



# The Langton

GRAMMAR SCHOOL  
FOR BOYS

## **Stakeholder Engagement & Consultation Summary Report**

Prepared by The Education People, November 2023

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## Introduction

This report has been compiled to describe the consultation process that has taken place and summarise stakeholder views to inform the decision of the governing body regarding the proposed conversion of Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys (The Langton) to an academy within The Canterbury Academy Trust and the forming of The Canterbury Trust.

The consultation was undertaken from Monday 9 October 2023 to Monday 13 November 2023.

The governing body commissioned [The Education People](#) Governor Services to support them with the consultation process and produce this report.

## Rationale and Process

The Governing Body evaluated different strategic options for the school and concluded that the one that would best help them realize their vision would be to consult on the proposal to academise with The Canterbury Trust and formalise the successful collaborative arrangement that had been in place for over a decade. The consultation was undertaken following extensive communication and liaison with the Regional Director, and in advance of a formal academy order being sought.

Two surveys, one for parents/carers and one for staff to respond to the consultation was opened on Monday 9 October and closed on Monday 13 November to ensure those wishing to respond were given ample opportunity to do so. Staff were given the option to submit their views anonymously should they wish.

The governors set up a dedicated academisation [consultation page](#) on the school website and all stakeholders were encouraged to submit questions via the clerk to the governing body or via the survey form.

Students were given opportunity to engage with the online survey with 12 students doing so, further engagement for students was given with the opportunity to feedback on questions in form group discussions. The student union met with the headteacher personally to discuss. All students received consultation docs via their school e-mail accounts. The headteacher met separately with a group of students from the SRP who had requested a tailored response for SEND students.

## Stakeholder engagement

### Parent/Carer survey

In addition to being able to submit questions via the survey, stakeholders were asked:

1. About you, please tick one that applies: parent/carers, student, alumnus, other
2. Have you read the consultation proposal document?
3. What are your views on our proposal for The Langton to become an academy within The Canterbury Academy Trust and form The Canterbury Trust?





### Stakeholder survey responses:

Student numbers recorded on the DfE's "Get Information About Schools" website show 1247<sup>1</sup> students are currently attending the school, which equates to approximately 1000 families who could have responded to the survey. 114 parents/carers, 11 Alumni, 13 Other stakeholders and 12 students completed the survey. Six members of staff completed the stakeholder survey, and their response has been collated with the staff survey results. 2 alumnus responses were submitted by email therefore not included in the graphic below.

#### 1. About you, please select one that applies

[More Details](#)

 Insights

 Parent/Carer	114
 Student	12
 Alumnus	9
 Other	19



### Parental survey analysis

98% of all respondents said they had read the consultation documentation before giving their views. 59 respondents asked questions which were in the main answered in the FAQ live document on the school's website.

The parents/carers' views on the proposal were divided and varied. 43 of the 114 parent/carers supported the proposal. This equates to 38% of the parents/carers responding positively, with 30% stating a preference for the school to remain controlled by the local authority or to wait till a later date, and 23% providing no firm view either way.

The main theme of views were<sup>2</sup>:

- Those parents who were **opposed** to the proposal feared that it will dilute the prestige and quality of The Langton grammar school, and that it would compromise its autonomy and standards.
- Those parents who were **cautiously in favour** of the proposal saw it as a way to secure the financial and governing independence of The Langton school, and

<sup>1</sup> [Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys - GOV.UK \(get-information-schools.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/get-information-schools)

<sup>2</sup> The anonymised raw data will be available for the governing body to view along with this report

to collaborate with another school that shares its vision and values.

- Those parents who were **enthusiastically supportive** of the proposal thought that it would enhance the opportunities and resources for the students and enrich the social and economic diversity of the school community.
- Those parents that were **undecided** or **uncertain** about the proposal, voiced that they needed more information and clarity on the purpose and benefits of academisation, and that had some concerns about the implications and risks of joining with another school, specifically an RI school.
- Those parents that were **opposed** to the proposal **at this present time** voiced that they had concerns regarding the lack of evidence of researching other opportunities, the transparency of the process and the current government agenda regarding academisation with the upcoming election.

The main theme of views from parents were:

- Timing and existing arrangements; the sudden rush to implement the change puzzles some contributors.
- If the current arrangements already yield benefits, why the urgency?
- Some view the proposal as an excellent idea to proactively take control.
- The fear of being compelled to join a larger trust drives this perspective.
- The fear is that academization might dilute the Langton boys' Grammar school's reputation
- Full financial responsibility and the absence of local authority (LA) support raise concerns.
- Contributors seek data to validate teacher support
- A positive perspective highlights the benefits of sharing facilities and resources between the two schools.
- The fit between these schools is seen as ideal.
- Contributors appreciate financial and governing autonomy but worry about potential teacher sharing.
- Trust is placed in the school leaders to act in the best interest of the school and students.

Acknowledging that The Langton is already an excellent state school, contributors recognise the intellectual challenge of persuading parents to change something that's already the best.


## **Student voice**




Students were invited to submit their views via the stakeholder survey. 12 students submitted views with 25% giving positive views in favour of the proposal. The remaining 75% of views were split between being against the academisation and not having a view either way.

## Staff responses\*:

### 1. About you, please select one that applies

[More Details](#)

 Insights

 Teacher	23
 Support Staff	7
 Non Teaching Staff	0



98% of staff had read the consultation document prior to completing the consultation response survey. Staff were given the opportunity to submit questions via the survey form; 3 members of staff submitted questions via this medium and 1 member of staff raised a question via paper submission. 5 staff members (1 Teacher, 2 support staff and 2 non teaching staff) submitted paper submissions which are included in the data but not in the Microsoft forms graphic above.

There are currently 158<sup>3</sup> members of staff employed who had opportunity to complete the survey. 41\* members of staff completed the survey with 98% in favour of the proposal. \* six members of staff completed the stakeholder survey for parents/carers and their submission is included within the staff analysis.

Comments<sup>4</sup> included the desire to ensure core values are maintained and that the spirit or autonomy of The Langton is not lost; the view that sharing of resources would be beneficial, and that the staff have faith in the leadership of the school to make decisions in the best interest of the school and its students. There was only one negative comment voiced regarding the proposal.

### Information to stakeholders

The following information was made available for all stakeholders via dedicated Consultation pages on the school' website:

<https://thelangton.org.uk/information/consultation/>

The consultation document also was distributed by email to all parent/carers and staff with a letter from the Chair of Governors. In addition, the consultation document was sent to the following:

- the Local Authority
- all Headteachers in surrounding schools in both the Canterbury and Coastal areas
- all Unions represented in the school
- the local elected KCC Member
- the Diocesan Board of Canterbury

<sup>3</sup> [Staff-List-Sept-2023.pdf \(thelangton.org.uk\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> The anonymised raw data will be available for the governing body to view along with this report

- the Member of Parliament for Canterbury

## Summary

In drawing conclusions, it should be noted that the number of responses from all stakeholder groups were noticeably low in comparison to the size of the stakeholder community. This could be due to several factors, including but not exclusively that parent and carers are satisfied with the proposal and felt no need to respond. Those parent and carers who did feel strongly about the proposals were able to voice their views and these have been included in the pack for governors to review privately. Due to the low numbers of responses, it would be inappropriate to release individual responses due to GDPR.



## Appendix 1 – Academisation Position Paper from Dr Ken Moffatt

Available on the school website: [Consultation Paper \(thelangton.org.uk\)](http://thelangton.org.uk)

### **Academisation A Position Paper**

Schools have been invited to become academies since the early 2000s, a Labour initiative, further bolstered in 2010 by the Conservative/Lib Dem Coalition. There are many types of academies, large and small, successful and otherwise, and we have all perhaps seen the very worst type of academy chain that just seems to grow for the sake of growing, hoovering up other schools and delivering a standard model of education that must be followed by all. This is not a model of education I would ever pursue.

Academization takes a school out of Local Authority control and gives it new levels of freedom. Initially, the suggestion was that academization would mean greater financial income for the school; if this money did indeed exist, it has certainly dried up now.

All leaders in this sector have had to keep their eyes on the rapidly changing landscape to check that we have the right model in place and the right status for the right time. This is basic business practice. On two occasions we have seriously considered academization, in 2017 and in 2019. On the first occasion, Dr Baxter and I went to KCC Sessions House for a meeting with County officers where we were reassured and convinced that staying within Local Authority control was the best option for the school. We have always enjoyed a good relationship with KCC and felt comfortable within that family. When Darren Watson and I revisited this in 2019, as increasing numbers of school changed their status, we could still not see the clear argument to proceed.

Times change, however. As of today, over 80% of secondary schools in England and Wales are academies and that figure rises to around 87% for Grammar Schools. We were very surprised last year when the current government, in the guise of the then Education Secretary, Nadhim Zahawi, announced that all schools would need to be in Multi Academy Trusts by 2030.

I spoke with Mr Zahawi at the conference for Grammar School Heads in London at the time and gauged his strength of feeling for the direction of travel. Obviously, he was gone in a few weeks and the revolving door at Westminster gave us a dizzying succession of Education Secretaries and the White Paper in which his plan was embedded never turned into law.

However, Dr Mark Fenton, Chair of the GSHA, made his advice very clear to me and my fellow headteachers that now was the time to start having conversations with other schools about such opportunities as may be available and not risk being forced into an uncomfortable academization at a later date. Dr Fenton knows The Langton very well and I trust his advice as one of the leading headteachers of his generation.

It is very clear that whilst the White Paper never turned into guidance or policy, the direction of travel towards academization has not gone away. It is worth being aware, also, that there is no opposition to the academization programme from the Labour Party who introduced it in the first place. That has been made clear to us from local Labour politicians. A change of government at the next election is, therefore, unlikely to delay progress in this area.

I could foresee, from the moment that schools were first encouraged to move away from Local Authority control, that this was a genie that was never going to go back in the bottle. There is a real concern that a future Secretary of State, and we do see so many of them these days, might, quite sensibly, instruct the small percentage of maintained schools remaining to change to academy status to ensure uniformity across the education system. Politicians have notorious form for springing snap, surprise decisions upon us. In the last

month, the current government has offered us the British Baccalaureate and a ban on mobile phones in schools, neither of which were seen coming.

I cannot risk leaving the future of The Langton to a politician's whim. Not when I can take means to protect us from this. For the first time in our thinking, KCC is not trying to talk us out of leaving Local Authority control. Local Authorities across the country are struggling financially and, as more and more schools leave LA control, it becomes less of an option for Local Authorities to provide the same robust support for the few schools that remain in their care. That we have been supported on our journey, so far, by KCC, to my mind, speaks volumes.

Given that we have worked so successfully, for so long, with Canterbury Academy on an informal basis, it is both right and wise at this point to consider whether we should make our partnership more formal. There is not another Multi Academy Trust operating in the county that I could envisage working with, now or in the future.

### **Progress Towards**

Last year, in the light of the above, we had to establish both due diligence and feasibility to see if it was even possible to enter into a formal partnership with The Canterbury Academy Trust. Having established that, it was then time to see whether the Langton Governing Body would actually look favourably on the idea of academization as the future direction of travel. There would have been no point pursuing the idea further if we could not get Full Board approval. The purpose of the Full Governing Body single agenda meeting on June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2023, was to see, having considered the arguments put before them, whether the Governing Body would actually consider academization. In the event, the governors voted unanimously in favour of moving towards formal academization. In voting in favour of this, they signalled a wish to begin the journey of the formal process of becoming an academy.

The first step on that journey is consultation with our stakeholders, which is where we are today. The earliest date at which the governors might decide to formally apply for academy status is at the Full Governing Body meeting on November 23<sup>rd</sup> when they will have had time to contemplate the stakeholders' contributions. At that meeting they will decide yes or no to academization or decide that they need more time to come to a decision. Any application to the DfE to change the school's status will not be made until after that November meeting, and after consultation and a decision has been made.

The Langton's stakeholder group is large. Obviously, as parents you are a very key part of this. It can be argued that the primary stakeholders are the staff of the school who draw their livelihood from The Langton and I have to say that, following internal discussions, teachers and support staff are very much in favour of the move towards academization. That, again, is a big tick and endorsement for me. We must also consult with our alumni, the 1248 Langton Society, many of whom retain very close ties with their *alma mater*, and also with colleagues in local primary and secondary schools who might, reasonably, claim ramifications or opportunities for their school or community.

I mentioned earlier that over 80% of secondary schools in England and Wales are now academies, but in the primary sector that figure falls to around 40% and I am conscious that primary headteachers are nervous about the very real threat of takeover if all schools were to be pushed into a Multi Academy Model. If we do establish The Canterbury Trust, a rebranded Trust for the city and its environs, we could potentially offer safe harbour to local primary schools and give them freedom from takeover but, more importantly, autonomy to carry on serving their communities in the excellent ways that they have been doing for generations of local children. Some local Primary heads are excited by this possible opportunity. I would be very keen to help provide a Canterbury solution to a Canterbury problem.

### **Current Benefits**

Over the last 11 years The Langton and Canterbury Academy have successfully shared resources for the benefit of both institutions and to the detriment of neither.

To begin the combined elite sporting academies that exist across the two schools, we appointed Nicky Little to lead on the rugby academy. His salary is shared across both schools. Neither school could have afforded him on their own. This is an example of the buying power that two institutions together can provide. School rugby at The Langton has never been so strong and, whilst some might argue that this is just sport, we do believe in the transformative power of sport to take young boys and to turn them into good men. And to give the same opportunity to our Sixth Form girls.

Tim Fox, formerly an Assistant Headteacher at The Langton, is now a Senior Vice-Principal at Canterbury Academy overseeing the performance of the Langton academic stream. Though a Langton employee, he works entirely from The Academy who pay his salary. The academic interactions between the two schools are such that, because of The Langton Stream at The Academy, Canterbury Academy students have joined The Langton and gone on to take places at Cambridge. Staff at The Langton have been delivering A Level courses to Canterbury Academy students in Biology and Politics for over 8 years.

Two years ago, the Examinations Officer at The Langton resigned and left for a job in Higher Education. The position, with on-costs, cost The Langton around 35K per year. After conversations with Canterbury Academy leaders, it was agreed that we could outsource the practice of exams to the exams team at the Academy at a much reduced cost of around 17K. These small financial gains mean a lot more to stretched school budgets than might appear to private sector employees.

This year, following our Head of Careers' decision to leave the profession, we have established a Careers Hub which meets on a Thursday to operate on both a surgery drop-in and formal appointment basis for all students needing careers advice using Canterbury Academy staff. In all my time at the school, I have been conscious that, whilst we offer excellent support to students applying to university, our provision for students who want to engage with other forms of training or wish to go straight into the world of work has never been as robust as I would have wished. Of course, this is an area of strength at The Academy and, as we are seeing a marked increase in student interest here in apprenticeships rather than progressing inevitably to university, this is a real bonus for the school.

The Design Department at The Langton is flourishing under Dan Pledger's leadership and numbers gravitating towards the subject are high. We need more staffing to cope with the increased number of Design classes in the school and we have struggled to fill that gap. Recruitment is a massive issue for schools in the South East as it is obviously the part of the country where a teacher's salary has the least buying power and Design is a shortage area for quality teaching. Because luck dictated that Canterbury Academy had a surplus of Design teachers, we were able to access high quality Design teaching from a partner which helped us enormously through the year.

Two years ago, The Langton, along with Canterbury Academy, Canterbury Primary and St. Nicholas' special school formed the Concordia Learning Alliance to deliver CPD to teachers in Kent. Working with Thames Gateway, staff from all the schools deliver bespoke training courses for teachers locally as well as delivering the standard countrywide National Professional Qualifications for teachers. There is a gap in the market currently that the schools have wisely identified which provides the opportunity to raise much needed money for our own institutions. This has been a very powerful innovation

These are just some of the many economies of scale that can work for both institutions.

### **Future Opportunities**

Academisation does offer freedoms both financially and educationally. The school would have more freedom to deliver a curriculum of its own choosing. We have totally re-written our Key Stage 3 curriculum for full implementation this academic year. The content and structure are unique to our school and are the product of a year's focus by all teaching staff. The History of Ideas programme that runs at the core of The Langton Curriculum is equally unique to this school. We have a history of curriculum innovation that will play out nicely under this new freedom.

Running school finance in the maintained sector is a real challenge in that we are not allowed to set a deficit budget, but, under Schools' Financial Services scrutiny, we are subject to Balance Control Mechanism meaning that we are not allowed to build up financial reserves above a relatively modest figure and that, if we do, we simply have to hand the money back. An unexpected, un-funded pay rise for teaching or support staff, which has happened twice in the last 6 years, can decimate a planned school budget. As an academy we would be free of Balance Control Mechanism and would have the opportunity to build a financial reserve that will absorb similar financial shock. Only this weekend it was reported that a mistake in government calculations means we stand to receive less funding than was previously promised in the years 2024/25 – probably in the region of 80K. If we put the context that a maintained school with a very healthy financial state is probably only carrying forward a balance of about £200K, you get the sense of how precarious school budgets are.

Both schools have Specialist Resourced Provisions attached to them supporting students with an EHCP. Staff across the SRPs have a multitude of rare and niche skills that could be deployed more widely and the opportunity for sharing best practice is huge. We do know that there is a mental health crisis across the nation and senior staff have already had discussions about whether, if academization takes place, there would be the opportunity to employ an educational psychiatrist across the two organisations. It is increasingly difficult to get access to CAMHS and the ability to potentially recruit an ex-CAMHS practitioner would be very attractive.

### **What Would Academisation Look Like?**

In practice, there should be no noticeable difference to the day to day running of the school. Both schools will retain autonomy over curriculum, budget, uniform, calendar and any other strategy or policy they wish to pursue. Staff will continue to teach and work in the schools where they were appointed. If staff wish to experience other aspects of education as they are practiced in other areas of the trust, they will be very welcome to do so. Nobody will be asked to work somewhere against their wishes.

I will have an over-arching responsibility, with Jon Watson at Canterbury Academy, to lead the Trust which may take a day a week of my time. This will not compromise my work at The Langton and may give opportunities for senior staff to experience different responsibility at the school. Otherwise, it will be the same faces teaching our young people, in the same way.

### **Conclusion**

We do find ourselves in a situation where, having considered all the opportunities available, including sitting tight, staying as we are and hoping nothing will happen, the Governing Body has opted unanimously to begin the formal consultation and the formal progress towards becoming an academy. We have been discussing this policy for years. The senior leadership are unanimous in their view that there is an inevitability about the academization agenda that is best grasped now to make sure that we are the ones choosing our destiny and that we are very comfortable with our colleagues at Canterbury Academy and are confident in our ability to work together for the betterment of both organisations and to the detriment of neither.

The DfE are clear that it is no longer an option to become a stand-alone academy or form a new multi academy trust. These options, if we had ever wanted them, are now gone to us and the DfE message is that Grammar Schools entering into MATs are an essential part of the government's "levelling up" agenda and they are not looking at Grammar Schools academizing with other Grammar Schools. That said, it would not be impossible for us to admit another local Grammar School into the Trust at a later date.

The teaching and support staff at The Langton are overwhelmingly in favour of joining Canterbury Academy in a newly branded Trust for the same pragmatic reason that they see it as inevitable, but, also, as an opportunity to do something new and exciting for the children of Canterbury and Coastal region. They have my assurances that their jobs are secure and that this will not result in any redundancies or restructures or redirection of staff to other parts of the Trust.

This is my 36<sup>th</sup> year at the school. It has been an absolute privilege to spend my career here and I hope to have several more years to come. Latterly, as the leader, I have become even more cautious about big decisions which, in this case, have an existential impact on the school and I would never do anything if I thought the risk to the school was great. The previous headteacher, Matthew Baxter, handed over the school to me in a much better state than he inherited it, and I know my job is to do the very same for my successor when the time

comes. Jon Watson at the Academy is an Old Langton and is as passionate about The Langton as I am. For much of my career I have been suspicious of the academy programme, but I am now of the view that the time is right. I do not believe that the Local Authority will have the long capacity to keep supporting us in the excellent way they have in the past, because of resources, not because of any failing on their part, and I believe it is finally time to seize an opportunity available to us, to protect the unique nature of this school which this move will provide.

As things stand, we would be the lead school in the partnership with, at the very least, an equal voice in determining the Trust's future direction. The Langton will continue to operate autonomously, uniquely and to the dance of its own drum safe from any future sudden political whim. For these reasons, I recommend the plan to academize to you.

Ken Moffat

## Appendix 2 – Letter to parents/carers

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

As part of our consultation process, we would like to offer you the opportunity to give your view via this survey.

We would encourage as many of you as possible to complete the survey so that the governing body has the fullest picture of what the school community thinks about the proposal to join The Canterbury Academy Trust and form The Canterbury Trust.

The deadline for the online survey is midnight on **Monday 13 November 2023**. Your responses will be collated by [The Education People](#) and incorporated into the Stakeholder engagement and consultation summary report, which will be reviewed by the governing body.

Anonymised responses will also be shared with the Trust as part of this consultation process.

The survey can be completed online via this link: [Respond to Consultation](#)

Or by scanning the QR code:



Alternatively, you can complete the form below and return it via the school office.

<b>About you, please tick one that applies:</b> Parent/Carer <input type="checkbox"/> Student <input type="checkbox"/> Alumnus <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Please state:
<b>Have you read the consultation proposal document?</b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>What are your views on our proposal for The Langton to become an academy within The Canterbury Academy Trust and form The Canterbury Trust?</b>          
<b>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.</b>          
<b>Your name:</b>

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey; your views matter to us.

### Appendix 3 – Letter to staff

Dear Colleague,

As part of our consultation process, we would like to offer you the opportunity to give your view via this survey.

We would encourage as many of you as possible to complete the survey so that the governing body has the fullest picture of what the school community thinks about the proposal to join The Canterbury Academy Trust and form The Canterbury Trust.

The deadline for the online survey is midnight on **Monday 13 November 2023**. Your responses are anonymous and will be collated by [The Education People](#) and incorporated into the Stakeholder engagement and consultation summary report, which will be reviewed by the governing body.

The survey can be completed online via this link: [Respond to consultation](#)

Or by scanning the QR code:



Alternatively, you can complete the form below and return it via the post box in the staff room labelled “Consultation responses”.

<p><b>About you, please tick one that applies:</b></p> <p>Teacher <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Support staff/TA <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Non-teaching staff <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><b>Have you read the consultation proposal document? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></b></p>
<p><b>What are your views on our proposal for the school to become an academy within The Canterbury Academy Trust and form The Canterbury Trust?</b></p>
<p><b>If you have any questions, please submit them here. A live FAQ document can be found on the school website. Questions submitted will be added to this document with replies, or addressed separately if related directly to staffing contracts and conditions.</b></p>

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey; your views matter to us.

## Appendix 4 – Frequently Asked Questions

Available on the school website: [The Canterbury Trust FAQs \(google.com\)](https://www.canterbury-trust.org.uk/faq)

The Canterbury Trust – FAQs for parents

### Multi-Academy Trusts

#### What is a Multi-Academy Trust?

A Multi-Academy Trust (“MAT”) is a formal collaboration between two or more academy schools.

#### What benefits are there of joining together in a MAT?

The schools have served the Canterbury community and its surrounding areas for very many years. We have a firm commitment to providing the highest levels of care and academic achievement for all our children and young people, irrespective of their starting points or any disadvantage they may have. A set of shared values connects the schools. We work with likeminded people following a common core vision.

#### Why are schools joining MATs both locally and nationally?

Schools can use the strong collaboration and accountability afforded by the MAT to drive up standards and share best practice and services across the trust, replacing aspects of former local authority support. Across the country Local Education Authorities are being eroded in terms of size and power. The Government, both incumbent and alternative, has indicated that this is their preferred structure.

#### What are the risks of not academising and becoming part of The Canterbury Trust at this stage?

The biggest risk is being forced to join a MAT in the near future which may either have different values and ethos to the Langton and/or remove significant levels of autonomy and decision making from the Langton.

#### Who are Multi Academy Trusts accountable to?

MATs are directly accountable to the Department for Education. This is across all aspects including educational provision and standards, finances and estates. MATs are externally audited on an annual basis.

#### Why are Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys and The Canterbury Academy Trust a ‘good fit’?

Both organisations share a strong alignment in a set of common core values and common ambitions for the schools and communities they serve.

Both organisations have been working collaboratively for over 10 years, sharing school improvement, financial, and operational expertise via a less formal arrangement.

#### What schools will be part of The Canterbury Trust?

Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys  
The Canterbury Academy  
The Canterbury Primary School  
City View Pre School and Nurseries

#### Will other schools join the Trust in the future?

The Trust will be open to exploring opportunities to work with other local primary, secondary or special schools.

#### Why are we not forming our own academy?

The DfE will not allow new MATs to form or schools to academise on their own. The only way to acadmise now is to join an existing MAT.

#### Why are we not partnering with Simon Langton Grammar School for Girls?

As with the previous question, as neither of the Langtons are currently academies, this isn't an option.

#### Why is The Canterbury Academy Trust the best fit for Langton and what other options were considered?

The reasons for this are outlined in detail in the briefing paper from Dr Moffatt.

#### How many of the 32 grammar schools in Kent are acadmies?



23 of the 32 grammar schools in Kent have already converted to academies.

### **Governance**

#### **How would the governance arrangements work and would there be any representation from Simon Langton on the MAT board?**

A new governance structure will be formed with one Trust board across the MAT, with individual local governing bodies for each school. Simon Langton Local Governing Body would still operate. The newly formed Trust board would be made up of skilled individuals and be comprised of some existing Trustees and governors from both Simon Langton and The Canterbury Academy Trust.

#### **Does the role of governors change?**

There is an extra layer of governance added in a Multi Academy Trust. This is outlined in the scheme of delegation. While the titles for some of these change, their responsibility does not.

However, the essence of the role of members, trustees and local governors remains the same. The members, trustees and local governors remain volunteers from across the schools and local community.

#### **Will the change result in any governors being paid?**

No. The role remains completely voluntary with strict guidance around conflicts of interest.

#### **What happens next, what is the timescale of any change?**

Governors would need to consider all of the feedback and outcome of this consultation process and then meet to discuss whether they wish to proceed. If they do then they would need to apply for permission to the Regional Director (part of the Department for Education) to go ahead, and if that is granted, lawyers would need to carry out the legal work involved. Staff and parents would be updated at each stage and staff from Simon Langton would be part of a separate consultation process under the TUPE regulations, which is more specific and would give them a further opportunity to ask questions and understand how, if at all, their role might be affected.

The earliest this is likely to be able to be implemented is January 2024, and we are keen to continue to take on board the views of staff, governors, parents, pupils and the wider community throughout the process.

#### **What safeguards are in place to ensure that governors have the necessary skills and competencies for their roles?**

As part of the conversion process, DfE would conduct checks to ensure the governing body was fit for purpose and had the necessary skills and competencies.

#### **How are academies held to account?**

The DfE replaces KCC in holding academies to account when they convert.

#### **Will we still have parent governors?**

Yes there will still be parent governors on the Langton LGB.

### **Staffing and Finance**

#### **What would the leadership structure be in the new MAT?**

The Trust would be led by Jon Watson and Ken Moffat, as the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) and Trust Executive Director. They would lead an executive office team that would focus on ensuring school improvement and development, as well as effective corporate function.

#### **How are MATs financed?**

MATs receive their funding directly from the Department for Education, which is then distributed to the individual schools. A small percentage is retained for central services such as finance and HR, with the individual schools retaining control of the rest, including reserves they build up.

#### **How are improvements to the school estate funded?**

There are a variety of sources available to MATs, including Department for Education funding, KCC capital funding (which academies can access also) and building up of reserves.

#### **Are there financial advantages by being a MAT?**

Each school will manage their own finances and maintain their own reserves. However, A range of cost savings will be achieved through the Trust - for example when procuring supplies and services, or by taking advantage of any opportunities to reduce unnecessary staffing costs as and when they occur. But the overarching rationale behind amalgamation is to extend and enhance opportunities and improve the stability and security of schools within the Trust, not to cut costs. The latter will take place naturally over time as the trust rationalises contracts, bulk procurement and the like.

**Would staff be required to work at both sites?**

Staff who currently have a defined place of work in their contract could not be asked to work elsewhere without their agreement. We already have a number of staff who work across the schools. We will continue to be open to any future possibilities.

An increased number of schools and an expanded trust will also offer more developmental opportunities for aspiring middle and senior leaders to undertake projects or seek progressions within trust schools, rather than needing to look beyond the existing organisation. So, we would aim to have greater opportunities for retaining high quality staff within the trust and develop colleagues for the future.

**Will staff roles and responsibilities change?**

No. We are not envisaging any changes to school based roles or responsibilities. Individual schools will remain responsible for setting their own staffing models and determining roles and responsibilities for staff within their schools.

**Will staff terms and conditions change?**

No, we do not expect any changes to terms and conditions of school staff. All staff are protected by TUPE legislation which safeguards staff terms and conditions in the event of a transfer in the ownership of a company or organisation, such as this.

**Will this result in any redundancies?**

No. Neither organisation envisages any issues of this kind.

**Will CPD and training days be coordinated?**

No. Schools will have autonomy to prioritise the needs of their school. We are, of course, open to any opportunities to combine for specialist training.

**Will staff have to sign a new contract?**

No. Contracts will transfer across to The Canterbury Trust with exactly the same terms and conditions.

**Will it affect staff's pension?**

No. Members of both the Teachers' Pension Scheme and the Local Government Pension Scheme will continue with the same pension under the same terms.

**Are staff in favour of academisation?**

There is a staff consultation currently taking place alongside the stakeholder consultation. The senior leadership team unanimously supports forming The Canterbury Trust and no members of staff have expressed concerns to the team.

**Does CAT have a financial reserve?**

Yes it is currently in a healthy financial position. Schools within the Trust will have control of their own reserves and be able to use them strategically to benefit the students.

**How will the Trust manage any conflicts of interest?**

All academies must declare all conflicts of interest between any of their members, Trustees or senior staff annually. Any financial interactions between them must be reported directly to the DfE.

**Does Langton intend to sell land and buildings?**

No. There are no plans to sell land or buildings.

## **School Operations**

### **Does Ofsted consider each school on an individual basis or inspect the MAT as a whole?**

Ofsted considers each school on an individual basis currently, but they would look at the MAT board as the accountable body for any individual school. Each school retains their own DfE number.

### **Will there be a new headteacher?**

No. Dr Moffat, Mr Watson and Mrs Farrell will remain the headteachers at Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys, The Canterbury Academy and The Canterbury Primary School respectively.

### **What will change in the day-to-day experience for staff and students?**

Nothing at all. The schools all retain their autonomy. The individual character of each school will not change. This will simply allow us to support each other even more.

### **What would happen to the uniform?**

We don't propose to make any changes to the current school uniforms of any of our schools.

### **Would the name of the school change?**

We do not intend to change the name of any school and we are strongly committed to retaining the identity of each school within The Canterbury Trust.

### **Would the times of the school day and holidays change?**

We have no plans to change the times of the school day or the term dates. Any future changes would be subject to consultation with parents and carers.

### **Would admissions arrangements change?**

We would not expect any of the current admission arrangements to change. The Local Authority would continue to co-ordinate the application process for admissions.

### **Is it likely that the curriculum between MAT schools will be synchronised?**

There are no plans to synchronise curriculums within schools, but the MAT will always consider the benefits of sharing good practice.

### **Will the ethos and values of the schools change on becoming an Academy?**

No. The ethos and values of the schools will continue as they always have done.

### **Will working with other schools mean lowering our own standards or possibly detracting resources from our own school?**

No. By working closely with others we will be raising our own standards and increasing accessibility to a greater range of resources.

### **Will there be any changes to how exams are run?**

No, the arrangements for these will remain the same as they are currently.

### **Will classes become jointly timetabled?**

The schools will continue to operate independently.

### **My child has special educational needs. Will the change to academy status mean any changes for her/him?**

No. The Local Authority will continue to have overall responsibility for Special Educational Needs budgets. There will be no difference in the support given for individual pupils whether schools remain under Local Authority control or are part of a Multi Academy Trust.

**Will there be any impact on class sizes?**

No, this will have no impact on class sizes.

**Will student's data be shared with other schools in the Trust?**

No, data protection rules would still apply.

**What impact will The Canterbury Academy's Ofsted have on staff at the Langton?**

None. No members of staff at The Langton will be asked to provide any additional support and/or teach at the Canterbury Academy due to the Ofsted judgement.

**Will this mean Simon Langton is no longer a grammar school?**

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. Only parents of students at the Langton would be eligible to vote on this. Parents of students at other schools in the Trust would not be eligible to vote.

**Will Simon Langton remain a single sex school pre 6th form?**

Yes.

**How will Langton's high standards be maintained?**

The leadership team at The Langton will have full autonomy to maintain the Langton curriculum and standards.

**Will this impact SEN provision at the Langton?**

No. This will have no impact on funding or provision for SEN, including the SRP..

**Will this impact Safeguarding provision at the Langton?**

No. This will have no impact on safeguarding.

**Why are SRPs included within the Director of Primary, Inclusion and Early Years when both schools have secondary SRPs?**

These are two different strands within this responsibility. Inclusion is an area that both organisations are passionate about. Should the Trust grow larger, these roles would possibly separate into two distinct jobs. The integration of SRP students into mainstream would of course be part of what the Director of Secondary Improvement would work with the head teachers on.

*The Education People have received a handful of questions regarding the consultation process. The FAQs are intended to provide further information for stakeholders to support their understanding of the proposal. The survey question being asked in this consultation: "What are your views on our proposal for The Langton to become an academy within The Canterbury Academy Trust and form The Canterbury Trust?" is intended to give stakeholders an opportunity to give their views, which in turn, will support the governing body in forming a decision around the proposal and what the next steps might be.*

*However, for clarity, The Department for Education's guide on converting to an academy recommends the following steps:*

*Governing bodies to consider the different types of academy and guidance for academy trusts.*

*Get consent from your governing body that they wish to pursue academisation.*

*If you decide to apply to become an academy, run a consultation on whether you should convert. This should include staff members, parents, students and the wider local community.*

*These are the steps that have been followed by The Langton Governing Body in this process.*