

**Finance & Business  
Services Team  
Academy Conversion  
Support**

## Introduction

For School Leaders to ensure that every learner gets a good education it is imperative that we give schools and academies the necessary support and guidance so they can ensure maximum investment in supporting education. We recognise the changing requirements brought about by the increased numbers of clusters and federations, along of course with both Multi and Single Academy Trusts. We continue to invest in the development of our systems in line with national policy and local issues that impact on the delivery of education.

The Finance & Business Services Academy Support Team are a team of accountancy professionals (CIPFA, ACCA, AAT, CSBM) with extensive knowledge of national and local financial procedures, experience of schools' financial systems and wider School Business Management skills.

We can support you either in school, via phone or electronically, helping you to ensure the most effective use of your resources in order to have the maximum impact on pupil outcomes.

We offer a range of packages enabling you to select the level of support appropriate to your needs and budget.

## Benefits & Features

The team provide a full range of financial management, accounting, business and systems advice to assist educational establishments and Trusts with all aspects of locally managed budgets and financial accounting. We offer an Academy training programme in financial management for governors, school leaders and school finance staff, along with bespoke Business Management support and advice services.

## **Application Support Package**

Going through the application stage to become an academy can be a challenging proposition. This package can be purchased on its own or alongside the MAT Creation & Academy Support Package and/or the Post Conversion Support Package for Academies. The application support package will guide you through the completion of the required application forms, the relevant financial statistics needed to support your application and the schools improvement strategy to the DfE lead officer.

You will be assigned a project lead who will assist you every step of the way in completing your application ready for the headteachers review board.

## **MAT Creation & Academy Conversion Support Package**

Educator Solutions has over 25 years' experience of supporting schools in all aspects of business and financial management, HR consultancy & administration, legal advice and governance and leadership support and advice. We have an unparalleled knowledge of Norfolk schools, both LA maintained and academies, and have worked harmoniously with school governors, leaders and staff throughout a myriad of changes to the educational landscape, in order to give all our children the very best standard of education.

We have had the privilege of supporting every academy conversion in Norfolk, which means we have an unrivalled wealth of experience of the process.

This exciting support package brings together areas of expertise from across the traded services of the Local Authority, all of whom have vast experience in the conversion process.

Our team will be on hand to guide your Governing Board through the conversion process to the creation of your Multi-Academy Trust and beyond, to ensure there is minimal impact on your day-to-day running. We understand the process of converting can be a time of great change and our team will assist in ensuring a smooth and seamless transition.

You will have a dedicated and experienced officer who will act as your Project Manager and will be your first point of contact with any queries you may have.

The Project Manager will ensure that the whole process, and all tasks identified and required, will be completed in an efficient and effective manner, and within the agreed timeframe.

They will also be responsible for liaising with all parties including the DfE, and for the identification of any risks to the timeline, any dependencies, and any required mitigating actions.

### **Post Conversion Support Package**

We understand how difficult it can be for new academies and their administrative and financial staff during the first few months following conversion to academy status. There are a number of key tasks to complete and our experienced team at Educator Solutions are able to offer support with these. As well as giving you the reassurance that everything is up to date the pressure is taken off your team at this very busy time.

We are able to offer support with

- Registration with the appropriate portals and ensuring your published information is accurate and compliant
- Completion of financial returns
- Completion of land and buildings questionnaires
- Completion of the FMGS (financial management and government self-assessment) and production of action plan if necessary
- Review and set up your internal financial controls
- Advise of and set-up systems to ensure you have the documents and information you need for your first audit to hand
- Development a key tasks calendar to aid with future planning
- Train Trust staff to undertake these tasks

## Re-brokered Academy Closure of Accounts

We are excited to be able to offer stand-alone academies or academies that are part of a Multi-Academy Trust a service that closes down your academy accounts. One of the benefits with this service is that we are able to offer not just you but the academy trust who will be taking on your finances an independent, impartial & professional service when calculating your final balances. Our experienced team at Educator Solutions have been reconciling & closing Local Authority school accounts for many years, providing detailed information to academies within the 4 month legal framework upon converting to an academy. We have now extended this to offer a re-brokered service to assist academies when closing their accounts.

Depending on how your accounts are set-up will determine the complexity of the close down. You will be assigned a project lead who will arrange an initial meeting and then provide dedicated time in completing the process.