



Aldercar High School

In pursuit of excellence

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Head Teacher: Mrs C Hatto

9th May 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

Proposal to convert to Academy status and join the Embark Federation Multi-Academy Trust - consultation.

At the Governing Body meeting on Tuesday 3rd May 2022, the Governing Body of Aldercar High School resolved to consult with stakeholders, staff, parents and carers on the proposal to convert to academy status and to join the Embark Federation Multi-Academy Trust.

The consultation period will run from Monday 9th May 2022 until Friday 17th June 2022.

This has been discussed thoroughly at Governing Body level. We have taken great care to explore all possible options to ensure that the students of Aldercar High School are placed in the strongest position for the future.

The Governing Body agreed that by making this decision together with 3 other strong secondary schools from within Derbyshire, we will be able to strengthen the provision for our young people now and long in to the future. We have chosen EMBARK as we share their core beliefs of Family, Integrity, Teamwork and Success. We also believe in their shared vision which is to create 'stand out' schools at the heart of their communities. We are excited by the potential to be even stronger together for the good of our children.

In forming a MAT, the over-riding concern of governors is to ensure that our school continues to provide the best possible standard of education and care for our children.

Key points of forming a Multi-Academy Trust

- Our school will retain its character and will continue to look, feel and remain as it is now with the same: school uniform, school name, school times, holiday pattern and admission policy. Most of the changes will be behind the scenes.
- Schools retain their own Head Teacher and they will lead the school on a day to day basis alongside a local Governing Team whilst receiving support and challenge from the MAT to ensure the best provision for our children.
- The creation of a MAT means funding for running our schools comes directly to us, meaning we have more control over how it is spent. It will also mean some services can be shared across the schools which will help them be more efficient and make sure that funding is focused on teaching, learning and support for our children.

Academy status is becoming more common, over 70% of secondary schools now belong to a trust and many local authorities have encouraged and supported schools to organise themselves within groups, such as Federations or MATs. The recent Government White Paper

has also highlighted the national ambition for all schools to belong to a MAT by 2030 at the latest.

As their budgets are reduced, Local Authorities are also reducing the services that they have available to schools. Making this change now means that we can choose how we want our school to develop and play a part in shaping the future of secondary education across our county. Our Local Authority has made it clear that it expects all schools to consider the pros and cons of such a move. Becoming an academy means removing the school from the control of the Local Authority. The decision to consider changing our structure has not been taken lightly and our Governing Body has spent a long time looking at the possible advantages and drawbacks of such a move.

Advantages of forming a MAT:

- Research strongly suggests working together as a group of schools raises standards.
- It will help us recruit and retain the best staff and give them the very best development and career opportunities.
- School leaders and teachers can share thinking and planning, helping to spread expertise.
- Governors and Trustees can work more strategically, especially during challenging times.
- Groups of schools can find it easier to find and fund specialist expertise (both specialist teachers and specialists in areas such as data analysis, finance, health and safety).
- The MAT structure leaves Head Teachers to focus on teaching and learning (with the business-side of the role being more coordinated across the MAT).
- Economies of scale can help schools cope better with shrinking budgets.
- We will have greater freedoms in developing the curriculum to make sure it is personalised to the needs of our pupils.
- We will be able to create and share staffing roles that operate across the MAT that would not have been possible in any one individual school.
- Shared professional development can more easily be arranged and afforded.

Governors believe that academy status within a MAT is the best way to support Aldercar High School in continuing to develop and improve, and that working together within the MAT will bring benefits to teaching and learning that will positively impact on children's achievement. This is a positive decision that the four secondary schools are making together. This way we can choose how to shape our future together in the best interests of our children, staff and communities.

What we would like you to do:

We would like to know what you think of our plans, so we are inviting you to take part in our public consultation which will run from Monday 9th May 2022 until Friday 17th June 2022.

We will be holding a consultation day at the school on Wednesday 18th May 2022 which will give you the opportunity to find out more about the proposed trust and ask any questions that you may have.

Wednesday 18th May 2022

9:00-10:00am

Informal coffee morning to be held at Aldercar High School with Governors, Senior Leaders, Matt Crawford (Chief Executive of Embark), trustee representatives of the proposed Embark MAT and myself.

3:30 – 4:30pm

Staff meeting to be held at Aldercar High School with Governors, Senior Leaders, Matt Crawford (Chief Executive of Embark), trustee representatives of the proposed Embark MAT and myself to discuss the proposal and ask any questions they may have.

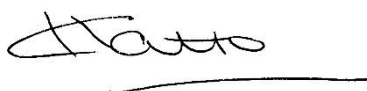
5.30pm – 6.30pm

A parents meeting held at Aldercar High School for parents to come and find out more about the proposal and ask any questions of Governors, Senior Leaders, Matt Crawford (Chief Executive of Embark), trustee representatives of the proposed Embark MAT and myself.

In addition, please read the Frequently Asked Questions attached with this letter.

Please feel free to ask any questions about this proposal, voice any positive comments or air any concerns to the following email: consultation@aldercarhigh.co.uk or alternatively you are welcome to write into the school for the attention of Mrs Hatto / Mrs Paver-Brown (Chair of Governors).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hatto', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Clare Hatto
Head Teacher