



# The Langton

## GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS

### Consultation Document

on the proposed conversion of Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys (The Langton) to an academy within The Canterbury Academy Trust and form The Canterbury Trust



## **Consultation on the proposed conversion of Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys (The Langton) to an academy within The Canterbury Academy Trust and form The Canterbury Trust**

### **Introduction**

Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys, known as “The Langton”, is a selective grammar school for boys aged 11 to 18, with a mixed sixth form, located in Canterbury, Kent. The school was established in 1881. The school currently has 1247 students on roll and was rated as ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted in 2013.

The Governing Body of The Langton is proposing to convert to an academy within the Canterbury Academy Trust and form The Canterbury Trust (CT). This document sets out the reasons for this proposal, the benefits and challenges of academy conversion and joining the Trust, and how stakeholders can engage with the consultation process.

The Canterbury Academy Trust (CAT) is a group of fully inclusive schools that share a common vision of providing ‘schools for all talents’. The Trust consists of The Canterbury Academy, The Canterbury Primary School, and City View Nurseries. The Trust was formed in 2010. The Trust currently has over 2500 students across its schools. Separate to this consultation, the Trustees of the Canterbury Academy Trust will be applying to change the name of the Trust to The Canterbury Trust, with The Langton at the forefront of its leadership and governance. The governing body of The Langton is being supported through the consultation process by The Education People<sup>1</sup>.

### **How have The Langton Governing Body arrived at this proposal?**

The Governing Body is committed to achieving the school’s vision of becoming a world class community of independent learners who enjoy an ability to think creatively, critically, and innovatively, who possess a strong sense of responsibility for their school and local community, and who will use these skills for the benefit of themselves and for the good of the wider world.

With the changing educational landscape and emphasis on school-to-school support, along with the diminishing number of maintained schools within the East Kent area, and the government’s white paper in mind<sup>2</sup>, the Governing Body feel it is the right time to explore

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<sup>1</sup> [The Education People | CPD, Training, Safeguarding, consultation support](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Opportunity for all - Strong schools with great teachers for your child \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)  
[Written questions and answers - Written questions, answers and statements - UK Parliament](#)

the benefits of becoming an academy versus remaining a foundation school maintained by the local authority.

The governors recognised that The Langton and The Canterbury Academy Trust enjoy a very close working relationship, which has been successfully in place for over a decade. This includes the provision of a grammar stream for boys and girls at The Canterbury Academy, staffing support for leaders, teachers and wider work force, joint planning and assessments, and joint enrichment opportunities, as well as creating economies of scale to allow more money to be spent on student facing services.

The Governing Body considered all strategic options available to the school and concluded that in order to move closer to achieving the board's vision, and with the successful long-standing collaborative working arrangements in place, the proposal to join the Trust would be mutually beneficial. Both organisations share a strong alignment in a set of common core values and common ambitions for the schools and communities they serve.

### **What is an academy?**

An academy is a state-funded school that is independent of local authority control. Academies have more freedom and flexibility over their curriculum, finances, staffing and governance. Academies are funded directly by the Department for Education (DfE) and are accountable to the Secretary of State for Education. Academies are subject to the same inspection regime as maintained schools by Ofsted.

Going forward, schools that wish to academise must do so by joining a multi-academy trust (MAT). A MAT is a single legal entity that oversees the strategic direction, performance, and finances of its schools. MATs are charitable companies limited by guarantee and are responsible for the individual academies within their trust. The Academy Trust must comply with the Funding Agreement (the contract) with the Secretary of State as part of the establishment of the academy.

Legislation requires that each academy has the following characteristics:

- that it uses the funds received for the education of those attending the academy.
- that its finances are open and transparent and audited.
- that it offers a balanced and broadly based curriculum.
- that it provides education for students who are wholly or mainly drawn from the area in which the school is situated.

### **Will The Langton get more funding as an academy?**

The Academy Trust will receive a General Annual Grant<sup>3</sup> from the Secretary of State calculated as the equivalent to that which would be received by a maintained school taking account of the number of students at each academy. Capital funding is also available, channelled through the Trust. Every academy trust must abide by the requirements of their funding agreement and have regard to the guidance in the Academy Trust Handbook<sup>4</sup>.

Academies receive the same amount of per-pupil funding as they would receive from the local authority as a maintained school. However, as an academy, The Langton would be free from

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<sup>3</sup> [Academy general annual grant allocation guide: 2023 to 2024 academic year - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/674243/2023-2024-academy-general-annual-grant-allocation-guide.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [Academy Trust Handbook - Academy Trust Handbook 2023 to print - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/674243/2023-2024-academy-general-annual-grant-allocation-guide.pdf)

budget control mechanisms which will allow them to build up greater reserves and strategically invest in frontline services.

### **Are there any consequences of joining a multi-academy trust?**

Academy Trusts are directly liable for matters such as insurance, employment liabilities, pensions, health and safety, and property maintenance. However, as mentioned above, trusts receive funding from central government to enable them to meet these additional costs.

Once an academy order has been issued and documents signed, the schools within the Trust cannot then revert back to be local authority-maintained schools.

### **Why convert to an academy?**

The governors and senior leaders of The Langton have been considering the future direction of the school for some time. They have explored various options and opportunities to ensure that the school continues to provide the best possible education for its students in a changing and challenging educational landscape.

The governors believe that converting to an academy and joining CAT and reforming as The Canterbury Trust, would offer the following benefits:

- **Curriculum:** The Langton would have greater freedom and flexibility to design and deliver a curriculum that meets the needs, interests and aspirations of its students. The school would continue to follow the national curriculum where appropriate, but also have the scope to innovate and enrich its provision in line with its ethos and values, as it has done in the past two years with the formal introduction of The Langton Curriculum. The school would also benefit from sharing good practice and resources with other schools within CAT (reformed as CT), especially in areas such as research, STEM, arts, sports and vocational education.
- **Finances:** The school will have more autonomy and control over its budget and spending decisions. The school would also benefit from economies of scale and efficiencies by being part of CAT (reformed as CT), such as joint procurement, shared services and reduced overheads.
- **Staffing:** The Langton would have more flexibility over its staffing structure, pay and conditions. This would enable the school to recruit, retain and reward high-quality staff who are committed to the school's vision and values. The school would also benefit from enhanced professional development opportunities by being part of CAT (reformed as CT), such as joint training, mentoring, coaching and career progression.
- **Governance:** The Langton would continue to have autonomy over its governance arrangements, although the legal and statutory responsibility would sit with the Trust board. Current governors would become the local governing body (LGB), which would be responsible for overseeing the day-to-day running of the school. The LGB would report to the board of trustees of CT, which would be responsible for setting the strategic direction, performance and finances of the Trust as a whole. The Trust board would be made up of unpaid, skilled individuals and would be comprised of some existing trustees and governors from both Simon Langton and The Canterbury Academy Trust, as well as independent members with relevant skills and experience.
- **Collaboration:** The Langton currently benefits from the collaborative working with CAT and joining the Trust, reformed as CT, would strengthen this, as The Langton becomes part of a wider family of schools. The school would have greater ability to collaborate with other schools within CT on various aspects of teaching and learning, such as curriculum development, assessment, moderation, enrichment activities,

transition arrangements and pupil support. The school would also continue to share additional facilities, resources and expertise, such as specialist teachers, sports coaches, counsellors, and therapists. With The Langton becoming part of the Trust, the Trust's opportunities to support local schools is significantly strengthened, with future opportunities for other local schools to join the Trust.

### **What are the challenges of academy conversion?**

Academy Trusts are directly liable for matters such as insurance, employment liabilities, pensions, health and safety, and property maintenance. However, trusts receive funding from central government to help them meet these additional costs.

The governors and senior leaders of The Langton are aware that converting to an academy, joining the Canterbury Academy Trust and reforming as The Canterbury Trust, would also present some challenges, such as:

- **Legal and administrative:** The Langton would have to go through a legal and administrative process to convert to an academy and join CAT and reform as CT. This would involve transferring, for example: buildings, contracts, liabilities and staff to the Trust. The school would also have to comply with various statutory requirements and regulations as an academy, such as company law, charity law, data protection law and freedom of information law.
- **Financial and operational:** As stated above, the school would have greater freedoms and financial flexibility; However, this would be within the framework of the trusts own financial scheme of delegation and reporting mechanism, rather than to the local authority.
- **Cultural and relational:** The school would want to ensure it maintains a positive and constructive relationship with the local authority, other maintained schools and external partners.

### **Will the admissions arrangements change?**

As a foundation school, the current school admission arrangements are set by the governing body, which has a duty to comply with the School Admissions Code set by the Department for Education. However, Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys complies with the Co-ordinated Admission Scheme, which is administered by Kent County Council for Year 7 intake. Should the school become an academy, we would not expect any of the current admission arrangements to change. The Trust would become the admissions authority with responsibility for determining the admissions and oversubscription criteria, but the Local Authority would continue to co-ordinate the application process for admissions. The Trust would also be bound by the School Admissions Code, and Admissions Appeals Code statutory guidance.

### **How will The Langton change?**

It is unlikely that you will see any change in the day-to-day school lives of your child or young person. The school uniform and the school name will remain the same.

The Langton will remain a selective grammar school until such time as a majority of parents vote to overturn this status, as per DfE guidelines<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> [School Standards and Framework Act 1998 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

The school already has a close working relationship with the Trust, and therefore the opportunities that are afforded to Langton students through this collaboration will be further strengthened and enriched.

There will be opportunities for staff to work together and share expertise across schools within the Trust, to develop a strong curriculum and enhanced learning experience for all students. The Trust will give opportunity for staff development and continuous learning, which the Langton governing body and senior leaders feel would be highly motivating for the staff and help them meet their personal career ambitions.

If an academy order is granted, staff will go through a transfer of employment process under TUPE Regulations. These regulations protect the terms and conditions of staff at the point of transfer. All employees would continue to work at the school with the same responsibilities as now.

Academies do have the power to vary their curriculums and length of the school day. However, it is not intended to take any such steps at this stage, and parents/carers, staff and students will be consulted if any such changes were to be considered in the future.

#### **How will the leadership and management of the school be affected?**

No changes to staffing structure are currently planned. Dr Ken Moffat will remain the Headteacher with the existing leadership in support. Dr Moffat will be invited to join the board of trustees of The Canterbury Trust and will work closely with Mr Jon Watson in leading the Trust.

#### **How will conversion affect the relationship with the Simon Langton Schools' Trust?**

The Simon Langton Schools' Trust is a charity set up under the Charitable Trusts Acts 1853 to 1894, and which was sealed by the Minister of Education on 9<sup>th</sup> November 1956. The statutory provisions which govern the operation of the Trust are now contained in the Charities Act 2011. The Trust was established to provide funds for the education of students attending the Simon Langton School for Boys and the Simon Langton School for Girls. However, the main purpose of the Trust is now to manage its investments. The Trust is a separate legal entity to the Governing Bodies that oversee the Girls' school and the Boys' school, and therefore has no operational involvement in the management of either school.

The Trust does, however, own parts of the land that the schools occupy, but not the school buildings themselves. When there are dealings regarding the land the Trustees liaise with the school, Kent County Council (KCC) and the Charity Commission as well as complying with any restrictions in the deeds of the sites. Should an Academy Order be granted to The Langton, the Trustees of the Simon Langton Schools' Trust would be required to liaise with the school, KCC and The Canterbury Trust to negotiate terms regarding land use. Further information about the Simon Langton School's Trust can be found on The Langton website<sup>6</sup>.

#### **How will the decision be made?**

The Governors of The Langton have yet to make a final decision on whether to convert to an academy and join Canterbury Academy Trust reforming as The Canterbury Trust. They are keen to consult with all stakeholders, including staff, parents and carers, students, the

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<sup>6</sup> [Simon Langton Schools Trust \(thelangton.org.uk\)](http://thelangton.org.uk)

local community and the local authority, before making a formal application to the Department for Education (DfE) via the Regional Director.

The consultation period will run from Monday 9 October 2023 to Monday 13 November 2023. During this period, the school will provide opportunities for stakeholders to ask questions, express views and give feedback through a consultation survey, which can be completed online or by using the form included at the end of this document.

The school will also publish regular updates and FAQs on its website and social media channels.

The governors of The Langton will carefully consider all the feedback received from stakeholders during the consultation period. A decision on whether or not to proceed with the proposal is likely to be made by the full governing body in November 2023. Governors will communicate their decision to all stakeholders after such time.

If the decision is to proceed with the proposal, the school will submit a formal application to the DfE for approval. The DfE will then conduct its own due diligence process before granting or refusing consent for the conversion. If consent is granted, the school will aim to convert to an academy, join CAT and reform as CT by April 2024.

### **How can you get involved?**

The governors of The Langton value your views and opinions on this important proposal to academise and form The Canterbury Trust. You can respond to this consultation proposal in the following ways:

- Representations can be made in writing via the school office to the Governing Body. Please address your correspondence to “Academy Consultation, Clerk to the Governing Body.”
- Stakeholders are encouraged to give feedback via the consultation response form, which can be completed via this link: [Respond to consultation](#)

or by scanning the QR code:



- Your questions can also be submitted via the survey form.
- Or by completing the form at the end of this document.
- Or by email to: [MFrench@thelangton.kent.sch.uk](mailto:MFrench@thelangton.kent.sch.uk) (Clerk to the Governing Body)

Thank you for your interest and participation in this consultation. Your views matter to us.

**About you, please tick one that applies:**

Parent/Carer

Student

Alumnus

Other  Please state: \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you read the consultation proposal document? Yes  No**

**What are your views on our proposal for The Langton to become an academy within The Canterbury Academy Trust and form The Canterbury Trust?**

**Please submit any questions you have here. A live FAQ document can be found on our website. All questions submitted will be added to this document with replies.**

**Name**

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