

# Special school application to convert to academy status

Please complete all relevant fields with information.

*Please note that information provided on this application form, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes, primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.*

# 1. Basic details

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| FULL school name and postal address |  |
| Local authority name and LA/ESTAB number |  |
| School URN  |  |
| Name of headteacher |  |
| School email address |  |
| Telephone number (other contact number) |  |
| Name of chair of the governing body(other contact number) |  |
| Email address |  |
| Telephone number |  |
| Name of the main contact for the conversion process. If not one of the above, include role, email address and telephone number |  |

## 2. Conversion date

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Your conversion date will be scheduled for approximately five months form the 1st of the month following the month in which you apply. If you wish to convert on an alternate date, please give the date and your reasons.  | Please confirm the date on which you wish to open as an academy.  |

## 3. Multi-academy trust or single academy trust

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Are you applying to join a multi-academy trust or as a single academy trust? Please mark the relevant box. | **Multi-academy trust** |  | **Single academy trust**  |  |
| If you are joining an existing multi-academy trust, please give the name of the trust that the school is joining.  | Name of trust: Trust has consented to your school joining them:  |
| If you are forming a new multi-academy trust, please give the name of the trust (if known), and the names of the other schools in the trust.  | Name of trust:Other schools in trust: |
| If you are applying as a single academy trust, please state the name of the school(s) you will be supporting and what support you will be providing.  | Name:Support: |

### Governance

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Number of members of the trustNames of membersExperience/background |  |
| Total number of people on the board of trusteesName of the chair of the trust Experience/background |  |
| Name of the finance directorExperience/background |  |
| Name of the HR director Experience/background |  |
| Name of the head of school improvementExperience/background |  |

## 4. Pupils

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Age range | [number]-[number] |
| Category of special educational needs you provide for (please mark with a cross only the ‘primary’ SEN) | Specific Learning Difficulty |  | Moderate Learning Difficulty |  | Severe Learning Difficulty |  |
| Autistic Spectrum Disorder |  | Visual Impairment |  | Hearing Impairment |  |
| Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty |  | Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulty |  | Speech, language and Communication Needs |  |
| Multi-Sensory Impairment |  | Physical Disability |  |  |
| What is the number of pupil places for which the school is currently funded? | (number) |
| Does the school have residential provision? | Yes/No |
| If yes, what is the number of residential places for which the school is currently funded? | (number) |
| Is the school involved in running specialist SEN units on other schools’ sites, off its own main site? | Yes/No |
| Does the school have any specialist provision i.e. a separate nursery unit? | Yes/No |

## 5. Information on educational outcomes and attendance

Please provide information on pupil outcomes and progress based on national curriculum assessment and/or P-scales where applicable. This information can include teacher assessments for pupils working below Level 1 and/or Level 3, information on NVQs and other national qualifications, patterns of attainment, achievement and progress and destinations of pupils.

Summary of Progress in English and Maths at KS2/KS4 based on the Expected Progress set out in the National Progression Guidance [select as appropriate]

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **English**  | **No. Students** | **% LQ** | **% Median** | **% UQ** | **Progress range** |
| All students |  |  |  |  |  |
| Pupil Premium |  |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Maths** | **No. Students** | **% LQ** | **% Median** | **% UQ** | **Progress range** |
| All students |  |  |  |  |  |
| Pupil Premium |  |  |  |  |  |

All pupils:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Attendance rates (for previous year)** | **Percentage** |
| Attendance rate (overall) | % |
| Persistent absence at 15%  | % |

## 6. Finances

Please state what the revenue carry forward was/will be at the following dates:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 31 March 2016(i.e. the end of last financial year) | 31 March 2017(i.e. the end of this financial year) |
|  |  |

Please state what the capital carry forward was/will be at the following dates:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 31 March 2016(i.e. the end of last financial year) | 31 March 2017(i.e. the end of this financial year) |
|  |  |

If the school has a revenue or capital deficit, please provide a summary of how the deficit is being handled. (Please also see the guidance at the end of this form on how deficits will be assessed during the academy order approval process.)

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Similarly, if the school’s expected carry forward in 2017 is lower than the actual carry forward in 2016, please explain the reasons for this.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

If the school has any existing loans, please provide details of who the loan is with, how much for and for how long.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Please provide information on any additional funding from the LA (e.g. for outreach work, grants) or other funding streams.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## 7. Additional information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Please confirm the date of the school’s most recent Ofsted inspection and the school’s overall grade. (Please also confirm if the school has recently been inspected by Ofsted but the report has not yet been published.) | **Details** |
| Is your school part of an LA reorganisation?If yes, please provide brief details below: | **Yes/No** |
| Is your school part of any LA closure plans? | **Yes/No** |
| If yes, please provide brief details below: |
| The governing body has discussed the statutory consultation exercise and considered its equality assessment needs. We will require confirmation that the governing body has considered what plans it has for the statutory consultation exercise and any equality impact assessment. Your project lead will contact you to discuss this.  | **Yes/No****Yes/No** |
| Is the school linked to a diocese? | **Yes/No** |
| If yes, please say which one:(Please send in the diocese’s letter of consent with your application form either by post, or via the email address applications.academies@education.gsi.gov.uk. We will be unable to progress your application without this consent.) |
| Is the school linked to a federation (The School Governance (Federations) (England) Regulations 2012)? | **Yes/No** |
| If yes, confirm that your application for an academy order has complied with these Regulations as amended by The School Governance (Federations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 (1554).  |
| Does your school currently have an exemption, issued by the local Standing Committee on Religious Education (SACRE), from providing broadly Christian collective worship? If yes, when does the exemption expire?  | **Yes/No** |
| Please provide any other information you think may be significant for the school’s conversion to academy status:  |

### Land and buildings

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Who currently owns/holds the school building and associated land? |  |
| Is any part of your school’s facilities used by or shared with organisations other than the school?This could include hire of school hall or playing fields by community groups.  | **Yes/No** |
| If yes – please provide below details below of the shared use: |
| Are there any building works planned or ongoing at the school? | **Yes/No** |
| If yes, please provide details below of what is being done, the scheduled completion date and whether the arrangements for funding will be affected by conversion: |
| Is there a nursery, children’s centre, swimming pool, leisure centre, community library or any other shared facility on site? | **Yes/No** |
| If yes, please state below what, and whether the school has any proposals to retain (or acquire) the facility as part of the conversion process: |
| Has the school been in receipt of any grants from Sport England, The Big Lottery Fund, or the Football Federation? | **Yes/No**  |
| If yes, please state below which body awarded the grant(s), how much they were for and what facilities were funded: |
| Is your school part of a PFI scheme? | **Yes/No** |
| Is your school part of the Priority School Building Programme? | **Yes/No** |
| Is your school part of the Building Schools for the Future programme?  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Would the school be interested in finding out more about sponsoring another school? | **Yes/No** |
| What prompted you to apply for academy status? Please tick any that apply |
| 1. Information at a FASNA/SSAT Event:
 |  |
| 1. Another academy or academy sponsor:
 |  |
| 1. The Academies Show:
 |  |
| 1. Letter from DfE:
 |  |
| 1. A DfE project lead
 |  |
| 1. Other – give details below:
 |

## 8. Academy support grant

Please complete the school’s bank details below so we can pay your £25,000 support grant promptly following the award of an academy order. To claim this grant, you must agree to the terms of the support grant certificate available on the GOV.UK website [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/256036/support_grant_claim_form.doc). Please indicate you have read and agree the terms by putting a cross in the box below. (Claims that do not include this will not be processed and you will not be paid.)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| I confirm I wish to claim the £25,000 support grant and I agree to be bound by the terms of the support grant certificate | YES | NO |
|  |  |
| Name of bank |
|  |
| Bank branch address |
|  |
| Bank account name |
|  |
| Sort code |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Account number |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

## 9. Declaration of the governing body

By submitting this application we, the governing body of the school named in this application, confirm that:

* we have the authority to resolve that our school should become an academy;
* all the information included is true and accurate to the best of our knowledge;
* if the school is a foundation or voluntary school that has a foundation and there is a diocese, trust, or other body that appoints governors in our school, then that body and the trustees of the school have separately agreed that we may convert to academy status (a letter stating this will be sent separately to this application from that body to the department);
* if the school is part of a federation, we have complied with the requirements in The School Governance (Federations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 (1554) when passing the resolution to convert to academy status, and a record of the voting is available should departmental officials wish to see it;
* a resolution to apply to convert to academy status has been held and carried and a record of this decision is available should departmental officials wish to see it;
* we will, in accordance with Section 5 of the Academies Act, consult with any stakeholder we consider relevant to our conversion to academy status and also consider any equality needs, and that this consultation will be completed before we sign our funding agreement;
* there are no financial or safeguarding investigations ongoing at our school;
* individuals who will act as members and trustees of the proposed academy trust, as well as the individuals associated with it , must ensure that principles are promoted which support fundamental British values, including: respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England; respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic processes; support for equality of opportunity for all; support and respect for the liberties of all within the law; and respect for and tolerance of different faiths and religious and other beliefs;
* we accept that the department may ask for any additional information as it sees fit to assess our application and that as a condition of our conversion we shall provide it;
* should any information presented in this application be revealed to be false or misleading, our application may be rejected and our academy order potentially rescinded if it has already been awarded.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name and position of the person that completed this form |  |
| Date form was completed |  |

# Supporting notes

## 1. Basic details

Please state the school’s **full** name, its address, the local authority name and the LA/Estab number so that we can correctly identify your school.

We require the name and contact information of the headteacher and the chair of the governing body. It would be helpful to know who the main person is to contact during the conversion process. For example, if it is the business manager or a consultant, please provide that person’s name and contact details.

## 2. Conversion date

**The default conversion date is 5 months from the month of application - a straightforward conversion will take around 5 months to complete. If the school is part of a PFI contract, it can take 6 months or longer to complete the process.** If you would prefer to opt for an alternative date, please state this on the application. Your project lead will discuss this with you in more detail either whilst processing your application or as soon as you gain an academy order.

## 3. Multi-academy trust or single academy trust

There are two types of academy trust:

1. multi-academy trust (MAT) - MATs run more than one academy. The MAT is a charitable company with a single set of articles of association. It is a single legal entity accountable for a number of academies; its board of trustees is accountable for all the academies in the trust. The trust enters into a master funding agreement (MFA) with the Secretary of State, and into supplemental funding agreements (SFA) for each academy it operates.
2. single academy trust (SAT) – a SAT is responsible for one academy. It has its own articles of association and funding agreement with the Secretary of State. Its board of trustees is accountable for that one academy only.

We believe all schools, including those performing well, will benefit from being in a multi-academy trust. We want schools to operate in strong, resilient structures which raise standards. Multi-academy trusts bring together leadership, autonomy, funding and accountability in a single structure, and are the best long-term formal arrangement for schools to collaborate and support each other.

Because of these benefits, we expect that most schools will form or join multi-academy trusts as they become academies. Effective schools can apply to become single academy trusts, but will need to demonstrate that they are performing well and can be successful and sustainable alone. We expect most small schools will be part of a multi-academy trust helping to secure their long term success.

### 3a. Multi-academy trust

You can apply to form a multi-academy trust with other schools, or join an existing multi-academy trust.

If you are **joining an existing multi-academy trust** you must confirm that the established trust consents to your school joining them. Please send in their letter of consent with your application either by post or via the email address applications.academies@education.gsi.gov.uk. We will be unable to progress your application without their consent.

**Forming a new trust –** please give the name of the trust and the other schools that intend to join.

**Structure of MAT**–please give as much information as possible on who the members and trustees are/will be and how it is/will be structured, for example in a diagram. If you are forming the trust with other schools, we recognise you may not have come to a firm decision on its structure yet, but it will be very helpful to see the early stages of your planning.

### 3.b Single academy trust

Each application to become a single academy trust will be considered on a case by case basis, with the decision being informed by various factors. These include:

* your school’s exam results from the last 3 years
* the progress your pupils have been making over the last 3 years
* your most recent Ofsted inspections
* your school’s capacity to be successful and sustainable as a single academy
* your school’s finances.

**Supporting another school** - as part of the conversion process, we expect Ofsted rated “outstanding” or “good with outstanding features” schools which convert into an academy to commit to support at last one weaker school in return for academy status. For special schools this could include supporting a mainstream school to improve opportunities for children with special educational needs. Please name the school(s) you will be supporting.

### 3.2 Trust governance

As part of the conversion process, we will expect your governing body to consider its governance structure and arrangements because, as an academy trust, we would expect its board to be lean and tightly run.

We recognise that your governing body may not have reached firm decisions on this yet and we are interested in their thinking as it develops – your governing body is not required to commit themselves to plans at this stage.

Your governors may find it helpful to consult further information on the roles and responsibilities of members and trustees which can be found on:

* The Charity Commission website:
	+ [Setting up and running a charity](https://www.gov.uk/topic/running-charity)
	+ [Trustee role and board](https://www.gov.uk/topic/running-charity/trustee-role-board)
* The Academies Financial Handbook, which can be found on the Education Funding Agency’s pages on the GOV.UK site [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academies-financial-handbook-2015)
* The Governors’ Handbook, which can be found on the department’s pages on the GOV.UK site [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governors-handbook--3)

**Number of founding members of the trust** – these will be the individuals who will sign the memorandum of association that sets up the academy trust. The members agree the articles of association for the academy trust and hold the board of trustees to account for the management of the trust. The articles define the charitable purpose of the trust and how it will be run. The minimum number of members is three but we would encourage your governors to consider having five members in order to ensure that the members have the necessary skills and expertise to hold the trustees to account for school leadership/improvement, financial accounting and running a charitable company.

Please give the number of the members of the trust, the number of members who are also trustees, and the number of trustees.

## 4. Pupils

Please select from the list only the ‘primary’ category or categories of special educational needs (SEN) that your school provides for. Special schools will be designated as providing for one or more category of special educational need, as listed in the school census.

Pupil numbers should be based on the school’s budget for the current financial year and the number of pupil places for which the school is currently funded.

X – the number of pupil places for which the school is currently funded.

X – the number of residential places for which the school is currently funded

Schools wishing to convert to academy status must convert “as is”. This means that they will not be able to alter their main characteristics during the course of the conversion process. Please note that we will corroborate this information with the local authority. If there is a discrepancy between the views of the school and the local authority, your project lead will seek to understand the reasons for this and will work with both parties to agree a position before the application can be considered further.

## 5. Information on educational outcomes and attendance

All special schools should have in place systems for monitoring the progress and outcomes for their pupils. As such, in the absence of or in addition to national attainment data, special schools should be able to provide information based on systems they use to track and review pupils progress and outcomes in support of their case to become an academy. This might include:

* Pupil outcomes based on national curriculum assessment and/or P-scales where applicable, such as Teacher assessments for pupils working below Level 1 and/or Level 3
* NVQs
* Destination of pupils at transition stages i.e. post 16, post 19, further education, employment.

### Information on pupil attendance

We would expect that special schools would have low levels of unauthorised pupil absence and that higher absence rates would be related to pupils’ regressive or complex health needs, although these absences would be authorised. Rising trends of unauthorised pupil absences would be a cause for concern, for example in schools for children with behaviour, emotional and social difficulties (BESD), and we would need to understand the reasons.

## 6. Finances

The finance section is particularly important and must be completed accurately to avoid delay to your application being processed. Please state the **revenue** and **capital** carry forward for the school at three points in time: the end of the previous financial year, the end of the current financial year and the point at which you intend to convert.

Please make it clear whether the amount at each point is a **surplus** or a **deficit** by writing the appropriate words in brackets after the figure.

If the school has a **deficit**, we need to know how this occurred and how long the school has been in this position. A deficit does not prevent your application being considered or approved, however we need to be assured that:

* the plan you have to reduce the deficit is workable
* the deficit will be eliminated within a short period of time
* that there is no longer term financial problem with the school that will mean a deficit will recur.

Schools with large deficits will be asked to supply budget forecasts showing their current expenditure, how they expect to reach a balanced budget, and by when. The department's preferred format for that information is for income and expenditure to be set out using the Consistent Financial Reporting codes. Your project lead will provide you with a sample deficit recovery plan and explain what information is required from you.

It would be helpful to know whether the school is currently part of, or is planning to join a PFI scheme - if this is the case your project lead will contact you for further details and explain the process to you.

If the school has any outstanding loans please state the full amount, who they are with, and outline the repayment schedule.

## 7. Additional information

Please indicate whether the school has been included in any local authority plans for reorganisation or has been considered as part of the local authority’s closure plans. Please note that we will corroborate this information with the local authority and will need to discuss the situation with you as part of the application process.

The governing body has a duty to consult on whether or not the school should to convert to academy status. It also has a duty to consider whether an equalities impact assessment is required. We would therefore like confirmation that the governing body has plans for the statutory consultation and has considered its duty under the Equality Act 2010. Consultation and any impact assessment need to be completed before the conversion date.

Where applicable, please enter the name of the **diocese, foundation or trust** that will need to give permission for the school to start the conversion process. Your project lead will need to see evidence of their permission in order to progress your application.You may send in a copy of the letter of consent electronically via applications.academies@education.gsi.gov.uk or in hard copy to the department. **If your school is part of a federation, please confirm that your application for an academy order has complied with** the relevant regulations (The School Governance (Federations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 (1554)).

**Building works, shared use including nurseries**, Sport England funding, PFI, BSF and PSBP - we do not need full information at this early stage, but it is helpful to know whether your school has any of these arrangements as they typically require additional time to deal with. This could affect your scheduled conversion date.

Finally, in this section you may also supply any other information that you consider relevant to your application or you think may be significant. For example, you may wish to tell us if you are planning a new sixth form or there will be a significant increase in pupils with the types of SEN that your school provides for.

You may also send in any further information via applications.academies@education.gsi.gov.uk or in hard copy to the department.

## 8. Academy support grant

In order to access the £25,000 support grant, please mark the box to confirm agreement to the terms of the grant and provide the school’s bank details.

## 9. Declaration of the governing body

Please make sure that the governing body has read and agrees to the declaration before sending the application form to the department. In particular if the school is a foundation or a voluntary school and has a foundation or there is a diocese, trust, or other body that appoints governors at the school, then that body and the trustees of the school have to provide **written confirmation** that they agree to the school converting to academy status (a letter stating this will have to be sent separately to this application from that body to the department). The person who completed the form should insert his or her name and post and also the date the form was completed.

Please email the completed application form (in Word format) to the following address: Applications.ACADEMIES@education.gsi.gov.uk and copy it to your DfE project lead.

# Support grant conditions

The conditions of the grant are in the academy financial support grant claim form available on the from the department’s pages on the GOV.UK website [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/256036/support_grant_claim_form.doc). When you have converted to academy status you will be required to confirm that the grant has been spent on the specified purposes only.

For ease of reference, the conditions are:

1.Grant can only be used for the following purposes:

a) obtaining legal advice in respect of the conversion process;

b) the costs of software licence transfers;

c) HR/TUPE advice;

d) re-branding costs; and

e) expenses incurred in setting up of the academy trust.

2. You should retain records to show that the grant has been used for the purposes outlined in (1) above for 6 years after the end of the financial year in which the expenditure has taken place. The books and records of the school relating to the claiming and use of grant will be open to inspection by the National Audit Office and representatives of the Secretary of State as and when they may require.

3. a) In the event of a successful conversion, any unused element of grant should be transferred to the academy trust for the purposes described in its charitable objects, typically the advancement of education. The chair of the governing body will be expected to sign a declaration confirming how much of the grant has been spent at the point of conversion to academy status and, if relevant, how much has been transferred to the academy budget. The chair will send a certificate to the Secretary of State declaring this and including the exact amounts of money spent and transferred. The certificate can be downloaded from the department’s pages on the GOV.UK site [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academy-support-grant).

b) In the event that the conversion does not occur then any unused grant should be repaid to the Secretary of State within 10 working days of notifying us that you are withdrawing your application to convert.

4. When procuring goods and services for the school or academy, you are reminded of the requirement to comply with EU and UK procurement law and regulations when appropriate.

You will be paid grant within 14 days of the issue of your academy order.

Please email the completed application form (in Word format) to the following address: Applications.ACADEMIES@education.gsi.gov.uk and copy it to your DfE project lead.

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