

Sale & Davys CE Primary School
Academy Status Consultation Queries / Further Information

1. Academies are still in their infancy.

Academies have been part of the education landscape since 2000 and the academies programme has grown under successive governments. The Academies Act 2010 sets out the current framework for the academies programme. DDAT was established in 2014 and has grown from the first 2 schools (joining in Summer 2014) to its current membership of 29.

2. Mickleover school turned down academy status due to the financial requirements upfront.

There are no upfront costs to the school on joining DDAT. There are costs associated with the academy conversion process itself, (mainly legal work, setting up of new financial systems etc), and these costs are covered by a 'conversion grant' provided by the Department for Education (DfE).

3. Headteacher will be taken away for long periods of time.

There are no plans to make any changes to the current leadership at Sale and Davys. DDAT do not foresee any reason(s) for a Headteacher to be away from school for long periods of time.

4. DDAT state a minimum of 400 pupils for an Executive Head model.

DDAT do not have a set model for its schools in terms of leadership structure as every school is unique. An Executive Head model will be considered only where there are educational benefits of doing so and this would only be progressed with the full support of the Local Governing Body.

5. What will be the school application process (admissions)?

On conversion to academy status there are no changes to the admissions process – Sale and Davys will still be part of the LA coordinated admissions and parents will apply for a place in the same way.

6. No benefits to the school by becoming an academy except potential financial benefits.

The decision to become an academy is not based on finance. Governors have considered the educational benefits of joining DDAT and the positive impact this will have on our pupils and their families. As a member of DDAT, Sale and Davys will have access to increased support from a Diocesan Trust who share our vision to provide the very best for children.

7. 6 visits per year – costs associated with this.

There will be a minimum of 6 visits per year by the school improvement team. However, in reality, there will be significantly more visits and as an example, an outstanding school in DDAT received 19 visits from the school improvement team in an academic year. This also does not include any support visits from the finance, HR, health and safety, site and buildings, or any other member of the DDAT central team. All visits from the school improvement and central team are included in the management fee. There are no additional costs to the school for visits.

8. Annual reports – staffing structure – Mrs Briggs will be overseeing more than one school.

There are no plans to change the leadership structure at Sale and Davys. As referred to previously, DDAT do not have a set model for Executive Headships and will only consider this where there is an educational benefit and with the full support of the school's governing body.

9. What is the reason for governors deciding now is the right time.

The governors of Sale and Davys have been considering academy status and joining DDAT for a number of years. Governors have monitored the growth of the academy trust and sought advice from other schools within the Trust on their experiences. Governors feel that now is the right time to move ahead with the proposal and access the increased levels of support that are offered as a member of the DDAT family of schools.

10. Will school meals be provided by Willington Primary School?

DDAT have no plans to change current arrangements for meal provision and this would be a decision for the governing body as it is now.

11. Will the school still work with LA schools?

Yes, all DDAT schools are actively encouraged to continue to work with schools regardless of whether they are DDAT, LA or other MAT schools. It is vitally important that schools continue to work with their local cluster to benefit pupils and the community.

12. Are all staff happy to stay on at the school once it changes over?

Members of staff have been invited to respond to the consultation and no concerns have been raised. The school will complete more in-depth consultation with staff on the TUPE transfer if the proposal does proceed.

13. When will the changeover happen?

No date has been proposed for the academy conversion however it usually takes between 4 to 6 months following approval to proceed. The timings for conversion can be dictated by the school to ensure that this moves ahead at the right pace for the school.

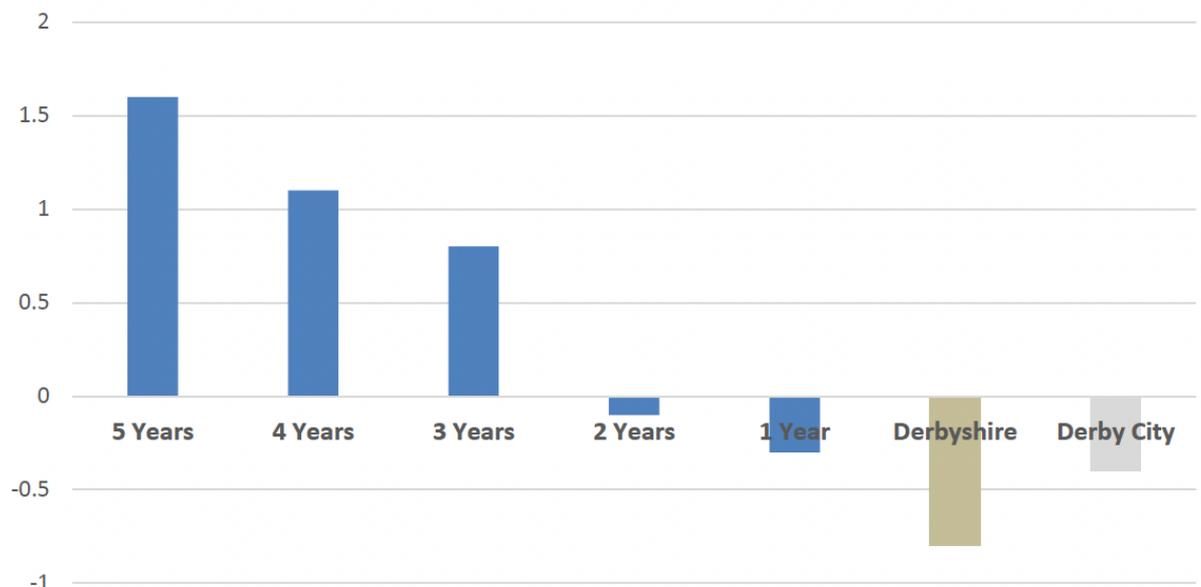
14. Are there any assurances in place that Mrs Briggs will not be moved to another school to help support inadequate schools?

No assurances can be given as senior leaders in all schools (whether they are LA schools or academies) may be asked to support a struggling school. This arrangement is not specific to academies and as a Church school within the Diocese of Derby this kind of school-to-school support is already encouraged. Academy status does not have an impact on this.

15. How do the statistics of grades and achievements with schools within DDAT compare to Sale and Davys? DDAT schools do not seem to be achieving any more than average grades.

The performance of a school is measured by progress scores, as this indicates what value is added during a child's journey through school. The graph below shows the performance of DDAT schools in this respect based on how long they have been in the Trust:

A graph to show the average combined progress scores across a group of schools - grouped according to length of time since conversion



Analysis of data shows that the longer schools are working in DDAT, the greater the impact on progress children make. The group of schools that have been in DDAT for 5+ years have an average reading, writing and maths (R,W,M) progress score of +1.6. The group that have been in DDAT for 4+ years have a score of +1.1. The 3 year+

group have a score of +0.8. The 2 year+ group have a score of -0.1 and those that have been in for 1 year have a score of -0.3.

DDAT takes schools into the Trust that have been graded as 'inadequate' by Ofsted. The trust works intensively with the schools to bring about rapid, but sustained improvement. 50% of the schools in the group labelled 5+ years were inadequate when they came into the trust. Their improvement was rapid and by the end of 2016 they had an average combined progress score for R,W,M of +1.6. The improvement is clearly sustained when you look at the same group of schools 3 years later when their combined average progress score was still +1.6 in 2019. Another indicator of the Trust's success is the performance of a group of schools over a longer period of time (over a three year period) as this obviously takes into account 3 times as many pupils (3 year 6 cohorts from each school).

Looking back at how the group of schools that have been in the Trust 5+ years as of July 2019 and considering their 2017, 2018 and 2019 outcomes, this group of schools have an average combined progress score of +1.4. The group of schools that have been in the trust for 4+ years have an average progress score for 2017, 2018 and 2019 of +0.7 and the group of schools that have been in the trust for 3+ years also have +0.7. Progress is not just rapid in the schools where it needs to be, but it is also sustained over time.

16. DDAT annual report – planning on doubling the size although it has not managed to achieve this. How do they plan to manage growth and what effect will this have on the schools and funding?

The current DDAT strategic growth plan is available on the DDAT website here: <https://ddat.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/DDAT-Strategic-Growth-Plan-VF-BOARD-APPROVED-SF-December-2020-1.pdf>

This is an up-to-date version of the growth plan that has been approved by the DDAT Board of Directors. The annual plan referred to in this query may be from a number of years ago.

The growth of the Trust does not have an impact on individual schools' funding. However, additional schools joining the Trust does have an impact on the overall capacity and expertise within the organisation.

17. When school moves over it loses its Outstanding Ofsted grade. How long will it be before the school is given its new grading?

Sale and Davys' last inspection was 2008 and the school was judged to be Outstanding. Converting to academy status does not change the outcome of that inspection. Sale and Davys will be due for an inspection when routine inspections resume in the Autumn term, as it has been 13 years since the last inspection.

18. Level of support will depend on the category which Ofsted or the MAT Board place the school in so if Sale and Davys is placed in level 1 then the level of support drops. If this happens does the school only get support if the school declines at one of its inspections?

The school will receive a significant amount of support regardless of the level in the scheme of delegation. If the school is judged to be 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' there is clearly a need for additional support to be provided to ensure that standards improve rapidly – this is why schools at this level pay a higher management fee in recognition of the additional support and resource required.

19. If the school does require additional support at any time then DDAT increases the management fee Sale and Davy are required to pay so how will the school manage this?

This should be factored into any school's financial planning to ensure that support is affordable. However, this is not specific to academies and all schools should ensure that they can access additional support if this is needed. The DDAT model has been developed to ensure that the support is in place to avoid the school being in a situation where standards decline. The minimum level of support provided from all teams within DDAT ensure that the team know the DDAT schools thoroughly and support is provided as soon as weaknesses and areas for improvement are identified, before impacting standards.

20. Do the school pay per visit for the 6 visits per year in addition to the fee the school pays to join DDAT and any yearly contributions to DDAT?

No, all DDAT support is included in the yearly contributions (management fee). There are no additional costs for visits outside the minimum of 6 (see query 7). There is no joining fee on conversion to academy status as part of DDAT.

21. Have the 2021 intake parents been made aware of the proposal?

Consultation materials have been made available on the school website and this will be discussed with parents on an ongoing basis.

22. Will help and support be given to any families wanting to move their child out of the school and into a LA school?

The school will support transition in the same way it does currently. However, children and parents should not notice any changes to the excellent provision at Sale and Davys. The benefits to the school will be 'behind the scenes' in terms of ensuring continuous improvement, collaboration with a wider range of schools, training and development for staff as well as support for the senior leadership. Although this support happens 'behind the scenes' it will have a clear and positive impact on pupils.

23. Is it true that if the school is not happy or achieving well within DDAT it is not possible to move back to the LA?

It is correct that a return to the LA may not be possible. If a school's relationship with its Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) is not working, the Department for Education may take the decision to re-broker the school to another MAT. However, the trust that we are proposing to join is a Diocesan MAT and as a Church school we have a long standing history of working positively with the Diocese of Derby and we do not foresee any reason as to why this may change in the future.

24. I am very happy with the school as it currently stands with its Outstanding rating. How can this be improved upon?

The decision to join DDAT is not taken on the basis that we want to change the things that work so well for Sale and Davys. The decision is taken on the basis that we want to continually improve for our children and the community, and the additional support provided by DDAT will help us do this.