



**Consultation Letter from**

**Acer Learning Trust**

**to join**

**North East Learning Trust  
(NELT)**

**Monday  
6<sup>th</sup> April  
2020**



6<sup>th</sup> April 2020

To all Stakeholders,

The Trustees of Acer Learning Trust met on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and discussed and passed a resolution to join North East Learning Trust (NELT).

NELT is an extremely successful Multi Academy Trust consisting of six Secondary Schools and three Primary Schools operating across the North East of England, hence the North East Learning Trust.

The proposal outlined in this consultation letter will afford opportunities for Holley Park Academy to ensure continued success and excellence for pupils within North East Learning Trust. The advantage of joining an established Multi Academy Trust (MAT) is to enable the Trust greater scope for future growth, as well as enable greater diversity across its academies. NELT offers a central support package to academies within their trust from which Holley Park Academy will benefit.

NELT provides the following central services to its academies during the year:

- Human Resources
- Financial Services
- Legal Services
- Education Support Services
- Marketing and Communication
- Estates and Health and Safety Management

As an initial phase and following discussions between the two CEO's and Senior Leaders, an application has been made to the Regional Schools Commissioner for approval for Holley Park Academy to join NELT.

The addition of Holley Park Academy would be a welcomed expansion for NELT. They currently have 3 primary schools. These deliver education to children from age 3-11 years. All three are working well and are operating as a team. We believe Holley Park Academy will bring capacity and expertise that will allow NELT to sponsor struggling primaries in the future, should this be needed. Holley Park Academy demographically will bring a range of expertise to NELT. It will also bring the staff of Holley Park Academy into a much larger community of professionals, with all of the facilities and expertise that go with that larger community and the provisions it can make in terms of resource, capacity and professional development.

This is a fair and open consultation with all stakeholders who could be affected by the proposed changes. It will begin Monday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2020 and conclude Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2020. This letter sets out the proposal and how interested parties can contribute to the consultation process.

The ethos of Holley Park Academy would be unaffected by this proposed change. The Trustees of Acer Learning Trust are supportive of this move and envisage that this will be concluded by 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020.



We understand there may be questions you have as you consider the effects of any changes by joining NELT. This letter will hopefully answer these questions and the consultation exercise will give you the opportunity to make any comments you may have with regard to the proposed change. Information on how you can make representations is available at the end of this letter.

At the end of the six-week consultation period, Trustees will ensure comments have been considered and a response given.

**Process:**

- CEO's, Trustees and Senior Leaders begin discussions
- Consultation with all Stakeholders
- Due Diligence exercises involving NELT and Acer Learning Trust
- Application to be submitted to the Regional Schools Commissioners (RSC) North
- Restructure of Holley Park Academy Local Governing Body to become Local Academy Council
- NELT to carry out a TUPE process

**Staffing:**

The Trustees wish to assure the stakeholders that this decision comes from a desire to improve the education of all pupils now and in the future.

The Trustees value the staff and their contribution to the education of the pupils and recognise the hard work and dedication shown to the pupils by all staff.

- The present staff will TUPE across to NELT
- The Trustees have no wish to reduce pension benefit
- The Trustees wish to assure the staff that all discussions will be open and transparent, and information will be sought from experts to answer any questions raised

**SEN [no difference]**

- The Trustees of NELT will comply with all of the statutory duties imposed upon the governing bodies of maintained schools
- SEN funding still follows the pupil
- The autumn census return forms the basis for calculating pupil led funding for the following academic year



## **Financial Implications**

- Academies are funded per pupil, and will not receive more money per pupil than Local Authority run schools
- A single Funding Agreement fund will fund NELT

## **Frequently Asked Questions (F.A.Q.)**

### **1. Who is being consulted about the proposed change to join NELT?**

All interested parties/stakeholders are being consulted. These include parents/carers of pupils of Holley Park Academy, all Acer Learning Staff, Holley Park Academy Local Governing Board, Trustees and Members and Trade Union representatives.

### **2. Will the school retain their Local Governing Body?**

Yes, however, a restructure will take place and a new Local Academy Council will be formed for Holley Park Academy.

### **3. Is the decision being driven by the financial implications?**

The Trust will consider the funding needs and allocation of each Academy using clear logic and priority as to what will most benefit the pupils. Being part of a large trust will bring financial benefits e.g. through bulk purchasing.

### **4. Will any policies/procedures need to change?**

There will be Trust wide policies and school policies.

### **5. Has the school considered the risk of final salary pensions becoming more of a burden if salaries increase?**

Staff will continue to be members of the salary scheme funded by the government and pension payments do not come out of the school budget.

### **6. Would there be any changes to the admissions policy?**

Schools will still be obliged to adhere to the Admissions Code and any changes would have to comply. The Local Authorities administer this and would still have overall authority to ensure schools are complying with the Code.



**7. Will the final decision be taken by the Members?**

The Members and Trustees of Acer Learning Trust will make the final decision of any changes to go ahead based on their belief that it is in the best interests of the pupils now and in the future.

**8. When will the transition be complete?**

It is envisaged that the process from application should be completed by 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020.

**9. Would the name of the school change?**

There are no plans to rebrand Holley Park Academy, however we will adopt the NELT logo on stationery etc.

**10. Would the uniform change and involve an added expense for parents/carers?**

No, the uniforms would remain the same.

**11. Is it likely that school terms/length of days would change as this could impact negatively on parents, especially working parents?**

It is not envisaged that there would be any changes as a result of joining NELT.

**12. Will inspection arrangements change as a result of joining NELT**

NO - The frequency of Ofsted inspections for all schools within the Trust will remain the same.

**CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS**

Holley Park Academy considers that this proposal is in the best interests of the Academy and the community it serves. If you would like to comment on the proposal or raise any additional questions, please get in touch.

You can respond in any of the following ways:

- By email to [info@holleyparkacademy.co.uk](mailto:info@holleyparkacademy.co.uk)
- **F.A.O Mrs Richards, Mr. Dent, Ms. G Wood**

Or by writing to:

Sharon Richards (Mark as Private and Confidential)  
CEO/Executive Headteacher  
Holley Park Academy  
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