

The Future of the Toot Hill Academy Trust

1. Currently in education, as in most areas of life, everyone follows success. In education, an Ofsted judgement is critical in how the outside world views the school and its capability and capacity. Now Toot Hill School has secured the official label of 'Outstanding', a range of possibilities opens up to the school that weren't previously available. Nationally only 14% of secondary schools are deemed Outstanding. On latest information, RaiseonLine ranks us in the top 3% of all schools nationally for value-added.
2. Simply put, we must be doing something right. Equally we have a distance to travel if we wish to be viewed as one of the 'great' learning schools with a national and international reputation.
3. A significant element of this future journey would be the development of a chain trust. Essentially this would mean that Toot Hill School would sponsor and support schools who are facing difficulties. Already we are in a position to sponsor the Meden School. Toot Hill School has received approval from the Secretary of State to sponsor the conversion of Meden School to an Academy under a seven-year commitment.
4. To facilitate this and future developments our Trust would need to evolve from its current format. I would like to propose that the Trust converts to a Multi-Academy Group named The Torch Academy Group ('TAG') Trust to facilitate such an enlargement of our remit. The new Trust Group would appoint a Board of Directors to monitor all schools, including Toot Hill School, within the Trust Group.
5. Through the DfE's approval of this development we are demonstrating our capacity to effect school improvement beyond the boundaries of Toot Hill School. If Toot Hill School Academy Trust was to change to a multi-academy group, that extended Trust might in time attach more schools to the group. Any such schools would need to be selected carefully and after due diligence to ensure that this work would further support the Toot Hill community.
6. If the proposed Multi-Academy Trust were to commit to a given school we would have to be certain that we could deliver on our promises of school improvement. We consider our model for school improvement is a very secure one, but as with all models it is only as good as the people involved with delivering it to the school. Any expansion as a multi-academy trust would need to be considered and measured.
7. The governing body of Toot Hill School would retain its current responsibility to set and monitor the strategic direction of the school. Some governors would also be Directors of the Multi-Academy Trust but other governors may wish to limit their scope to the direction of Toot Hill School and its own community.
8. Critically the development of the Torch Academy Group must not harm the standards we have secured at Toot Hill School. Our experience to date with Meden School supports the notion that school-to-school support helps both institutions move forward. Professionally I consider this to be the way forward as I recently explained at the Parents' Forum.
9. The governors would appreciate your views on this proposal.

John Tomasevic
Executive Headteacher