



Services for schools, owned by schools

“Don’t pretend academies are going away”

New services launched to support schools with academy conversion

Over 50 head teachers and chairs of governing bodies came together at an event in East London last week to hear from former Downing Street adviser and academy expert [Robert Hill](#).

The event, hosted by [Newham Partnership Working \(NPW\)](#), also launched the NPW MAT PACK, a suite of services from in-house experts and experienced partners to support schools with their academy conversion.

NPW CEO Anna Crispin commented: “We are delighted to welcome Mr Hill here this evening to help local school leaders gain deeper understanding of the conversion process. Academy conversion is an inevitable path for many schools so we are delighted with the amount of interest, proactivity and engagement being shown by schools. We are happy to be working with a range of highly reputable partners to provide full academy conversion support and NPW stands ready to work with schools throughout their entire conversion process and beyond.”

During his speech, Hill, Visiting Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Education and Professional Studies at Kings College London, impressed on school leaders how, despite changes to plans to enforce academisation, academies remained the Government’s favoured approach for the future of education.

Hill warned schools “not to pretend that academies are going away, because I think that is still unlikely”.

Stating, “I’m not an advocate or champion, I’m here to explain”, Hill began the discussion by briefly laying out the current government position on academy conversion.

Drawing upon his past experience in developing academy policy for government, Hill reassured school leaders that conversion can work and could work for them.

His top tips included:

- Sharing academisation at every level: governors, staff, pupils, parents and the local community
- Planning and foresight as key at every stage of the conversion process
- Not seeing conversion as an end point but, post-conversion, a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) should expect to grow further to nurture and develop staff and the wider school community.

Hill focussed on positive ways of developing a Multi-Academy Trust, emphasising: “I would say the key benefit of MAT’s is that they basically enable us to develop new talent for leadership and new, more effective, new models of governance. I think the best MAT’s are freeing school leaders up from grot and grime in order to focus on teaching and learning.”

East Ham MP and member of the education select committee, Stephen Timms, corroborated this when he spoke with NPW in May: “We are certainly not waving goodbye to [academies], indeed the government has made it clear it still would like every school to become an academy by 2022 but it isn’t going to compel schools to become academies by 2022.”

#ENDS#

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About NPW

NPW is a mutual organisation, formed by Newham Schools, providing a legal entity to run and commission education support services.

NPW is a respected, high quality provider of professional support services. NPW's experienced staff work in collaboration, providing bespoke solutions that free up leadership time, allowing schools to concentrate on delivering excellent outcomes for their pupils.

Our service directory offers a comprehensive suite of packages and solutions to meet schools' needs in the areas of HR, ICT, Governance, Management and the commissioning of education services supporting School Improvement.

Our approach is underpinned by an emphasis and commitment to the children and young people in the schools, academies and colleges we work with, together we aim to enhance their learning.

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