



Governor Questions and Answers.

Answers supplied by Christine Dickson (Centre for Education and Financial Management CEFM)

1. The Local Authority own the school premises. If we become an academy, do they a) remain the owner of the premises to which we pay a lease? Or b) The MAT assumes ownership?

[Christine Dickson] Academies that convert from a former local authority maintained school, where the freehold is owned by the local authority, generally occupy the predecessor school's site under a lease from the local authority, normally for 125 years at nil rental.

2. A considerable number of support staff are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme. If we become a MAT, are we allowed to remain with LGPS or, would we have to opt out and join a new pension service? I am not sure about the teaching staff pension scheme but, would this also apply?

[Christine Dickson] The academy trust must ensure that all teachers employed in each academy have access to the Teachers' Pension Scheme and, in so doing, must comply with the requirements of the scheme and with Fair Deal for staff pensions published by HM Treasury. The academy trust must, in accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations 2008 and with Fair Deal for staff pensions guidance published by HM Treasury, ensure that all affected staff employed by the academy trust other than teachers have access to the Local Government Pension Scheme, unless an individual expressly chooses to opt out of the scheme in accordance with the regulations.

3. If we become an MAT, will we continue to use the local authority on a Service Level Agreement basis for HR, Payroll and ground maintenance services?

[Christine Dickson] The MAT will be required to obtain three quotes for these services and select the one which represents best value.

4. As an MAT, can we alter school term time e.g. lengthen or shorten term breaks, So long as the required number of curriculum days are adhered to?

[Christine Dickson] The length of the school day and year are the responsibility of the academy trust. Academies can set their own term times. Please find below a link to a Telegraph article re how this has operated in practice. The curriculum is also the responsibility of the academy trust which must follow certain requirements laid out in its funding agreement with the Education Secretary.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/10687829/Growing-number-of-academies-extending-the-school-day.html>