

Dame Tipping Consultation Meetings
14th June 2018

Staff and Unions 4pm

Wendy Whittington from GMB Union noted that the consultation document had been sent to the Head Office which had taken time to arrive at the right regional office. She also noted that Havering HR were not in attendance.	It was noted that LIFE Education Trust use the HR services of Essex HR.
How long will it take to join?	Following the consultation period, the Governing Body of Dame Tipping will meet to make the final decision whether to join the Trust or not. They would take into consideration the views of the parents, staff and students before coming to their decision.
What could stop the school joining the Trust?	The Governing Body of Dame Tipping deciding not to proceed following the consultation or the Trust Board withdrawing after due diligence process
What will slow the process down?	The land issue will most probably slow the process down with discussions between lawyers and the Local Authority and any other stakeholders.
You said you would centralise finance, is there a finance officer at Benhurst – how would this work?	Yes there are finance officers in all schools. The core functions i.e. Payroll and reports would continue to be carried out by the finance function within each school next year. The work of the finance team will change in terms of what the Education & Skills Funding Agency and the Academies Financial Handbook require of the Trust and therefore some elements will become centralised and overseen by the Business & Development Manager
There are more students admitted who require 1-2-1 support from LSAs Will we still be able to provide this support?	There is a need to ensure a balanced budget for each school and this is a Government expectation. The Trust will support the school in looking at where cost savings can be made which may include support staff restructures, as the largest expenditure of any school is staffing
If the school could address the spare spaces in the school would the deficit be lowered?	Yes. Following discussion it was noted that the school can be difficult for parents to get to, many local families move to Brentwood for the schools and some families who move have more than one child at the school.
Will the SENDCO still be able to use the Local Authority speech & language advisers?	Yes. It is the intention of the Trust to review the contracts held within the school to ensure that the contracts provide value for money and are essential. It may be that in future the Trust employs its own SEND expert to support schools across the Trust .
Will there be any immediate changes when we join?	No

Will Dame Tipping become a feeder school to Frances Bardsley	It is hoped that through consultation and with discussions with the Local Authority this could be in place for September 2020 entry.
What about boys?	There is no intention to admit boys to Frances Bardsley
What contingency for expansion does the Core Executive Group of life have in place?	Time will be released for David Denchfield to support the Headteacher and perhaps work with small groups. As more schools join, the Core Executive Group will have more time released to the Trust to ensure appropriate support is given where needed.
Does the pension remain with the Local Government Pension Scheme?	Yes
If you leave the school would you still have continuous employment recognised?	LIFE Education Trust would recognise continuous service if you moved to or came from another Local Authority school however it is important to note that Trusts don't legally have to recognise continuous service so each individual should check with any prospective employer

Parental and Local Community 6.15pm

<p>Why did Dame Tipping choose LIFE Education Trust?</p>	<p>The Church of England have suggested 11 Trusts that VC schools can join. The Headteacher and the Chair of Governors attended a Church of England conference last year and were given a presentation by The Vine, the Church of England Multi Academy Trust. Both the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors felt, it would be in the interests of Dame Tipping to consider other local smaller options. The Headteacher and Chair of Governors have held meetings over a period of weeks with LIFE, to explore what joining would look like and felt that Dame Tipping could be part of a growing Trust which would allow them to be part of that growth process. As a Church school, the Ethos of LIFE works well with the Ethos of the Church of England and Tim Elbourne the Diocese Director of Education had also suggested the school speak with LIFE. Dame Tipping want a local solution in order to be able to do practical things together like moderation of student work, the skills festival, use of the facilities at Frances Bardsley or Benhurst. The Headteacher and Chair of Governors felt that LIFE cared genuinely about staff and student wellbeing and were keen to work and share experiences.</p>
<p>What will improve by joining the Trust?</p>	<p>Taking on board the results of recent parents and student questionnaires, the school will be able to take part in festivals run by LIFE, use the facilities when free at Frances Bardsley or Benhurst Finances will improve due to cost savings achieved by centrally sourced contracts and services</p>
<p>Would teachers from other schools come and teach at Dame Tipping?</p>	<p>There may be opportunities for staff including shared CPD and support with teaching and learning however staff from other schools would not “cover” for a member of Dame Tipping staff who might be off sick</p>
<p>Would we be free from Ofsted visits going forward if we joined a Trust?</p>	<p>Unfortunately not. However, Ofsted would delay their visit if the school joined any Trust by up to 2 years which would give the Headteacher and staff, with support from the Trust, time to make improvements and changes although this is not reason enough to join a Trust.</p>
<p>Will the curriculum remain the same?</p>	<p>Yes it would currently remain the National Curriculum and the school is looking to make the curriculum more exciting for the next year.</p>

What does MAT stand for	Multi Academy Trust
Will Educational Health Care Plans (EHCPs) be affected if the school joined a Trust	No – the school will continue to access these via Havering.
Will Admissions still be run by the Local Authority	Yes although Trusts are able to run their own admissions if they wanted. LIFE have opted to remain with the Local Authority.
What will be the obvious changes and improvements if we joined a Trust	The funding received from the Local Authority would be received via the Trust and the Trust would require less contribution than Dame Tipping currently pay to the Local Authority. The Headteacher and her staff will get support and advice from the Trust freeing her time up to spend with students and school improvement.
Will Teacher Inset Days be the same across the Trust	Not currently. On occasions and only where it will benefit all staff then perhaps Inset Days will involve staff meeting together. There will be other occasions where the schools across the Trust will meet too, including Rewards evenings, staff BBQs, Christmas concerts, possible sports days.
Does the Chair of Governors feel there are any negatives to joining the Trust	No – Dame Tipping must recognise it is vulnerable due to its size, the Headteacher has many hats to juggle and with central support, her time will be freed up. The Trust want to ensure its success including that of all its staff.
Would the school get teaching support from other schools if there were another challenge mid year?	It is unlikely that another similar situation would occur, however the Trust would support the Headteacher in making the right decisions for Dame Tipping
How many other schools in the Trust	Benhurst Primary School and Frances Bardsley Academy for Girls. The Bridge is a small unit looking after the needs of students with mental health issues. Margaretting Primary VC school near Ingatestone, is currently in the consultation process to join LIFE as are Dame Tipping so by Christmas the Trust could have 5 schools/centres.
Will all schools that join the Trust be local	Yes mainly Havering and Essex however if another school especially a secondary wanted to join from a different local Borough; the Trust would look at the options to perhaps create clusters.
Does the Trust want to expand further	Yes it is hoped that the Trust will have between 6 and 10 schools by September 2019
You won't just take anyone then?	No the Trust is looking for schools with a shared Ethos that would fit with the Trust and its established schools
Are you talking to any Secondary schools	Yes we are talking to a number however many Good and Outstanding secondary schools are reticent about joining Trusts due to the belief that they will have less autonomy than they currently enjoy.

Would you still use the LA Mental Health services	Yes. The Trust would not want to change something for change sake.
Is the Contribution to the Trust the same for each school that joins?	Yes currently it is a percentage of their income or £20k, whichever is larger. Dame Tipping would pay £20k which is approximately 5%. Frances Bardsley would be paying c£250k. However it is important to note that for the contribution made, Dame Tipping will recoup money immediately through shared services such as Payroll and HR.
Will all our policies become LIFE policies?	Certain core policies will be LIFE policies i.e. Data Protection and Finance, however it is becoming clear that in some cases, policies need to be tailored to individual schools with an over reaching summary.
Will the school stay the same size	Yes as the buildings cannot be extended any further at present.
Did the Local Authority consider closing Dame Tipping	It was never something they discussed with the school
If the CEO or any of the Core staff left LIFE, would the Ethos remain?	Yes the Board of Directors steer the Trust and set the Ethos
Can the school leave the Trust with notice?	No however the school could move to another Trust if it felt absolutely necessary and was supported by the DfE
When is the final decision being made	The Consultation Process ends in July and depending on the land issues and legal paperwork we would like Dame Tipping to join for 1 st September
Is it only the Governors who make the decision to join the Trust?	Yes however they would take into consideration the views from staff, parents and students before making any decision.
If staff perform well at Dame Tipping, would they be poached to work at other schools in the Trust	No however if vacancies were advertised within the Trust and a member of staff wished to apply, that would be a welcome way to retain good teaching and support staff and support their career progression.
Will all new staff be employed by the Trust and then be directed to work wherever?	No this was discussed in the early stages of LIFE however it was recognised that students and staff need consistency. Some core LIFE support staff may be asked from time to time if necessary.
Do the children have to keep taking SATs if we joined a Trust as the pressures were intense for them	Students will need to continue to sit SATs. Dame Tipping have put in measures to ensure support will be given to students and the Trust and school recognise that the mental wellbeing of students is important
Will school holidays change?	The Trust is currently following the Havering terms. The flexibility comes via the INSET (teacher training) days which may be reviewed on occasions and only where it will benefit all staff. The 5 inset days provided by the Borough can be taken when the individual school wants.
What is the stance on Term Time Holidays?	The Trust is in agreement with the Department for Education in that Term Time Holidays are not beneficial to students and leave will not be granted unless it is exceptional.

