



Understanding funding in our Multi Academy Trust

For Parents and Carers,

We wanted to take a moment to explain how school funding works now that we are part of a Multi Academy Trust (MAT), and how this differs from when we were a Local Authority Maintained School.

1. Where does our funding come from and how does it work?

As an academy within a MAT, our funding comes directly from the government through the Department for Education (DfE) rather than via the Local Authority. This is called General Annual Grant (GAG) funding.

The amount we receive is calculated using the National Funding Formula, which considers:

- **Number of pupils** on roll
- **Additional needs** (such as special educational needs or English as an additional language)
- **Deprivation indicators** (e.g., eligibility for free school meals)
- **Other factors** like premises costs and geographic adjustments

The MAT receives the funding for all its schools and then allocates resources across the trust. This allows us to:

- Share expertise and services (such as HR, finance, and specialist teaching)
- Invest strategically in areas that benefit pupils across all schools
- Respond quickly to local needs without waiting for Local Authority approval

In addition to our day-to-day funding, we also receive a separate type of funding called 'capital', which can only be used for buildings, site safety, and essential maintenance. As a trust, we look across all seven schools to identify where this capital investment is most needed to keep our buildings safe, well-maintained, and fit for learning. Because this funding is limited, we must prioritise carefully and use it wisely as part of our Trust-wide Building and Estates Management Strategy, focusing first on the areas of greatest need.

2. How is this different from a Local Authority Maintained School?

Previously, as a Local Authority Maintained School:

- Funding was provided by the Local Authority, which managed budgets and services for all schools in its area.
- The Local Authority decided how much each school received and often provided central services (e.g., payroll, IT support).
- Schools had less flexibility to make independent financial decisions.

Now, as part of a MAT:

- We have greater autonomy over how we use our funding to meet the needs of our pupils.
- Decisions about spending, staffing, and resources are made within the trust, allowing us to tailor support and invest in areas that directly benefit our school community.
- We still follow national accountability standards and are inspected by Ofsted, just like maintained schools.
- The trust can negotiate better deals for services and resources by working collectively, which can save money and improve quality.

We are also governed by the DfE Academy Trust Handbook, which sets out strict financial, governance, and accountability requirements for all trusts. Each year, we undergo both internal and external financial audits, and these are submitted to the DfE. This provides independent assurance that public funds are being managed properly, transparently, and in line with national expectations.

We believe this model gives us more flexibility to innovate and improve outcomes for all children. If you have any questions or would like more detail, please don't hesitate to contact us.