



4th June 2024

Dear Staff, Parents and Carers,

Your School governing board have been concerned for some time that the support being offered by the Local Authority has been declining and on the advice of ESCC have been looking at alternative opportunities. We have extensively researched the options and believe that now is the right time for our school to join up with a small but brilliant academy that is very much aligned with our ethos and values. The Governing Board has passed a resolution to convert Ringmer Primary and Nursery School into an academy and to join Durrington Multi Academy Trust (DMAT). This is a Trust, based in Sussex, who we believe will be able to further improve our school and help it become outstanding. This is an amazing opportunity for our school community to work alongside other educational establishments, learning and collaborating with one another for the benefit of the current and future Ringmer learners.

[Home - Durrington Multi Academy Trust \(dmat.education\)](http://dmat.education)

What is an academy?

An academy is an independently managed and publicly funded school that operates outside of local authority control. More and more schools are taking this step and we believe the time is right for us to join them. This change in status will grant us more autonomy and flexibility in shaping the educational experience we provide to your children.

Why are we making this change?

The decision to apply to become an academy has not been taken lightly. Academisation offers advantages that will ultimately enhance the education and opportunities we can provide to our learners:

Curriculum Freedom: As an academy, we will have more freedom to design and adapt our curriculum to meet the specific needs and aspirations of our learners.

Enhanced Resources: We will have greater purchasing power, allowing us to allocate resources more efficiently to continue to improve teaching and learning.

Staff Development: Our dedicated staff team will have increased opportunities for professional development, ensuring they are equipped with the latest teaching techniques and tools, and have the opportunity to work with a wider pool of professionals.

Community Engagement: We will continue to work closely with parents and the local community to further develop our school as a real hub of our community.

Educational Excellence: Our primary focus will remain to continue to provide an outstanding, inclusive education with high expectations of excellent outcomes for all our learners.

Over the past 18 months, as part of a robust due diligence process, we have engaged in training, listened to presentations from various trusts and visited other schools to find out about their experiences of joining and working within a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) and we believe that this transition will bring numerous benefits to our learners, staff, and the entire school community. Our choice of DMAT was made because:

- Their vision and values align closely with ours
- It is a small Trust and gives us the opportunity to influence future developments
- Our leaders will receive high levels of support in all areas of school life
- Quality Professional Development will be available to all
- The MAT includes a Research School and the South Downs Teacher Training Hub
- During 2023, several of our leaders had the opportunity to provide some consultancy for the Trust and really benefited from the opportunity

What changes can you expect?

The day-to-day experience of our children and families will remain largely the same. RPNS will retain its identity as a school for our village. This was one of our top priorities in speaking with any MAT and one of our core identification requirements. The name and uniform will remain unaffected by the move to academisation. Our commitment to providing a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment for your children remains unwavering. Any changes are likely to be behind the scenes. We will keep you informed every step of the way.

What happens next?

We are in the early stages of the process and no agreements have been signed. Our first steps are to submit an application to convert to an academy and open a full consultation during which you will receive more information, and have the opportunity to meet and speak with leaders from DMAT.

The consultation period will run from **Tuesday 4th June to Tuesday 2nd July 2024.**

We are keen to ensure that all stakeholders have the opportunity to take part in the consultation process. A Q&A document is attached with this letter. We have arranged the following opportunities to come and find out more from Governors and DMAT leaders and to ask questions:

- **Wednesday 12th June at 8.45am in the school hall.**
- **Tuesday 18th June at 7.15pm in the school hall**
- **Friday 28th June at 2.45pm in the school hall**

You can also submit questions and comments here: <https://forms.gle/nviAXVTfNA4uVCns6>
Pupils will be kept informed and given the chance to comment.

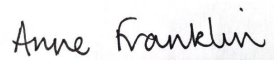
Our commitment to you

The welfare and success of your children remain our top priorities. We are dedicated to ensuring that the conversion to an academy is a seamless and positive experience for everyone involved. We value your input and look forward to working together to make this transition a success.

We understand that change can be challenging, but we are confident that this decision will enable us to provide an even better education for your children.

Thank you for your continued support and trust in Ringmer Primary and Nursery School.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Anne Franklin". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Anne Franklin

Chair of Governors of Ringmer Primary and Nursery School