

## St Paul's CofE Aided Primary School Collective Feedback from Union, Staff and Parent Consultation Meetings January 2025

### Union & Staff Consultation Meeting Tuesday 28 January 2025, 3:00pm School Main Hall

<b>Question</b>	<b>Can you offer any reassurances staff may have around restructure?</b>
<b>Answer</b>	Any restructure of major staffing changes are under the direction of local leaders. There is nothing Trust-dominated or directed for this to take place post-transfer. If there were this would be declared as a measure. Three Spires Trust would always work alongside local leaders to support if a large staffing change were to take place.
<b>Question</b>	<b>Is St Paul's financially healthy?</b>
<b>Answer</b>	We have our struggles. We are looking to join Three Spires Trust to protect our staff and do the best for our children. Budgetary challenges are in every school at the moment.
<b>Question</b>	<b>Does Three Spires Trust do anything to increase income?</b>
<b>Answer</b>	Yes, TST offers support in securing bids, driving income streams, supporting and managing SKA projects. Three Spires Trust CFO's background allows him to think enterprisingly about the Trust and look at monetising the Institute of Education and our offers, increase revenue, look at group procurement and keep the money at the local level to benefit the students, staff and communities.
<b>Question</b>	<b>How do you communicate with the Diocese?</b>
<b>Answer</b>	CEO routinely meets with the Director of Education, works closely with the National Church of England and has routine communication with the Diocese. There are corporate members (Diocesan appointed) that work closely and within Three Spires Trust.  In addition to Church of England schools we are very open to looking at community schools. Three Spires Trust aims to be across phases and multi-dimensional.
<b>Question</b>	<b>Do St Paul's staff have any concerns around joining Three Spires Trust?</b>
<b>Answer</b>	A majority of the staff body are positive. A few staff have fears and worries, particularly surrounding fixed-term contracts. As Headteacher Jen has attempted to reassure staff and ensure they're all aware of how she's looking to make the best possible decisions for the children St Paul's serves. St Paul's has been on a journey of improvement and is proud of what it's built, Three Spires will enable the school to flourish even further.

- Question** Will staff ask ‘why Three Spires Trust’?
- Answer** Possibly, but we have been very open and transparent throughout the entire process. Academy visits and various conversations have taken place to ensure we looked at all of our options.
- Question** Staff will want to know if the school is still in charge
- Answer** Yes, we will protect what we have built up. In the school on a daily basis, our existing Headteacher and senior leadership team will continue to lead and manage their school as they are currently doing.
- Question** Could staff be asked to work across multiple academies/sites?
- Answer** We offer opportunities but do not mandate or force this. Terms and conditions stay the same. The Trust follows all national scales and measures are always declared ahead of time. There is also a staff well-being offer.
- Question** What is the proposed timeline?
- Answer** We are working towards 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025 conversion. The various parties including Department for Education (DfE), Diocese, Three Spires Trust, school governors and local authority will dictate this.
- Gail Khan Associates will offer project management support throughout the conversion process.
- Question** Do you have a standard TA level for your TA positions across the Trust?
- Answer** This is decided by the local leaders, with the autonomy of the school. All staff, including TAs, would TUPE transfer over as they currently stand.
- Support staff within Three Spires Trust are supported, encouraged to develop their skills and enriched.
- Question** How long does TUPE last for?
- Answer** There are no timings attached to TUPE. The conditions you are transferred over on remain including continuous service until such a point anything regarding your contract is re negotiated, i.e. you take a new role/promotion or policies are consulted upon and updated.
- If Three Spires Trust were to make any changes or foresee any changes, this would be declared in TUPE as a measure.
- A measure that will be declared would be your payroll provider changing to Stoke City Council and Three Spires Trust becoming your employer on your payslip.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Parent and Stakeholder Consultation Meeting

**Tuesday 28 January 2024, 5:00pm and Thursday 6 February 2025, 9:00am**  
**School Main Hall**

### Parent/Carer Meeting 28 January 2025, 5pm

<b>Question</b>	<b>How is a Trust not a business and is it good value for money?</b>
Answer	Three Spires Trust is not interested in asset stripping. There has been large investment going into the Trust sector and with our low Trust share, we work to keep the money in the local context. Three Spires Trust share is highly competitive and offers justified, high-quality services. Three Spires Trust is able to secure bid and funding on behalf of the school and provide opportunities the school may not have been able to achieve on its own.  Three Spires is looking to monetise its offerings, sell services to other Trusts or organisations.
<b>Question</b>	<b>What would be the benefits?</b>
Answer	The support from the LA is decreasing. Costs are increasing. Being part of Three Spires Trust would enable our school to tap into expertise and CPD for staff which will in turn impact our pupils.
<b>Question</b>	<b>Does Three Spires Trust dictate how to spend whatever money is left with the school?</b>
Answer	Trust Board approves budgets but decisions sit locally. This is the same with teacher pay awards, recruitment and appraisals.
<b>Question</b>	<b>Will the Lighthouse provision remain?</b>
Answer	This will stay the same. If anything, it could grow and develop but will remain as our provision.  It is a high priority of Three Spires Trust's to offer quality provision that is staffed accordingly and inclusive for SEND/SEMH needs.
<b>Question</b>	<b>Will there be any relationship between the school and the local authority after transfer?</b>
Answer	Yes, the LA remains responsible for the educational offer. The LA has statutory responsibilities in terms of admissions and educational offer across the city. The Trust has a positive relationship with Wolverhampton Local Authority.
<b>Question</b>	<b>Will admissions policies change?</b>
Answer	We recently consulted on our admissions policy at St Paul's so it will remain until the next consultation period in 3 years time. The Trust have no intention of changing the schools admissions criteria.

**Question** What are the Trust's growth plans?

**Answer** We are in a position where we're looking to consolidate growth but have a few current expressions of interest. We aim to only entertain conversations if we are sure that we can enhance the school and if it is the right growth.

We are naturally developing geographical hubs with the schools in Wolverhampton and schools in Stoke-on-Trent.

### Parent/Carer and Stakeholder Meeting 6 February 2025, 9am

**Question** Can we have an example of the tangible benefits of joining that you're already experiencing?

**Answer** From the Headteacher's perspective the ability to access advice and expertise that is available throughout the Trust.

**Question** How does the Trust manage to do things cheaper?

**Answer** There are cost savings through joint procurement as a larger entity but there is also the element of a higher degree of quality in the services and support we provide to schools that has diminished over time from local authorities.

**Question** You mentioned no changes to staffing. Does that include kitchen staff?

**Answer** There is currently a tender process underway for catering services in school – this process continues.

**Question** Will lunchtime staff need to go to other schools?

**Answer** No.

**Question** What is the biggest number of schools you can have in the Trust?

**Answer** No cap. We wish to still be in a position to know the staff and children in our schools. Likely growth will take us to around 16 schools, 7,000 children.

**Question** What happens to staff pensions?

**Answer** Would stay as part of the TPS and LGPS – nothing will change.

**Question** With the church being an integral part of the school, the church pays insurance and capital expenditure through the Barchester Committee. Will this continue?

**Answer** Matters relating to the church, shared services and expenditure would be agreed throughout the transfer process.

**Question** Is there a plan to separate utilities between the school and church?

**Answer** Difficult to answer at this stage until we know more. Both parties will need to be happy with any future shared/joint use agreements at the point of transfer.

**Question** Would like to see something written from the Trust where you commit to there being a church in Pendeford.

**Answer** The Trust has no intention of removing the current arrangements or relationship in place between the church and school.

- Question** Will the church be involved in any decision making?
- Answer** The Diocese will be party to any land/building transfers involved in academisation and anticipate the PCC will be kept updated.
- Question** Are you aware of the history of St Paul's?
- Answer** The Trust have a brief understanding but would use local knowledge throughout the process to aid decision making.
- Comment** I am a former SENCo at another school and we didn't used to get any support and came here apprehensive today but I am inspired having heard the presentation.
- Comment** I have had three grandchildren go through St Peter's recently. They and the Trust have provided brilliant support for SEN children – I am really pleased with what is happening over there.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Email Feedback

- Comment** All this bigger is better hasn't and doesn't work. I can give plenty of examples. St Paul's is run well and left alone will continue to. Anyway all this will benefit some in bigger pay packets it always does so leave the school alone.
- Question** Did any of your other Trust schools share their building with a church?
- Answer** No
- Question** Are you aware of the mixed nature of the current ownership of various parts of the building? The church hall, vestry, chapel, foyer and storage areas and café area are all used by the church? What is proposed about the ownership of the building and land? Will the ownership arrangements be different for shared areas and for church only areas and for church access areas. E.g. access to the vestry?
- Answer** Legal advisers would be appointed at the point of transfer to support both the school and trust on all land and building related matters. The Diocese will be party to any land/building transfers involved in academisation and anticipate the Parochial Church Council (PCC) will be kept updated.
- Question** The school and church have shared buildings since it was first built. How will the Trust ensure that there is always a church available for the people of Pendeford? We believe the historic Trust deeds state that a church must be provided in Pendeford. Also that out of school hours and in school holidays, the building or at least part of it, is the church's to let out for our income, or for our use. We do not expect that the Trust will have any input to the work of our church, if so, we will need to agree this aspect.

Answer Matters relating to the church, shared services and expenditure would be agreed throughout the conversion process.

**Question The café area of the building belongs to the church and is used by a community café that provides income for the church. This will need to be recognised in the documents moving forward.**

Answer The Trust has no intention of removing the current arrangements or changing the relationship in place between the church, school and the community. There will be a Church Supplemental Agreement which will deal with such matters in advance of the conversion.

**Question Services (utilities etc) are currently shared and are not separately metered. Has any consideration been given to how service bills will be handled?**

Answer Difficult to answer at this stage until we know more. Both parties will need to be happy with any future shared/joint use agreements at the point of transfer.

**Question The church currently pays voluntary contribution to buildings by paying capital insurance and Barchester as full recognition of shared cost of buildings. We believe we are the only church in the Lichfield Diocese that does this. Has this been taken into account?**

Answer Matters relating to the church, shared services and expenditure would be agreed throughout the conversion process this will also include liaison with the Barchester as needed.

**Question What will be the make up of a proposed Governing Body?**

Answer There no planned changes to the membership of the governing body – known as an academy committee in Three Spires Trust. That said, there may be some tweaks to the composition for instance, there will be no LA appointed governor, but there will be a community governor.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Online Survey Feedback

None