

Frequently Asked Questions

I would like my child to go to Heart of England but they don't attend Balsall Common Primary School, will they be disadvantaged in any way?

No, in fact they too would benefit from what Heart of England would learn from a partnership with two primaries, particularly in relation to the transition from primary to secondary education.

What are the main benefits of the potential merger with Central Schools Trust for Heart of England?

Educational

Effective continuity of educational provision and transition from KS2 to KS3 is key to improving outcomes for children at GCSE and A Level. A 'cross phase' Multi Academy Trust (MAT) structure has the potential to bridge the artificial divide whilst retaining the individual identity and authenticity of each school in its partnership.

Given the significant changes in assessment and curriculum intent there is a golden opportunity to align philosophically. There is much potential for staff to augment practice rooted in educational research by sharing an approach to professional development and school improvement whilst retaining the individual identity of each organisation within the MAT. Many subjects would greatly benefit from continuity in curriculum intent and delivery from foundation stage through to KS3 and beyond.

A focus on developing and improving curriculum, assessment and cultural synergies, whilst maintaining individual school identity, will ultimately enable students to:

- experience greater parity and smoother transition in their learning
- progress more consistently (avoid the academic dip)
- build confidence and self-worth rooted in shared values and curriculum intent

The learning gained would be shared by Heart of England School with its other feeder primary schools so that they too could capitalise, ensuring benefit to many more primary school children destined for Heart of England beyond those attending Balsall Common Primary School.

Financial

The main financial advantages are; a strong financially sustainable future for all schools in the trust; better value for money through increased efficiencies related to shared services and increased purchasing power.

Is it unusual for a Secondary to join with two primaries? Would joining a MAT with other secondary schools be more beneficial, for sharing good practice, skills, resources etc?

It is not unusual for MATs to include secondary and primary schools. The primary feeder-secondary hub model is common. A local example is the Finham MAT which includes both Finham Park School and Finham 2 as secondary schools and Finham Primary School.

The educational benefits of sharing good practice and curriculum delivery are relevant across all key stage phases. The best value benefits of shared services and greater procurement power are also not dependent on secondary or primary only MATs.

Isn't it only 'failing' schools that join Multi Academy Trusts (MAT)?

No. It is true that schools that are judged by OFSTED as 'Requires Improvement' or 'Inadequate' are often sponsored by a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) to drive educational improvement. However, many 'Good' and 'Outstanding' schools also choose to join a MAT. It is government policy to encourage all schools to consider becoming part of a MAT.

Heart of England is a 'Good' school (OFSTED October 2018) with 'Outstanding' leadership. It achieved the best GSCE Progress 8 score in its history this summer and A Level performance was second only to Tudor Grange Academy across all Solihull state schools.

Would there be any changes to the leadership at Heart of England?

There would be no change to the leadership at Heart of England.

Would there be any changes to the admissions policy at Heart of England as a result of any potential partnership with Central Schools Trust?

There would be no change to the current admissions policy.

Would the Heart of England uniform change?

No. There would be no change to the school's identity or the uniform.

Would the curriculum offering change as a consequence of the potential partnership?

There would be no impact on the curriculum offering.

Will parents be consulted as part of the due diligence process?

Yes, during the due diligence period parent consultation meetings will take place.