

## What is Trust School? Apa itu Sekolah Amanah?

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What is a Trust school?

Trust schools are:

- foundation schools supported by a charitable foundation or "Trust";
- part of the local authority family of schools, funded on exactly the same basis as other local authority maintained schools.
- able to employ their own staff, set their own admission arrangements, and manage their own land and assets.
- supported by the Trust through the appointment of governors to the school's governing body.
- not uniform in nature. The members of the Trust might include education charities, further or higher education institutions, business foundations or community groups, for example. A Trust might work with a single school, a group of local schools or a network of schools across the country. The important thing is what's right for the individual school.
- about building long-term relationships with partners and/or other schools for the purposes of raising standards and for the benefit of all pupils.

It will be for the school's existing governing body to decide whether to acquire a Trust, who the members of that Trust should be, and whether the Trust should appoint the minority or majority of the governing body.

- What does Trust status offer? The government wants all schools to be strong self-confident schools with a distinct ethos, working with parents, children, their local communities and other partners to deliver an excellent education that meets the specific needs of their pupils. A Trust school is simply a foundation school with a foundation that forges a long-term sustainable relationship with external partners to create a new source of dynamism and to help raise standards. We know such partnerships work from the example set by voluntary aided and specialist schools – they've been able to draw enormous energy, drive and expertise from the contribution of their foundations and sponsors to develop their individual character and ethos. The benefits have been clear in the results they have achieved and in their popularity with parents. As part of the family of local authority maintained schools Trust schools will build on, and extend more widely, those elements of system reform that are already working to raise standards in schools. Trusts involving several schools have other benefits too – like being able to share teaching and learning across schools and helping to deliver the new 14-19 entitlement.

The booklet "What Trust Schools Offer" outlines examples of what could be possible, and is available to download at: <http://www.ssatrust.org.uk/trustschools/test/findoutmore/default.aspa>

- Is Trust status just for secondary schools? No. Primary and special schools can also become Trust schools. There are both primary and special schools involved in the Trust school pathfinders.  
Why has the government legislated for Trust schools when it is already possible for schools to move to foundation status?

The law currently allows a Foundation school to acquire a foundation with almost no process surrounding it (like consulting parents, allowing others to comment etc) or any safeguards on what a Trust can and cannot do. The Education and Inspections Act puts in place safeguards around forming and acquiring a Trust. It also allows for the Trust to appoint the majority of the governing body if the school wants it to do so.

- What is the difference between a Trust school and a foundation school? A Trust school is legally a foundation school supported by a charitable foundation that appoints some of its governors.  
A small number of foundation schools with a foundation already exist under education legislation but at present the foundation cannot appoint the majority of the governing body. The Education and Inspections Act puts in place safeguards around forming and acquiring Trusts, and enables schools to choose to allow their Trust to appoint a majority of the governors if they wish.

- What is the difference between an Academy and a Trust School? Academies and Trust schools are two strands in the diverse range of options designed to deliver real improvements in school attainment. Each is designed to work in different circumstances. The Academies programme targets those secondary schools with the lowest levels of attainment and in the most deprived communities. As such they represent a radical solution designed to provide a step change in education in failing schools.

Acquiring a Trust is a way for a range of schools (primary, secondary and special) in different circumstances to raise standards, from those that are currently under-performing to those that are leading the way in the education sector as a whole. There are no specific criteria for which schools can become Trust schools: the decision is one for the governing

body to make.

The level of involvement from business partners differs in Academies and Trust schools:

- Academy sponsors appoint the majority of governors to the governing bodies of their schools. In Trust schools, the Trust can appoint either the minority or majority of governors: the decision is made by the predecessor governing body.

- Academy sponsors contribute £2 million. In the case of Trust schools, the Trust is not expected to make any financial contribution.

What could a Trust look like?

Some organisations that might want get involved as members of a Trust include:

- Universities and FE colleges;
- Educational Charities;
- Business Foundations;
- Community Groups;
- The school's Local Authority
- Other local stakeholders.

Trusts might support a single school, or a group of schools in a particular area or across the country (for example where schools share a specialism). The Trust might be formed by a single member organisation, or a group of organisations coming together for the purpose.

All Trust schools will have to promote good local community and race relations and be bound by the Race Relations Act and the Disability Discrimination Act.

- What's the rationale for businesses to be engaged? Many businesses welcome the opportunity to engage with and raise aspirations in their local community or where appropriate across the nation, sharing expertise and skills with local schools and contributing to policy development. They also welcome engagement with young people who are going to be the employees of the future. A Trust may help to build capacity in a specific subject or skills area through, for example, supporting particular specialisms. Becoming part of a Trust makes it easier to work with a group of schools through a shared and formal framework and governance structure. It provides the opportunity to help build a culture of creativity, innovation and expertise in schools as well as helping to create a distinctive ethos for the school. Businesses also see advantages for the development of their own staff. Involvement in such programmes as Academies and specialist schools has proved popular with many employees and businesses are seeing improvements in staff morale and retention as a result.

- How will the government stop unsuitable organisations forming Trusts? Local authorities will be able to refer plans to acquire a Trust to the Schools Adjudicator if it is clear the school has not consulted properly, or if they are concerned that the acquisition of the Trust would have a negative impact on school standards.

Certain categories of people will not be allowed to be involved in a Trust, including those disqualified under company or charity law and those who have been disqualified from working with children and young people. The Education and Inspections Act gives the Secretary of State a reserve power, in prescribed cases, to remove any charity Trustee, even if the person is not otherwise disqualified, and to appoint charity Trustees.

Beyond these specific restrictions, it will be for individual governing bodies, following consultation, to decide who they want to work with. Schools will need to carefully consider the suitability of their partners before they consult on proposals to become a Trust school.

- Will Trusts profit from their involvement? No. Trusts will be charitable not for profit organisations and will not benefit financially from their involvement with a school or schools.

Is there any funding available to support schools who want to pursue Trust status?

Any primary, secondary or special school that is interested in becoming a Trust school can apply for the 'early adopter' programme by submitting an Expression of Interest form by 28 February 2007. Schools will be eligible for a small amount of funding (up to a maximum of £10,000) to assist with set-up costs that they may incur when going through the process to acquire a Trust.

Schools will also benefit from a high level of support from the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT) and the Youth Sport Trust (YST) as well as having access to a toolkit and model documentation.

Further information and an application form is available to download from the SSAT's dedicated Trust schools website at <http://trustschools.ssatrust.org.uk>

- How would a shared Trust work? A Trust will be able to support more than one school. This could help schools in an

area to work together, or could support a network of schools across the country in developing a particular specialism or ethos and approach.

Schools supported by a shared Trust could continue to have separate governing bodies, but each school would have some governors appointed by the Trust. However, where schools want to acquire a shared Trust which builds on an existing hard federation they can continue to have shared governing body arrangements. It would be possible for schools not already in a hard federation to establish one at the same time as, or shortly after, acquiring their shared Trust. In either case, the shared Trust would support the schools in developing a shared direction, and in rapidly spreading good practice and innovative approaches.

Each school would go through the process to acquire the Trust (including consultation with parents and other local stakeholders) and would decide whether to allow the Trust to appoint a minority or majority of the governors for that school.

- Will schools be forced to acquire Trusts? No. It will be for the governing bodies of individual schools to decide whether to acquire Trusts, although local authorities might wish to consider encouraging Trust status as a way of addressing the needs of poorly performing schools.

Are Trust schools faith schools by the back door?

No. No school can acquire or lose a religious character by becoming a Trust school.

- What freedoms do Trust schools get? Trust schools will benefit from flexibilities similar to those already enjoyed by foundation schools and voluntary aided schools. They will set their own admission arrangements (operating within the law and acting in accordance with the Admissions Code) and employ their staff, while complying with the national School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document. The Trust will hold the land and assets of the school on trust for the duration of its relationship with the school.

- Does Trust status give more power over admissions? Trust schools are subject to the same rules as foundation schools. This means that they set their own admissions arrangements, but they will have to act in accordance with the School Admissions Code and will not be allowed to introduce selection by ability. Trust schools will play their full part in taking hard to place pupils, having fair admissions and working with other schools.

What happens to staff when a school becomes a Trust school?

The staff of a Trust school are employed by the governing body, not the Trust – this is the same position as in other foundation schools. There is no change of employer if a foundation or voluntary aided school becomes a Trust school. Where a community or voluntary controlled school becomes a Trust school, the staff will be protected by TUPE because their employer will change from the local authority to the governing body.

Teaching staff will continue to be employed under the terms of the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

- What difference will being a Trust school make to the school's funding? A Trust school will continue to receive its funding from the local authority on the same basis as other local schools – and funding will be delegated to the governing body, not the Trust. There will be no additional funding from the local authority for a Trust school, and there is no expectation that the Trust will provide the school with additional funding (although of course they will be free to do so if they choose).

- Will the governing body have less control in Trust Schools? The governing body of a Trust school, and not the Trust, will remain responsible for all aspects of the conduct of the school. The Trust and the governing body remain separate entities. Where a Trust appoints governors to a number of schools each school will retain its distinct identity.

- Will there be fewer parents represented on the governing body of a Trust School? No. Parents will continue to make up one third of the governing body. This is the case in all maintained schools, including Trust schools. If the Trust appoints a majority of the governing body there will be fewer elected parent governors. Where this is the case Trust schools will be required to establish a Parent Council with an advisory/consultative role.

The governing bodies of all schools will have a duty to have regard to the views of parents.

- Why would you want a majority of the governors to be appointed by the Trust? A school would benefit from having a majority of governors appointed by its Trust because this would really harness the external expertise and energy of their partners. It would also effectively give the Trust control over all decisions which fall to the governing body, and allow it to take strategic decisions about the direction of the school. This will not be right for every school: it is a decision that each school must make for itself, following consultation.

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