

Proposed Change of Primary Academy Names Consultation Report

Summary

This report sets out the process for, and responses to, the consultation exercise carried out by The Mead Educational Trust on the proposal to change the name of Knighton Fields Primary Academy to Knighton Mead Primary Academy; Northfield House Primary Academy to North Mead Primary Academy; Rowlatts Hill Primary Academy to Rowlatts Mead Primary Academy; Thurnby Lodge Primary Academy to Thurnby Mead Primary Academy; and Willowbrook Primary Academy to Willow Mead Primary Academy.

The consultation took place over a five-week period, starting on Monday 18th March 2019 and finishing on Friday 19th April 2019, and involved a range of consultation methods and communication channels.

Overall, the consultation received 531 responses during the specified timeframe. Responses were from a range of stakeholders comprising parents and carers, former pupils, residents and staff members.

After carefully considering the comments and suggestions received during the consultation period, Trust leaders agreed that: Knighton Fields Primary Academy change its name to Knighton Mead Primary Academy; Northfield House Primary Academy to North Mead Primary Academy; Rowlatts Hill Primary Academy to Rowlatts Mead Primary Academy; Thurnby Lodge Primary Academy to Thurnby Mead Primary Academy; and Willowbrook Primary Academy to Willowbrook Mead Primary Academy from 28th August 2019.

Background

After careful consideration, the Board of Trustees of The Mead Educational Trust (TMET) agreed to change the names of its schools so that their names explicitly reflect the link to The Mead family of schools. Including the word 'Mead' within its schools' names will help to build public recognition of The Mead family of schools, celebrating their long established track record of school improvement intervention and raising standards. The change of name will be particularly beneficial for schools joining The Mead Educational Trust that are judged by Ofsted to be requiring improvement or inadequate, as it will signify the Mead family of schools' commitment to raising standards in such schools.

Consultation Process

Letters detailing the proposal to change the academy names were sent to parents/carers, staff, academy councillors and other local stakeholders.

Details about the consultation were posted on both the Trust and Academies' websites and contained information of how to respond to the consultation.

An email containing information about the consultation was also sent to members of staff and academy councillors of other schools within the Trust and local stakeholder groups.

The consultation period ran from Monday 18th March 2019 – Friday 19th April 2019.

Consultation Responses

A total of 531 responses were received during the consultation period. The responses were from a broad spectrum of the community including parents and carers, former pupils, residents and staff members. Of the responses received, a number of common queries or concerns were raised. The response to issues commonly raised by respondents can be found below.

The cost of purchasing new uniforms for students

One respondent expressed concern that the name change would mean parents and carers having to purchase new uniform. The respondent was assured that current students would be able to continue wearing their current uniforms for as long as they required them and will only be required to purchase the updated uniform items when they require a replacement e.g. when a student outgrows their school jumper.

The environmental impact of changing uniform

One respondent raised concern over the environmental impact of changing uniform. The environmental impact of changing uniforms will be minimal as current students will be able to continue wearing their current uniforms for as long as they require them.

Loss of identity

Five hundred and twenty five respondents felt that the proposed name for Willowbrook Primary Academy – Willow Mead Primary Academy – did not reflect the local community in which it serves, and suggested Willowbrook Mead Primary Academy as an alternative name.

The cost of rebranding the school following a name change

Three respondents raised concern over the funding required to rebrand the schools following a name change. Respondents were assured that the cost of updating the school logos and signage would be funded by a specific external grant that is intended for marketing, public relations and trust identity rather than any funding that is intended for school improvement.

Consultation Outcome

After carefully considering the comments and suggestions received during the consultation period, Trust leaders agreed that: Knighton Fields Primary Academy change its name to Knighton Mead Primary Academy; Northfield House Primary Academy to North Mead Primary Academy; Rowlatts Hill Primary Academy to Rowlatts Mead Primary Academy; Thurnby Lodge Primary Academy to Thurnby Mead Primary Academy; and Willowbrook Primary Academy to Willowbrook Mead Primary Academy from 28th August 2019.