

Academy Conversion

Claremont High School's Communication Strategy
Information sharing and joint planning meeting :

7.12.2010

Frequently asked questions – general questions

- **How can I communicate my views about the school converting?**

You can write to:

- Mr F T Molloy, Headteacher, Claremont High School, Claremont Avenue, Kenton
- Harrow HA3 OUH
- Or email
- admin@claremont-high.co.uk

From Local Authority School to Grant maintained and then to Foundation School

- In 1990, against a background of massive school based, local and national opposition Clarendon High School became the first school in Brent to convert to Grant Maintained Status
- Nearly one year later all but one school in Brent made the conversion to Grant Maintained status
- In 1999 all of the Grant Maintained Schools became Foundation Schools – not one chose to become a Local Authority controlled Community School
- In 2007 the one remaining LA Community School converted to Foundation School status

What did Grant Maintained Status mean for Claremont?

- The school successfully dealt with the real threat of closure;
- The school was able to establish highly effective HR procedures and reaffirm its commitment to achieving best practice in conditions of employment allaying any fears that staff may have had;
- The school was able to secure very successful regeneration and capital projects – the technology block, sixth form block, languages block and other major improvements;
- The school became a leader in supporting other schools through the conversion process;
- When the national landscape changed the school was well placed to take advantage of what came next: Foundation Status – this was not true for all schools and some fared less well than Claremont!

Frequently asked questions – What is the rational for conversion? Sample responses:

- **Why does Claremont High School feel the Academy route is the right one?**
Enable us to further strengthen the strategic financial management and planning that we will need to secure the continued success of the school in local and nationally shifting economic landscapes;
- Ensure that we are able to make strategic decisions concerning the deployment of resources so that we can continue to employ teaching and support staff of the highest quality who continue to thrive in the best possible terms and conditions of employment;
- Focus on meeting the needs of all learners in our local and wider community across all key stages and with our partner primary and secondary schools ;

Frequently asked questions – Staffing Issues

- **Will there be any changes to staff pay and conditions if the school becomes an Academy?**
Under the Transfer of Undertaking (Protection of Employment) Act (known as TUPE) staff will transfer to the Academy on exactly the same terms and conditions of employment as they currently have. Claremont High School is an outstanding school because of its teaching and non teaching staff, Governors see no reason to alter the well established terms and conditions that they have worked to create.

Frequently asked questions cont...

- **Will the school be rebranded and so change its name and its ethos and character?**
- **NO.** Claremont High Schools is an **OUTSTANDING** school and the Governors see no reason to make any changes to its ethos and character. The school's name will remain the same with the subtle addition of a line stating that Claremont High School is 'An Outstanding Academy School'.

A Sample time line (1)

- Claremont High School
- Timeline for Academy Conversion
- **Actions already taken:** (insert dates of letters from Unions and date of replies?)
- INSERT dates that information was put on the web site)
- Discussion of the opportunity to convert following Michael Gove's announcement about outstanding schools and academies with governors (Full Governors' meeting in July 2010)
- Decision to investigate further at full Governors' meeting in July 2010
- Headteacher and Deputy attended the SSAT Academies Conference in September 2010
- LA Union Secretaries met with staff on school site to support their election of school based representatives (September 2010)
- School based representatives informed Governors and Leadership Team that they wished to have a secret ballot over the issue of consultation and that this should be with staff and parents (October 2010).
- Heads bulletin - October 2010
- Findings from the SSAT Academies Conference and other matters relating to conversion brought to the meeting by those attending including the written communication from the LA Union Secretaries discussed the at Full Governors meeting where Governors vote unanimously (x in attendance out of x) to adopt the second of three proposals : (insert wording?)
- Chair of Governors and Headteacher meet with the Six Acting Union Representatives and inform them of the Governor's decision and the purpose of the staff meeting (Thursday 21st October)
- Chair of Governors and Headteacher convene a Staff Meeting and explain the rationale for the decision reached and the next steps (Thursday 21st October)



Sample Time line (2)

Academy Conversion – what are the alternative views that have been taken into account?

- Anti Academy materials
- NASUWT paper – very recent

The Web site pages – Possible contents

- **The contents of this area of the web site**
- **(Remember to add the sources)**
- The Aims and Objectives of Claremont High School
- What being a Foundation school currently means
- The principles that underpin our decision to proceed to become a Converter Academy
- An introduction to the Converter Academy Issue at Claremont outlining why Governors feel that this is the right decision for the future of Claremont High School in the current educational, social and economic landscape.
- Frequently asked questions
- Frequently asked questions with responses/answers
- A time line for the conversion process
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- **Other useful references/information**
- A summary of the Government White Paper (insert date)
- List of schools that have already become a Converter Academy with some comments from the schools
- Alternative views on Academy Status