



Shoreham Village School and The Pioneer Academy



Consultation about whether Shoreham Village School should become an academy as part of The Pioneer Academy

Shoreham Village School is consulting about whether the school should become an academy within The Pioneer Academy.

The consultation runs until Friday 10th May 2024 – please have your say!

If the proposal is taken forward it is anticipated that Shoreham Village School would become an academy on 1st January 2025 or as soon as possible afterwards.

The reasons for the proposal

The ethos of both Shoreham Village School and The Pioneer Academy is that children come first, with learning at the centre of everything.

Joining The Pioneer Academy provides a greater breadth of staff expertise and resilience for Shoreham, and builds capacity across all the schools within the trust. This larger educational family provides opportunities for professional development and developing and sharing good practice for staff across the trust. This collaboration improves classroom practice, and that benefits all of our pupils.

The Pioneer Academy is well established and has a track record of success. It was established by Stewart Fleming Primary School in 2011, and Belvedere Junior School joined in April 2013. It has grown steadily and sensibly and now includes seventeen schools with ourselves potentially joining in January 2025. The Pioneer Academy only includes primary phase schools – 12 primary, 3 junior and 2 infant school currently.

What would happen if Shoreham Village School does join The Pioneer Academy?

If Shoreham Village School does convert to academy status and join The Pioneer Academy, Shoreham Village School would:

- Keep the name 'Shoreham Village School';
- Keep the same school day and the same school uniform;
- Continue to have 15 places in Reception each year;
- Benefit from increased opportunities for staff across The Pioneer Academy to work together to develop and share good practice, undertake staff development, build expertise to support groups of pupils with particular needs, and enhance resilience to staff changes.

One area that will change is:

- The admissions over-subscription criteria for Reception entry would remain as now with the exception that The Pioneer Academy would propose adding a 'children of staff' criteria. This would need to be consulted upon in Autumn 2025, and would – if approved – take effect for Reception entry in September 2027 onwards.

One area that may change in the future is:

- The school holidays at Shoreham Village School may consult in the future to align with those at the other schools within The Pioneer Academy, with the school matching the pattern of the other schools with the autumn term starting immediately after the August bank holiday and including a two-week October half-term.

What is an academy and how is it different?

An academy is an independent state school, funded directly from central government rather than through Kent County Council. An academy has several differences from a community school, including:

- Being responsible for its own admissions policy;
- Being responsible for its land and buildings;
- Having freedom from the requirement to follow the National Curriculum; and
- Being the employer of its staff.

The Pioneer Academy will use its experience to ensure that Shoreham gains the most advantage from being an academy.

The Board of Trustees of The Pioneer Academy is responsible for all the schools within the Trust. School Boards provide local governance, and support and challenge to the Headteacher and leadership team, and include parents and staff. For Shoreham Village School, the School Board would be formed from the current Governing Body.

Where can I find further information? How can I have my say?

More detailed Questions and Answers have been sent out along with this letter and are also available on the Shoreham website (www.shorehamvillageschool.net) or from the school office. Further information about academies is also available on the DfE website (www.education.gov.uk/academies).

You can have your say by:

- Ask any questions via this form: <https://forms.gle/R3KgCfKXK6Cg6tVj8> – Governors would particularly welcome your views about what you think the advantages of joining The Pioneer Academy would be, any concerns that you might have, and any areas that you would welcome further information about.
- Meetings for current or future parents: Tuesday 23rd April 2024 at Shoreham Village School at 9am and 6pm.

Staff at Shoreham and other local stakeholders are also being consulted.

The consultation closes on Friday 10th May 2024. Please have your say!

What happens next?

The Governing Body will consider all responses to the consultation.

If the proposal proceeds, it is anticipated that Shoreham Village School would become an academy and join The Pioneer Academy on 1st January 2025 or as soon as possible afterwards. If the proposal does not proceed, Shoreham Village School would remain a community school within Kent County Council.