

SOUTH CUMBRIA MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

CAMBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL PROPOSAL TO JOIN SCMAT



RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO PUBLIC CONSULTATION MEETING 8/3/23

Below are questions that were submitted as part of the consultation process and responded to by Cambridge Primary School Headteacher Jenny Lavery, SCMAT CEO & Executive Headteacher Andrew Wren and SCMAT school member Vickerstown Primary School Headteacher David Holmes as part of the public meeting on March 8th 2023.

Q: Will policies and procedures be standard across the Trust or does each school have its own policies?

A: SCMAT CEO and Executive Headteacher Professor Andrew Wren:

The statutory policies are central but there are some local policies and where appropriate we have adopted local authority policies.

There is a Cumbria-wide group of MAT CEOs that has a relationship with the union reps and we discuss emerging issues but also look at common policies where there is the opportunity to harmonise across the Trusts. The CEOs come together with the union reps and use this as a forum to refresh the policies. We are then free to adopt them as a Trust knowing it has gone through union consultation.

Q: What about redeployment?

A: SCMAT CEO and Executive Headteacher Professor Andrew Wren:

We see that there will be progression opportunities for staff. But if redundancies ever need to be made, there will be an opportunity to redeploy to another suitable alternative at another SCMAT member school because employees work for the Trust, not the school

Q: Will staff be asked to cover staff shortages in other schools?

A: SCMAT CEO and Executive Headteacher Professor Andrew Wren:

AW – No one will be made to cover and an individual's place of work is contractual but there may be opportunities that arise. We can ask but we cannot make staff cover.

JL – There may be an opportunity for someone to stretch their wings a bit more and gain more experience.

Q: Will schools be able to outsource their own supply staff?

A: SCMAT CEO and Executive Headteacher Professor Andrew Wren:

This is a really good point that has not been raised before, I cannot see any reason why not and it is good to have staff on the pay roll who can come in and cover.

JL – Between the schools already in and connected with the Trust, we know people and we do share them.

Q: Is my pension safe?

A: SCMAT CEO and Executive Headteacher Professor Andrew Wren:

Yes, it transfers over through the TUPE process and there are no changes.

Q: Will current working hours be assured by the MAT

A: SCMAT CEO and Executive Headteacher Professor Andrew Wren:

Yes, terms and conditions remain the same.

Q: Will we benefit from others doing the same role?

A: SCMAT CEO and Executive Headteacher Professor Andrew Wren:

There are cross school groups that are sharing expertise and while it is primarily teaching and learning at the moment, we will also be looking at support staff groups coming together.

Q: What will change?

A: SCMAT CEO and Executive Headteacher Professor Andrew Wren:

- In the first instance there will be very little change. SCMAT values the individual identity of each of its schools and is passionate about retaining this;
- No requirement for a school to change its name, except that for legal reasons the school will convert to an academy under South Cumbria Multi-Academy Trust;
- Local Governing Body in place;
- Any plans to change name, logo or uniform will be led by the school and governors;
- Pupils are unlikely to notice any immediate differences. Over time pupils and staff will benefit from the sharing of excellent practice in teaching and learning between the partner schools.

Q: School meals are limited, will this be looked at?

A: SCMAT CEO and Executive Headteacher Professor Andrew Wren:

As a Trust we currently have a range of internal and external providers across our member schools and our Operations Manager is reviewing what works best. If we are made aware of inconsistencies in the standard of food and the cost we will work to address this.