

Consultation Document

Re: Holywell C of E (VC) Primary School's proposal to
join Ventrus Multi-Academy Trust

May 2017



Context

Holywell C of E (VC) Primary School has been part of the Three Valleys Co-operative Trust since March 2014. This network has proven to be very successful in ensuring that our local schools work together in the best interest of our children. We have shared professional development for our staff, enhanced learning for our children and have worked together to develop best practice in teaching and learning. Driven by our collective belief in the tremendous value of partnership working and in response to the changing educational landscape, all of the Trust schools have been considering how we can build upon and enhance the work of the Three Valleys Trust.

Over the last six months, Ashleigh C of E (VC) Primary School, Bishops Tawton Primary School, Bratton Fleming Community Primary School, Holywell C of E Primary School and Pilton Infants' School have individually and collectively researched the possibilities of joining a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). Following these extensive investigations, the Governors are formally considering the option of joining a Multi Academy Trust known as Ventrus

The Proposal

It is proposed that Holywell C of E (VC) Primary School joins Ventrus Multi-Academy Trust effect from 1st January 2018.

What is an academy?

The Department for Education states that:

An Academy is essentially an independent state school. It is funded directly by central government, is accountable to them and independent of the local authority. It has increased freedom to determine its own curriculum and terms and conditions for staff. Academies are still subject to the same inspection arrangements of any state school.

To expand on that, the main features of an academy are:

Funding

Academies receive the same level of per-pupil funding, as they would receive from the local authority as a maintained school, plus additions to cover the services that are no longer provided to them by the local authority. However, academies have greater freedom over how they use

their budgets to best benefit their students and they receive their funding directly from the Department for Education rather than from local authorities.

Governance

The principles of governance are the same in academies as in maintained schools, but the governing body has greater autonomy. Academies are required to have at least two parent governors. *As a Church of England school, we are also required to have two foundation governors on our local governing body to protect the Christian ethos of the school.*

Admissions, special educational needs and exclusions

Academies are required to follow the law and guidance on admissions, special educational needs and exclusions as if they were maintained schools.

Collaboration

Academies have to ensure that the school will be at the heart of its community, collaborating and sharing facilities and expertise with other schools and the wider community.

What is a Multi Academy Trust?

A multi academy trust (MAT) is where a group of individual schools become academies in their own right, retain their separate identity, and yet legally join together through an overarching Trust.

A multi academy trust is a formal collaboration between schools. It is important that the individual schools remain separate organisations, retaining a distinctive identity, which is reflective of and centred in the school's local community.

Why should Holywell C of E (VC) Primary School become an academy within a Multi Academy Trust?

Working within a multi academy trust offers the opportunity to maximise expertise and best practice for the benefit of all schools and the ability to use resources more efficiently and effectively for the benefit of all children.

The governors of Holywell C of E (VC) Primary School believe the benefits of joining a Multi Academy Trust would be:

- *To improve outcomes for all children;*
- *To create opportunities to share resources;*
- *To create wider opportunities for enhancing the education of the pupils e.g. joint school projects, sports and creative projects;*
- *To enable pupils to meet and work as a part of a larger group;*
- *To provide greater flexibility with regards to the curriculum to enhance opportunities for children;*
- *To provide greater staff development opportunities and networks which will enable our school to keep and develop valued staff;*
- *To secure and develop successful leaders for the future;*
- *To share best practice at all levels by making full use of staff expertise in specialist areas;*
- *To improve opportunities for professionals who know the pupils best to be at the centre of the decision making process;*
- *To manage school budgets more effectively and creatively to support pupil progress;*
- *To increase purchasing power and ability to secure best practice.*

Who are Ventrus Multi-Academy Trust?



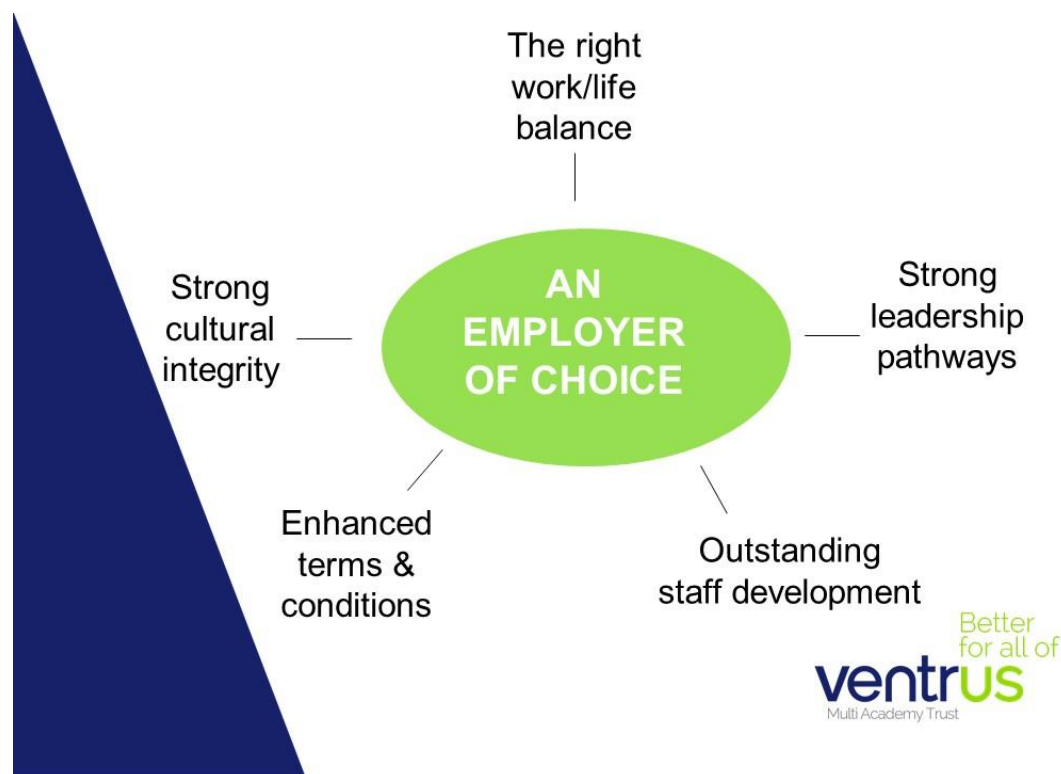
Ventrus Multi-Academy Trust (originally named the Primary Academies Trust) was set up in 2011 by a group of like-minded Headteachers who wanted to build a stable and secure platform from which they could grow a network of excellent schools. It currently comprises of eleven Primary Schools and one Secondary School across Devon (see map above).

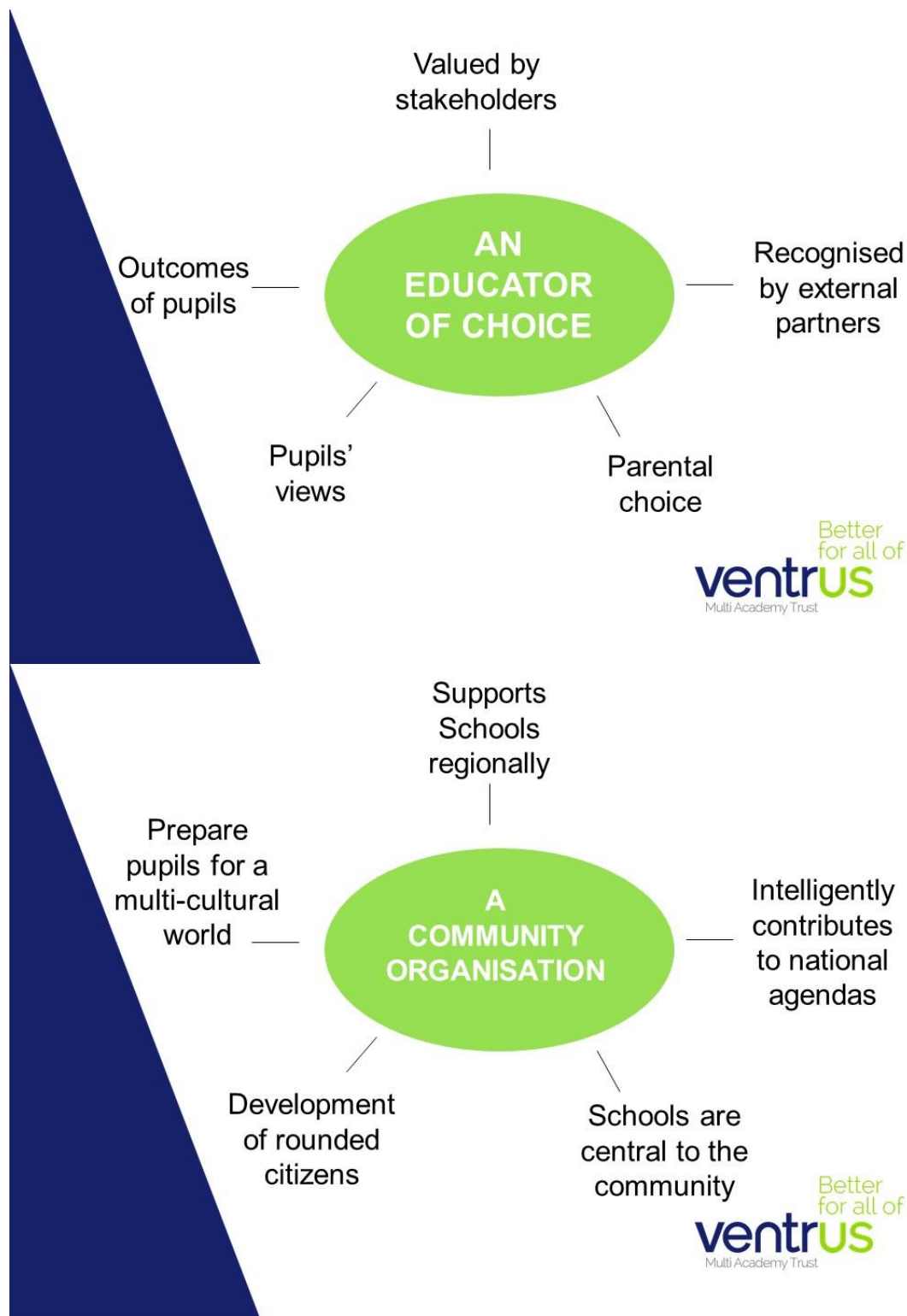
Ventrus Mission Statement

Ventrus are a values-led organization focused on transforming lives through high quality collaboration and innovation across and beyond our family of schools.

Vision and Values

The vision for the trust is to be an Employer of Choice, an Educator of Choice and a Community Organisation.





The Trust values are described below:

Hope - We believe that nothing is impossible with a little help from friends.

Energy - We approach every challenge with a positive and energetic attitude.

Authenticity - We believe in being true to ourselves and to our partners.

Responsibility - We prepare our children for the future, which is a privilege we take seriously.

Trust - We are an open organisation and our word is our bond.

Governance and Leadership

The Directors of Ventrus are drawn from high performing individuals in the financial, legal and business world. They give freely of their time to support and challenge the Executive Leadership Team to secure continuous improvement in all the partner schools.

Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Gary Chown, leads the Executive Leadership Team. All members of the Executive Leadership Team have a long and proven track record of school improvement.

For more information on Ventrus Multi-Academy Trust, including Governance and Leadership please see the Trust website: www.ventrus.org.uk

Frequently Asked Questions

How will the leadership of the school change?

Day-to-Day leadership of the school will remain the responsibility of the Headteacher supported by an Executive Headteacher and central support team from Ventrus.

Who will be teaching my child? Will the same teachers and teaching assistants remain in each school?

The existing teachers, teaching assistants and support staff will carry on working in the school and there will be no compulsion to change. Over time there may well be opportunities for colleagues from our school to broaden their role by working in other schools, however, there would be no pressure to do so.

How will joining a Multi Academy Trust impact on transition to secondary school?

There will be no change in this area. As now, parents will be able to select the secondary school of their choice for their child and the partnership will provide the appropriate transition programme for each individual.

Will the staff of the Trust still have the same employment rights if we become an academy?

In practice, all staff will transfer their employment from the Local Authority to the Academy Limited Company. Terms and Conditions of service will be protected under transfer of undertakings legislation known as TUPE.

What will the school times be?

The school will keep the same timings. If there were ever a view to change timings of the day, it would be a matter for consultation before any decision is taken.

What will happen to school uniforms?

The school will keep the current school uniform.

Will Ofsted continue to inspect the school?

Yes.

The Consultation Process

The Department of Education states that the Governing Body must consult formally with anyone who has an interest in the school about plans to become an academy.

Consultation approaches with Partners

Stakeholders	Newsletters	Email/Letters	Websites	Open Meetings	Clinics
Parents	★	★	★	★	★
School Council				★	
Staff		★		★	★
Local Community		★	★		
Other Learning Community Schools		★	★		
Diocese		★	★	★	