

CHELMSFORD LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

A PROPOSAL FOR RODING VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL TO JOIN A NEW MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT
November 2017



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The Proposal

The governors and Head of School at Roding Valley High School have been investigating the benefits of joining a multi-academy trust being created by The Boswells School, Chelmsford Learning Partnership.

Roding Valley High School is already successful in its own right, playing an important role within the community it serves, with a distinctive ethos and individual approach. However, in an increasingly challenging educational landscape the Governing Body recognises that a fresh approach is needed to maintain and improve school performance, in line with current government policy.

Our school has already benefited from the leadership of Paul Banks, who took on the role of Executive Head Teacher in April of this year. Senior leaders at Roding Valley High School have worked closely with Paul Banks and his colleagues at The Boswells School to develop strong leadership for our school. Paul Banks will be the CEO of the Chelmsford Learning Partnership.

The emerging Chelmsford Learning Partnership would be a new partnership that would strengthen and sustain the quality of education each school is able to offer their children and young people through greater collaboration and joint working between member schools.

We have carefully considered the proposal and have carried out extensive due diligence to assure ourselves that joining this trust is the best option for our school.

The proposed multi academy trust would be established in April 2018 by The Boswells School and The Tyrrells School, which are already academies and Barnes Farm Infant, Barnes Farm Junior, Perryfields Infant and Roding Valley High Schools which would all convert to academy status. This is an opportunity to join the new trust in an exciting phase of its development.

The Benefits of Membership

The Chelmsford Learning Partnership would provide a range of important benefits for its member schools through greater collaboration and joint working between Headteachers, senior leaders, staff and governors. We believe that our trust will have significant benefits for our students:

- Improved and sustained Quality of Teaching and Learning
- Better quality of teaching because of the CPD and training across the schools
- Improvement and sustainability of standards
- Improved transitions
- Staff will have a wider understanding of straight through education
- Shared provision of before and after school provision
- Richer curriculum opportunities through saved finances and shared resources
- Joint School Council – cross phase (Children’s Voice)
- Collaborative charity working opportunities –(increased Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural)
- Governance – shared training to improve standards for all the children
- We can help and support other schools for the benefit of the children
- Developing a shared community and serving the community needs
- Peer to Peer mentoring

We are also clear that there will be benefits to our staff as a result of this collaboration:

- Increased professional development opportunities and training with access to shared training and input across all phases of education
- Joint planning to reduce workload
- Improved succession planning and greater opportunities for movement and/or secondment allowing us to keep our best staff
- More comprehensive induction programme
- Wider sense of identity and collective responsibility
- Higher quality external expertise through economies of scale and a movement away from an already strained school improvement service from the local authority
- An opportunity for staff retention through admissions policies

The governors at Roding Valley High School researched and visited a number of MAT's before selecting Chelmsford Learning Partnership. In our view Chelmsford Learning Partnership most closely matches the culture of our school. We also believe that joining a new, smaller MAT allows us to shape our own destiny rather than being consumed within a large, fully functioning MAT that would impose their style upon us. In addition, we feel that joining with Chelmsford Learning Partnership will allow us to:

- Establish a CLP hub within the West Essex area, providing closer links with local schools and our community.
- Take advantage of the economies of scale available that are not achievable by a stand-alone entity.
- Develop and extend extra-curricular activities.
- Ensure that our students and staff flourish in a broader and more stable environment.
- Minimise any dependence on supply teachers by gaining access to a wider, experienced teacher base.

Furthermore, we believe that, whilst any changes carry an element of risk and short-term upheaval, these will be minimised by partnering with a team that we already work closely with and whose senior leader has first-hand experience of how Roding Valley High School works.

Key information about the other member schools

	The Boswells School	Barnes Farm Infant	Barnes Farm Junior	Perryfields Infant	The Tyrrells School
<i>Age Range</i>	11-18 years	5-7 years	7-11 years	5-7 years	4-11 years
<i>No. of students</i>	1482	269	358	180	448
<i>Headteacher</i>	Mr Paul Banks	Ms Vicky Walker	Mr Ross McTaggart	Mrs Amanda Reid	Ms Amanda Daines
<i>Most recent Ofsted report</i>	Feb 2017 Good	March 2014 Good	July 2017 Good	Sept 2016 Good	Nov 2008 Outstanding

Trust Vision and Values

The Chelmsford Learning Partnership is an emerging trust whose ethos and fundamental principles are based on allowing the schools within our trust to flourish with a clear focus on strong leadership in each of our schools.

In all our schools, we strive for the following:

- Inspiring curiosity and a lifelong love of learning for all students
- Developing teaching that is good and aspiring to be outstanding across our schools
- Building capacity for sustained school improvement through strong leadership and the sharing of resources and good practice
- Enabling all our schools to be good and aspire to be outstanding
- Developing a shared level of accountability for the achievements and well-being of children across all our schools
- Retaining the distinct ethos and character of each school within our trust

Trust governance, leadership and management

The Trust would be governed by a single board of trustees. The trustees will have the range of important knowledge, skills and expertise needed to oversee an organisation of nearly 4,000 students, around 500 staff and over £19m of public funding.

Each school would continue to have a Local Governing Body (LGB), with representation for parents, staff and the wider school community as now. Governors and Headteachers would continue to decide how their school is run with the vast majority of decisions still made locally.

The trust would have overall accountability to the Department for Education (DfE) but each school would be subject to individual Ofsted inspection.

Each Headteacher would continue to be responsible for running their school but would form a leadership group responsible for developing and implementing trust plans for school-to-school support and collaboration. Paul Banks, Headteacher of The Boswells School will be appointed as CEO (a DfE requirement) with specific responsibility for overseeing the trust's legal, financial, governance and HR functions. The Headteachers and the CEO will form the Strategic Learning Group that will develop and implement the trust wide improvement plan.

The funding would still be calculated and allocated on a school-by-school basis. The schools would contribute to the central costs of running the trust, which would be kept as low as feasible. The Trust's finances would be subject to close scrutiny by the DfE's Education Funding Agency and independently audited accounts would be published. The Trust would be the employer of staff in all schools.

School management and operation

In each school, pupils would continue to be taught by the same teachers in the same classrooms, wearing the same individual school uniform that they do now. Over time pupils would notice changes in the way they learn and be able to access a wider range of opportunities, as the schools develop trust-wide initiatives to enhance teaching, learning and the curriculum.

The names and identities of the school would remain the same and schools would retain control over the admissions policies and processes, which must be compliant with the national admissions code.

All staff would continue to work in their current schools with the same responsibilities and terms and conditions as now. There would be opportunities for some staff to take on wider

responsibilities across schools to enable the trust to function effectively and efficiently. Staff would also have access to enhanced professional development. There are no plans to make any posts redundant as a result of the Trust being established.

Next steps

The aim is for the Chelmsford Learning Partnership to be established on April 1st 2018.

The first step is for Roding Valley High School to consult with their school community on the proposal. The consultation will run from Monday, November 13th until Friday, December 15th and will include meetings when parents, carers and staff will be able to hear more about the proposal and ask questions.

School	Audience	Time & Date
Roding Valley High School	Staff	3:30pm Monday, November 27 th
Roding Valley High School	Parents / carers	6.30pm Monday, November 27 th

The Governing Body will then consider a report on the consultation and decide whether to proceed with the proposal. Then, subject to completion of legal tasks such as completing the agreements with the Secretary of State, the Trust would be established and the schools would convert on April 1st 2018. The transition would be carefully managed to ensure day-to-day running of the school is not affected.

Parents, carers, staff, students and the wider community of each school will be kept fully informed.