



KOINONIA

Academies Trust



Welcome to
Koinonia Academies Trust

CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Education in Koinonia Academies Trust	4
Governance within the Trust	5
Benefits of joining the Trust	6
KAT Membership Agreement	7
Support to schools joining the Trust	8
Conversion Support	8
Our solicitors	10
Academy conversion project management support	11
Due Diligence	13
Financial Review	13
Strategic School Improvement Review	14
Premises Review	14
Academy Financial Management	15
Responsible Officer (on-going from academy budget)	17
Proposed Responsible Officer Service	17
Payroll	18
Purchases	18
Income	19
Expense Claims	19
Petty Cash	19
Accounting System	19

INTRODUCTION

Koinonia Academies Trust (KAT) was established in June 2013 as an independent charitable company. The purpose of the Trust is to create a mutually supportive family of academies, holding within it both schools that choose to become converter academies and those seeking a sponsored solution.

'Koinonia' means 'that which is in common' and is often translated as 'fellowship' or 'community'. By working together in this way, we aim to support our community through partnership working; we are committed to the development of effective collaboration with, and between, our academies. It is in the service of our community members that we work together to support and develop each other and ensure everyone reaches their potential.

KAT has been founded by a Leadership team with a track record of school improvement. Governors and staff have raised standards and improved life chances for local children through focusing on high quality teaching and learning and developing community cohesion. Our commitment to working together enables us to develop partnerships and deepen relationships for mutual benefit. Through the creation of the Trust, we believe we have created a context for bringing about rapid improvement where it is needed by working collaboratively with other improvement partners.

Through focusing on Joint Practice Development, we ensure the best teaching is spread across settings and that every child receives their entitlement to a good education. Our links with partners enable us to support both internally and, through wider links, beyond the Trust itself.

KAT also welcomes already-successful schools into the Trust, and we are keen to support them in developing their work with other schools and academies. We will provide excellent professional opportunities for all those working in our academies and maximize the financial resources available for pupils.

We firmly believe in autonomous schools that are properly accountable and focused on providing school-to-school links and opportunities to support each other. We think that other schools will be attracted to the values of our Trust; they will be most welcome to explore and consider joining us.



EDUCATION IN KOINONIA ACADEMIES TRUST

**Our mission is at the heart of everything we do.
We aim to truly serve our community, children, families
and staff alike, in the widest sense.**

Educational Aims and Objectives

The Diocese has five areas of mission in relation to schools:

- To be at the heart of our community and in the service of it.
- To hold high expectations of each individual and encourage true partnership between stakeholders in order to build and develop community aspirations.
- For every child to be included; to work in partnership with local agencies to ensure a personalised curriculum for all.
- For trust, compassion and fairness to be the principles on which relationships are founded and for tolerance rather than intolerance to be the norm.
- For each academy to operate on principles: social responsibility, honesty, equality and consideration for others.
- To develop and maintain high performing academies that deliver every family their entitlement to a good education.
- For Trust settings to be ground-breaking and supportive learning environments which develop both children and staff, where independence, resilience and innovation is encouraged.



GOVERNANCE WITHIN THE TRUST

Koinonia Academies Trust is committed to the integrity and autonomy of local governing bodies. Schools that join the Trust retain their local governing bodies who continue to be responsible for monitoring the operation of their academies and are accountable to the Trust's directors for the performance of their academy.

The Chair of Governors of each academy within the Trust may serve as a director on the Academy Trust board alongside our experienced directors appointed by the Trust.

Directors oversee the strategic direction of all academies within the Trust and are responsible for the deployment of resources across the group of academies. The Trust uses a 'scheme of delegation' to determine how much autonomy each academy is given within the Trust. The Trust will work closely with governors to support and advise on the appointment of headteachers (Principals) for each academy in the Trust.

We welcome enquiries from governing bodies of schools who may wish to join Koinonia Academies Trust and see this as an opportunity to strengthen the community of schools within our area. For more details of how schools can join the Academy Trust, do contact Jim Dugmore, CEO of the Trust, who will arrange a visit to your school.

BENEFITS OF JOINING THE TRUST

Koinonia Academies Trust provides member academies with the following benefits:

- Stability and protection in a fast-changing educational landscape
- Annual Membership Agreement for core support along with a tailored programme of high-quality support services
- Support for schools requiring rapid improvement and schools aspiring to become 'Outstanding'
- Strong strategic guidance and advice from our experienced team who understand, support and develop education
- Collaboration and sharing of best practice between all academies in the Trust
- Economies of scale and cost savings for a range of services centrally procured by the Trust
- Working relations within a Trust that maintains the integrity and independence of local schools judged 'good' and 'outstanding'



KAT MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT

KAT provides member academies with:

- a range of core services that are included in the Membership Agreement, and access to a range of high-quality support through KAT's framework of approved providers

The Membership Agreement provides academies with:

- reassurance of compliance with the DFE, EFA and all other legal regulations
- a collective means of managing and meeting the statutory requirements for academies

The Membership Fee is charged on a percentage of an academy's annual funding based on their Ofsted grade on entering the Trust, and thereafter from the Ofsted grade at the beginning of each academic year. The charge will be 1.5% for good and outstanding schools entering the Trust. An additional charge of 1.5% may be levied for schools in category to provide some of the additional support needed to enable their journey out of category. In schools requiring improvement the Trust may levy an additional 0.5% (making a 2% total), but this would depend on the needs of, and be negotiated with, the school on entry to the Trust.



SUPPORT TO SCHOOLS JOINING THE TRUST

Conversion support

DfE guidance on conversion to Academy status describes the stages required for a maintained school successfully to become an academy. These stages include: consultation; the establishment of an academy company; advice on and conclusion of a funding agreement with the Secretary of State; staff transfer compliant with the requirements of the Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment (TUPE) Regulations; and ensuring that the academy has use of land and buildings.

The DfE recognises that there are costs associated with conversion and pays a £25,000 grant to all converting schools once they have secured an Academy Order.

Community School conversion is usually straightforward from a legal point of view and practical support can be provided by our solicitors and also from the Trust itself. For Faith Schools, additional processes are needed.

For all voluntary schools – aided and controlled – the DfE has defined arrangements for conversion that reflect the extensive legislative framework which protects the status of voluntary schools.

This framework provides rights, responsibilities, powers and duties for all parties, not least for the trustees of school sites and for the religious authority (the Diocesan Board of Education for Church of England schools).

The Diocesan Boards of Education Measure 1991 (which is also statute law) and various Education Acts give DBEs a range of powers, duties and responsibilities which have to be observed.

Academies are independent schools, governed by a combination of charity law, company law and contract (the Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State). The model documents for converting Church of England schools to Academy status were negotiated between the Church and government nationally with extreme care to ensure that the powers, duties and responsibilities of all parties are properly transferred into this new legal context. Converting schools from voluntary to academy status is a more complicated, technical activity than the comparable conversion for community schools. Section 3(4) of the Academies Act 2010 safeguards the position of voluntary and some foundation schools by providing that the Governing Body may apply for an Academy



Order only with the consent of the Trustees and “the person or persons by whom the foundation governors are appointed”.

The DBE will always be involved in this process – because it holds the statutory responsibility within the Church of England and is itself a statutory body. Other trustees may include the PCC and/ or the local incumbent and churchwardens. The DBE is in a position where it may have to give advice to other church bodies and has a duty to prevent any of the parties from acting illegally or otherwise in breach of the trusts upon which the school site is held.

Schools will be aware that Dioceses receive no direct funding from the DfE (except for SIAS inspections) and are reliant on education trust funds (where they have any), on a grant given from the funds generated by the parish share and on fees charged to schools where this is appropriate.



Our Solicitors

Koinonia Academies Trust has appointed its own solicitors, Lee Bolton Monier - Williams (LBM-W), to ensure that all aspects of the conversion schools meet the requirements and protect the any individual Trusts responsible for a school.

LBM-W will in particular ensure that for each individual school:

- all the necessary consents are in place before the school converts
- the funding agreement is drafted to maintain the role of any existing arrangements, e.g. the Diocese or any local foundations, in the running of the academy
- land transfer arrangements proceed according to the requirements of the individual Trusts and follow any requirements for access by the academy to the land it owns
- any necessary statutory transfers of land from the local authority are properly concluded in advance of academy land transfer
- the supplemental agreement meets the necessary requirements

LBM-W are also available to offer advice to converting school Governing Bodies, as required.

As of January 2013, the Trust has negotiated a fixed fee of £7,500.00 plus VAT and disbursements with LBM-W. This covers the 'usual' legal work required for a school conversion project. These fees will be paid from the Academy Conversion Grant of (£25,000.00).

Academy conversion project management support

KAT has negotiated - at a competitive price - Project Management support from drb Management Limited who have extensive experience in this field, and currently provide a number of Trusts with this support.

Drawing on the extensive experience of drb Management, we will be able to support schools through each and every stage of the process to ensure a smooth and successful conversion. It will also reduce the workload on Governors and school leaders so that the process does not become a distraction from their core responsibility for teaching and learning. By taking responsibility for project managing the process, the drb consultant will also reduce the work required of the solicitors, and therefore the size of the fee they would normally charge.

This support includes:

- A financial and practical assessment of the impact of Academy status on the school
- Liaison with Education Funding Agency (EFA) and Legal Advisors for the completion of commercial / financial agreements and articles and memorandum of association
- Support for the school in undertaking consultation with local stakeholders, as required by the DfE
- Checking of funding agreements from the EFA
- Production of a budget plan / projections for the new academy
- Staffing cost projection for new academy
- Setting-up of new Account Management System on SIMS/FMS (including user defined Management Reports)
- Undertaking of a Contract Value Analysis
- Assisting with the review of staff contracts and TUPE information received
- Liaison with the school to ensure relevant insurances are in place for the new academy
- Reviewing / explaining the implications of any LGPS liability
- Setting up academy payroll
- Setting up new bank account etc (if appropriate)
- VAT and Data Protection registration

- Closing down the current school accounting system
- Offering advice as required to Headteacher, School Finance Administrator and Governing Body
- Sourcing additional services as required for new academy
- Production of an accounting handbook and assistance with policy documentation
- Any other support as required to ensure smooth conversion

Conversion service to be delivered as follows on a fixed fee basis, paid from Academy Conversion Grant of £25,000.00:

10 days' equivalent support - £4,500.00 + VAT (Basic Support Package to ensure conversion is managed appropriately and according to Diocesan requirements, payable from start-up grant). This support will be delivered through visits to the school and work undertaken off site up to the point of conversion.

Staff training for office staff on new requirements, for managing Academy Company, can also be delivered at an additional cost on an hourly rate basis of £60.00 per hour.



Due Diligence

As part of the preparation for academy conversion for all academies, the Trust will also undertake a comprehensive due diligence process as follows:

The due diligence will cover the following key areas:

- Financial probity and sustainability of the school
- Governance
- Strategic school improvement review
- Premises review

Financial Review

The Financial Review would be undertaken by an Executive Consultant of drb Management and would involve meeting with the Chair of Governors and / or Chair of Finance, headteacher and the key financial manager at the school.

At this meeting the drb Consultant would ascertain the level of financial competency of the governing body, headteacher and financial manager and identify any training and support that might be required as part of the conversion to Academy status.

The drb Consultant would also obtain all of the key financial information relating to the school's budget, carry forward balance, staffing structure, School Financial Value Standard, last audit, school development plan, financial procedures etc.

The Review will show in a structured format, how financial controls and processes are managed in school, the key information listed above and overall recommendations for the way forward.

The main objective of the review is to give the DBE a complete overview of the school's financial position, the robustness of its current financial systems and processes and the training and support that will be required during academy conversion and post conversion. A full report is provided, along with copies of the key financial documents.

The cost of producing the Financial Review would be: £750.00. This includes review preparation, meeting at the school and writing up the report.

Strategic School Improvement Review

Working with senior leaders and governors, an experienced, Ofsted trained, drb Ignite associate would observe lessons in each class, progress data and talk to pupils, staff and parents (if available). Discussions would also be held with leaders at all levels and representatives of the governing body.

Other school information, for example that relating to pupils' well-being, safety and attendance would also be scrutinised.

The school will receive a detailed report, based on the four judgments made by Ofsted inspectors. The report will evaluate the evidence found during the review, include judgments about the current position of the school and provide detailed, prioritised recommendations for action on which a subsequent drb Ignite Support Plan would be based.

The cost of producing the Strategic School Improvement Review would be £2,190.00. This includes review preparation, plus two days to undertake and write the report.

Premises Review

The primary purposes of the premises review are twofold:

- To ascertain the condition of the buildings and associated mechanical and electrical plant. This survey identifies the operational effectiveness of your equipment and details the anticipated life expectancy and associated costs for replacement. The report's findings are also backed up with photographic evidence if required. The condition survey is an excellent tool for budgeting for plant replacement. By taking a proactive approach to this replacement, the likelihood of unforeseen failure is greatly reduced. When plant reaches the end of its life expectancy, drb Facilities Management Limited will identify new technologies that will reduce your school's carbon footprint and reduce the utility costs for the site
- Statutory Compliance: During the survey, a health check is carried out on all statutory documentation and systems of work. A report prioritises any urgent remedial actions required to ensure that the school / academy is fully compliant with statutory legislation, including Health and Safety legislation

The cost of producing the Condition Survey Report ranges from £1,100.00 for a small School to £1,600.00 for a large school. The cost includes the undertaking of the survey, production of the report and a further visit to the site to overview its contents with the school / KAT.

Academy Financial Management

Following conversion to Academy status it is likely that most academies will need greater support in order to fulfil the role of a stand-alone finance function supporting management, governance and external accountability requirements.

To support our sponsored academies within this specialist area, KAT, through its strategic partnership with drb Management Limited, can deliver 'bespoke' financial management support to guide and support our academies as follows:

Paid for by the Trust:

- Annual preparation of the Academy budget plan, including presentation to local Governing Body
- The Whole of Government Grant Return or its equivalent, completed annually
- Production of KPI and CFR reporting to the Trust / Academy. These reports will be produced termly for the academy and also presented to the Trust Board
- FMGS Audit undertaken during the first year
- Termly Data Analysis of both financial and school performance data
- Advice and guidance on all academy issues
- Ensuring all statutory academy deadlines and returns are complied with / produced / submitted e.g. VAT, PAYE, CFR reporting to the EFA



Paid for by the academy (ongoing from the Academy budget)

Monthly finance visits to provide:

- Production of termly monitoring reports presented to Governing Body
- Three-year Strategic Projection (1-3 years/ongoing), ensuring clear linkage between the Strategic Financial Plan and the Academy's Development Plan
- Production of regular staffing projections (independent check)
- Budget monitoring and outturn forecasting
- Planned/regular meetings with the headteacher and School Finance Administrator
- Advise to the headteacher, Academy Finance Administrator and Governing Body on changes, both National and Local, which will affect the Fair Funding Scheme and the implications of these changes for the academy
- Advice to the headteacher, Academy Finance Administrator and the Governing Body on the requirements of the Academies Financial Handbook, Financial Management (and how they tie in with the requirements of the DBE)
- Advice and guidance to the Academy Finance Administrator
- Financial training for the Academy Finance Administrator on the new financial management requirements on becoming an academy
- Advice and guidance on the completion of any finance-related returns to the DBE / EFA and LA (where applicable)
- Ensurance that the academy meets all the current and any future requirements of regulations and standards associated with audit regulations as per Academies / DBE requirements
- Advice and guidance on bank reconciliations
- Advice and guidance on the production of VAT Returns e.g. monthly bank reconciliations; VAT returns; cashflow, trial balance
- Advice and guidance on the reconciliation of / monitoring of control accounts e.g. salaries / VAT / creditors etc
- Implementation of best value
- Preparation of Year-End Workbook / Accounts for DBE (and the Auditor)
- Fund reconciliation
- Advice and guidance as appropriate

Responsible Officer (ongoing from Academy budget)

Although no longer a statutory requirement, KAT recommends that all academies appoint a Responsible Officer (RO), who is responsible for providing an independent oversight of the academy's financial affairs'.

In the absence of an internal audit service it falls to the RO to provide the Governing body with independent assurance that:

- the financial responsibilities of the Governing body are being properly discharged
- resources are managed in an efficient, economical and effective manner
- systems of internal financial control are being maintained and
- financial considerations are fully taken into account in reaching decisions

The conditions of the DFE grant, and the financial procedures which the DFE expect the Academy to follow, are described in the DFE Academies Financial Handbook, which expands upon the Academy's funding agreement with the Secretary of State.

Further details may be set out from time to time in financial circular letters, and in the annual funding letters. The main purpose of the RO role is to ensure that these requirements are followed.

Responsible Officers are often consulted before significant financial decisions are taken and provide a useful source of advice for academies. However, the RO should also perform a wider role by visiting the Academy at least once a term and undertaking a series of detailed tests to confirm the operation of the main financial systems.

Proposed DBE Responsible Officer Service:

- Full day RO Review per term (each review taking up to 6 hours)
- Report summarising the findings of the RO
- Presentation of the RO report to the Finance Committee

Payroll

A number of employees from the academy payroll will be selected and the salary details will be checked back to personnel records to confirm that the amount paid is correct.

A number of amendments to the payroll will also be checked to ensure that appropriately authorised source documentation exists.

The final payroll print for one month will be reviewed to ensure that it has been appropriately authorised.

Purchases

1. the payment has been correctly authorised
2. the payment is correctly recorded in the accounting system
3. the invoice is correctly authorised
4. the invoice corresponds to the order
5. goods or services have been certified as received
6. the order is correctly authorised
7. the order has been placed with an appropriate supplier

Details of any contracts let with a value over a prescribed limit will be obtained and the documentation reviewed to ensure that correct quotation/tender procedures have been followed.

Progress against any significant capital contracts will be reviewed to ensure that payments made are appropriate and progress is satisfactory.



Income

Receipts from the DfE and sponsors will be reviewed to check that the amounts received agree with source documentation.

One category of 'miscellaneous receipts' will be selected to ensure that:-

1. appropriate action has been taken to manage any overdue amounts
2. primary records of amounts due reconcile to records of monies collected
3. monies recorded as collected have been banked promptly and in full
4. monies collected are correctly recorded in the accounting system

Expense Claims

A sample of expense claims will be reviewed to ensure that there is appropriate documentation to support the claim and that the claim is appropriately authorised.

Petty Cash

A sample review of petty cash balances and supporting vouchers will be undertaken.

Accounting System

Bank reconciliations will be reviewed to ensure that they have been correctly prepared and authorised.

Control account reconciliations will be reviewed to ensure that they have been correctly prepared and authorised.

The procedures used to prepare financial reports issued to Governors and officers of the Academy and DfE will be reviewed through sample checks to ensure that they are completed accurately and promptly.



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