



# EASTWICK SCHOOLS

## Securing the future of education at Eastwick

The Eastwick Schools Governing Body has been exploring how best to safeguard and improve the educational provision at Eastwick in the context of changes to educational policy regarding how schools are funded and operated.

After detailed consideration of the options available, including maintaining the status quo, the Governing Body has elected to formally consult on changing to foundation schools then academies within The Howard Partnership Trust (THPT).

The benefits of this would be:

- better support to improve and achieve an outstanding Ofsted rating, making us a better school for our children,
- better opportunities for staff development and retention, and
- better access to funding and control of our expenses.

Before any final decisions are taken, we will benefit from the opportunity of consulting with our staff, our parents and friends, and other key stakeholders. As outlined below, the whole process will likely take the rest of this school year, potentially taking effect from the beginning of the 2016/17 academic year.

### What to expect over the coming months ...

In exploring the options available to us, we have identified additional benefits that can be gained through changing to foundation schools; an option that is not available after academy conversion.

We will be inviting an exchange of views and taking the decision on the foundation change before doing the same on academy conversion. The following diagram illustrates the steps we intend to take, although the timeframe will remain flexible to allow us time to consider the input we hope gain from the two consultations.





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## Why foundation status?

In changing from community schools to foundation schools we would take control of admissions and the assets of the schools (in trust on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education) and become the employer of our staff.

The benefits would include:

- increased surety and flexibility to improve the schools' facilities and;
- increased control of the strategic direction and advancement of the school.

Community schools and foundation schools are maintained by the Local Authority and therefore the schools would continue to be funded and overseen by Surrey County Council. However, with the above benefits, the Governing Body will hold greater freedoms to shape the overall direction and provide the best possible learning environment for Eastwick children.

This change can be undertaken independently of a move to convert to an academy but we see this as the initial step in a two-step process.

## Why conversion to an academy?

The academy school model was originally conceived by the Labour government prior to 2010. Subsequently it has become the Government's model of choice, as evidenced in the recent 2015 Autumn Statement from Government.

Conversion represents a significant step for any school. The Governing Body has been focussed on exploring and shaping a model that suits Eastwick's specific situation; one that aligns with our vision and ethos, and critically helps us strengthen and improve the long-term educational outcomes of the schools.

THPT has a proven track record of outstanding provision. As partnership schools within the trust, Eastwick Schools would input to, and benefit from, improved oversight and support. The objective is to deliver an even better educational offering, with greater resilience to change and improved assurance of long-term performance, alongside the benefits highlighted above.

*The Spending Review and Autumn Statement represents the next step towards the government's goal of ending local authorities' role in running schools and all schools becoming an academy. This will accelerate the Government's ambitious reform programme, giving more power to teachers.*

The Spending Review and Autumn Statement, 2015

*54 of Surrey's 300 primary schools have converted to an academy.*

*There were 14 primary school academies at the beginning of the 2013/14 academic year, just over two years ago.*

Surrey CC website  
December 2015

## More information

Information on the proposal to change to foundation status can be found on the school website <http://eastwickschools.uk>. During the course of the consultation, a set of Frequently Asked Questions will be developed and regularly updated to help explain the proposed changes in more detail. These too will be found on our website.

Information relating to THPT can be found at <http://thehowardpartnership.org>