



Conversion to Academy Status as part of a Multi-Academy Trust

In my presentation I explained that the decision by the Governing Body of Tavistock College to pursue an Academy order has been taken in the best interests of the college and its students. There are many reasons for the decision. Our revenue will come directly from central government, not through the local authority. This will give us greater freedom to spend our money where we think it will most benefit our students. By forming an Academy Trust with other schools we will be able to work more collaboratively to raise standards of achievement and expand the range of opportunities we can offer staff and students in the college. Academy status will afford us greater opportunities for professional development for teachers, governors and school leaders and we will have the opportunity to bid for capital money direct from the DfE to further improve our school environment. Additionally, by converting to Academy now, we are able to choose a partner school who we want to work with. Economies of scale mean that, together, we can negotiate contracts and services that represent better value for money. But this whole decision is really predicated upon *sustainability*, not change. It is about taking some control over our destiny while we still can, and maintain the direction of travel we have begun. We will fight to sustain our co-operative identity. By pursuing this course of action now, assuming we are successful, we are able to adopt the co-operative articles of association (currently before the DfE) and not wait until a forced MAT is upon us with an academy trust board that we do not know, or a partnership with a school or group of schools that do not share our ethos. *Sarah Jones, Principal*

Questions from the community meeting on Wednesday 20th January.

Regular updates will be posted on the college website including any questions that parents or other members of the community with an interest in Tavistock College would like answered. Any questions requiring a written response should be emailed to a.thomas@tavistockcollege.devon.sch.uk

Q) Would there need to be a large groundswell of parents in opposition in order to halt the process?

A) Yes. It would have to be significant, though, as most stakeholders so far have supported the Governors decision.

Q) Wouldn't it be more expensive to be an academy?

A) Not at present. However, the Government's spending review indicated the grant that LAs have (that would be passed on to academies on conversion) is being phased out from 2017. ALL schools would then have fewer services, not just academies. Economies of scale by grouping schools into multi-academies might ameliorate this.

Q) Why not just wait for 2 years?

A) We would potentially lose prospective partners to other schools and maybe have to convert with loss of cooperative values. Also, the rate of change across the SW region (52% of secondary schools were Academies in September; 65% are now academies) would leave us isolated.

Q) If the partner school(s) we convert with under a MAT don't prove to be as easy to work with as was anticipated, what happens?

A) We will choose our partners carefully. The co-operative ethos and values should minimise risk.

Q) Is this meeting the end of the consultancy phase of the process?

A) No. You can continue to have a dialogue but an academy order will be pursued as soon as partners are found. This will be in a matter of weeks and the announcement will be made on the website.

Q) What might the timescales for conversion be?

A) As soon as possible. Conversion is always on the first of the month. We are aiming for May but it is likely to be July or even September.

Q) Will you liaise with other successful academies to gain expert advice?

A) Of Course, however we have staff at the college that have completed this previously so do have internal experience of successful conversion.

Q) In the short term is Tavistock College confident of finding a partner school?

A) Yes.

Q) Can partner schools be located in other LAs?

A) Yes. There will be opportunities for mutually beneficial school improvement work. Economies of scale. The intention is to work with co-operative schools on a formal basis.

Q) Will we leave our Co-operative trust to form a new one?

A) We will need to leave the trust as Tavistock College, foundation school and then re-join as Tavistock College (MAT)

Q) Will the MAT still work closely with our primaries?

A) Of course, we will continue to improve our relationship with our primary schools.

Q) What services would we share with the other schools?

A) Payroll, equipment, legal services, teaching staff and expertise

Q) Could students move schools for 6th form activities?

A) Yes, this could happen whether or not we are an academy, we will be offering more choice.

Q) Are there any specific local schools we would partner with?

A) No but they would have to be co-operative schools or academies.

Q) If as an academy the school fails, what happens?

A) The same for any school whether or not we are in an academy- we would be sponsored by a MAT, charity or other school chosen by the RSC.

Q) Why does the DfE want all schools to be academies?

A) It is a government decision, based on one particular ideology. The spending review of 2015 makes this direction of travel clear.

Q) What would happen if our feeder primary schools do not join our MAT?

A) Nothing needs to change. The primary schools can make their own choice.

Questions continued overleaf ...

Questions continued

Q) I have once heard that it was very difficult for a cooperative trust school to be forced to be an academy – what has changed?

A) There has been a change in government.

Q) Could parents meet with others who have become Cooperative MATs?

A) There are hardly any, but the closest is in South Gloucester. Sarah Jones will investigate.

Q) What was the view of the staff?

A) Generally positive, they wanted reassurance of pay and conditions. Also there was concern about the ethos of the school. It is in the best interests of the school to protect the staff.

Q) How far down the process are we?

A) Consulting i.e. not voting – we have not formally applied yet for an Academy Order. This will happen very soon in the next few weeks.

Q) Who would be accountable for example over admissions and complaints?

A) The Academy Trust and the RSC.

Q) How many children are there currently in the college? (1260) and in the cooperative trust? (approximately 1850).

Sport Results

Wednesday 13th January

Primary Schools Netball Tournament – Horrabridge Primary School won

Thursday 14th January

Year 9 & 10 Netball v Callington – Tavistock lost

Sport Fixtures

Tuesday 2nd February

Secondary Sports Hall Athletics at Ivybridge College 1:30 – 4:30pm

Year 7, 8 & 9 Netball v Okehampton, Kelly College & Callington at Tavistock College 4pm start

Wednesday 3rd February

Primary School Athletics 'B' Team in the Sports Hall 12pm – 3pm – Tavistock College Junior Leaders to assist

Thursday 4th February

Year 7 Netball v Liskeard @ Liskeard College. Leave @ 2:45pm

GLAM Squad



Exciting times for the girls in PE as the GLAM (Girls Leadership and Marketing) squad have received their new hoodies and are modelling them in a PE lesson. Mrs Doyle and Miss Hodge



U13s Boys Cricket

The U13 boys cricket team returned from the Devon county finals returned from Exeter University finishing outside the top 3 despite finishing the 3rd highest scorers. The team played fantastic taking catches, hitting wickets and scoring points.

Congratulations to the team on their efforts. Mr Corkell

Year 7 Tyler Hunt, Charlie Elkington and Jacob Bevan

Year 8 Callum Mitchell, Tom Limb, Oliver Thursby, Jamie Cooper, Josh Monk, Leon Bray, Connor Johnson and Jack Emptage.

Getting to know your staff

Mrs C Carroll



1) What's the best part of your job? Knowing I have made a difference to a child's day, whether that be in a big or a small way. A child that knows there is someone there to take the weight off, when it is most needed, is a happier child.

2) When you were little what was your dream job? Honestly, I wanted to be a lollypop lady, Our primary school lollypop lady had the warmest and kindest smile – I wanted to be just like her when I grew up.

3) If you could have one wish, what would you wish for? I don't need to think about this one, world peace!

4) Football or Rugby? Football players or rugby players? Rugby every time.

5) If you had a really rubbish day, how do you cheer yourself up? Linking up with nature usually does the trick; hiking over the moor or a walk along one of our beautiful, Devon country lanes with my dog, Johnny Whippet.

6) If you could have a superpower for a day, what would it be? The power to make people laugh – we all feel happier after a good belly laugh.

7) What is your favourite song ever? Zoom, by Fat Larry's Band - showing my age with this one!

8) Who is the most inspirational person you know? Bill Gates: to give away your fortune to such a worthy cause as global health, in my book, should give inspiration to the world.

9) Give us one interesting fact about yourself. I was named after my father's birth place, Co 'Clare', in Ireland.

Dates for the Diary

Thursday 4th February

Intermediate Maths Challenge,
Years 9 and 11

Tavistock

COLLEGE