

London South East Academies Trust (LSEAT)

FAQs – Parents

Question	Response
<p>School funding How would joining the academy affect the school's funding?</p>	<p>Pupil funding is set by the DFE and the Local Authority, but the school would likely benefit from economies of scale that the academy trust would provide in terms of costs and services.</p> <p>It would also enable the school to access a wider range of funding streams and grants etc. to support building projects, staff training and development, etc.</p> <p>Academy trusts also have better arrangements in terms of procurement which would enable us to purchase equipment and services at a much more competitive rate. An academy trust such as LSEAT also has access to a wider range of professional expertise and services that we would be able to access at a much lower rate than we currently pay.</p>
<p>Cost How much would it cost to join the trust? What percentage of the budget does it take up?</p> <p>With the 'top slice' that LSEAT would take, is there usually surplus funding and does this get passed back to the individual schools?</p>	<p>The cost to join as an academy would be the legal fees for converting and transferring across which are usually covered by the support grant provided to schools by the DFE when they convert.</p> <p>A 'top slice' which is payable annually to the Trust from the school's budget is averaged at 6% for schools in LSEAT but is negotiated on an individual school basis depending on the circumstances of each school and ensuring they are not financially hindered. The 'top slice' gives access to services such as HR, Safeguarding support, Health and Safety, Payroll, School Improvement support, external advisors, legal advice and support etc. We currently buy all these services from Surrey or other providers.</p> <p>It is very unusual for any of the centralised 'top-slice' funds to be left over but if there was the Trust would reinvest this across the Trust for the benefit of all schools.</p>
<p>Therapies Does going into an academy mean that the 'therapies' will improve?</p>	<p>Our school already has good access to many therapies and we wouldn't change that but we might be able to gain access to more.</p> <p>LSEAT recently commissioned a review to look at efficiencies, effectiveness and how therapies can be improved for the pupils across their schools. This is a priority area for LSEAT and they will be seeking further support externally for necessary funding to develop such a crucial area.</p>

<p>Budget What's the anticipated impact on children especially budget per child and access to services?</p>	<p>The revenue that schools receive for each child will remain the same as what is set by the DFE and the local authority. It may be useful to have the weight and expertise of a MAT behind in challenging LAs with regard to individual pupil funding.</p>
<p>Governance Does the trust still have local governing boards with local parent reps?</p>	<p>Yes. The LSEAT governance structure provides for a high level of governance scrutiny and involvement from trust level down to local governing boards at school level. We have explored this in detail as an associate and are making sure that the new arrangements are every bit as good as those we have now.</p>
<p>Staffing Will there be any change in the teaching staff, SLT or Headteacher?</p> <p>We appreciate that existing staff will probably transfer ('TUPE') over but will you recruit new staff on different pay and conditions?</p>	<p>We do not anticipate any changes in staffing or leadership as a result of joining a MAT.</p> <p>Pay and Conditions will remain the same for all existing staff TUPE'd over and LSEAT follows the National School Teacher Pay and Conditions documents. The Trust's salary structure for all other staff is very similar to Surrey but staff could then have a choice between staying on the Local Authority terms and conditions or moving across to LSEAT. New support and admin staff would be employed on the LSEAT terms and conditions moving forwards following transfer.</p>
<p>Curriculum Will the curriculum remain the same?</p>	<p>We have developed what we believe is a good curriculum for our students. Joining a MAT would not change that but we will always continue to look for ways to improve it. Working with a larger group of professionals, sharing experience and best practice should help with that.</p>
<p>School day & holidays What impact will joining a MAT have on the length of the school day and school holidays?</p>	<p>There is an additional two-week half-term in October that Surrey are also planning in 2026. However, Surrey schools will continue until July 28th, but LSEAT schools will finish on July 20th 2027. It is not a given that this would happen every year.</p>
<p>Class sizes Will class sizes remain the same?</p>	<p>We will continue to determine our class sizes based on the needs of our students just as we have always done.</p>

<p>Who will we be joining? Which other schools are in the MAT?</p>	<p>18 mainstream schools, special & alternative provisions across Bromley, Bexley, Lambeth, Sussex & Surrey. The MAT also has a Music Service. There are currently 4 Surrey Special Schools and an SLD setting in Sussex that form part of the Surrey & Sussex Hub that we would potentially join.</p>
<p>School name Will the school name change?</p>	<p>We are all proud of the Portesbery name which is well known, well respected and will not change. If we become a full member of LSEAT, we would simply become Portesbery Academy.</p>
<p>Uniform Will the uniform remain the same?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Admissions What is the admissions process for academies?</p>	<p>Our admissions process will not change.</p>
<p>Day-to-day management Who will be running the school?</p>	<p>The headteacher remains responsible for running the school just as now.</p>
<p>Visible changes What changes will the pupils and parents see?</p>	<p>Very few. If we join LSEAT as a full member, the only visible change would be to our name (changing from Portesbery School to Portesbery Academy). Over time, pupils and parents should see the benefit of us sharing best practice, expertise and training with other schools.</p>
<p>School expansion Will the school get even bigger?</p>	<p>We have no plans to increase pupil numbers at Portesbery any further after our current and final expansion is complete. Any increase beyond that would require consultation, local authority agreement and additional accommodation.</p>
<p>EHCPs How will it affect my child's EHCP as Portesbery is a named school on there</p>	<p>No change. Portesbery will still be the same school even if we change from a school into an academy.</p>