

# Mendell Primary School

Aspire - Challenge - Achieve

## School Future Update

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to give you an exciting update on the future of our school.

Over recent months the Governors at Mendell Primary have been in discussions about becoming an academy. Becoming an academy is something that over 80% of secondary schools and nearly 50% of primary schools have done over recent years and for many reasons we are reaching the conclusion that now is the right time for us to look at what that would mean for our community. We are looking to join a family of schools who support their schools to be part of their communities, so our ethos and values will also stay as they are.

Over the last few months the Governors have met with different Multi-Academy Trusts to establish which one is the best fit for our school and we are now consulting with you, as parents and carers, as we feel that Leading Learners Multi-Academy Trust is the perfect match for our school.

Leading Learners is a small Multi Academy Trust which has four other schools and has been working with a small group of Primary Schools on the Wirral. Leading Learners' vision is to ensure that all schools keep their individuality whilst improving the education for all pupils. The CEO of the Trust is Mrs Yvonne Brown and I know that she was delighted to meet our pupils and staff on the many visits to our school. Yvonne would love to meet Mendell's Parents and Carers and is coming to Mendell to meet with you on **8th June from 8:50-9:30** (before Sports day starts). I do hope you can join us to meet Yvonne and ask any questions you may have.

We believe that joining the trust will:

- Ensure that the school leaders remain in control of the school's vision and journey.
- Give the school greater freedom in securing best value for money by being able to make better use of the school's full funding entitlement.
- Enable effective collaboration between the schools in the trust.
- Open up opportunities for pupils to engage with other pupils and for staff to share their expertise and learn from other schools across the trust.

There will be no visible changes for the pupils at our school, the leadership team will continue to lead and drive forward the improvements at the school and there will be no changes in our curriculum delivery.

Below are a list of frequently asked questions which explain the process and how it will affect your child.

I do hope you can join us on 9th June 8:50am (after the gates close). If you are unable to attend and have any questions or comments please email [support@mendell.wirral.sch.uk](mailto:support@mendell.wirral.sch.uk)

Kind regards,



Mrs C. O'Neill Edwards; Head Teacher

## **FAQs**

### **What is an academy?**

Academies are classed as independent state schools which have the freedom, enabled by the Academies Act 2010, to determine their own policies on such things as the curriculum taught, school hours, term dates and staff pay. Primary, secondary and special schools are all able to apply to convert into an academy and are accountable to the Secretary of State.

Academies are managed by their own Academy Trust and are not the responsibility of the council. Academies are given directly money which would have been given to the council; the academy can choose how to spend the money.

### **Who runs an academy?**

The academy is run by an Academy Trust. This is a legal body which operates as a charitable organisation and a company limited by guarantee. The trust has a formal agreement (a contract) with the Department for Education. There will still be governors for the school. Trustees of the Multi-Academy Trust will delegate governance functions down to the local level of the Academy and therefore operate Local Governing Bodies. There will also still be elected parents on the local governing body.

### **Are there any rules relating to admissions that academies have to follow?**

Yes, academies must follow the law for school admissions, special educational needs and exclusions as if they were a maintained school.

### **My child has special educational needs. How can I be confident that they will be given the same level of support, attention and care?**

The Academies Act 2010 requires academies to follow the same statutory requirements framework for special educational needs as local authority schools.

Schools will receive funding for young people with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) the same way, whether they are academies or local authority schools. Where young people have special needs but do not have an EHCP, academies are required to have regard for the SEND Code of Practice, meaning that young people will be supported according to the level of need and involvement of external agencies.

### **What will change for my child?**

Nothing, the provision for you and your child will remain the same.

### **Does the school have to change its uniform?**

No, we do not have any plans to change the uniform.

### **Does the school have to change its name?**

No, the name of the school could stay the same unless the school community wanted to change it. This is something that parents can help decide. We will be asking parents what their thoughts are after half term.

### **Will the school still have links with the Local Authority or other schools in the area?**

Yes, we know the value of collaboration and fully intend to continue with this.

### **Are academies exempt from Ofsted inspection?**

No, academies are subject to the same inspection regulations as schools maintained by the Local Authority.

### **Isn't it only struggling schools that convert to academy status?**

No, that was the case when the Academies project first started over 15 years ago, but since 2010 all schools have been able to convert, including many of the very best schools in the country.

### **Will our school close?**

From parents and children's point of view nothing will change; everything that helps our children to progress and thrive in our school will remain. There is a technicality that means officially Mendell primary School will close and then re-open at the same time as an academy.

How can I find out more information about academies?

<https://www.gov.uk/types-of-school/academies>