the Trust will provide an aspirational and exceptional all-through education system for all pupils, staff and community members of our Trust’***

The schools involved as part of the consultation were:

1. Lindley Junior School (Academy)
2. Moorlands Primary School (Maintained)
3. Reinwood Infant and Nursery School (Maintained)
4. Reinwood Junior School (Maintained)
5. Salendine Nook High School (Academy)
6. Spring Grove Junior, Infant and Nursery School (Maintained)

These decisions followed a period of up to two years of research which had been conducted by the respective bodies to help inform their final decisions and recommendations which informed this consultation. Consideration was given to what was in the best interests of learners now and in the future as well as what the implications of the options would be for staff, parents and the wider communities that the schools serve.

Subject to the outcomes of consultation and final governor approval, applications are scheduled to be submitted to the DfE on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March for the following:

- I. Application to form a new multi-academy trust
- II. Application for single academy trusts to become a part of the new multi-academy trust
- III. Four applications for the maintained schools to become academies and join the new multi-academy trust

A working party has been established and they developed the consultation process and materials alongside preparing the applications. The working party has representation from each school’s leadership and governing body and together they have overseen the processes and outcomes to date.

Consultation commenced Friday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and concluded on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2024.





### **1.1 Geographic distribution of the proposed Heritage MAT Schools**


The map on the next page shows where the schools proposing to join Heritage MAT are located. Their proximity will significantly aid joint working.


**Heritage MAT**  
Private: 6 places


[Share](#)


- 

**Moorlands Primary School**  
4.1 ★ (9) ⓘ  
Primary school + Note
- 

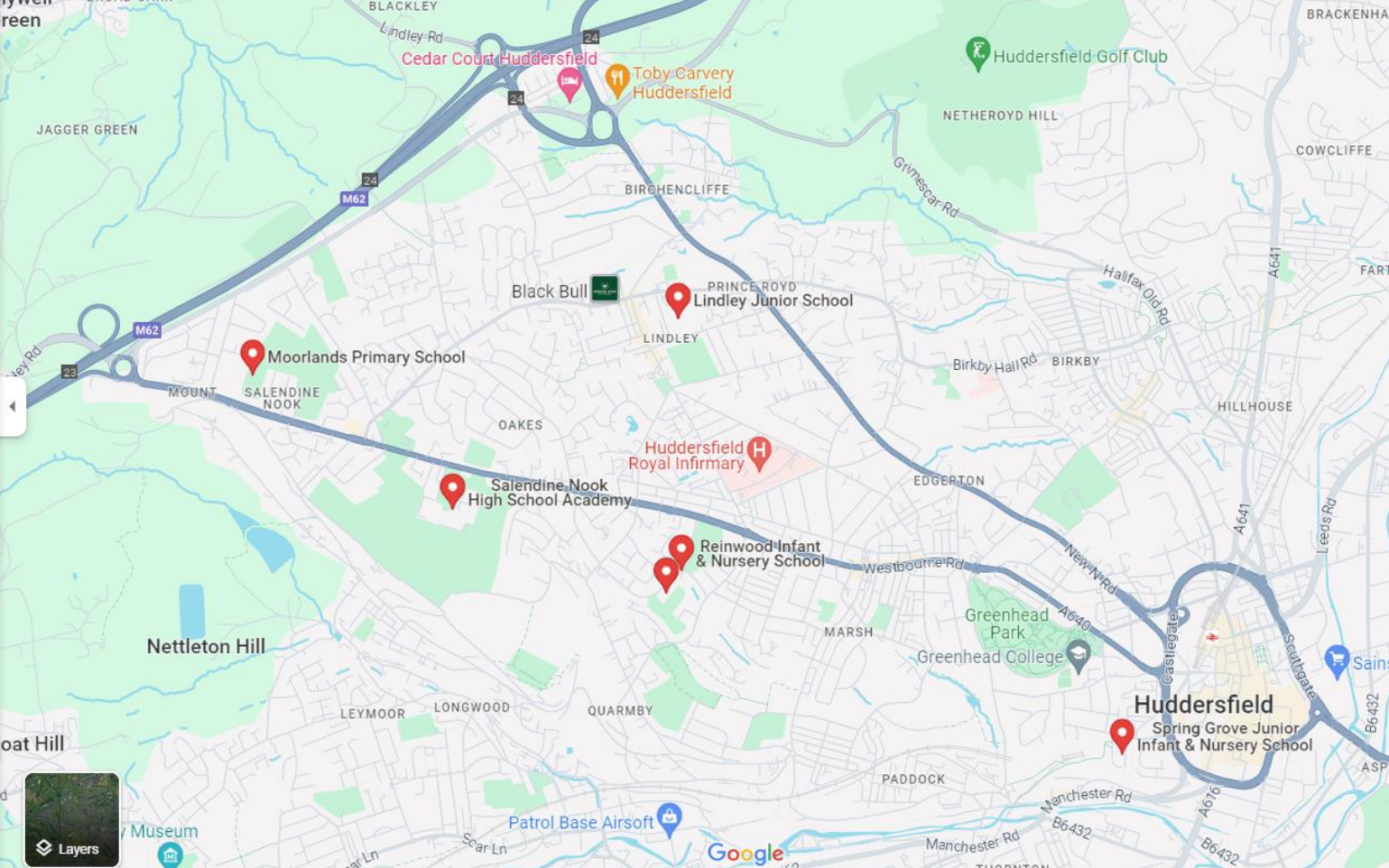
**Salendine Nook High School Academy**  
2.7 ★ (34) ⓘ  
Secondary school + Note
- 

**Spring Grove Junior Infant & Nursery ...**  
3.4 ★ (5) ⓘ  
Combined primary and s... + Note
- 

**Reinwood Infant & Nursery School**  
4.6 ★ (10) ⓘ  
Primary school + Note
- 

**Reinwood Junior School**  
4.0 ★ (6) ⓘ  
Primary school + Note
- 

**Lindley Junior School**  
4.1 ★ (9) ⓘ  
Primary school + Note



## 2. Consultation Methodology

The overall aim of the consultation process was to ensure that everyone who has a stake in the decision of each of the schools/academies to become an academy and/or transfer to the proposed new MAT, had the opportunity to hear about the proposals, ask questions and to make their views known about the plans.

The objectives of the process were to:

- Provide relevant background information for stakeholders
- Explain the reasons for the proposal
- Outline the pros and cons for the proposal
- Set out the stages in the process for each school to become an academy and form the MAT and the associated timelines

The principles laid down by the project team for the consultation were that it should be:

- An open and transparent process
- Accessible to all stakeholders in terms of:
  - The times of the events
  - The media used
  - The language used (jargon-free wherever possible and acronyms fully explained)
  - Well-publicised and advertised

A variety of media were used to consult including:

- Social media channels
- Direct communications sent to the Local Authority, trade unions and local community groups
- Text messaging / School Ping
- Coming soon information flyer
- Direct meetings held by heads of schools to regularly inform their members of staff
- A website hosting consultation information, videos and including frequently asked questions for staff, parents, community and governors
- Links on the website to external guidance on the implications of joining a multi-academy trust and the process and timescales involved
- Information on how to give feedback or ask questions via an online feedback form or various avenues within the schools
- An update video midway through the consultation to answer questions received by stakeholders
- An invitation to a consultation event held at Salendine Nook High School on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024

## 2.1 Direct emails / messaging

Emails/Pings/Messaging introducing the consultation were sent electronically to the following groups and are included at Appendix 1:

- Parents/community members
- School staff and Trades Unions
- Local schools
- Governors
- Kirklees Local Authority

## 2.2 Publicised event

All stakeholders were invited to a consultation event that was held on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> January at 6pm, at Salendine Nook High School.

Staff were also kept informed as part of the set staff meeting and briefing structures throughout the consultation.

## 2.3 Frequently asked questions (FAQs) and feedback form

At Appendix 2 is the Consultation PowerPoint which contains FAQs for staff, parents & the community and governors. Answers to these FAQs were delivered in video format on the website to their respective audiences (Staff, Parents, Governors – Appendices 3, 4 & 5). Links were also sent on emails to the LA, Unions and the DfE for their information.

## 2.4 Website

The schools formed a dedicated website [www.heritagemat.uk](http://www.heritagemat.uk). All communication materials were posted online including items mentioned within this section of the report. Additional items included information regarding future governance and how to get more involved.

## 2.5 Media channels

Media channels for communication included; text messages, videos, email and school websites. A copy of the information shared is available on the Trust website [www.heritagemat.uk](http://www.heritagemat.uk)

# 3. Overview of the Consultation Feedback received

## 3.1 Attendance at Consultation Meetings & Survey responses

Date	Event	Venue	Number in attendance
31.1.24	Open evening/afternoon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents, staff</li> <li>• community</li> </ul>	Salendine Nook	22

Number of surveys responded	23
What is your view of our mission and vision?: 'Through collaborative approaches and strong leadership systems, the Trust will provide an aspirational and exceptional all-through education for all pupils, staff and community members of our Trust'	Votes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve = 18</li> <li>• Approve in Part = 1</li> <li>• Disapprove = 3</li> <li>• Other: Focus on experience and outcomes for pupils not staff and community members = 1</li> </ul>
What is your view of our values? 'Inclusivity – Collaboration – Excellence'	Votes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve = 20</li> <li>• Disapprove = 3</li> </ul>
Now that you have seen our proposal are you in favour or against our plans?	Votes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I SUPPORT your application to form a new MAT = 8</li> <li>• I need further information = 5</li> <li>• I neither support nor oppose your plans = 1</li> <li>• I DO NOT support your application to form a new MAT = 4</li> </ul>

### 3.2 Themes and Key Messages

Appendix 6 contains all of the questions, comments and feedback received from stakeholders from the various media used throughout the consultation period.

A summary of all the responses and the messages contained therein, with implications for the schools and proposed MAT is provided in the remainder of this section.

Stakeholders are most interested in:

#### 3.2.1 What are the differences between academies and maintained schools and what does it mean for children? Do you have to become an academy?

Stakeholders wanted to understand the differences between the two statuses, queries were raised about;

- The role of the local authority and what does this look like if you are an academy in a MAT?
- Curriculum freedoms – academies do not have to follow the national curriculum but most do. This proposal includes following the national curriculum across all its schools. By coming together it is hoped strategically this will become stronger as the



schools work together, using similar systems and increased professional development opportunities for staff etc

- Admissions – the local authority will still coordinate transition admissions for all schools. Academies are their own admissions authority but are still bound by the national admissions code. Academies must follow the code and cannot decide to change admissions without due consultation and approvals. A question was raised from a local Trust during consultation which queried the intention of Heritage to potentially change the secondary priority admission area (PAA) once they became a MAT. This was clarified at a follow up meeting and confirmed that we have no plans to try to change the PAA.
- Accountability / Leadership, who is accountable and who will lead the individual schools?
- Identity, will the MAT change school names, uniform, day and term times?

### **3.2.2 Timing**

General queries were raised around the process;

- How long does it take to set up a MAT and for the schools to join?
- What if there is a change in government or policy?
- Will inset days align?

### **3.2.3 The formation of the Trust and its governance arrangements**

Stakeholders sought reassurance around the proposed governance model, what it would look like and how it would work in practice. They were keen to understand who would be running the organisation, who would be the CEO and at what level decisions would be taken.

A very clear message came through with regards to supporting one another and also others who may need support in the future and stakeholders were broadly supportive of this position. Stakeholders were keen to ensure the support mechanisms were in place but not at the detriment of the six schools, capacity must be there.

What would be the next stage of discussions assuming the applications were approved? Understanding the roles and responsibilities of all the parties involved in the decision making including the DfE, RD, ESFA, Governing Bodies and leadership of each school and ultimately who would be the Members and Trustees?

### **3.2.4 Financial considerations such as increased costs/central top slice/ falling budgets – ultimately how will this MAT be funded?**

This was highlighted as a high priority during consultation with stakeholders keen to understand this proposal wasn't going to cost any more than what a school pays now and if anything would reduce costs overall. It was explained that a working party had been set up to look at this exact point and further detail would be known in coming weeks and months.

Leaders were clear that there was a finite budget for set up and this would be monitored throughout. They also stressed the point that as an academy you can access pots of money you can't as a maintained school so there were new and additional opportunities for capital and school improvement funds beyond the annual budget.

- Who owns the buildings and land?
- Will there be more or less money?
- How does funding work?
  - Will funding follow the pupil?
  - Will finances be merged or 'pooled'?
- Do schools retain their reserves?
- The benefits of joining a MAT
- Will costs increase?

### **3.2.5 The impact on learners now and in the future**

How will SEND support work as an academy, will it be different or better?

Will Headteachers be out of school a lot at meetings?

The National Curriculum and Early Years Statutory Framework was a focus of parental questions as they were keen to understand if the schools would still adhere to it as academies. Headteachers reassured parents that the National Curriculum and Early Years Framework were central to teaching and learning, planning and practice and that children still had to be prepared to sit the same testing systems as they do now and move between Primary and Secondary.

Staff will have increased opportunities for professional development, sharing best practice and developing their skills. Recruitment and retention is hard in schools today and together it is hoped the schools and MAT will increase career choice for staff.

### **3.2.6 Staffing – contractual implications, general concerns and opportunities**

Staff across the schools raised a number of queries with a particular emphasis on;

- Choice – do schools have a choice and who makes the decision for the school to become an academy?
- Geography – would staff be requested to go work in any of the other schools?
- Contractual – will pensions be the same? Will Terms and Conditions and roles remain the same? Job security, costs, pay progression, recruitment. Is there a risk of redundancy?
- General – professional development & CPD. Who will be the decision makers?

Colleagues were able to see the distinct benefit of working collaboratively and sharing best practice. Parents were also keen to understand staffing implications for their children and whether these proposals would mean a lot of change in the classrooms.

Overall, stakeholders were cautious but optimistic in identifying the risks and benefits this proposal could bring to the individual schools and their learners / communities. Many requested an opportunity to have continued dialogue as there was more information to share whether this was via messages home, letters, or meetings.

## **4. Conclusion and Recommendations**

On compilation of all feedback and data received, the conclusion that can be drawn is that there are no apparent legitimate reasons why the development of the MAT should not continue according to the timescales outlined. There is a view that this will be a positive move for all the schools, but this is not yet shared widely amongst all stakeholder groups, and it is important to recognise the ongoing dialogue is going to be extremely important.

Whilst there are queries about the process and the detail of how the MAT will operate (much of which is still to be agreed and decided), there are no major concerns or contra-indications that have been raised through this process.

Response rates from parents and community members at all schools were low and particularly so from schools that are already single academy trusts. From this can be deduced that:

- Stakeholders appear to be generally content about their school joining a MAT and creating Heritage MAT

- Stakeholders are content to leave these decisions to the managers and leaders of their schools
- Stakeholders of schools that have already recently converted have been through the process before and do not have further questions and queries.

Following the completion of the consultation period for all schools wishing to join/form the MAT it is recommended that:

- All schools proceed with the next phase of the application process
- A range of media are used to further inform/update stakeholders of all the interim milestones and timescales and plans for the MAT as they progress
- Due diligence and financial modelling is completed

## 5. List of Appendices

<b>Appendix 1</b>	Direct Letters/emails	Parents/community members School staff and Trades Unions Local schools Governors Kirklees Local Authority
<b>Appendix 2</b>	Stakeholder Consultation Presentation	
<b>Appendix 3</b>	Staff FAQs Video	
<b>Appendix 4</b>	Parent & Community FAQs Video	
<b>Appendix 5</b>	Governors FAQs Video	
<b>Appendix 6</b>	FAQs & Overview of the Consultation Feedback Received	