



George Stephenson
High School

Formal consultation on the proposed conversion of George Stephenson High School to an academy and to join the Pele Multi Academy Trust (MAT)

Dear Parents/Carers,

You may be aware that in recent years, the government has signalled their intention that all schools should be part of strong multi-academy trusts, indeed 82% of secondary schools are already academies with the majority belonging to a multi academy trust. More recently, the Government's Schools White Paper stated that all schools should either be an academy or on their way to conversion by 2030. Although this bill has been withdrawn, it is widely understood that the intention remains the same.

Alongside the governing body of George Stephenson High School, I have been investigating Academisation for the last two years, prior to the now withdrawn Schools White Paper, in order to determine what benefits there could be for George Stephenson and we have reached the conclusion that conversion to academy status and joining a strong multi academy trust would be in the best interests of the students, the staff and our community. Details of the rationale for this decision can be found in the documents listed at the end of this letter.

Joining the Pele MAT does not stop us being a North Tyneside School serving the students of the borough. The discussion with governors has always focused on how we can benefit from working with schools both within North Tyneside and in a MAT whilst retaining our identity as George Stephenson High School; I believe that the proposal to join the Pele MAT achieves this aim. A detailed explanation of this can be found in the aforementioned rationale document.

There are many different models of Multi Academy Trusts from organisations that are run centrally with very little variation between the schools in that Trust to a group of schools that have come together to share practice. The Pele Trust currently consists of Ponteland High School, John Spence High School, The Duchess Community High School along with 5 primary schools, but this is set to grow as like-minded schools approach the trust and look to join. The option of Pele Trust allows us to benefit from school to school support, cost efficiencies and broader student opportunities without compromising on our provision or identity. What is important is that the values of the Pele Trust are aligned to our own; a quick investigation of the [Pele Trust vision and values](#) shows that this is the case.

Governors have now consented for me to consult with all stakeholders regarding conversion and the proposal to join the Pele Multi Academy Trust. We have included the following documents for you to help you understand the rationale for the proposal as well as provide you with helpful links around Academisation:

1. Rationale for academy conversion and to join the Pele MAT
2. A Frequently Asked Questions document
3. Department for Education rationale for [Trust Partnerships](#)
4. PELE Trust [Website](#)
5. [Consultation feedback form](#)

For the avoidance of any doubt, the structure of the Pele MAT will protect and enshrine the individual character and ethos of each school within the trust. The 6-week consultation period (30 school days) will take place from Monday 9th September 2024. As part of the consultation, we will be holding a meeting at 5pm on Monday 23rd September 2024. The evening will involve a short presentation followed by an opportunity to speak to governors/Chair of Governors and the senior leadership team. Please contact the school via email, enquiries@gshs.org.uk with the heading 'MAT Consultation Evening' if you intend to attend the consultation evening. The consultation will close at 3pm on Friday 18th October 2024.

On behalf of the governors, I would encourage you to engage in the consultation. We value your feedback, so any comments are welcome on the [feedback form](#). We will review consultation feedback from all stakeholders and inform you of the outcome and next steps shortly after the consultation closes.

Yours sincerely



Peter Douthwaite
Headteacher