

## Frequently Asked Questions - Partners

### How will they be chosen? How much say will they have?

All partners will be chosen by the schools after long and detailed discussions on the extent to which they share our vision for the schools and community in the future. They will be involved at a strategic level in helping us shape the future direction of the cluster. Day to day running of the schools will still be the responsibility of the Governing Body, as it is now.

### What is in it for them?

There is mutual benefit to be derived for the partner organisations as long term involvement with us helps them to meet their own agendas, **but they are not expecting commercial gain**. Many organisations welcome the opportunity to engage with and raise aspirations in their local community by sharing expertise and skills with local schools and contributing to policy development. They also welcome engagement with young people who are going to be the employees of the future. Involvement in such programmes has proved popular with many employees and many organisations are seeing improvements in staff morale and retention as a result.

### How are Trustees selected? For how long? What qualifications do they hold?

Our partner organisations will be required to show an understanding of the work of the local Children's Centre, schools and colleges. They will all sign Memoranda of Understanding to that effect. The organisations will be permanent members of the Trust Board unless they are voted off by a majority of the members. Each organisation is responsible for nominating a CRB checked, senior executive representative to attend three key strategic meetings per year.

### What are the benefits of formalising relationships?

We are aiming for a balance between educational, public and business organisations to provide a mix of new skills for us to draw on to move the schools forward with greater certainty in a formal, legal, sustainable, long-term inter-organisational relationship, rather than many existing 'ad hoc' ones that rely on personalities and short term objectives. Our proposal is to form a Trust with external partners who share our long term vision. In the same way as governors are expected to serve a 4 year term, it is anticipated that when the constitution of the trust is written and agreed by all parties that there will be an expectation of a similar relationship timeframe, albeit with clear exit and enter protocols.

### Will they bring in extra funding?

There is no requirement or expectation that Trusts will contribute financially to the schools that they support. Trusts are not about generating income for schools - they are about a range of organisations contributing their skills and expertise to the development of schools. Of course, Trust partners may contribute financially if they want to. Having charitable status does open up fundraising opportunities that are not available to community schools such as the Big Lottery and Gift Aid. Trust schools will be funded via the Local Authority in the same way as other maintained schools.