

General Frequently Asked Questions

What is an Academy?

Academies are classed as independent state-funded schools, which have the freedom to determine their own policies on such things as the curriculum taught, school hours, term dates and staff pay and conditions.

Academies are managed by their own academy trust and are not the responsibility of the Council. Academy Trusts are given directly the money which would have been given to the Council, so academies can choose how best to spend that money on the provision of education.

What is a multi-academy trust?

A MAT is a single charitable company which operates a group of schools. In this case, each school would continue to have a local governing body to which certain functions would be delegated. The MAT will ultimately be accountable and responsible for the performance of all schools in the trust. Funding for the schools within the MAT continues to be allocated on an individual academy basis.

Why would a school want to convert as part of a multi-academy trust?

A MAT, as a single legal entity, allows schools to achieve strong collaboration and to use this collaboration and accountability to drive up school standards. Having the MAT as employer of staff also allows flexibility around sharing resources to meet the needs of the individual schools involved. The MAT can also provide a clear, consistent strategy and vision across a group of schools working together. MATs can often negotiate contracts and services that achieve much better value for money than if each school was to negotiate individually. By concentrating some of these decisions in the central team of the MAT Heads and Governors are able to focus more closely on educational standards and provision in their schools.

Which MAT is it proposed that we join?

Governors have chosen the Lighthouse Schools Partnership as the MAT that they wish to work with. Current members of the LSP are Gordano School, High Down Infants, High Down Juniors, Portishead Primary School, St Mary's CE Primary School (Portbury) and St Peter's CE Primary School (Portishead). The existing LSP is being reorganised on a Hubs model so that schools in Portishead continue to work together and schools in Backwell/Nailsea for their own Hub. In due course several more hubs may be added to form a financially stable trust which enjoys both the benefits of close working relationships and strong central services.

Will the name of the school change?

We will not be changing the school name.

Will the school change its uniform?

We will not be changing the school uniform.

Will term dates and school day times change?

We have no plans to alter the times of the school day or term dates, keeping these in line with most North Somerset schools. However, we may consult with the other schools in the partnership to align some of our INSET days in future years to make it easier for parents.

Will the curriculum change?

We would have greater freedom and autonomy over our curriculum. This will enable us to continue to develop our curriculum over the next few years should we so wish and the freedom to review any proposed changes by government and to decide whether they are right for the children at our school. We may also choose to work with some or all of the other schools in the partnership on joint curriculum projects.

Will the admissions policy and criteria change?

Academies are bound by the School Admissions Code.

Will the school receive more money from the government?

At present North Somerset retains a proportion of our funding to provide some central LA services. As an academy our trust would receive that money directly and will be able to choose who to buy those services from and how they should be best deployed for the specific benefit of children at our school. By becoming part of a Multi-Academy Trust, we would be able to take advantages of economies of scale to maximise our resources.

Will the senior staff spend more time running the business side of the academy instead of focusing on the teaching and learning?

Setting up and running an academy will require extra administrative work particularly in the early stages. However, we will be using start-up funding from the government to project manage this process and to get the partnership up and running. One of the benefits of a MAT over a stand-alone academy is that the central team take care of much of the business operation freeing the Headteachers and Governors to focus most on educational and welfare priorities.

How will the school be accountable financially?

We will be governed by the rules and regulations for charitable trusts so we will be required to produce and file annual accounts with Companies House, as part of the Multi-Academy Trust.

Will the school get support towards the expenses of academy conversion?

We will shortly be receiving a £25,000 grant from the DfE to cover the costs of the conversion including legal expenses. As a partnership we also hope to receive an additional start-up grant from the DfE.

What is the Local Authority view on academies?

It is the request of North Somerset Council that all schools now join MATs. Academy status offers schools an opportunity to develop a new relationship with the Local Authority with the Local Authority becoming the commissioner and schools the providers of education. We envisage that we will continue to work very closely with the Local Authority. We have worked in close liaison with officers from the LA in developing our strategy.

Does withdrawing from the Local Authority control leave us on our own?

We will still be in a position to buy in the LA services as and when required rather than being tied in, or alternatively, look elsewhere if we feel there are better service providers. As we will be working in daily collaboration with the other schools in the cluster, our MAT and the wider region we will definitely not be on our own. We will also be maintaining our excellent relationship with North Somerset LA who have a key role in commissioning education and overseeing standards across all schools in the area.

Will the structure of the Governing Body change?

The composition of the Governing Body will be maintained as it is now.

What will be the future responsibility of the Governors?

The Trust Board will now have overall responsibility for educational standards and the business operations of the partnership. We will be operating a model of earned autonomy so in practice they will delegate the work of overseeing standards in each school to the school Governors. As each school will also have its own budget the Governors will have to take responsibility for planning and spending funds at school level. The most important responsibility of the Governing Body will be for closely monitoring educational standards in the school and acting to support improvement.

Can you revert to LA control once you have become an academy?

The rules from the DfE state that a school would be required to maintain its academy status for at least 7 years. There have not yet been any examples of Academies reverting to LA control.

May 2017

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Questions raised at Governors' Consultation Meeting held 8 May 2017

While many children will complete their full 3-19 education within the LSP, not all of the primary schools feed into either Backwell or Gordano School. How will the LSP manage and support the transition of children from its primary schools to a secondary school outside the LSP?

(Mr Martin Gosden, Federation of Hannah More Infant & Grove Junior Schools)

JB: Such children can still benefit from improved education through being part of the MAT.

JN: Backwell School is used to working with primary schools that feed into more than one secondary school. The transition can be managed effectively, although supporting a common curriculum, eg a preferred first foreign language, could be a challenge. The schools can work together to improve the process, although it is acknowledged that this will not be the same as for children moving within an LSP hub. It is recognised that this is an important challenge that needs careful consideration.

Nailsea School is part of the NSTA, and so works with Backwell and Gordano schools in this capacity.

JB: Collaboration between Backwell and Nailsea schools continues and is increasing; both schools are committed to ensuring a smooth transition for all children.

GL: Two of the Portishead primary schools are not part of the LSP; care has been taken to include them in transition arrangements. The LSP wants its schools to maintain all positive significant relationships with outside schools.

BT: Wraxall children go to both Backwell and Nailsea schools. The Wraxall governors debated long and hard about how joining a MAT with only one of these schools might be viewed, and wished Nailsea School to know that it remained an appropriate and valued partner. He met recently with Nailsea School to discuss what is necessary to make transition effective. It is for the primary schools to engage with Nailsea School to ensure the latter knows that it has not lost primary support. It is for parents to determine the best secondary school for their children, not for primary schools to dictate this. Schools must work together to ensure all appropriate pathways are viable and supported properly.

What will the Scheme of Delegation look like?

(Ms Lucy Gordon, Federation of West Leigh Infant & Backwell CofE Junior Schools)

GL: The current Scheme of Delegation is available on the LSP website <http://www.lsp.org.uk/index.php/partnership-company-reports/> Matters are divided and allocated based on who has the key responsibility, with as much as possible delegated to school LGBs. Most standards matters are with LGBs; most HR matters at Trust Board level, as the employer. There has been some evolution of the scheme from practice.

Who will be the hub-leader? How will they be financed?

GL: The hub leader will be one of the existing Headteachers. The hub-leader role will be one of co-ordination.

How will Headteacher performance management be conducted?

GL: Performance management of Headteachers is undertaken by two LGB members, plus the Executive Principal, with advice from the SIP. It is important that the process is run by governors and that the HT's primary accountability is to the LGB. The Executive Principal's role is as a moderator and to provide assurance to the LSP Trustees. GL added that Trustees sat in on his own appraisal as Executive Principal.

Currently, maintained schools adopt many model policies from North Somerset. Will there be LSP policies for consistency across its schools?

(Miss Becky Cawsey, Wraxall CofE Primary School)

GL: The biggest proportion of policies will be LSP-wide. These are not model policies, but a single LSP policy for adoption by the LGBs. This approach frees significant amounts of governor time to focus on standards. The LSP works in partnership with solicitors Browne Jacobson to ensure its policies are compliant with legislation.

CS: The LSP *Safeguarding Policy* is the same document used by North Somerset.

How will Safeguarding and Online Safety be audited?

GL: The Trustees commission an external safeguarding audit for all schools.

How are school financial monitoring and auditing conducted?

(Mr Martin Gosden, Federation of Hannah More Infant & Grove Junior Schools)

CS: Audit West are employed to undertake three focussed financial audits each year. They choose which schools to sample, and highlight areas of high risk. The LSP accountants audit the full LSP accounts every autumn. The teachers' pension scheme is audited separately.

The LSP Finance Team provides templates for preparation of budget reports. All schools' financial records are held centrally (on cloud-based PS Financials software), which allows ease of access and monitoring. The central team trains school finance staff, and provides support and help.

Is there an optimum size for the LSP, and for its hubs? Could other schools join later?

(Mrs Jacqui Ramplin, Federation of Hannah More Infant & Grove Junior Schools)

GL: The size of the LSP and each hub is potentially limited by the capacity of the central team and the hub secondary school respectively, in order to ensure that the support they provide is effective. The Backwell hub would be a similar size to the Portishead one. If other schools wished to join one of these, the Trustees would need to consider if that would put undue strain on the resources. One of the RSC principles is that expansion should not come at a cost to existing member schools.

How is GL's time divided between the LSP Executive Principal role and that of Headteacher at Gordano School? How is it ensured that there is no bias?

(Mrs Tania Doe, Backwell School)

GL: Currently, the split is 80% Gordano and 20% LSP, which is not a sustainable situation: the Trust needs more time, not least while expansion and growth discussions are ongoing. The COO is currently 40:60. Trustees will develop a new central services model, which they are modelling. It is almost certain that there will be full-time LSP CEO, and possibly a full-time COO. One of the determinant factors is that these salaries need to be covered by the top-slice. There is reluctance to increase this to 5% (currently 3%); it is acknowledged that this 2% difference represents an enormous sum of money for larger schools, and has a huge impact on them. However, the Trustees would fail in their duty if they do not ensure sufficient capacity to maintain standards and support schools. Backwell LSP hub schools will have noticed that the LSP has not fully declared all central services that will be included in the top-slice: this is because the Trust Board intends to make a decision about this later in the month (May 2017).

The potential tensions about the current dual role are appreciated, and would be resolved should the CEO role become full-time.

JB: The RSC scrutinises not only the performance of individual schools within a MAT, but also that of the MAT itself, and will not allow Trusts to continue if they are not fulfilling their role.

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Questions raised at Backwell Staff Consultation Meeting held 15 May 2017

Taking the Education Psychology service as an example – if LA is going to wind up will there be any services that would be difficult to find? (Nick Burns)

GL: This is already happening; the LA already cannot meet all their commitments, for example with the VLS. Somehow we need to secure those services from elsewhere.

JN: Backwell School is buying Education Welfare services this year direct from the LA, however in future it is likely that this would be purchased via the Trust more cost effectively and with some control.

GL: Believes that secondary schools should stand up and support the primaries to benefit all young people. For example, the LSP have employed a Behaviour Specialist who works mostly in primaries.

What is the background to the LSP? Who are they? How long has it been in existence? What's in it for you? (Tony Pinner)

GL: The LSP is a very new multi-academy trust– since September 2016. It was formed from Gordano School Single Academy Trust. They have a Hub model with their most of their feeder primary schools with Gordano providing services such as HR to the primary schools. Gordano is very similar to Backwell School. The next phase was is how to incorporate the multi-hub model. Not sure when this will actually happen and the key will be to spin off those structures to the hubs. GL offered the opportunity to speak to Portishead Primaries if need be. LSP were currently operating a small and slightly risky MAT with a lot of obligations and risks. By operating a larger MAT it would be possible to put in a small extra tier to provide more capacity and create a more sustainable and financially secure model. The benefit of working with Backwell was significant and could involve some shared appointments etc.

Could you clarify the presence of the Church Schools. They are at every level, why is that? (Colin Ray)

GL: explained the structure of the MAT whereby there are 'members' who meet once per year and they appoint Trustees to sit on the Trust Board as and when there is a vacancy. 40% of members are church representatives (the Diocese originally required 50% representation due to VA school involvement, however this was changed following negotiation). At Trustee level church representation is 25%, however the Trust is able to select and interview potential C of E Trustees who would then need to be approved by the Diocese (they have to be supportive of the church ethos, but not necessarily be church-goers). Governors of Backwell School would not need to be C of E approved as it's not a church school. The LSP thought long and hard about C of E representation, but the alternative was no collaboration with half the primary schools in Portishead. We now view this as an incredibly positive aspect of the MAT.

The geographical area includes both Clevedon and Nailsea Schools. Have we ever spoken to them? (Alec Richardson)

JN: Confirmed that initially Backwell School approached its feeder schools and eventually extended discussions to include other schools outside the cluster, including Nailsea School, it did seem logical. However, in the end Nailsea chose a different route.

Is there any pressure for the children in the primaries in this MAT to come to Backwell? (Alec Richardson)

JN: There will be no pressure for pupils from primary schools who are not Backwell feeder schools to come to Backwell; the choice of secondary school would still be down to parental choice.

What sort of things might be in the central service? (Nicola Solomon)

GL: Decisions were still to be made, but he said he wanted as much as possible to be at hub level eg. Estates would continue to be based at sites, with a Site Manager and an estates budget. However, things like H&S compliance would be overseen by the Trust, quite possibly by an existing member of staff. There will be probably be some element of central HR and Finance, but would mostly be around hubs. There will be a central CEO. All was still being developed; he hoped to have something to share next month. Central Services was not likely to be a large team. The Top slice is hoped to be close to the 3% currently being charged.

JN: confirmed that governors have been looking at this closely and won't allow it if the figures don't add up.

Would this trigger any Ofsted? (Greg Brees)

GL: As Backwell is an outstanding school it should not face an inspection unless there has been a drop in standards or a safeguarding issue which would trigger one. Ofsted did not currently do MAT-wide inspections, although we may see a realignment of Ofsted windows to see the effect on a group of schools. There are league tables for MATs.

Who would be responsible for appointing CEO? (Rose Haywood)

GL: The Trustees appoint CEO, COO, HR director etc. Members consist of the five people who signed the original memorandum. All have dates for renewal. At that point the members will appoint someone to fill the vacancy who shares the same values etc. Members currently consist of the Assistant Director of the Bath & West Diocese, Bob Summers, ex Head of Gordano and now governor at a primary (?), the remaining three are all governors or trustees. For continuity the Chair of the Trust Board is also a member. The LSP are planning to expand the number of Trustees from 8 – 12, to include two trustees from each hub.

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Questions raised at Primary Staff Consultation Meeting held 17 May 2017

Will the same assessment methodology and tools be used in all schools?

(Ms Kelly Dicks, Northleaze CofE Primary School)

JB: There is no intention to impose standardised approaches; however, at times, schools may find that all working in the same way may be beneficial.

GL: As Executive Principal, my personal need is for high level tracking data to report to the Trust Board. However, headteachers in the Portishead primary schools wanted one of the benefits from the MAT to be effective shared moderation, which required all schools to work in the same way. They have jointly developed principles and systems, and the Insight tracker has been commissioned for all to use from Term 6. Not all schools were using it previously, and there was no obligation to change; however, the one that was not decided that it would be worthwhile to do so.

It will be for the Backwell hub primary schools to determine the approaches that work for, and suit, them. They may wish to consider the decisions made by the Portishead schools.

JK: The Backwell hub primary schools currently use a variety of systems. Headteachers are considering if a single approach would be beneficial. The ability to share effective moderation is much valued.

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Questions raised at Parents' Consultation Meeting held 23 May 2017

What feedback have you received from parents of the existing schools in the LSP and how are you going about using that learning to move forward. (Melanie Nash, Backwell)

GL : Most parents have hardly noticed a change, as the MAT is a back office operation and not front of stage. I hope that the parents would see that their schools are good and that great staff continue to be appointed.

CS: The LSP have recently appointed a new caterer and that is one area where differences may have been seen by parents.

GL: The LSP have also appointed a behaviour specialist who works for the Trust so parents may meet staff who are employed by Trust rather than by the school.

Is there a post-process evaluation? (Melanie Nash)

GL: There wasn't really a post process evaluation as the LSP had delivered on what they proposed. He has only sent out a few letters to all parents and most of those have been about this consultation.

JB: The opportunity for involvement in individual schools would continue and develop. The Heads in the Backwell hub have already started talking about some joint events and they are undoubtedly happening in Portishead, but parents do not realise that they are set up by the Trust.

What can we learn from the LSP? (Melanie Nash)

JN: There have already been lots of opportunities to work with Portishead schools.

JK: A group of Heads visited some of the Portishead schools and they have shared what impact the Trust has had on the schools there with schools in the Backwell hub. It has been a positive experience and confirmed our hopes for autonomy and maintaining our ethos whilst having someone to call on if help is needed etc.

GL: We have done a lot of work with school staff and governors sharing how it has worked, how we are doing but said there may be a need to do more with the parents.

Standardisation – one thing that attracted us to Backwell was breakout day. How much scope will there be for Heads to take that risk and have choice with their curriculum? (Alison Moran – Backwell School and Backwell Juniors)

JK: At Yatton we use Learning College off curricula activities and we have no intention to change that. It is understood that the LSP will respect this choice.

JN: Providing it continues to be good for the students and it is done well, things will continue as they are. There may be some coordination with primary schools.

NW: There are things that they feel are important but that does not mean it can't be challenged if they aren't working. We value the opportunity to work with other experienced Heads and teachers.

JN: The Scheme of Delegation (available on LSP website) is very detailed and gives reassurance re where responsibility lies and that is often at school level.

GL: Curriculum decisions lie at school level unless standards fall and then questions are asked. The current LSP schools have started using shared assessment to allow for moderation across the group of schools. It is beneficial to harmonise to ensure value is achieved. With regard to the Primaries in Portishead – some had followed NAHT model for assessment and some schools liked it. They had met on a number of occasions and had devised a single scheme to be used across all schools and they would subsequently meet for moderation.

Will there be any benefits for entry to secondary schools at transition? (Dominique – Hannah More)

JN: There are benefits of the Trust in all aspects and it doesn't depend on destination school in Year 7. Collaboration will be hugely important for everyone. It won't make a difference as admissions are down to governors and there is a criteria that has to be followed.

KC: From Hannah More and Grove School's perspective parents might be interested in why the school chose to link with Backwell School rather than Nailsea School. Nailsea School have not asked Hannah More and Grove to be involved with them and the option that Nailsea has chosen does not include a lot of primary settings, which was what they wanted this option. Currently two thirds of children go to Nailsea and one third to Backwell; they have good relationships with both schools. Grove has no control over admissions and to-date have never had any appeals over choice of schools.

What decisions would be referred up to Trustees or Members? (Carol Hudson, Northleaze)

GL: Most curriculum matters will sit at local governing body level and most business matters at Trustee level. Trustees have high level reports on educational standards but they are not detailed. They look at capital funding that has been received. The Scheme of Delegation gives details of all that (see <http://www.lsp.org.uk/index.php/partnership-company-reports/>) and is followed if school standards continue to be good or better. If standards slip then a level of delegation may be withdrawn. Governing bodies appoint and manage the performance of Headteachers as they do now.

Can you elaborate on the Northleaze admissions situation as students are increasingly not getting places at Backwell. Would be more interested in collaborating with schools where most children go (Northleaze)

SD: Backwell School is still the place where most children go. However, the parent feels this is currently because of siblings links but that may well end. SD confirmed this has been discussed in detail at hub level and with the LSP. The children will benefit wherever they go to in Year 7. Admissions are a concern and governors discuss it on a regular basis and it continues to be a sticking point, however, it does not mean that another route is warranted; there are still clear benefits of the link with Backwell.

Is there potential for change? Start of presentation talks about a 'seamless journey' but this may not happen for Northleaze children in the future. Is this a done deal or do parents have any say in this?

JB: Confirmed this is a formal legal consultation and all questions and comments are being recorded. Based on experience it is not possible to predict how many children, particularly from Northleaze, will get their first choice school. Some may have been unsuccessful due to sibling links from further afield, so as they disappear from the school then more Northleaze children may well get places. It is a live issue for the governing body and it is difficult to achieve an admissions policy that is fair to all. We would have loved Nailsea School to be part of this MAT, but they made a different choice.

GL: The MAT is not a done deal. The governors have indicated the route they wish to explore, which is what is happening now with the consultation. The information gathered will be reviewed by the governors who will then make a decision re how to proceed. It is a very vigorous process and can be stopped.

I understand importance of the MAT: strength in numbers, positive process etc. However, as admissions have changed and things have moved Flax Bourton School feel quite alone. Can/will the secondary school change its catchment area to the advantage of these schools? (Ex governor - Flax Bourton)

JB: Flax Bourton is within Backwell School's geographical area, however some parents don't live in the geographical area. JN confirmed the geographical catchment area has not changed in recent years. Parent confirmed his support of the MAT but maybe this needs to be clearer to parents, maybe individual Heads or the group of Heads need to ensure that is clarified.

Clearly business runs quite different to schools, do the schools run their own budget? At what point does the Trust come in and take over? Where does financial responsibility lie? What assurances will be in place? (Rowena Davin, Northleaze)

CS: The budget is set at school level, and the LSP believe that finances must be run at school level. The Trust will provide support and track levels spent on different categories.

Could there be a point when Trust might come in make redundancies as has happened in other MATs?

CS: Can't comment on other MATs, but at LSP money is held by each school and they have to set a balanced budget. The LSP take a top slice of 3%. If redundancies have to be made then the school should trigger that decision and the HR process will be supported by the Trust. The Trust and schools will not be able to avoid difficult decisions.

If several schools are sharing services is there a possibility that there might be a reduction in staff numbers? May the workload be higher?

GL: It could mean that. The way of doing things is likely to be different, however we do not want to make things difficult and will use the staff we currently have as much as possible. The key will be to run things efficiently. It is not uncommon when businesses come together, sometimes it can take years to get to that point.

JB: In some schools the Heads have taken on roles e.g. SENCO to reduce costs so there could be advantages.

If a school as an academy joins a MAT who is the employer? Thinking about standards pay and conditions? (Tom, Northleaze)

GL: The Trust is the employer for everyone within the Trust. There is a statement of intent to keep terms and conditions and not to be a rogue employer. The Trust will still follow STPCD and national/local conditions for support staff.

Is the Trust a charity?

The Trust is a company limited by guarantee.

I am interested to hear what Backwell school will gain from this process? What is GL experience as head of a secondary? (Melanie Nash, Backwell)

JN: All collaboration will be hugely beneficial to Backwell School; a benefit to transition, benefits to primary schools and will be beneficial to the secondary school when the students move up. Joining a MAT with another secondary school, (with the possibility of more to come) has big advantages for Backwell School. Also Backwell School do not want to be isolated in national/local context going into the future.

Mr Lewis talked about aspiration and a future with four hubs consisting of secondary and primary schools. At what point do you meet optimum level? There is a finite limit to resources. At what point does it become ineffective? There is a worry that this will become too big and advantages will be diluted by size. (Melanie Nash)

GL: we are being demand led. We are not actively marketing the Trust. The original intention wasn't to be this big, however we feel that this is the right thing to do to enable the schools to continue to be outstanding. The current model provides advantages to primary schools, but not the secondary schools. There is no optimum size. The information coming from the DfE is a moving target. The optimum size for collaboration is less than the optimum size for business effectiveness. The four hub model shown is likely to be the maximum size geographically and will be financially sustainable. Demand is unlikely to continue to grow; we are no longer getting calls of interest. There is a possibility that the LSP may get pressure from the DfE to support struggling schools, but only if they sit within our geographical hubs. The first duty is to those within the MAT.

Where is the voice of the parents within LSP? I understand where it is with the local school, but what happens if the Trustees wish to take organisation in a different direction? (Nini Anamay, Northleaze)

GL: Trustees do not have a lot of time to gather information from parents at schools. The Chairs' Forum will meet at hub level and they will feed back to Trust what is happening and what parents are saying at school level. There is a possibility in time that a parents' forum needs to be set up as well, although we have found Chairs are powerful.

A question on budgets – what if something disastrous happens and a school needs to find money for an emergency e.g. roof etc. (Mrs Sewell)

Schools will have capital funds for each school (as they do now). The Trust receives School Condition Allocation(SCA) (currently £0.5 million) and the EFA also has an emergency fund.

With regard to the 3% top slice – does being part of the MAT mean that there will be more money for Northleaze School?

CS: There is no new money. Some of the primary schools' current budget (more than 3%) goes to North Somerset which will come to schools in future and LSP will provide central services to give better value. Schools in this area aren't funded well in comparison with other areas of the country. Some services already exist within the hubs at secondary schools. There will be financial benefits

When Backwell became an academy one of the advantages given was that it would no longer be subject to the top slice. However now they would have a top slice taken again. How will you manage that? (Mrs Sewell)

JB: As part of the MAT services will be developed for the group of schools which will mean things are more cost effective.

GL: Secondary schools do benefit less, as they are already achieving economies of scale. However, by being in the Trust the secondary school can provide some of the services.

How will capital funds be allocated? Will it only be on maintenance or can they improve sites?

CS: All schools will still receive devolved capital and are able to spend that one capital improvements as they wish, In addition due to the size of the LSP, the trust receives SCA (School Capital Allocation). These funds are allocated by the LSP Board of Trustees based on analysis of property surveys and compliance reports, currently an external company is used to prepare the recommended projects

Where does future planning for places sit?

GL: Planning will continue to sit with North Somerset Council. Everyone has a good relationship with NS and we intend to maintain that. North Somerset still want to be involved.

Will there be transparency around things that still haven't been decided? e.g. Admissions (Jackie, Flax Bourton)

JB: Formal consultation on admissions is carried out annually.

GL: The LSP website is updated whenever possible, for instance information on shared services will be posted on the website soon. If more information is required, please ask the appropriate Headteacher. Schools are currently asking if this is the right path? And exploring the option

How will admissions work for pupils attending primary schools not part of the MAT but within the first geographical area?

There are currently no plans to adjust admissions policy to make it unfair on any child. In fact there are statutory requirements which must be complied with to prevent this. The Lighthouse Schools Partnership already have primary schools who are within their first geographical area, but not with the current MAT, and the LSP trust schools do not have preference on admission and all are treated equally.

Finally ...

GL talked through the next stage and the process to be followed, from a governors' resolution through to the signed funding agreement and opening as an academy. The process will continue as if everything is going ahead as it all takes time. The TUPE process will start after half term. The aim is for the Backwell Hub to join the MAT with effect from 1 December 2017, assuming everything is agreed and approved at the relevant stages.

Abbreviations

BT	Mr Ben Tucker – Headteacher, Wraxall CofE Primary School
CEO	Chief Executive Officer (LSP)
COO	Chief Operating Officer (LSP) [Mrs Clare Sanders]
CS	Mrs Clare Sanders – Chief Operating Officer, LSP
EP	Executive Principal (LSP) [Mr Gary Lewis]
GL	Mr Gary Lewis – Executive Principal, LSP
JB	Mr Julian Baldwin – MAT Development Co-ordinator [LSP Backwell Hub]

JK Miss Jo Keeble – Headteacher, Federation of Yatton Infant & CofE Junior Schools
JN Mr Jon Nunes – Headteacher, Backwell School
LGB Local Governing Body
LSP Lighthouse Schools Partnership
MAT Multi-Academy Trust
NSTA North Somerset Teaching Alliance
RSC Regional Schools' Commissioner
SIP School Improvement Partner