

# Thinking of joining Schoolsworks?



**Joining a MAT is a big decision  
- its like choosing  
a marriage partner!**

## Frequently Asked Questions about the Schoolsworks offer:

Q How is working as an academy school in Schoolsworks different from working as a maintained school?

A Our headteachers say:

“Schoolsworks Heads’ Forum is smaller and more focussed than my locality group”

“We enjoy a different level of collaboration by being part of the same team”

“We share more deeply one another’s opportunities and challenges as school leaders”

“Until joining Schoolsworks I have never fully shared my SEF and School Development Plan with other school leaders. We give effective and constructive feedback to each other and share solutions to the challenges we all face”

Q What does this collaboration look like in practice?

A There are very practical ways in which schools work together including the following:

- Assessment leads have developed a plan for Assessment Without Levels
- Maths and English leads meet to share best practice and co-construct KPIs
- Subject Leads run twilight Inset training across the Trust so we capitalize on areas of excellence
- SENCOs meeting regularly with colleagues to work on challenges like compiling EHCPs
- Early Years Team and other year groups undertake Trust wide moderation
- SBMs meet and offer mutual support under the expertise of the Trust’s CFO

Q What if everything in my school is just as I want it and I don’t want to change anything?

A We don’t want to create uniformity across the Trust or to reduce any school’s positive unique character. If something is going well, why would we change it? All five schools that have converted and joined Schoolsworks have retained their own name, uniform, branding and other unique features.

Q What will it cost to be part of Schoolworks and what will we get for this?

A A multi-academy trust (MAT) replaces the governance and executive functions of local authorities in a cost-effective way. Currently there are three executive functions which Schoolworks provides for its schools:

- Our Chief Executive Officer handles the liaison between all the schools, the Trust, the Department of Education and local authority as well as co-ordinating the direction of the Trust and being accountable for its responsibilities for school improvement, financial accounting and compliance
- Our Chief Financial Officer, a qualified and experienced accountant, works closely with the schools' Business Managers to support them in their financial role and in particular in generating the reports, budgets and accounts required by the EFA
- Our Director of Teaching and Learning co-ordinates all the school to school input and the work of the Trust-wide curriculum and support groups

In addition the Central Services Team of the Trust provides

- HR Support (from 2016)
- Payroll provision (from 2016)
- Legal advice and support (from 2016)
- Auditing to meet the EFA regulations
- Fully supported financial and budgeting software systems
- Academic annual self-reviews for each school
- Appointment and appraisal of school leaders
- CPD and career development opportunities, including training and opportunities for secondments
- Access to effective conflict resolution and mediation solutions for employees and parents
- Whole school peer mediation programmes
- Pupil collaboration and celebration events

Like all schools, we review our central services offer and budget annual and our current recharge rate to schools is 4%.

- Q The reputation of academy conversion is that it can be stressful, time consuming and expensive. How will Schoolsworks support us in the conversion process?
- A
- Our aim is to ensure that schools are not distracted from their main purpose of maintaining happy and effective learning communities during the process of academy conversion
  - With 5 years' experience of managing 5 conversions and working with highly experienced professionals we are able to handle all matters involved with the conversion process
  - We can also handle all issues of TUPE, Trade Unions and HR and we will fully support SBMs through the process with hands-on involvement of our finance team
  - In all our conversions so far the DfE conversion grant has adequately covered all the expenses of conversion

Q How do we know if Schoolsworks is the right Academy Trust for us to join?

- A
- Joining a MAT is a big decision – it's like choosing a marriage partner! This is obviously a two-way process, so we offer schools who are considering joining Schoolsworks a one-term Associate Membership offer, details of which are on the website. This Associate Membership gives the opportunity for you to see if the Trust feels like a 'right fit' for your school and vice versa.

We are obliged to undertake 'due diligence' which entails us working with Headteachers, governors and school leaders to get a good understanding of your school and its priorities. Our Trust is based on healthy relationships and we use the period of Associate Membership and conversion as good opportunities to build good relationships and understand one another better.

## Schoolsworks Academy Trust

Edward Bryant School, London Road, Bognor Regis, West Sussex PO21 1BQ  
Tel: 01243 822454 | Web: [www.schoolsworks.org](http://www.schoolsworks.org)



## Mission

Building Children's Futures Together

## Vision

- To create local, cohesive hubs of around 7-8 schools that know each other well, and provide effective mutual school improvement and support
- To multiply this model giving a network of 2 or 3 hubs of 7-8 schools by 2022, all to be located within reasonable reach of each other
- To see all schools within the Trust improving, all children reaching their potential and all staff leading pursuing fulfilling careers

## USP

- Local schools' based partnerships
- High proportion of Good schools
- School to school improvement model
- Visionary and collaborative leadership within the Trust and throughout all schools
- We are passionate about developing the excellence in school leadership and in teaching and learning, and we share best practice across our schools and we seek input where needed from outside the Trust

## Core Offer

An opportunity to work closely with a small group of like-minded individuals who are passionate about inspiring their schools and developing the best possible outcomes for their children.

