

Frequently Asked Questions

What is an academy trust?

An academy trust is a group of schools that work together under a shared governance structure. These schools remain focused on their own individual communities but benefit from being part of a wider network. The trust provides support, guidance and strategic direction, helping schools to collaborate, share expertise and continue improving. Academy trusts are funded directly by the government rather than through the local authority.

Why do schools join academy trusts?

Schools choose to join academy trusts for a range of positive reasons. Being part of a trust allows schools to work closely with others, sharing best practice, resources and expertise to improve teaching and learning. It can also provide greater opportunities for staff development and enhanced experiences for pupils. For many schools, it is about strengthening what they already do well and ensuring they are well-positioned for the future within an increasingly collaborative education system.

Is it only failing schools that join academies?

No—this is a common misconception. While some schools have converted to academy status following support or intervention, many strong and successful schools also choose to join academy trusts. These schools make the decision proactively, recognising the benefits of collaboration and wanting to build on their existing strengths. At Brook Primary, we are exploring this from a position of strength, not because it is required.

Will our school uniform change?

There are no plans to change the school uniform. Decisions such as uniform remain with the school, and we would not make changes without clear communication and consideration of our community. Maintaining our school identity is very important to us.

What impact will it have on our children?

Our children will continue to receive the same high-quality education in a familiar and supportive environment. The day-to-day experience of school life is unlikely to change. Over time, being part of an academy trust may bring additional opportunities, such as wider curriculum experiences, shared events, and access to a broader network of expertise. Any changes would always be made with the best interests of our pupils at the centre of decision-making.

Will the school holidays change if we join an academy trust?

No—there is no intention to change the current school holiday pattern. While academies do have the flexibility to set their own term dates, we recognise how important consistency is for our families and community. We are committed to maintaining the existing holiday arrangements and would only consider any changes in exceptional circumstances, with clear communication well in advance.

Will the school's ethos and identity change?

Maintaining Brook's strong identity, values and community ethos is a key priority. Any partnership we enter into must respect and support what makes our school unique. This has been an important consideration in identifying Stour Vale as a potential partner.