



COLD NORTON
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cold Norton Primary School
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Monday 8th December 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Consultation to convert to Academy status and join Quantum Multi-Academy Trust (QMAT)

Our Governing Board has been carefully reviewing its options to become an academy and it has decided to consult with parents, carers, staff and other stakeholders, on whether the school should become an academy and join QMAT.

About Quantum Multi-Academy Trust (QMAT)

The seven primary schools within QMAT were previously part of The Eveleigh LINK Academy Trust that has merged with Great Baddow High School in the summer of 2025. Two of our local schools, Purleigh Primary and Maylandsea Primary, are members of QMAT.

Why convert?

For several years we have recognised the resource limitations within which Essex County Council operate, and we remain committed to ensuring that we preserve the ongoing progress of all our children. In considering joining a multi-academy trust (MAT), our Governing Body were adamant that this option would only be recommended if we could be confident that the unique characteristics of our school would be retained as a result of this move. We agreed that any potential MAT would have to be small, with a strong local presence and focused on strong provision. The MAT would also have to offer strong support for the further development of Cold Norton Primary School, create excellent opportunities to enable our staff to grow and develop, and provide some autonomy so that we can continue to manage and run the school as we have done so successfully in the recent past. Improving the life chances of all children in our care remains paramount. We believe that joining QMAT will improve the quality of education that we are able to provide within the current education climate.

We are therefore commencing formal consultation today, Monday 8th December 2025, for a period of four school term weeks (six weeks in total). Consultation will therefore end at 3pm on Friday 16th January 2026.

What is an Academy?

Academies are state schools, funded directly from central government, no longer under the control of the Local Authority. Academy status gives schools more freedom to be innovative and creative with the curriculum, timetabling, staffing and governance.

All academies continue to be inspected by Ofsted and comply with the same rules as other schools on special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), exclusions and admissions.

An academy is part of a charitable trust (the MAT) run by a board of trustees. Trusts and their academies are rightly expected to work with and support other schools, including vulnerable schools. Should you wish to know more about the Government's policy, the Department for Education has its own academies bookmark on <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/convert-to-an-academy-information-for-schools>

What is a Multi Academy Trust (MAT)?

A Multi Academy Trust is a charitable company and is responsible for overseeing the running of a number of schools. It has three layers of governance: the Members, the Trustees and the Local Governing Bodies.

A MAT is formed when its articles (legal document) are approved by the DfE and it is registered at Companies House as a company. MATs are made up of a number of academy schools. Some are just primary school MATs, others will



have secondary schools in them and some will include Special Schools too. It is usual for MATs to have periods of growth, when a number of schools might join and then some period of consolidation. There isn't a set number of schools that makes a MAT. The partnership established between all schools in the MAT ensures that the schools can share skills and best practice and make optimum use of resources ensuring best value for money for each school.

In many ways, the children will not notice any immediate difference: they will be in the same uniform, in the same classrooms with the same teaching staff. However, in time, the children will perhaps notice changes and improvements in the way that they learn due to enhanced transition from greater links with each school within the Trust.

What will be the main benefits for Cold Norton Primary joining QMAT?

- Collaborative Learning Environment: Cold Norton Primary School will benefit from collaborating with QMAT schools, sharing best practices, resources, training and pedagogical approaches.
- Links with local schools: increased opportunity for both staff training and inter-school events with Purleigh and Maylandsea schools.
- Driving Primary Education: We have the opportunity to support the direction of travel within primary education in the trust.
- Transition (Systems and Processes): Being in a MAT with both primary and secondary schools could facilitate a smoother transition for students moving from primary to secondary education. Shared curriculum frameworks, assessment practices, key systems and communication channels can ensure continuity.
- Transition (Pedagogy & Curriculum): Strengthen transition, even more, from Year 6 to Year 7 to avoid 'coasting years' at Key Stage 3.
- The support that the LA offers Cold Norton Primary has reduced considerably. Therefore the MAT will be supporting and challenging the school to continually improve.

What additional responsibilities will Academy status bring?

Currently the Local Authority employs our staff. Going forward, the Multi-Academy Trust would be the employer, rather than the LA.

- The Academy Trust would be responsible for admissions rather than the LA (although the Local Authority would still co-ordinate and ensure the Trust adopts clear and fair admission arrangements in line with the admissions law and the School Admissions Code).
- The Academy Trust would enter into a 125-year lease for the land, usually owned by the Local Authority. We already have responsibility for the cost of maintaining the land and buildings.

Will any changes to the school be made as a result of conversion?

We do not intend to make any changes to the day-to-day work of the school following conversion, other than to adjust the governance arrangements and accountability that comes with working within a Multi-Academy Trust and to bring closer working practices between the schools in the Trust.

How do I learn more, and how do I respond?

More information on the process, and the answers to many of the questions you may have can be found in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document attached with this letter; both letter and FAQs are also available on our website, under the 'letters' tab. If you wish to respond with your view or queries not answered in the FAQs during the consultation period, we ask that you do so by emailing our admin address with the subject line: QMAT. Please include your name and contact details. Whilst we do not anticipate responding to each and every communication, we will provide answers to questions via the FAQs. The FAQs document will be updated and shared on our website to reflect any questions that are pertinent to our wider community. Following the closure of the formal consultation period the Governing Body will meet to consider how to proceed and the outcome of the consultation process will be shared with you as soon as practicable following the meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Cold Norton Primary School Governing Body