

# Questions for the consultation about the future of Darell Primary & Nursery School

**Money:** How does ECEDAT compare to alternatives?

- Does it have a funding pot in place for Darell to make up the shortfall?
- What would be committed to Darell in the short- and long-term?
- What future funding sources does ECEDAT anticipate?
- What would be the cost of joining a Multi-Academy Trust (legal fees, consultants' fees, etc)?
- How would we know that Darell's children would benefit?
- What are the equivalent numbers for the alternatives to ECEDAT?

**Results:** What is ECEDAT's approach to results?

- What are ECEDAT's short- and long-term business plans, and how will they change if results do not result in increased pupil numbers?
- In terms of its employment contracts, could Darell teachers and support staff be obliged or expected to come in earlier and work later?
- Would the Multi-Academy Trust be entitled to move children and staff between its schools to improve its figures?

**Working with other schools:** The National Governors Association recommends "Federation First" – a way of keeping local control of a school to avoid "missing out on all the benefits of being part of a group of schools".

- What progress has Darell made in following the NGA recommendations with other local, secular, non-PFI primaries?
- What are the (costed or uncosted) pros and cons of a local primary federation?
- Has sharing resources and co-operating with Windham Nursery and Children's Centres been considered?

**Accountability / Transparency:** How would the Every Child Every Day Academy Trust be accountable to staff and parents?

- Will ECEDAT publish the minutes of its governing decisions?
- ECEDAT is legally obliged to publish some of its financial data: what else will it volunteer to make public?
- If Darell decided to no longer be accountable to democratically-elected representatives, what would be the precise process for when things go wrong?
- What are the specific details of ECEDAT's finances, and its short- and long-term plans?

- Some examples: what would the Trust be legally free to change about Darell without consultation: • its name? • its uniform? • its staffing?

## **How binding?:** How free would Darell be to leave ECEDAT?

- What would the likely costs be in terms of lawyers and consultants?
- With ECEDAT in control of the school, rather than its governing body, who would decide what happened next?
- Would Darell be forced to become part of another Academy?
- Could that be a Chain Academy?

## **Consultation:** *how do we make sure that our school is not one of those organisations that holds a so-called "listening exercise" about a huge decision, then just pushes through an outcome regardless of what anyone has said?*

- Should an **advisory** ballot of staff and parents make sure that everyone's voice is seen to be heard? This would work best if the options presented were not binary.
- If not, how can the governing body reassure staff and parents, present and future, that this is not a **political move**?
- And if not, how do we include the many stakeholders who do not feel confident in making public statements?
- What is the governing body's plan to replace the consultation group from which four parents have resigned?
- And in terms of decision-making, how precisely do the voices of parents and staff influence the school's future?

## **Good governance:** What is the nature of the consultation?

- Who is being consulted?
- How will the final decision be taken?
- When does a decision need to be made?
- Who decides?
- Is there only one option?
- How will communication happen?
- What would it take for the pre-consultation application to join ECEDAT to be paused?
- What are the pros and cons of *all the alternatives*?