

Since the consultation we have achieved Academy status and converted on 17th August 2011.

For more information please read the following pages.

Thank you



Proposed Academy Status – Information Paper

What is Academy status?

Academies are independent schools which receive their funding directly from the Government through an agency. Academy conversion is part of the coalition government's plans for a reformed system of strong, autonomous schools and a modernised role for local authorities. Academy status is intended to promote innovation and flair by giving school leaders more freedom to decide how best to meet the needs of their students, parents and wider communities.

It is important to stress that the 'new style' academies are different from those promoted by the previous government. Whereas 'old style' academies tended to replace schools in difficult circumstances, the Academies Act 2010 has enabled all schools to apply to become state funded independent schools (Converter Academies). The first school in Slough to convert to academy status is Slough Grammar and Langley Grammar is also in the process of conversion.

Slough and Eton School is currently a Voluntary Controlled school overseen by the Diocese of Oxford and the Local Authority. As such most of the school land belongs to the diocese and the staff are, in principle, employed by Slough Borough Council. In practice many of the responsibilities for employment are delegated to the school governors, which in our case is the Interim Executive Board. Many secondary schools in Slough have had Maintained status for a long time and they have had similar responsibilities for employing staff, owning their land and organizing their admissions.

If the School converts to Academy status, there would be three key differences:

1. The school would cease to be maintained by the Local Authority and would instead be funded directly by the Department for Education through a Funding Agreement. The school's budget would continue to be based on funding formulas set by the Department. In addition, the school would receive the portion of its funding which is currently retained centrally, known as the Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant (LACSEG). The size of the LACSEG varies considerably between local authorities.
2. A charitable Academy Trust would be set up which would lease the school's site from the Diocese and be responsible for the assets, appoint the members of the governing body, and employ staff. The Diocese of Oxford and the members of the present Interim Executive Board will be responsible for establishing the Academy Trust. The Academy Trust will have members who are responsible for appointing the Governors of the Academy.
3. The employment of school staff would move from the current governing body to the new Academy Trust. The employment rights of all members of staff would be protected by TUPE, Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations which came into force in 2006. This means that these employment rights would transfer to the Trust under the same terms and conditions of employment. Pension rights and continuity of service would be preserved.

What are the advantages for Slough and Eton School?

The two principal advantages for the School are in terms of finance, and the autonomy to make our own decisions regarding the curriculum and other areas in the years ahead.

1. The School would continue to receive funding for students based on formulas set at a national level. In addition, we would receive an uplift of around £300,000 per annum, which represents the amount of funding currently retained by the Local Authority to provide central services. Although the School would need to use some of this funding to purchase services currently provided by the Local Authority, we believe that the net benefit to the school will be in the region of at least £200,000. We would wish to use part of this money to support our family of primary schools to help raise standards in Slough.

Indications are that all schools will face substantial cuts to overall funding sources in the future, with capital budgets hardest hit. The additional funding available from converting to an Academy will provide some cushion to set against these cuts and help to protect the school's current educational provision and environment.

2. Local Authorities are facing major cuts in their finances which means their ability to provide services will be restricted.

Early conversion to Academy status also responds to the reality of the new policy agenda. Academy status is a key educational policy of the new Government recently outlined its vision for the next five years in the White Paper on Education. A principal commitment is to "devolve as much power as possible to the front line, while retaining high levels of accountability"; the prime method of achieving this aim is the expansion of the academy programme. Under the Government's proposals schools themselves will lead the drive for further improvement; the White Paper outlines plans for some leading schools to receive extra funding specifically to promote collaboration and the professional development of school staff. We are very interested in such opportunities for Slough and Eton School as a natural extension of the work we have been doing with partner schools in recent years through our Leading Edge (formerly RAPP) specialism.

What would stay the same?

Some important matters would **not change** if we were to become an academy:

- The school would continue to be called Slough and Eton Church of England Business and Enterprise but we will consult with all stakeholders about remaining as a college or an academy. We will debate with pupils, staff and parents if we want to change the uniform. The School's ethos, aims and educational environment will remain the same. We will continue to be a non-selective faith school.
- There are no planned changes to admissions as a direct result of academy conversion. However, the Admissions Policy is reviewed every year and any proposed changes are consulted on through the Local Authority's coordinated process.
- The school would continue to provide education free of charge. There would be no charges beyond those already levied for additional items such as instrumental music lessons.
- In principle we would continue to work to the School Teachers Pay and Conditions document and to current conditions covering non-teaching staff. Our aim is to attract the highest quality staff to provide the best possible service for the students.
- Academies do not have to follow the National Curriculum programmes of study although there is a statutory requirement to provide a broad and balanced curriculum. We periodically review our curriculum to ensure that it is appropriate and relevant for our students in our context. Academy status will give the School freedom to implement the most appropriate curriculum for our students, and may help to provide stability and protection against external destabilising decisions.

It is expected that all schools converting to be academies will form a relationship with another school in order to improve their performance. Slough and Eton School has worked with a number of local schools to improved standards through our second specialism of Leading Edge and we would expect this support to continue.

What is the process of conversion?

The Governors have passed a resolution to apply for conversion, and an application has been submitted to the Department for Education. Application for conversion to Academy status has the effect of enabling a number of further investigations and actions to be made. At this point the School is not bound to convert and is in a position to withdraw from the process at any point until the binding agreement over funding of the Academy is entered into with the Department of Education.

The next steps are:

- The Department for Education considers the school's application, and grants an Academy Order which gives permission for the school to begin the formal process of setting up the Academy. In theory, as a school with an 'Outstanding' Ofsted rating we are pre-approved subject to checks on financial status.
- A consultation process continues as determined by the Governing Body.
- Once the Academy Order is granted, the Governors can set up the Academy Trust. Final decisions are taken about the composition of the new governing body. TUPE negotiations take place with staff to ensure the transfer the teaching and support staff to the Academy Trust.
- A Funding Agreement is negotiated and agreed with the Department for Education. This is in effect a contract between the Academy Trust and the Department which sets out the funding and running of the Academy.
- The School ceases to be maintained by the Local Authority and becomes an Academy.

We expect the process of conversion to take around three months, and the target date for the school to become an academy would be 1 September 2011.

Consultation

We welcome any comments you may wish to make in writing, to Mrs Lynne Bovington, Clerk to the Governors c/o Slough and Eton Business and Enterprise College, Ragstone Road, Slough Berkshire, SL1 2PU or by email to head.pa@slougheton.com.

A summary of the key changes is set out on the next page. For further information about the government's Academy programme, you may wish to consult the Department for Education website at www.education.gov.uk.

Paul McAteer
Headteacher

17 January 2011

Slough and Eton Business and Enterprise College–Academy

Conversion Summary of key issues:

Issue	Current situation (Community VC School)	Proposed (Academy)
What kind of school?	Community school	An academy, independent from the Local Authority and funded directly by the State.
Who owns the land on Which the school is built?	The Diocese of Oxford and part by Slough BC	The Academy Trust will have a 125 year lease
Who runs the Academy?	The Governing Body	<p>A Slough and Eton School Academy Trust will be formed; this will be a company limited by guarantee with exempt Charitable status.</p> <p>The Academy Trust will appoint a new Governing Body which will have responsibility for running the school. The Composition will reflect the current Governing Body, and will include elected staff and parent governors.</p> <p>The Governing Body will act as the Board of Directors (for company law purposes) and the Trustees (for charity law purposes) of the Academy Trust.</p>
Who employs the staff?	Local Authority	The Academy Trust
Who will provide the main funding for the school?	The Government via the Local Authority, who retain a proportion of the funding to pay for central services.	The Government directly
Can the school charge fees?	No	No. There would be no charges beyond those already levied for additional items such as instrumental music lessons.
Who determines the curriculum?	The Governing Body within the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum	The Governing Body
What is the school called?	Slough and Eton Business and Enterprise College	
Who controls Admissions to the school?	Local Authority	The Governing Body