

Proposal to become an academy and join Enlighten Learning Trust



The Governing Body of Riverview CofE Primary and Nursery School (VA) is proposing that our school become an academy in partnership with the Enlighten Learning Trust (ELT). Our Governing Body welcomes your questions and comments about this proposal to help inform its final decision.

This period of consultation and dialogue will commence on **Monday 3rd October 2022 until Monday 14th November 2022.**

What is an Academy?

An academy is a state school, funded directly by central government. When a school such as ours becomes an academy, they gain some additional freedoms and responsibilities. Further details can be found in the 'Frequently Asked Questions' document on our [Academy Consultation webpage](#). Joining an academy is known as 'academisation'. Historically, some schools have been forced to join academies to address low standards of learning and teaching and this has understandably led to some negative press. Riverview, by contrast, are not being forced to join an academy and this proposal is driven not by the Local Authority or government but by the Governing Body's considered belief that pupils and teachers will benefit from collaboration with carefully selected schools which share our values and vision.

Successful Collaboration

Our schools has collaborated with other schools within ELT recently. As part of this collaboration, we are part of joint moderation sessions where examining children's work which has supported teacher judgements and enabled us to share good practice. Our leaders are engaging in continuing professional development facilitated by ELT. This will enable them to develop their leadership and teaching and has inspired them to take a lead on aspects of school development. It will also empower them to encourage and motivate other aspiring leaders to develop their own skills. Throughout this period, we have been able to benefit from this collaboration with ELT, whilst retaining our individual distinctiveness within the community, which remains of paramount importance to each school.

Why now?

1. We are stronger together

We believe that collaboration with ELT will further improve outcomes for pupils and staff. It will do this through drawing on a wide bank of expertise, creating further economies of scale and sharing resources to give our schools an even stronger, more resilient structure, to ensure that every child's learning opportunities are maximised and that every member of staff has encouragement to grow and to lead.

2. Seeking the best for all children is our responsibility as a Christian school

Our Diocese, the Diocese of Guildford, is strongly encouraging its schools to academise for the future protection of its distinctively inclusive and values-driven education. The Governing Body passionately believes that, as schools rooted in Christian values, we have a moral duty to strive for educational excellence, which reaches beyond our own walls. Through formal partnership with other, like-minded schools, we can ensure that an even greater number of children flourish and experience the fullness of life.

3. Enlighten Learning Trust shares our vision and our values

ELT feels like a natural partner for Riverview because of its inclusive yet distinctly Christian ethos, its vision of schools as equally important family members and its unassailable and aspirational commitment to the belief that every child is deserving of a nurturing, holistic and empowering education.

ELT's vision, values and purpose are aligned with our own. Like us, it aims to bring about positive social change by equipping children for a rapidly changing world

<https://www.enlightenlt.education/VisionandValues>

By joining ELT, we would not be 'taken over' and would become an integral part of a 'family of schools'. Our unique and distinctive vision and values will be celebrated and championed such that the 'Riverview way' will thrive.

4. There is a national move towards academy status for all schools

Some Local Authorities are vastly reducing and withdrawing support for education, meaning that the system of education in this country is increasingly school-led. As a consequence, we believe that schools in Surrey are becoming increasingly isolated often with little support, a greater sense of competition and a disproportionately large amount of time spent by leaders on tasks which would have previously been undertaken by the Local Authority. This all culminates in less time to focus on excellent teaching and learning.

Academisation seeks to address this imbalance, re-establishing pupil outcomes as the top priority of partnered schools. Within Surrey, 123 out of 296 primary schools and 42 out of 53 secondary schools were now academies (October 2020). Over half of children nationally are now educated in academy schools. The government's vision is for every school to be part of a family of schools in strong academy trusts.

Summary

In summary, the Governing Body believes that both the children and teachers at Riverview will benefit from collaboration with ELT through shared vision and values, further strengthening our resilience and the opportunities of our staff, all centred around maximising the outcomes of our children through educational excellence.

How can I have my say?

We want to listen to your views and to answer outstanding questions. We encourage you to join our dialogue by:

- Completing the questionnaire, which will be emailed to you on Monday 7th November 2022 following the opportunities for discussion as listed below. This should be completed by Monday 14th November 2022.
- Emailing the school using the email info@riverview.surrey.sch.uk with the subject title ACADEMISATION to ask questions relating to this consultation. This information will help us develop our FAQ document.
- Attending a drop-in session with Governors to answer any questions you may have. They will be available at 'Time for Talk' on Wednesday 5th October and Thursday 6th October 2022

If there is a demand for more meetings we will arrange another face to face meeting during the week beginning 10th October 2022.

Alternatively, please feel free to come and chat to any member of the leadership team when they are on the playground before or after school.

- Meeting Mike Boddington (CEO of Enlighten Learning Trust) and Ant Marsh (Director of Primary Education) who will be available after school, on the playground for a chat on Wednesday 19th October 2022.
- Attend a meeting with Mike Boddington (CEO of Enlighten Learning Trust) and Ant Marsh (Director of Primary Education) on Wednesday 19th October 2022 from 5pm to 6pm

Our parents, staff and the Diocese are being consulted as part of this process.

The consultation closes on Monday 14th November 2022. Please share any views you wish to by completing the questionnaire before this date.

What happens next?

Our Full Governing Body will consider all feedback received prior to making a final decision about becoming an academy and partnering with ELT. Should the proposal proceed, it is anticipated that Riverview would convert to academy status on or after the 1st April 2023. Should the proposal not proceed, Riverview will remain a maintained school. For more information about our proposed conversion please visit our [Academy Consultation webpage](#).



Mrs M Atkins
Headteacher



Mrs E Letchford
Chair of Governors

On behalf of the Full Governing Body of Riverview CofE Primary and Nursery School
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