

- Will there be more opportunities for professional development – move up the ladder?
Yes, there is potential for growth and we are keen to develop new AP free schools both at Primary and Secondary. This will open up new opportunities, the MAT is also keen to branch out into Specialist Education and have already expressed an interest in supporting a local Special School which is in Special Measures as well as putting bids in for new Free Special Schools. Cranbury College would be a leader of the AP and Specialist work within the MAT.
- Can we be moved to another school in the MAT?
Only on a secondment basis and if it is something you would be interested in doing.
- Who is ultimately in charge of the MAT?
The Trust Board and the CEO are answerable directly to the DfE.
- Will there be lots of Managers?
As in any large organisation there will be a lot of managers.
- What do you think Cranbury will look like in 10 years, Site, Bigger?
The vision for Cranbury has always been to be a central hub of expertise in the area of SEMH in Reading. We anticipate that this will still be the case, we are aiming for a bigger site and working with the DfE and our MAT partners we would hope to secure bigger and better premises for our Primary School. The aim would be to expand our knowledge and expertise and to open more specialist SEMH provision within Reading and its borders.
- Will there be more opportunities for training?
There is a depth of skills and expertise across the MAT, we would have access to a much broader range of training opportunities within the MAT. Maiden Erlegh is a “Teaching School” and this would enable us to both access and provide training through to our colleagues.
- Will the name change?
No
- Uniform?
This will be a local decision, currently ELT have decided against a uniform.
- Yellow?
Our corporate colours of Black/Grey/Orange and White will remain the same.
- Is there a maximum no of schools in a MAT?
No, but the DfE and the Regional Schools Commissioner have a strategic commitment to manage the size of MATs.
- What is your preferred structure?
To be within a MAT
- Will we be able to offer students a more varied curriculum?
Yes, hopefully our students will be able to access other sites, we will also have access to a wider pool of teachers.
- Can we ‘swap jobs’ for a day across MAT?
Yes
- Inset days – what will they look like?
This will be a decision we will make and based on staff consultation we will continue with the pattern of INSET days.
- Term dates? – will they change?
The Trust Board will set the term dates, as opposed to Reading Borough Council.
- Feedback from teachers who have been through this process is generally negative. Where can we find positives?

This is very true where schools have been forced to academize due to their OFSTED inspection outcomes. Where schools have joined MATs of their own choosing the stories are rather different.

- Are there redundancy packages?
No we are not looking to change the Staffing structure at Cranbury College.
- What are the risks? Weaknesses?
Please see the staff formal consultation document.
- Will we be asked to teach on other sites/partner schools?
If Cranbury takes on responsibility for other AP Academies or Special Schools, then we may ask you to teach in another school but this would only be if you agreed and where interested in doing so.
- Will leave entitlement change to 52 week contracts?
No.
- Will unions still have the same influence?
Yes.
- What is the alternative?
To stay with Reading Borough Council which is still rated “inadequate by Ofsted”. This option would make the on-going viability of Cranbury far more insecure and vulnerable.
- Where are the facts/evidence to say we can’t become something else?
There are two options, stay as a maintained school within RBC or convert to an AP Academy and join a Multi Academy Trust. Schools can no longer become Stand Alone Academy Trusts (SATs). Reading Borough Councils preferred option is for all of its schools to become Academy’s and either join MATs or develop their own MAT.
- Who will get the money we make and will we see any of it?
The MAT will take a 5% top slice of our budget, not our revenue income.
- Who is in charge of employment if we are a MAT?
The MAT will be in charge of employment as RBC are currently in charge of employment
- Will the MAT help to get the right staff?
Working for this MAT will be attractive and it will help us to recruit good quality teachers and non-teaching staff across the College. There are more opportunities available for this type of quality recruitment as part of a MAT.
- What advantage do the MAT get from having us?
Our knowledge, expertise and reputation in the area of SEMH/SEN/’Hard to Reach’ groups; our proven track-record in helping other schools to improve in this area. Our network of contacts and positive relationships within the local education community. Good quality trainers, access to good practice.
- Why do they want us?
The Trust wants to be a community trust; they don’t want to limit themselves exclusively to mainstream education. The CEO feels that to be a true community trust you must have AP and Specialist schools within the Trust – and therefore meet the needs of all young people in the constituency. MET needs our knowledge, expertise, leadership and vision to develop this area of education. We are also a ‘Good’ school working towards ‘Outstanding’, why wouldn’t they want to be aligned with us?
- Do they want to use us?
Yes, they want us to develop practice across their Trust as well as using us to support the AP and Special Schools within the Trust. It’s important to not think of ‘use’ as a pejorative term

in this context. Much of the initial discussion between Cranbury and MET has focused on the notion of 'equal partnership' and parity of status between all schools in the organisation.

- **Who will be in charge of staff structure/HR?**
Staff Structure is overseen and agreed by our Governors. HR is currently run by RBC, this will change to MET being in charge of HR.
- **Who has the overall say?**
There is a scheme of delegation which sets out decision making at all levels of the organisation; MW is currently negotiating what this will look like for Cranbury College as it will be different for mainstream schools and AP/Special. Once this has been agreed it will be shared with staff.
- **Will the Trust overlook SLT?**
AS HT, MW currently reports to the Cranbury Management Committee - this will not change. However, any HT of a maintained school in Reading is appraised by and accountable to the Head of Education for RBC, this would change to be the CEO of MET. Robust accountability is an essential element within the close monitoring of statutory safeguarding and quality control judgements in any educational setting.
- **Staffing?**
Will remain the same unless our budget changes significantly or we fail to make the revenue we need to pay staff salaries. However, this is also the case within our existing agreement with RBC
- **Can they move us/get rid of us etc?**
No, we currently have a Commissioning Agreement with RBC to provide 132 places. We are in the process of negotiating that agreement and I am seeking a commitment of 3-5 years with RBC rather than the existing yearly agreement.
- **What will change?**
Please see the staff consultation document
- **How much freedom will we have?**
We will have more freedom to develop Cranbury as we want to. MET have acknowledged that we have the expertise in the AP space. They also recognise that we've had to develop networks, capacity and revenue within the restrictions of our contract with RBC. We will access to more funds and we will be able to make bids for funds we couldn't access as a maintained school.
- **Will the MAT make sure we have facilities/money?**
Yes.
- **Will we gain anything?**
We will get support, professional development opportunities, expansion opportunities, access to National Leaders of Education, quality training opportunities, access to a full range of subject support; we would be joining an organisation of 700 staff with all the associated benefits of networking opportunities, opportunities to share outstanding practice with colleagues and access to an extensive range of extracurricular opportunities.
- **Will the people on the 'shop floor' actually see a change?**
Yes, a change for the better as we access greater curriculum resources, extra teaching capacity, possibility of new subjects for our students. We should experience a much more streamlined operation as we leave the cumbersome and clunky RBS systems to join a compact, neater, fully functioning and less complex organisation.
- **Will we have loads of complex/SEN kids that should be in a specialist school?**

Currently almost 50% of our intake are complex or SEND who should be in a specialist setting. The opportunity of joining the MAT will enable us to work with them to improve the local Specialist Schools; this, in turn, will support us to ensure that more of our cohort have access to good quality Special Schools. This will enable us to work with our local schools in a more proactive way to reduce the exclusions of students in Reading.

- **Will the MAT just make us?**
Again, the implication here seems to be around the idea that MET are only interested in Cranbury in order to exploit resources/levy remote unsparing corporate power/complete a hostile take-over etc. We would not be in dialogue with any Trust where any of the above was likely to be the case.
- **Where do we get our money from? Respite, Commissioned places etc.**
We are currently commissioned by RBC to deliver 132 places for children at risk of PEX or who have been PEX. The respite and turnaround that we offer to schools is bought directly by schools and this will continue for as long as we have the capacity to offer it.
- **How much per student, how will this compare with the MAT?**
We currently receive £10,000 per place from RBC and a £6000 top up per student within the 100 pre 16 places. For Post 16 we receive £10,000.
- **Will policies/procedures change?**
Some policies might be adopted through MET rather than through RBC. Statutory policy decisions are made by the Management Committee, others are made by ELT and SLT, this may change but will be negotiated through the "Scheme of Delegation" set between the MET and Cranbury College.
- **Who is going to be in charge?**
The Head teacher will remain in charge and will be held to account by the CEO of the Trust and the Chair of the Management Committee, rather than the Head of Education at RBC.
- **What happens if we don't like it?**
There is a system of re-brokering into another Trust if, for any reason, this application doesn't work out.
- **What if they treat us badly?**
We are currently treated badly/with measured indifference by RBC; so, in that sense, things can only improve. We only need to reflect on our difficulties in securing long-term premises over the last 5 years to highlight the ineptitude and lack of foresight on the part of the LA. The key driver for joining a successful, solvent and child-focused MAT is to ensure the long-term future of Cranbury and, therefore, provide on-going pastoral and academic support for young people in Reading
- **What if it doesn't work out?**
Under the current system (nationally), we have to make it work out or we will have to go into another Trust.
- **According to Panorama.... School promised the world but got nothing!!!**
Negotiations and the scheme of delegation are key to operationally and strategically moving the College forward. Our Management Committee are still going through their due diligence; if it isn't going to work then the MC won't agree to it. As a general rule, we need to be open-minded about how we secure our long-term future whilst retaining a healthy scepticism about over-inflated promises or guarantees.
- **What if that happens?**
We are working thoroughly and with caution to ensure that we are protected and the contracts and service level agreements are sound. We will appoint lawyers with expertise in

this area to ensure that we are protected. Again, it is not in the interests of MET to drive down the quality of education for the most vulnerable cohort of young people in Reading. They (MET) are determined to raise standards and support outstanding outcomes in all of their schools.

- Who will be in charge of the curriculum?
The curriculum for our learners will be designed, shaped and delivered by Cranbury College.
- Can they force us to do certain things?
Only if it is laid out in policy/terms of reference/contracts and schemes of delegation. All of which we will work with our legal team to ensure all is in place to best serve Cranbury College and our young people.
- Are we just going to be a business?
We are now! If we don't generate a certain amount of income we can't afford to operate! We currently are generating a very healthy income, which has meant we have been able to retain all our staff whilst other schools are having to make significant cut backs.
- What about the actual education/care?
The education and care will continue to be our responsibility with the support from the Trust. The Trust we are proposing to join is a Teaching School and also has several NLEs(National Leaders of Education). The Trust will be able to support us in our desire to become an outstanding provider of Education. With regard to our care of our students, we are outstanding at this and this will continue.
- Do we get help to choose the MAT or is it just SLT/Governors?
The decision about which MAT to join is solely for the Management Committee (Governors) to make. There are two staff representatives on the MC so I would urge you to discuss any concerns you have with either Sue or Vanessa.
- Student hours – will they expect full time?
Yes, all our students should be offered a full time curriculum, which they are. In very specific situations, some students require a reduced timetable or 1 to 1 tuition because they cannot cope with Full Time. This should be time limited and regularly reviewed by phase leaders – this is an expectation whether or not we are in a MAT.
- Holiday clubs?
Regardless of whether we are in a Trust or not, this is something we have been considering for some time and the Extended Leadership Team are keen to develop holiday clubs in the future.
- Redundancies?
There is no business case for redundancies. The business manager operates a healthy balanced budget and therefore no redundancies are anticipated in the immediate future.
- What if everything goes wrong?
Then we will deal with it in the same way we deal with everything.
- What if we don't join a MAT, will RBC close us?
No, RBC need us and they are committed to commissioning 132 places from us as they do now. We are currently negotiating a 3-5 year commissioning agreement and this would be the same if we went into a MAT or we remained maintained. RBC's strategy is to move all of its schools into MATs. This is also the national agenda.
- Free tea and coffee?
Local decision, our decision and will remain.
- Training from other schools in MAT?

Lots of training opportunities for our staff to access and lots of opportunities for our staff to train others.

- Free training opportunities?

Yes

- Personal development?

There will be opportunities for work shadowing, visits, sharing good practice, moderating, sharing of resources, job shares and we are looking at time limited job swaps or secondments where appropriate.

- Will we be the only PRU?

We are not a PRU, we are an Alternative Provision College and within our portfolio of services we do have a Primary, KS3 and KS4 PRU. The other services we offer as an AP provider are Hospital Teaching Service, Outreach Services, Medical Teaching Service, SEND Complex Commissioned places service, Behaviour Support Team, Post 16 Provision. The MAT we are looking to join have a clear 5/10-year strategy to branch out into AP and Specialist provision. Cranbury College would like to expand and we can only do this if we are part of a Trust that wants AP in its portfolio. The MAT is looking to us to lead on and drive AP within the Trust and within the Reading area.

- Will we have to just train everyone else?

No, we won't JUST have to train everyone else; we will be sharing our expertise and knowledge across schools within the Trust as we currently share our expertise and knowledge with other schools in Reading.

- What will we get?

This is covered in previous answers but in summary:

Long term financial security

Estates strategy

Funding opportunities

Access to wider curriculum subjects for our students

Support from National Leaders of Education in a wide range of subjects

HR Support

Financial Support

- Building?

As we've seen over the last 5 years, RBC have not been able to support us in securing long-term premises. That is despite the fact that they commission us to provide education for children and young people resident in their borough. By joining MET, we cannot guarantee that this situation will change but we can be reasonably sure that it won't get any worse. However, MET have buildings within their estates register that are not currently in use and we would be involved in these discussions.

- Will we ever be together KS1,2,3,4,5?

In an ideal world we would be located on a maximum of 2 sites. But regardless of whether we join a MAT or not, we have to be strategic about where we locate the different stages and how we structure the delivery of teaching and learning. In our settings, safety (for all stakeholders) is paramount.

- Sport?Facilities?Science Lab?IT?More options for students e.g Language, Science, music?

This has been partially covered in previous answers but in simple terms, there will be a far greater range of options for our young people through joining a MAT. Over the last couple of years, we've increasingly seen the benefits of working in partnership with other local schools

(The Wren, Kendrick, The Abbey, UTC, JMA); being part of MET would allow us to extend these opportunities within a sustainable and formalised structure.

- What happens if MAT goes into administration?
There are statutory and legislative mechanisms that would be activated in this event. Financial operations and MAT solvency are scrutinised closely by trustees.
- Will there be any additional inspections for teachers?
Schools within MATs are subject to standard Ofsted inspection protocols.
- Pay and Conditions for new staff?
As now.
- How will affect over job roles?
See previous responses in regard to deployment of staff/training opportunities/secondment
- Pay rises?
Ts and Cs remain as now, supported by formal appraisal systems.
- Workload?
We work hard under our present arrangements; the young people in our care always need and deserve patience, understanding, effort and commitment.
- How does the transfer of assets work? What happens and what's the process?
This is a critical part of the legal and due diligence process (not least of all in terms of identifying who has ownership of existing buildings and land). The picture in Reading is not as straightforward as it might seem and this clearly already has an impact on Cranbury. For example, we run KS5 and 3 from NTA which is on land now owned by Baylis Court Trust (who in turn run RGS) but was originally leased from RBC. This means that currently we pay rent to Baylis Court to run services for RBC on land and in a building that belonged to the council in the first place.
- Is there a conflict of interest with us being a PRU?
No, we will still be commissioned by RBC to provide places for young people who are PEX, those at risk of PEX and other vulnerable groups. Young people attending schools within MET will not have preferential or reserved places for any of our services and we will continue to work openly and transparently with all of our stakeholders.
- Are we still out to help all the kids in Reading?
We are and that is why we exploring every option with regard to securing our long-term future.
- Will we still be "Cranbury College"?
See previous responses. It is not in the interest of MET (or any MAT) to spend valuable resources and time on a pointless rebranding exercise. We are officially recognised as being 'GOOD' at what we do; and this is why MET approached us and not the other way around.
- Are jobs really safe?
There is no business case for redundancies at any level. We have a well-established team providing a 'GOOD' education for some of the most vulnerable young people in the local area. The longer-term picture for national education funding, high-needs resources and the 'Inclusion Agenda' is (understandably) harder to predict. From our own experience, it is clear that more young people are receiving/requiring SEN support, exclusions (FTE and PEX) are rising and mainstream schools are referring students earlier and with greater frequency. All this would suggest that there is going to be plenty of work for us over the next few years.
- Does the MAT we will join have any other AP sector schools/settings?
No.
- What locations does the MAT cover – would we need to travel greater distances?

MET have schools in Bracknell, South Oxfordshire, Wokingham and Reading. There would be no necessity under current planning to travel greater distances.

- Will authorities bus children in from further afield?
This is a very specific question which would only apply if we had a commissioning agreement with the authority in question. This happens in specific cases currently with young people who are taxied to our provisions from neighbouring authorities.
- Uniforms (letter headed paper will that need to change?
We don't have uniforms currently and there are no plans for this to change. Cranbury branding will remain as now.
- How much of our individuality will we maintain?
Responsible autonomy is vitally important for us as an organisation and always has been. We will continue to work in the best interests of our stakeholders with the same levels of support and trust from SLT.
- How much control will we retain?
See previous responses.
- Are dates stated achievable? May 2020?
A realistic timeline needs to be established – we are in the process of formulating this.
- Asbestos – riddled with it at Primary, so will Primary get a new building fit for purpose?
In truth, none of our buildings are fit for purpose but joining MET would potentially provide us with better access to better premises.
- Will key stages be integrated on sites?
See previous responses.
- Will TUPE be permanent or time limited?
Permanent.
- Will the GT pension scheme still be available for non teaching staff? (we will no longer be part of the local government)
We will confirm a definitive answer on this as soon as we can.
- Will LA pay scales remain the same or be re-banded?
To be confirmed. Academies are able to set their own pay-scales.
- What is in it for us (cc) other than leaving RBC?
Please see previous responses.