

FAQ: What Does Joining Matrix Academy Trust Mean for Our School and Families?

1. Why is Uffculme Special School considering joining Matrix Academy Trust?

Matrix Academy Trust is a high-performing multi-academy trust with a strong track record of improving outcomes for pupils, including those in disadvantaged areas. Joining the trust offers access to shared expertise, resources, and professional development opportunities, helping us sustain and enhance the quality of education and support for our pupils.

2. Will the school's ethos and approach to autism change?

No. While we will align with the trust's overarching vision of "Education Without Exception", Uffculme will retain its unique ethos and commitment to the social model of difference. Our SEND-focused approach and personalised support for autistic learners will remain central to everything we do.

3. How will governance change?

The local governing body will continue to exist but will operate under a **Scheme of Delegation** set by the trust board. The trust board is the legal entity responsible for strategic direction, financial oversight, and accountability. Local governors will still represent parent voices and the school community.

4. What does this mean for teaching and curriculum?

Matrix uses an evidence-informed curriculum approach. For Uffculme, this means:

- Continued personalised learning for pupils with autism.
- Access to trust-wide curriculum expertise and resources.
- Opportunities for staff to collaborate with specialists across the trust.

5. Will there be changes to SEND provision?

Matrix Academy Trust has a statutory SEND policy and expects each school to publish its own SEND Information Report. The trust promotes early identification, inclusive practice, and partnership with parents. Uffculme will keep its tailored provision for autistic pupils and strengthen it through trust-wide support and training.

6. How will communication with parents be affected?

Uffculme already uses Class Dojo, Evidence for Learning, and home-school diaries to keep parents informed and engaged. These will continue as our primary communication channels. Joining Matrix Academy Trust will add extra options, such as the Matrix Parent App, which offers:

- Push notifications and updates.
- Access to calendars, attendance, and newsfeeds.
- A paperless, streamlined way to stay informed.

This means parents will have more ways to stay connected, without losing the familiar systems that work well for our community.

7. Will staff and leadership change?

Current staff will transfer employment from the local authority to Matrix Academy Trust under TUPE regulations. The headteacher and leadership team will remain in place, supported by trust-wide leadership development.

8. Will there be financial implications for parents?

No. Education remains free. Joining the trust allows the school to access economies of scale and central services, which can improve efficiency and free up resources for teaching and learning.

9. How will safeguarding and wellbeing be managed?

Matrix places safeguarding and wellbeing at the heart of its work. Policies will align with trust standards, and staff will receive additional training and support.

10. What opportunities will this bring for pupils?

- Enhanced enrichment activities (e.g., Duke of Edinburgh, careers guidance).
- Access to wider networks for post-16 pathways.
- Continued focus on life skills and independence for autistic learners

11. How can parents share their views or ask questions?

We will hold consultation meetings and have set up the following email contact for queries:

academy@uffculme.bham.sch.uk