Consultation report on the proposal for the schools within the Ambition and Imperium Federations to convert to academy status and form The Ambition Imperium Trust

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1. **Background**

The Ambition and Imperium Federations have been regularly exploring options for the next phase of their development. In support of the DfE's Schools White Paper proposal of February 2026 for all schools to join or form high-quality school trusts, we wish to extend our educational footprint and mission and create a new Multi Academy Trust (MAT) within and beyond Greenwich.

Following careful consideration, both Federations, who have collaborated very successfully over the years, decided to join together and form a new Multi Academy Trust, called The Ambition Imperium Trust (TAIT).

This would entail our schools converting to become academies and form part of the Trust. As per Section 10 of the Education Act 2010, between October and November 2026 we subsequently undertook a statutory consultation on this proposal creating opportunities for families, staff and the wider community to find out more information, share their views and ask questions.

The proposal to form The Ambition Imperium Trust is aimed at securing long-term stability for our schools and unlocking new opportunities. By becoming part of a values-driven, local trust, Imperium will continue to thrive while benefiting from enhanced support, resources, and shared expertise. We believe this move offers clear educational advantages for both pupils and staff, including stronger collaboration, mutual support, and access to a wider range of high-quality professional development.

All of the schools, across both Federations, would offer support and challenge to one another through peer review within the proposed MAT. The leadership teams of the schools are highly experienced and have the capacity to improve further through synergies that can be achieved via spreading specialist leadership knowledge across the schools. Each of the schools has a strong local community that will be keen on preserving school identity and local representation. For this reason, we are proposing that all schools would retain a strong Local Governing Board with delegated accountability.

We would also continue to maintain and develop our links with other local schools. Some of these may wish to join our collaboration over time.

The consultation will run from 8 October 2026 to 12 November 2026. Following this period, a final decision will be made by the Imperium Federation, with a view to Waterside, King's Oak and Oak Lodge converting and joining The Ambition Imperium Trust on 1 September 2027. To note, the schools within the Ambition Federation will be undertaking a similar consultation process.

2. Process

- The consultation took place between 8 October 2026 to 12 November 2026.

- The schools' websites were updated to publicise the consultation process, i.e. a mandatory pop up that you need to dismiss to move into the website (See Appendix D for example screenshots).

- Stakeholders were invited to take part in the consultation in the following ways:

    - Verbal feedback at the following meetings:

Staff and Stakeholder Meeting			
School	**Date**	**Staff**	**Stakeholders**
Cardwell	2.11.2026	3.30pm - 4.15pm	4.30pm - 5.15pm
Eglinton	3.11.2026	3.30pm - 4.15pm	4.30pm - 5.15pm
Henwick	4.11.2026	3.30pm - 4.15pm	4.30pm - 5.15pm
King's Oak/Oak Lodge	5.11.2026	3.30pm - 4.15pm	4.30pm - 5.15pm
Waterside	9.11.2026	3.30pm - 4.15pm	4.30pm - 5.15pm
Trade Union Reps (NEU, Unison and NASUWT)	6.11.2026	Held virtually at 1pm	

    - In written form by writing to the Federations.

    - Online via a SurveyMonkey consultation form

        - The key question posed was *Do you agree that the school should become an Academy and enter into a Funding Agreement* with the Secretary of State? (*The funding agreement is the contract every converting school must sign with the Secretary of State for Education. It's the formal consent to allow the school to convert and it provides the operating framework for the school, including the commitment to ongoing funding. We are therefore seeking your feedback on whether you support the conversion, and if so, for you to respond accordingly.)

- Letters were sent/emailed on 8 October 2026 to all staff, parents, governors and a wide group of stakeholders to seek their views on the proposal. See Appendices A and B for the lists of stakeholders consulted.

3. Summary Consultation Feedback

The meetings were attended as follows:

School	Date	Staff in attendance	Stakeholders in attendance
Cardwell	2.11.2026	15	0
Eglinton	3.11.2026	10	0
Henwick	4.11.2026	8	0
King's Oak/Oak Lodge	5.11.2026	3	0
Waterside	9.11.2026	7	0
Trade Union Reps (Virtual meeting)	6.11.2026	1 (NEU)	4 (NEU x2, NASUWT, Unison)

The feedback received was as follows:

1. Written responses:
    a. None were received

2. Online responses:

Consultees	In Favour	Not in Favour
Eglinton Staff	5	
Eglinton Parents/Carers	2	2
Cardwell Staff	5	1
Cardwell Parents/Carers	5	1
Henwick Staff	5	
Henwick Parents/Carers	3	
Other Ambition Staff	6	1
Waterside Staff	7	
Waterside Parents/Carers		
King's Oak / Oak Lodge Staff	1	
King's Oak / Oak Lodge Parents/Carers	4	
Other local schools	7	4
Local Councillor	1	
Local Ambition Residents		
Local Imperium Residents	1	
TOTAL RESPONSES	**52**	**9**

- **85% of online respondents were in favour for the schools to academise and join the new proposed Ambition Imperium Trust.**

3. Questions raised at staff meetings and via emails:
    a. These have been captured and responded to, in blue text, in the FAQ document available in Appendix C.

4. Outcomes of the meeting with Trade Union reps:
    a. A full transcript of the virtual meeting is available upon request.

4. Detailed Consultation Feedback

4.1 Comments raised online by those **in favour** of the proposal:

Respondent	Response	Comments
a local councillor	Yes	Fully support the work of these two high performing federations and the work they will do moving forward.
a local resident	Yes	This is an amazing opportunity to expand the brilliant work done by Waterside and King's Oak to more children. Their work has helped so many children to benefit and become better. I think it has to happen - sooner the better.
a member of staff at Cardwell Primary School	Yes	More opportunities for staff, the pupils will also benefit. Sharing experience and knowledge. Both schools have something different to bring to the table. If we don't go ahead we will be taken over by another academy and then staff/pupils will have no say in anything.
a member of staff at Cardwell Primary School	Yes	To operate within a trust allows us to share central operations in human resources, legal services and procurement; allowing us to achieve better value for money and direct more of our budget into the classroom. The top slice £ as additional income for the school.
a member of staff at Cardwell Primary School	Yes	I feel this is going to be a good next step and this will open many great opportunities for all staff and children. Working together as a bigger supportive team.
a member of staff at Eglinton Primary School	Yes	I trust Lisa with making the right decision for us. I also have great respect for Waterside's work as I have seen children from our school florish under their wing. This is a great fit.
a member of staff at Eglinton Primary School	Yes	The support with behaviour and training from experts will be excellent. We know the good work waterside do already .
a member of staff at Henwick Primary School	Yes	Henwick has a falling role and are facing redundancies if we continue in this way. Becoming an academy will mean greater control over our next steps and potential opportunities for redeployment for other staff who may otherwise have to go.
a member of staff at Henwick Primary School	Yes	I don't feel the arguments against outway the benefits.

Respondent	Response	Comments
a member of saff at Henwick Primary School	Yes	Lisa has been transparent with us about the challenges of Henwick and the rest of the federation before this proposal. I was under no doubt that with falling roll and moving from 2 form to 1 form that there will be restructuring and loss of jobs. Meeting Meic and hearing the arguments - whilst I have no desire for change, this is the best option as it means we are in charge of our destiny not having it done to us. I appreciated the time both leaders took to explain things and ask for challenge. I have listened to the arguments against - which seem to be about leasing and whether the leaders will leave - not about the impact not doing this will have on my job.
a member of staff at King's Oak and Oak Lodge	Yes	Completely understand why and I think it's a good idea. It's about time
a member of staff at Waterside School	Yes	Fully believe this is the right thing for me as an aspiring leader and for our children and communities. Thank you Meic for your kindness and candour during this process - presenting unbiased facts not personal opinions or agendas... as you've done for us throughout your leadership.
a member of staff at Waterside School	Yes	The arguments for this outway the arguments against and I fully trust Meic in his leadership to steer the federation into the next part of this journey. I would rather be in a position to help form this than have it done to me - which will be the case if we are pushed into an LA or other MAT. I do worry about the pressure this has put on the two leaders who have done nothing but present facts.
a member of staff at Waterside School	Yes	I wondered what would happen with regards to the Greenwich policies that we currently use. Currently some of the policies we follow (e.g Maternity policy) are policies from Greenwich, however when we move to TAIT, will the details and contents of these policies (eg terms, pay, restrictions, deadlines for notifications etc) remain or will the Trust adapt these? I am unsure if there are any other policies that we solely use Greenwich's policies for (I know most of the policies are Imperium Federation ones), but I ask about the maternity policy as this is one I have had to read and follow most recently. Thank you
a member of staff at Waterside School	Yes	I think it would benefit many people from having an expansion. As an academy we could learn a lot from each other. How would teacher pay scales work in the future? Would it stay the same as moving up an M scale?
a member of staff at Waterside School	Yes	I think it is a positive move for the school and can progress us as a trust. It is exciting times to work here.
a member of staff at Waterside School	Yes	I am not a fan of academies and have worked in one quite large trust which I left because they cared more about data and league tables than the children. I also left my school of 5 years because they were academising. However because Meic is setting up this trust I trust him and his judgements. He cares about his staff and the children and I believe him when he says it's the best thing for us to continue to help more children with SEMH needs.

Respondent	Response	Comments
a member of staff at Waterside School	Yes	I trust what the leadership of Imperium have to say and I have witnessed first hand the life changing work the team do with some of the most interesting children in education. My child has thrived here when they weren't even allowed into their previous schools. I think it is amazing that they are doing this!
a parent or carer of a pupil at Cardwell Primary School	Yes	I think the rationale is clear. I appreciate this may be a smaller MAT and MATS tend to be larger but the opportunities it could provide for all stakeholders is worth exploring. The sense of community is clear through the documentation.
a parent or carer of a pupil at Cardwell Primary School	Yes	If the school were to have 2 weeks off for October half term instead of having INSET days throughout the year, then I would fully support this.
a parent or carer of a pupil at Cardwell Primary School	Yes	If it benefits the children of the local community, I do not have an issue with the school becoming academy. By only concern would be children with SEN or additional needs. The impact it has on children with needs.
a parent or carer of a pupil at Cardwell Primary School	Yes	It will be massive for the community.
a parent or carer of a pupil at Eglinton Primary School	Yes	This is a move that is inline with the current direction and can see how this will benefit the children across all schools involved.
a parent or carer of a pupil at Henwick Primary School	Yes	I am definitely in support of the school becoming an academy. It is a bit disappointing that the uniform wouldn't reflect the new status, as I think that would be a welcoming change. I would like to hear more about how my child's education will be impacted. I would like to hear how gifted children will be helped to excel further

Respondent	Response	Comments
a parent or carer of a pupil at Henwick Primary School	Yes	As a parent of three children at the school, I strongly believe that our school should consider becoming an academy. I have three children who all started at the school in Reception. My twins are now in Year 4, and my other child is in Year 3, so I have had the opportunity to experience the school and see its development over a number of years. During this time, I have seen first-hand the positive environment that the school provides for its pupils. The school has strong values, dedicated and caring teachers, and pupils who are encouraged to be respectful, responsible and enthusiastic about their learning. I believe these qualities are extremely important and are a major reason why I have been so happy for all three of my children to attend the school. As a parent, I feel that the school has a really strong foundation. The teachers work hard to support the children, not only academically but also socially and emotionally. My children have been given opportunities to grow in confidence, develop their individual strengths and become independent learners. The fact that all three of my children have been able to progress through the school happily and positively is something I value greatly. For this reason, I believe becoming an academy could be an exciting opportunity to build on what the school already does well. Becoming an academy should not mean changing the values or qualities that make the school special. Instead, it could provide the opportunity to strengthen them further, bring in new ideas and resources, support staff development and share good practice with other schools. I also believe that becoming part of an academy trust could give the school access to wider expertise and additional opportunities for both pupils and teachers. This could include greater opportunities for staff training, improved resources, enrichment activities and collaboration with other schools. These developments could ultimately help raise standards and provide our children with an even broader and stronger educational experience. Having three children at the school has also given me confidence in the staff and the school's approach. I would not support such an important change simply for the sake of change. I believe it should be about looking at where the school is now, recognising its strengths and asking how we can make it even better for the children who attend today and for future generations. Ultimately, I believe our school has something very special. We have good values, committed teachers, wonderful pupils and a strong sense of community. Becoming an academy could give the school the opportunity to build on these strengths, while opening the door to new opportunities and continued improvement. As a parent, my main priority is that my children receive the best possible education in a safe, caring and inspiring environment. I believe our school already provides this, and I would support becoming an academy if it helps the school to continue improving, provide greater opportunities and give every child the chance to reach their full potential. Having watched my three children grow and develop at the school from Reception to their current years, I feel strongly that this is a school worth investing in and supporting. Becoming an academy could be an important step forward in ensuring that the school continues to thrive for my children, their classmates and the many children who will follow them.
a parent or carer of a pupil at Henwick Primary School	Yes	Would be great to see the school have acess to more funding.. edcational playareas at play time and a update playground.. updated techology.. more educational trips for the kids. Where the fubdibg will go?
a parent or carer of a pupil at King's Oak and Oak Lodge	Yes	Think this could be a good idea, as long as the pupils are in small classes.

Respondent	Response	Comments
a representative from a local Primary School	Yes	The joining of both federations will be beneficial for all. It will enable opportunities for sharing the extensive expertise in teaching and learning, provision for SEN and behavioural support and understanding and leadership development for all. Most importantly I believe it will provide positive opportunities for all children in all schools.
a representative from a local Primary School	Yes	I think it will be natural step forward to guarantee stability, consistency, and a richer learning environment for all our pupils. We can then combine our expertise to inspire outstanding teaching and unlock exciting new opportunities for professional growth. I would be happy for this partnership to go forwards.
a representative from a local Primary School	Yes	Which aspects of curriculum design, pedagogy, assessment and school improvement will remain under the control of individual schools, and which will be determined centrally? How will staff be involved in decisions affecting their working practices? Are there any longer-term plans to reduce admission numbers, reorganise classes or restructure individual schools? What additional opportunities for career progression, curriculum leadership, coaching and professional development will be available to existing staff not already in SLT?
a representative from a local Special School	Yes	Completely - this is the best option for both federations and I am happy with the leadership who I know will have the best interests of their communities at heart.
Staff	Yes	Joining a school trust seems to offer several benefits for schools and their communities, allowing them to work together to improve educational standards and outcomes. Trusts offer more flexibility in how schools operate, enabling them to innovate and adapt to the changing needs of students and communities. This shared accountability will lead to better educational experiences, shared services and resources for students. Hopefully the Trust provide opportunities for staff development and sharing best practices, which can enhance the quality of education and support staff growth.
staff	Yes	This conversion will benefit the local community and the children of Greenwich. Expertise from across the schools will be shared to give our children the best possible inclusive education that they thoroughly deserve.
Staff	Yes	It sounds great
Staff	Yes	I am very excited about further collaboration and expertise sharing between the Ambition and Imperium Federations. It is a very complementary partnership, where both are ambitious for their pupils, that enable the very best opportunities and outcomes for children within the schools and beyond. I am in full support. I am genuinely exctied by the opportunities for the two school communities with the children at the centre of all thinking.
Staff	Yes	Great idea. We will work well together.
Staff	Yes	I think it will be a positive move in order to secure long-term stability for our schools and enable new opportunities for our children, staff and communities. I feel that we would all benefit from enhanced support, resources and shared expertise. I look forward to working within The Ambition Imperium Trust.

4.2 Comments raised online by those **not in favour** of the proposal:

Note: *Some comments have not been included within this report as they included false, unfair and/or derogatory statements.*

Respondent	Response	Comments
a member of staff at Cardwell Primary School	No	You say nothing will change. Why bother then? This is unnecessary but costly. The rationale isn't convincing. It will result in people looking for new jobs. How much money and time is this costing which could be used better on our schools. What practical experience does any of the proposed leadership of the new trust have in running a MAT? If this was going to happen it should have a CEO who actually knows how to run a MAT so we won't be walking in the dark. Who has experience to be the CFO? Will the creation of a trust result in MORE money being spent on central staffing? Will we continue to have the local authority for improvement partner work? It's worrying and shouldn't happen. I know from speaking with other colleagues that this is impacting on morale. It's an unwelcome change.
a parent or carer of a pupil at Cardwell Primary School	No	It will be a disaster. Would have been far better joining an already established MAT. My decision is made. I vehemently oppose this and will remove my child should this proceed. Don't do it. The Governors should explore any and all other options. Not this one.
a parent or carer of a pupil at Eglinton Primary School	No	The premise for this is not at all sound. Basing this on SEND and a government ambition for all schools to join a MAT is misleading. This will be a relatively small MAT. Small MATs are not financially sound and are vulnerable. Many are having to merge with larger MATs. Why did Ambition not look to merge with another MAT instead of tying to go it alone? Focus on the education of the children instead of exploring something that makes no sense. This is a bad idea and governors should reject this proposal and look to joining an existing MAT instead.
a parent or carer of a pupil at Eglinton Primary School	No	The documentation just talks about SEND. Nothing more, nothing less. This doesn't seem like a good enough reason. I would love to know what this is costing as that could be spent on our kids. Suddenly this proposal but in the years before I cannot recall any occasion where we've been told of partnership working between the two federations. This doesn't look like a good mix. How on earth will it work in reality? To say nothing will change is a lie. Don't take us for idiots. A number of parents are talking about organising a protest. Do you really want to upset people unnecessary? My son's teacher also told me that they weren't convinced by this so it doesn't fill me or others with confidence when your own staff aren't supportive. Nothing would change my mind. Should governors decide to proceed, despite the strength of feeling opposing this, I will take this to the press and to the secretary of state to seek a block.

Respondent	Response	Comments
a parent or carer of a pupil at King's Oak and Oak Lodge	No	Parents on benefits that are currently entitled to free school meals and grants for uniforms will no longer be entitled if the school was to become an academy, this is because the local authority have said they do not give support to academy school pupils. Whether families would get support in order to financially afford school lunches and uniforms for their child/children
a representative from a local Primary School	No	I believe the time period that stake holders in both federations have been given to consider the decision is insufficient. There would have been conversations and plans that took place long before stakeholders were informed of the decision to form a new MAT and stakeholders should have been informed of this sooner rather than wait a few weeks before the consultation period is due to end. This would have allowed stakeholders to explore other options outside of becoming a MAT.
Staff	No	I am unsure about the accountability of the academy system, for parents and the local community to be able to have a level of voice in the system. I also am concerned that although there is a strong leadership system at the moment, that there is not a level of checks and balances to prevent the small academy trust being subsumed by a larger more corporate trust in the future. The loss of building stock from the local authority also concerns me. I think there should be a level of authority across the local area to allow for provision of resources where it is needed, and all schools becoming corporate entities seems to go against there being a level of local oversight into provisions across the whole community and borough. I agree that having some level of autonomy in being able to make the decision about our governance is better than having an academy chain forced upon us. But I am still reticent about the move towards academies as a national system. I believe we do need do ensure that there is provision for our communities, and that there is a lot wrong with the current LA model, but I am not convinced that a further fracturing of the system is the right path. I understand the arguments about LA top slicing etc, but the arguments about economies of scale seem to go against this, as a group of 5 or 6 schools cannot have a larger purchasing power than an LA of 100 schools? I would like to ensure that there are further consultations, and transparency in the process of setting up policies/contracts and terms and conditions of provision and staffing. I need to read more about the current government papers on long term planning. I do have a level of trust in the current leadership structure, and know that they have the best interests of our local community in their mind, but as this is a permanent change, I am thinking about our community in 20 years, having that same level of trust and input into the decisions made at a trust level.

5. Next steps

The outcomes of this consultation will be shared on the schools' websites, with the Boards of Governors for both Ambition and Imperium Federations and as a result of the positive feedback received, will form part of a formal application into the Department for Education (DfE) to seek approval to establish the multi academy trust. Subject to a positive response from the DfE, the intention is to convert the schools to academies and form The Ambition Imperium Trust on 1 September 2027.

Appendix A - List of stakeholders consulted by Ambition Federation

- All staff of Cardwell, Henwick and Eglinton Primary Schools
- All parents/carers from Cardwell, Henwick and Eglinton Primary Schools
- All Governors from Cardwell, Henwick and Eglinton Primary Schools
- All local nurseries within a 5 mile radius, i.e. Busy Bees at Woolwich; Bonitots Nursery; Balloon Day Nurseries; Your Co-Op Little Pioneers; Thames Tiddlers Nursery; Bear Hugs Day Nurseries; The Nursery On The Green
- All local primary schools
- All local secondary schools
- Local MPs: Clive Efford and Matthew Pennycock
- Local Councillor: Len Duvall
- Royal Borough of Greenwich: Florence Kroll, Director of Children's Services
- Trade Unions: GMB; Unison; NASUWT; NEU; ASCL

Appendix B - List of stakeholders consulted by Imperium Federation

- All staff of Waterside, King's Oak and Oak Lodge
- All parents/carers from Waterside, King's Oak and Oak Lodge
- All Governors from Imperium
- Local MP: Matthew Pennycook
- Royal Borough of Greenwich: Florence Kroll and Vicki Cuff
- Trade Unions: GMB; Unison; NASUWT; NEU; ASCL
- Local primary schools
- Local secondary schools
- WhatsApp groups: Waterside Parents; Waterside Broadcast Channel; King's Oak Parents; King's Oak Broadcast Channel
- Instagram Channels: Watersidesemhschool; Kingsoaksemhschool; Imperiumfederation

Other Agencies working with the schools

Additional Support	All Kids Can
Ballet	Champions Theatre Arts
Chess	International Tennis Coaching Ltd.
Taekwondo	Teachsport Greenwich
Lego	Rhinos Sporting Projects
Coding	David Morley
Multisports	Rhinos Sporting Projects
Rocksteady	Rocksteady
Football	Elite Proformance
Gymnastics	ASG Active Sports Group
Tutoring	B Young Stars
HAF Club	Omega Sportz Ltd
School Counsellor	Path to Progress
Community Nurses	Young Greenwich School Nursing Team
Catering Company	Chartwells
IT Support	ATS
IT Support	Classroom 365
Telecommunications	Anytime Cloud
Literacy	Literacy Tree National Lead
Trauma	Trauma Informed Schools
Homestart	Nursery
SALT	Oxleas
SALT	Oxleas
STEPS	
Educational Psychologist	South East Psychology
ASD Outreach	
KSR Gymnastics	Gymnastics
Ktthedanceschool	Dance
CLA Schools	Cheerleading
Teachsport Greenwich	Dodgeball
Active Sports Group	Sports
Alpha	Afterschool Club provision until 6pm
Childrens' Centre	Childrens' Centre
School Travel Team	School Travel Team RBG
Future Digital	Photocopier leasing company

Appendix C – Responses raised during consultation process

1. Will our teacher pensions be run by a private company or by the LA?

   RBG (LA) is not the Teacher Pension Service (TPS). The TPS is a company in its own right that serves every teacher in the UK who pays into it. That will stay as it is. Our employer contributions will remain the same as we pay that not RBG. It is a set %. This is the same for support staff with LGPS- local government pension service.

2. Will joining the trust mean more funds available to employ more support staff? What will happen to the provisions as the white paper also wanted them for all schools?

   The White Paper says that secondary schools all need an inclusion provision. It acknowledges that most primary schools already have one in place. However, it is clear that children need to be fluid in the journey in the school through integration in class and intervention as needed. Specialist provision is reserved for the most complex.

   Re staffing, I cannot really comment on staffing levels at present. What we would hope is that becoming a Trust will create a better income stream to allow the schools to do more, with more, for more.

3. When is the meeting for the unions? I would like to organise a time for all staff to hear from the unions and have any answered from the unions about what it means to be part of an academy. Is there an opportunity when we could invite the unions into the schools so staff could meet with them?

   Meeting for all unions is scheduled for 6/11. Should staff wish to meet unions it would be best for union reps to arrange this after that meeting.
   As long as you clear with HT when this will be, then union reps are entitled to arrange meetings in school, normally after the school day.

4. I have read and heard from friends who teach in academies that academies have more control over their curriculum and don't have to teach everything set out in the national curriculum. Is that true? This would be quite exciting in my opinion because the primary curriculum is very packed.

   Academies can make changes to the curriculum but they can't depart from the national curriculum. Following the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, academies are transitioning to a system where they have a statutory duty to follow the national curriculum.

   An academy can't change core subjects like English, Maths and Science, RSHE or RE as there are exam constraints.

   However, academies can change pedagogy and delivery - how the curriculum is taught, lesson structures etc. Enrichment and context – they can adapt and enrich core topics to better reflect the community, student interests and regional employment opportunities.

   How many hours are allocated to a specific subject is decided by an academy. Under the new curriculum review, to be in place by Sept 28, academies will have more breathing space on shedding the content overload and decide how to expand topics they want to expand.

5. I also heard that it's the same for term dates and that academies don't have to follow the term dates set by the LA? Academies can set their own?

Academies can change term dates and set own holidays, e.g. a 2 week October half term.

6. What will the content of meetings in November be?

   The meetings in November are really for questions if people have them and wish to attend. There will not be a presentation as this has been done and documents sent out. Meic will attend our schools and I will attend his staff meetings. As I said, staff do not have to attend, no further information will be shared, but it is an opportunity to ask questions, meet Meic etc .

7. There are things we have access to as schools under the local authority e.g. Network meetings, IPs, CPD etc. What would this look like with being a school that is no longer under the local authority?

   As I mentioned in my PP last week, we have to pay for all of that anyway. We don't get it for free as a maintained school. Therefore, networks, CPD, IPs etc can all still be paid for. Many MATs buy into these services. Anything we have from the LA comes at a cost anyway.

   Our SLA includes the above and costs approx. £60,000 on top of a top slice taken by the LA before we get our budget. The difference as an academy will be we can choose exactly what we want to keep and what we want to outsource to better providers.

8. Could you please confirm whether the GMB Union has been invited to the forthcoming meeting on the 6th November? If so, have they received any correspondence regarding it?
   Yes, they have and I have spoken to Steve Oakes.

9. How would it work for in-year admissions please, outside of the Reception and Y7 admission rounds?

   This can also be through the LA, or some academies have their own policy. This would be something we would look at and develop.

10. Parents apply to pupil benefits for FSM. On the form it says they only process applications for academies if there is an agreement in place. Please see page 1 of the form: https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2026-07/pupil-benefits-application-form-july-2026.pdf

    We would look to be a partner Academy with RBG re FSM and uniform vouchers etc. If this is not able to happen, then we would have our own systems.

11. With admissions, parents apply to RBG and they offer places. Would parents continue to apply to RBG or would we process applications and offer places?

    Even though academies are their own admission authorities, standard applications for normal admission rounds (Reception or Year 7) must still be submitted through your home Local Authority application portal (such as via eAdmissions or local borough schemes).

12. Why is this consultation period so rushed? Why can't we have more time to think it through and hear alternative ideas to becoming an academy?

    This is the standard period of time for a consultation. It isn't rushed for any reason.

13. The reasons laid out for why we need to leave the LA and become an academy raise more questions. For example, are we really going to be saving money by not paying the top slice to RBG?. Instead of RBG, we will be paying that top slice to have two CEO's, legal consultants, marketing to "sell" the new academy and other costs.

    The reason for becoming an academy isn't solely about money. It will give us access to funds that we don't have access to. It will enable us to grow and expand our offer, e.g. a hub at Henwick. This would bring in more money. It will allow us to have choice about the quality of services we buy into and in fact, as we found when we outsourced health and safety, it often saves us money.
    We will have the LA top slice back and we would be able to choose how we spend that. That doesn't cover any of our salaries. We will be able to bank the money from our budgets and earn the interest rather than that going into the RBG pot. We get our money in chunks from the LA and they bank the rest. We do not get the interest earned on our portion.

    We don't market ourselves now other than the networking we do and our reputation, and we have consistently sold our curriculum and support to other schools. Other schools have already shown interest in joining us without any marketing costs. This won't be a drive to sell our Trust. We are spending money on marketing our Reception places as competition is high.

    I can understand why people would question the 2 CEO roles, and we have discussed this with the DFE. We feel as we both come with different areas of expertise this is the most sensible approach to make sure we get the best support into all our schools, particularly during set up. It will also help with succession planning should one of us leave, become unwell etc. during the early years. That way we would not be recruiting externally and the values and ethos we all believe in would not be lost and there would be stability for staff and pupils.

    We will not be recruiting anyone externally to join our team, at this size, so our costs would remain the same. Our salaries are already paid. Therefore, the top slice is not going to pay for a large team or 2 CEOs. Meic and I would manage a lot between us. We do pay for finance and legal now so we would still pay for that but look at all options where the service is strong.

14. How is this change going to impact teachers and TA's in the classroom every day? How do we get more support to help us so that we can feel like we are successfully meeting the needs of each student?

    With the needs of children rising we have had a real focus on SEND. However, more and more we find ourselves 'managing' behaviour that is detrimental to the child, other children and staff. With the expertise that comes from joining with Imperium, I would hope we stop 'managing' and actually make sure that all parties have the best-in-class support, programmes, resources, specialist interventions, e.g. trauma. A place where we can best work out how the children learn and grow.

    We know that some of our children who are nurtured and managed in primary school actually can't cope at secondary and are often out of school by Y8. We need to make sure the work we put in at primary level supports the child beyond our doors. I am incredibly passionate about changing life stories for our children and I know with the support of
    Imperium we will be better equipped.

    I am also well aware of the pressures staff feel and face on a daily basis. By equipping ourselves with the best training and support we will be able to support staff.

15. I am fearful that if I share my true feelings about why I don't want our federation to become an academy during this consultation period, I will be negatively viewed by senior management.

    I would hope that all staff know that I and the rest of the leadership teams across our federation are approachable, transparent and understanding. Any question or opinion is valid to that person and will be treated in a respectful way. Nobody will be viewed negatively.

16. I have just read that two existing school federations can join together to form a single larger federation under the control and oversight of a local authority. If that is the case, why can't the proposed merger of Ambition and Imperium be done under the control of the Local Authority. Why do we have to become an academy?

    That is the case and this is something we have looked at. However, becoming an academy affords more opportunities that we want to explore:

    a. Every time a school joins a federation you have to disband the board and start the whole process again. This is highly disruptive to the leadership of the federation, staff and community.
    b. We would still pay a top slice to RBG plus SLAs for services that are often not fit for purpose. Therefore, we would look to buy in services outside of RBG anyway.
    c. For repairs and maintenance, we would not be able to apply for any DfE bids or grants, these are given to the LA and they determine how they are spent.
    d. Single academy trusts that are looking to join a group can't join a Federation.
    e. We can't expand in any way - therefore the decline in pupil numbers and therefore the budget would have an enormous impact on schools.
    f. Henwick is already moving to 1FE and that has many implications if we are not able to bring in additional income.
    g. Without expansion there would not be a path for career progression beyond what we have now.
    h. Roles where staff work across the schools are not permanent as a staff member is still contracted to one school and if this school needs a staff member they will be used before employing a new one. This therefore impacts the staff members, the children, the curriculum etc.
    i. The LA is positive about the move to a trust for our schools.

    Even if we merged as hard federations, the White Paper is clear re. the journey and what the educational landscape will look like in the future.
    If we are not successful, then we would look at a merger to make a bigger group, but the direction of travel would then have to be joining a larger MAT under DfE guidelines at some point in the future anyway.

17. You have said that all contracts etc will remain the same. What about TLRs teachers are currently receiving? Will that stay the same?

    All pay and conditions will remain the same. We will follow the teacher pay scales and Burgundy book.

18. Long services award commitment.

    This would be retained by the Trust.

19. Would we stay on local government pay and conditions for both teachers and non-teaching staff?

Pay and conditions would remain the same,

20. If it does not go to academy status where does that leave us? Would we hard federate?

    DfE has stated that no more hard federations will be set up.

21. Working together we are excited. I am a union representative and I have trust in you two. Looking around other academies there is not a flow with money right now and hope we can be on the same page. I am not sure the solution is correct to be an academy especially if you leave and then changes with salaries, pensions etc change.

    We would not have a large leadership team. Therefore, the top slice we retain from LA would go back into school. We would commit at trustee level for no changes to pay and conditions.

22. How will our Special Educational Needs (SEND) and vulnerable pupil provisions change or benefit?

    Support with the setup of an assessment centre (nurture) to support our children, teachers and families. Experts working with us in the classrooms.

23. Will the Long service award still be honoured with RBG?

    Yes

24. Can staff still access the flexible working scheme with RBG?

    Yes

25. How will the flexible retirement scheme work for non-teaching staff?

    It will operate the same as it does now.

26. In the future, 2 years ahead, will the curriculum change? Would we have additional workload. Is there an assurance that would not change?

    There is a curriculum review so there will be some changes. Time will be given as it was before to ensure we met all statutory requirements.

27. Will the schools grow in size making a bigger academy? Will there be a cap on the amount of schools/pupils joining the academy?

    This would be consulted at trustee level. We are not looking to be a large MAT.

28. In terms of expanding would you have some say on the context and evaluate a comparative decision suiting the academy?

    Yes, of course, and we would undertake due diligence.

29. Will there be an option of extending the half term breaks for longer periods of time?

    Through consultation yes.

30. More focused on assessment and the curriculum. The workload increases and onsite 8-5. Trust stories do not see it has been successful and work well.

    We do not operate 8-5 at present. No strict times.

31. While it is you two, Lisa and Meic, we agree with your focus. What happens if you are not there?

    The trustees and Scheme of Delegation would ensure that the ethos is retained. Building leaders from within and maintaining a co leadership would support with that.

32. The Soft federation was a lot of work. However, it works better. It does bring along a higher workload. Will this continue?

    There will always be change in education and we have to adapt to it. Support is always given to staff. We work with staff to ensure this is done in a supportive way.

33. We understand change happens, but it does create more work. What will happen with teachers on the front line who look after a subject and teach. What can be done to protect us? Particularly the curriculum reform what needs to be done and changes.

    See above.

34. We do not understand the income streams and how that comes into schools?

    All our money goes to LA at present and sits in a pot earning interest. We don't get the interest. We pay a top slice to RBG and SLAs for backroom services. This is paid to us quarterly.

35. When we are also on the frontline the strategic issues what are the reasons behind the new mat and why did we not know this earlier?

    The rationale is as stated. This has been a long piece of work with many different branches. Lots of elements were confidential until a time we were able to tell the LA and staff.

36. Think people are concerned that the academisation is not the concern, it is whether Lisa will leave.

    The Co-CEO model allows for reassurance of leadership. Building leaders from within too helps to ensure that the vision continues.

37. Lisa and Meic had a specific way of working that aligned well with our values. As leadership changes and a new approach is introduced, how do you think these two different styles can complement each other to help the team succeed?

    While we have complete confidence in Lisa's commitment to our unique school cultures, what legally binding protections will be written into the Scheme of Delegation to stop any future CEOs from forcing corporate standardisation or changing our day-to-day running if leadership changes?

    A Scheme of Delegation (SoD) is the core governance document that formally outlines how the Trust Board distributes powers, responsibilities, and decision-making authority across the various layers of the organisation.

    The SoD acts as the "constitution" that determines what decisions are made centrally and what powers are delegated locally (typically to Local Governing Bodies, Headteachers, and Executive Leaders). However, aspects about standardisation or day-to-day operational matters are not covered within a SoD, other than listing who is responsible for establishing them.

As a maintained school our governing body do not act in an operational way and have no input on day to day running of our schools. They work with us to manage the strategic aspects of the school just as trustees would in a MAT.

38. I know of a number of local authority schools that share building space with other local authority schools. The branch secretaries of the NEU asked the LA about this in a meeting yesterday, and the LA confirmed it is not a problem for local authority schools to share/rent space from one another. They don't have to be an academy to do so.

    Yes, we already rent space to PVI nursery provisions. However, the idea is not just to rent the space - which would provide an income - it would be to expand Waterside. As I have said, we need to create opportunities aside from restructure due to the drop in pupil numbers. This would mean more children, opportunities to deploy staff should they want to, opportunities for staff to work in different provisions, access to an assessment centre for our children - like the nest we used to have at Waterside.

    As LA schools, we cannot expand or open anything new. As LA schools this would need to be a LARP style provision. Meic cannot expand as an LA school. The schools that have shared space this year that I am aware of are LA schools with Charlton Park Academy

39. I believe you mentioned in the meetings that a move to becoming an academy has been supported by the Local Authority. I am just wondering by whom? The LA told the branch secretaries of the NEU that they don't support a move for schools to become an academy and they would prefer all schools to stay under the LA and not become academies.

    I am unsure who they have spoken to. I have discussed this with Florence Kroll, Director of Children's Services and Vicki Cuff, Asst Director (these are my line managers) and all LA staff were informed.
    I am sure the council/children's services would prefer all schools to stay as maintained, due to the SLAs we pay to back room services, but they haven't commented during consultation or in fact approached us to say they oppose it. Prefer and oppose are two different things.

    I do have an email saying how this would be a great opportunity for RBG SEND, inclusion and mainstream. We were wished well with the work ahead and asked to keep them updated with any comms with the DfE.
    There has not been any opposition brought to us at all during this consultation from the LA. I am unsure who the union have spoken to. Should they share this with me I can discuss it with them. I can assure you that the information I shared with you is factual from the people I spoke to.

40. Are there plans to centralise HR functions across the trust? If so, how will this affect the existing HR structure within individual schools?

    As a federation we have created an interim structure where we have an HR officer working across all the schools. She works closely with each office/school on aspects of HR. At present there is not a plan to change this. Should pupil numbers continue to drop we will have to look at impact on staffing through budget implications.

41. If HR functions are centralised, does this mean there could be a reduction in the number of HR roles required within individual schools? Are there any anticipated changes to existing roles or staffing structures as part of the transition?

    If we become a trust and have 5 schools, this may mean that an additional role across the schools supporting the HR lead is created. All roles would be advertised internally.

Becoming a MAT would not require a reduction in roles. The drop in pupil numbers and budget implications would potentially mean a restructure if we remain as we are. I have shared the budget implications in all 3 schools.

42. Can you provide any reassurance around job security for existing support staff? Should we anticipate any restructuring, changes to responsibilities or potential redundancies?

    Becoming a MAT would not require a reduction in roles. The drop in pupil number and budget implications would potentially mean a restructure if we remain as we are. I have shared the budget implications in all 3 schools. Should we become a MAT and are able to utilise space within the schools to create more income, then any roles would be advertised internally. Staff contracts and JDs would remain the same unless they decide to apply for an advertised role.

43. Will existing employees retain their current job descriptions, responsibilities and roles following the transition? If changes are anticipated, how will these be communicated and managed?

    At this stage we are consulting on the idea of becoming a MAT. Should this go ahead there is a separate consultation called TUPE where we will provide further information.

44. At what stage of the academisation process will decisions about staffing structures, centralised services and individual roles be finalised? Will staff be consulted before any changes are implemented?

    At this stage we are consulting on the idea of becoming a MAT. Should this go ahead there is a separate consultation called TUPE where we will provide further information.

45. There has been mention of increased opportunities for career progression. Could you explain what this would look like for non-teaching staff, particularly those working in specialist roles?

    Absolutely. This would be for all members of staff. Having the additional 2 schools would enable us to look at expertise within and how we can use that across the settings. All roles would be advertised internally in the first instance. There may be more specialised roles, e.g. an estates manager who oversees all the buildings and compliance, learning mentors, admin roles that oversee certain functions that would run the same.

46. How does the trust envisage the future of the HR function, and what opportunities might there be for existing HR staff to develop, take on additional responsibilities or progress into more senior positions?

    HR is integral to the smooth running of an organisation. If we grow, then there will be the need to look at training we can provide to our staff that will allow them to progress and apply for any internal roles. We have such a pool of talent that we want to develop.

47. If the HR structure remains relatively unchanged following academisation, how will career progression be facilitated for existing HR staff? Will there be opportunities to develop beyond our current roles or access wider trust-level positions?

    If we grow, then there will be the need to look at training we can provide to our staff that will allow them to progress and apply for any internal roles. 5 schools will need to operate in a different way to 2 schools and 3 schools. We have such a pool of talent that we want to develop. Without growth there will not be opportunities for pathway progression within Ambition unless someone leaves.

48. As the trust develops, does it anticipate creating more specialised or senior HR positions within its central structure? If so, will existing HR employees within individual schools have the opportunity to apply for these positions and develop their careers within the trust?

    If we grow, then there will be the need to look at training we can provide to our staff that will allow them to progress and apply for any internal roles. 5 schools will need to operate in a different way to 2 schools and 3 schools. We have such a pool of talent that we want to develop. We would always look to recruit internally first rather than add additional staff.

49. Will the trust invest in the professional development of non-teaching staff in the same way it intends to invest in teaching staff?

    Yes, we have invested in training beyond teaching staff within Ambition, e.g. first aid. We would look to continue this as a MAT.

50. Which of the current HR systems, services and resources that we access through the local authority will continue following academisation, which are expected to change and how will the transition be managed?

    We are working with other local RBG schools to move our HR services out of Greenwich at the present time. These services are not value for money at present. This would all be managed by the HR teams across the new provider, e.g. change of policies. Academisation or not we will move our HR services from RBG.

51. If the school no longer buys into the local authority's HR and Payroll services, what alternative arrangements will be put in place? For example, where will we source HR policies, employment contracts, templates, guidance etc?

    At present we do not intend to change payroll. This service works well. HR would be from a new provider, e.g. Judicium, Browne Jacobson etc. They would provide all guidance.

52. Are there any plans to change the current payroll arrangements following academisation?

    Not at present.

53. If payroll arrangements do change, how will responsibilities be divided between the trust and individual schools? Would this result in additional administrative responsibilities for existing HR/Finance staff?

    We are not planning to change at present. If we did, we would pay an external provider and it wouldn't be done in house.

54. One of the potential differences with becoming an academy is having greater autonomy over certain employment arrangements. Does this mean the trust would have greater flexibility when determining staff salaries, annual pay increases or individual pay awards?

    This would all need to go to consultation with trustees. We would commit to the Burgandy Book and Green Book and national pay scales, but yes, trusts can consult on areas they would want to enhance for staff.

54. Currently, support staff job descriptions and salary grades are assessed and ratified through the local authority's job evaluation process. How would this work once we are

an academy? Would the trust continue to use the local authority's job evaluation, or would it introduce its own system for evaluating roles and determining salary grades?

We have to pay for this at the moment anyway. We would continue to use this service until we move to a different provider. However, through training this could be a role within the trust in relation to national pay.

55. With the development of the trust, would there be scope for support staff salary increases or additional financial recognition based on an individual's performance, contribution, increased responsibilities or the quality of work they deliver, rather than progression being determined solely by their existing salary grade and pay structure?

    Again, this would be determined through consultation. Trusts can do this.

56. Would the increased autonomy that comes with academisation allow the trust to review existing salary structures and consider whether individual roles are appropriately remunerated? For example, if someone has taken on additional responsibilities or their role has developed significantly over time, would there be greater flexibility to recognise this financially?

    Yes, there would be.

57. Will existing staff retain their current terms and conditions of employment following the transfer to the academy trust, including annual leave entitlement, working hours, sick pay, maternity/paternity provisions and other contractual benefits such as the employee assistance programme, free eye test etc?

    All the benefits would remain. I will include in that the phased retirement process, the £410 payment RBG make when you have worked in RBG for 30 year. The trust would honour this payment. Academy or not it is a massive achievement to have worked in RBG schools for 30 years serving the community.

58. Will there be opportunities or expectations for existing staff to support other schools within the trust, rather than working exclusively within their current school?

    Any cross-school job would be advertised. Yes, there would be opportunities for those who wish to apply. These would not be forced.

59. Will individual schools retain autonomy over their staffing decisions, recruitment and employee relations, or will these decisions be managed centrally by the trust?

    This would still be handled at school level.

60. If certain services currently provided by the local authority are withdrawn, how will the additional responsibilities and administrative requirements be managed? Will existing staff be expected to absorb these duties, or will additional resources be made available?

    We pay for all the RBG services, nothing is for free. Nothing will be withdrawn by RBG. It will be if we choose to move to a different company.

61. If the transition results in additional responsibilities or a change in the scope of existing roles, will there be a process for reviewing job descriptions and salary grades to reflect these changes?

    Yes, under HR law this would have to happen anyway trust or not.

62. How will existing staff be involved in decisions about the future structure and operation of the trust, particularly where proposed changes directly affect their roles and responsibilities?

    This is all done through consultation. Changes to employment and roles are all carried out through a consultation process.

63. Will there be a further opportunity for staff to raise concerns and receive clarification once more detailed plans have been developed? How will feedback from the current consultation influence the final decisions?

    Feedback will go to Governors into a report and they will make the final decision to progress or not. Staff can ask questions and I will continue to answer. Any changes will mean a further consultation so staff will have ample opportunities to be involved in the shaping of the trust.

64. If decisions have not yet been finalised, when can staff expect greater clarity?

    Consultation finishes on 12th November. The report will go to Governors by the 16th November. A decision will then be made and staff will be communicated with. We would anticipate this to be by 20th November.

65. Can you please tell us the names of the trustees that you mentioned at tonight's meeting and the role of the trustees?

    Trusts have Members and Trustees. CEOs are accountable to both and directly to the Secretary of State for Education.

    Role of members: Members are the guardians of the trust. They hold trustees to account for effective performance of the trust and also ensure the trust achieves its core charitable objectives. Trusts are a civic body and therefore have a responsibility to the community.

    Role of trustees: Trusteeds hold the legal powers. They have oversight of the strategic function of the MAT and the finance, much like a governing body.

    We would then have local governing bodies for our schools, so the individual voice of each school is still heard.

    I mentioned Sir Robin Bosher, Vic Goddard, Dr Pooky Knightsmith and Stephanie Fuller as just some of the people we have approached to be members and trustees. These people have agreed in principle as obviously it has not been agreed for us to be a MAT as yet.

66. If staff are in the local government pension scheme can they still use the flexible retirement programme with RBG?

    We would commit to the option of flexible retirement.

67. Will we remain on the same terms and conditions of employment?

    Yes. These will not change.

68. Will the school holidays include a 2 week half term in October?

    We would need to consult on this with all stakeholders, but in principle yes.

69. Are staff still entitled to the long service award with RBG after 30 years' service? The value is £410.

    Yes, we would commit to continuing this. Staff would still have worked in RBG for 30 years academy or not.

70. What commitment are we making to ensure there is greater diversity of staff within our schools, especially in leadership roles?

    By becoming a trust, we will be able to open up internal pathways of progress that at the present time are not there in any of our schools unless someone leaves. We are committed to 'growing our own teams and future leaders'. The vision is that our recruitment comes from within to ensure we continue with the ethos created. We have engaged with Hemisphere and are working with EAR group to look at recruitment processes. We are committed to being an inclusive organisation

71. I wondered what would happen with regards to the policies that we currently follow that are from Greenwich (e.g. the maternity policy)? Would TAIT use the information/details from the Greenwich policies when making their own version? For example, would the terms, pay, conditions, deadlines etc stay the same?

    I know that we (Imperium) have our own policies for many other things and am aware that you said you wouldn't want to be changing details if it's not necessary, but was more curious about the policies that are solely from Greenwich. I am unsure if there are any others - I only ask about the Maternity one as this is the one I have been most familiar with recently.

    In short - no, we are not changing the Maternity policy (as it's a Greenwich one and appears to be fit for purpose) and as for other policies, we've agreed with the trade unions that we will continue to use the very best versions from Greenwich and where needed, improve on those that would become the trusts. This would be done in full consultation with unions, HR and with you as staff - as it is important to Lisa and I that staff voice is clearly heard and appreciated. Both Lisa and I are aware that some of the policies feel punitive but we will look with you as staff, HR and legal advice on what can be enhanced or changed. As we've stated in our rationale, items such as pay and conditions, pensions etc would not change.

72. Will the Outreach service be safe?

    As you know, we were instructed by the LA in November that the SLA was agreed and there were to be no changes, only to be called in at the start of January to say that they were taking £400K out of the budget to cover costs within the LA. We had to go through a restructure, losing 3 staff and incur the costs of redundancies - when we had not caused this issue. If we were in greater control of the SLA and the funding – as a trust we would be - we would be in a greater position to circumnavigate such issues (and the NEU were aware of this issue due to them having to support their members against the LA). If we were able to expand, this would offer more opportunities to the Outreach staff who potentially could use their expertise on a wider basis than it is now.

73. Will the trust consider support staff pay in line with union wishes?

    We know that support staff pay has always been difficult and as maintained schools it has been a challenge to get the LA to discuss this clearly. Whilst we cannot commit to anything in regard to pay and conditions until we enter the TUPE process, this is something that both of us are willing to have a proper conversation over and how we can help moving forward.

74. You mentioned a charity arm of the trust. Would that be used to support our families?

Yes. As mentioned in the meeting, staff have some really amazing ideas on how to engage parents and the wider community and how we could use any charitable donations to offer support to families who are struggling. We would proactively want staff to be involved in the setting up and decision making for this area. So please bring us your ideas!

75. Why is Ambition trying to go it alone and not merge?

The Ambition Federation of schools is attempting to merge with the Imperium Federation. This will be 5 schools not 3.

Appendix D – Example screenshot of consultation notice on schools' websites

Screenshot from Ambition schools' websites



Screenshot from Inperium schools' websites

