

Proposal to become an academy with the Greenshaw Learning Trust



The Governing Body of Victor Seymour Infants' School has decided that the school should become an academy and join the Greenshaw Learning Trust.

An academy is a state-funded school that is required to follow the same regulations and serve its community in the same way as other state-funded schools, and is funded on the same basis, directly by the Department for Education. An academy cannot charge fees or make a profit.

An academy is overseen and supported by an academy trust - a charitable company established with the sole purpose of providing public education through its academy schools. Academy trustees have a legal duty to operate in the interests of the schools in the trust. An academy is not under the control of the local authority.

An academy trust provides an effective structure for schools to collaborate and share expertise and resources, and secure the services they require, whilst retaining their character and ethos.

The Greenshaw Learning Trust is responsible for Greenshaw High School and Green Wrythe Primary School in Sutton and Edenham High School in Croydon, and has approval to open a new secondary school in Sutton in the next few years. Its capacity to support schools has been endorsed by the Department for Education.

The Governing Body welcomes the views of stakeholders on the proposal to become an academy and join the Greenshaw Learning Trust, as set out in this leaflet and on the school website.

Why make this change?

Following careful consideration, the Governing Body concluded that collaborating as a partner in the Greenshaw family of schools would be the best way both to provide further opportunities for Victor Seymour's pupils and staff, and share the high level of knowledge and skills the school and its staff are able to offer other schools.

Victor Seymour will benefit from the close collaboration between a family of like-minded schools as part of the Trust, sharing good practice and realising economies of scale.

Schools are increasingly forming more structured groupings to work together and secure the support and services they require. At the same time, the support that local authorities are able to provide to schools has significantly diminished. The Government says it wants all schools to become academies as part of a group of schools.

By making this move now Victor Seymour can choose the schools it works with and take greater control over how it is run and how it develops in future.

The school will continue to be run as it is now by its leadership team and governing body, but they will have greater control over how the allocated budget is used and more choice over things like the curriculum and the support services the school uses.

What would stay the same?

As an academy, Victor Seymour's character will not change: it would continue to look, feel and be the way it is now. The school's name won't change - it won't include the word 'academy'.

The school will continue to provide high quality education and a broad and balanced curriculum to give local children of all abilities the best start in their lives. It will, as now, be subject to Ofsted monitoring and inspections. It will continue to operate at the heart of the local community, and collaborate with other local schools, for example to coordinate term dates, and with the local authority over provision for special educational needs and place planning.

There will be no changes to the school's admissions criteria – the same pupils will come to Victor Seymour as would come if it were not an academy.

As an academy, Victor Seymour will receive the same level of per-pupil funding as it would as a maintained school, but in addition will receive some additional money that is currently retained by the Local Authority.

The land and buildings used by the school will continue to be available to it and will transfer to the Trust on a long lease.

The Victor Seymour Nursery and Pre-School would continue to operate, run by the school, in the same way that it does now.

What would change?

As an academy Victor Seymour will have greater control over how it is run and more choice over how it spends the money allocated to it and which services it obtains from whom.

As part of the Greenshaw Learning Trust the school will be able to secure better value for money and free up money to use for the school's own priorities. This will help to offset the pressure on school budgets, preserve the curriculum and services for its students and safeguard jobs.

How would it affect staff?

The Greenshaw Learning Trust becomes the employer of the staff, not the local authority. All current staff will transfer to the Trust under TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment) regulations, retaining current pay and conditions. Teachers will remain in the Teachers' Pension Scheme and support staff will remain in the Local Government Pension Scheme as they are now; the employers' contributions will be maintained by the academy.

The Children's Centre

This proposal does not include the children's centre - Sutton Council is considering the future of children's centres in a separate process.

Information, views and comments

We would like to hear your views and answer your questions about the proposal that Victor Seymour Infants' School should become an academy and join the Greenshaw Learning Trust.

A series of consultation meetings are being held on Monday 18th January at the school:

For parents and carers *	2.00 pm to 3.00 pm
For all staff of Victor Seymour	3.30 pm to 4.30 pm
For parents and carers *	7.00 pm to 8.00 pm

* parents and carers of children at Victor Seymour Infants' School, Nursery and Pre-School and those hoping to join in September 2016.

You can also give your views or ask your questions:

- By completing the form on our website at www.victorseymourinfants.co.uk.
- By email to consultation@victorseymourinfants.org.uk.
- By writing to: Helen Matt, Headteacher, Victor Seymour Infants' School, Denmark Road, Carshalton, SM5 2JE.
- By posting a response form in the 'postbox' in the school foyer.

Please let us have your views before 12th February 2016.

There is more information on the school website at www.victorseymourinfants.co.uk.

To find out more about the Greenshaw Learning Trust, go to www.greenshawlearningtrust.org.uk

The change to academy status with the Greenshaw Learning Trust is a matter for the Governing Body – it does not require the approval of the local authority. It has the support of the Trust and will require the approval of the Regional Schools Commissioner, acting on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education (representations may be made to the Education Funding Agency, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT). If the process proceeds to plan Victor Seymour will become an academy and join the Greenshaw Learning Trust in April 2016.