

Question #	Question	Response
1	I would like to understand SEN needs provision and how this would be considered for admissions	As per the DfE Admissions Code and as documented in the AWCA Admissions Policy, any child with an EHCP in which AWCA is the named school will be offered a place on roll. With regards to specific SEND provision, the school will have a named SENDCO as a member of the senior leadership team who will lead the SEND provision at the school. We are currently looking at the statements within the 2026 White Paper, <i>Every child achieving and thriving</i> , to understand the Government's expectations of SEND provision over the next 5 years.
2	What are the employment possibilities?	We will be advertising for a Headteacher in April 2026 to start in January 2027. From March 2027 we will be advertising for both teaching and non-teaching positions.
3	Will 'community use' of facilities be available?	Yes, we are currently discussing with the LA an appropriate community use agreement to ensure that hire fees for the different facilities are reasonable to encourage take up
4	Will an additional open evening be held in 2027 once the school has been built?	Yes, as soon as we are able to host visits on site we will do so. We want to offer tours within the first few weeks of having the keys before planning further open evenings and transition events for the first cohort of pupils and their parents.
5	What is the spiritual focus of the school and if there is any admission criteria for children that regularly worship that live outside of the local area?	The school will open with a Christian ethos which encourages pupils to live life to the full and seek for that which is good, that which is right and that which is true. We are lucky enough to have a chapel integrated into the building and will be exploring maintaining a chaplaincy position in the school. We will not be having a faith admission criteria, AWCA has been designed to be a school for the whole community and therefore the Admissions Policy represents this view.
6	The school should offer places to children across Huntingdonshire on religious grounds	We want the school to be a school for the local community. It is important to us and the diocese that the local community have priority of entry.
7	Will there be a swimming pool?	No, the DfE build specification does not extend to a swimming pool.
8	Can we visit the school when it is built?	Yes, these opportunities will be available from May 2027 at the latest
9	Can the uniform style be reconsidered in favour of a swetashirt and polo shirt?	No, we will have the highest expectations for our secondary pupils and believe that the chosen approach to uniform supports this ambition. Much of the uniform can be bought at local supermarkets and our supplier is prioritising keeping costs low for the other items.
10	Concerns are raised for this school if it will be able to deliver? Will the Government need to be involved?	We are confident in our budget forecasts that AWCA will be successfully delivered. The DfE are involved at every stage of pre-opening and once open the school will be monitored and regulated by the DfE.
11	Make the community part of this new adventure	This is our ambition, once the Headteacher is appointed in the first half of the Summer term 2026 there will be more opportunities to engage with the future direction of the school.
12	I'm hoping for an excellent school with extremely high standards of conduct	This matches our expectations for the school and its pupils. Good conduct and attentiveness in class is a core part of our ambition for the school and we will be looking for a Headteacher and staff group that support this view.
13	What mechanisms does DEMAT actually have to monitor whether headteachers are engaging effectively with their parent community?	We are currently reforming our governance structures across the Trust and establishing Community Councils in every school. These Councils report directly to the Trust Board on parental engagement activities such as the outcomes of parent surveys and forums, as well as supporting the Headteachers on understanding and meeting the needs of their local community. Currently, this is undertaken by the Headteachers and reviewed by the LGB.
14	What confidence can parents have in DEMAT's ability to build leadership at a brand-new secondary from scratch?	Parents can be confident in our ability to build leadership at a new secondary school. We have already received interest from potential candidates and members of the senior team have worked in, led, and recruited to secondary leadership roles. This is an exciting career opportunity for many and we aim to build upon this to recruit the best team for the future AWCA pupils.
15	DEMAT currently has ~39 primary schools across Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk Demat — and they are a primary-only trust. This is DEMAT'S first secondary. That's a genuinely material risk. Managing subject specialists, GCSEs, sixth form, pastoral complexity at adolescence, and Progress 8 accountability are all categorically different from primary. What is the plan to deliver stable leadership and teaching?	We will be appointing a specialist team of secondary teachers and leaders who will have the necessary expertise to ensure leadership and teaching ability are stable.
16	Who will be the headteacher? What is their secondary headship track record, and have they opened a new school before?	As discussed at the s10 consultation evening, we will be advertising for and appointing a Headteacher during the first half of the Summer term 2026. As answered at the s10 evening, once appointed we will be confirming the successful candidates name and scheduling 'meet the Headteacher' opportunities in the Summer term to hear more about specific curriculum and operational plans.
17	What secondary specialists does DEMAT have at trust leadership level — Director of Secondary Education, for instance? Or is this being led by primary leaders adapting?	The Chief Executive at DEMAT is an experienced secondary school teacher, Headteacher, and Executive Headteacher. The DEMAT Director of Education has significant secondary teaching experience, and one Trustee has secondary leadership experience.
18	Which MATs or secondary schools is DEMAT drawing on for expertise and mentoring in this venture?	We are engaging with the Church of England Secondary Leaders network as part of our peer support programme, enabling us to work alongside and test our plans with current leaders.
19	What is the planned curriculum model — knowledge-rich, broad and balanced? Will all students study a full Ebacc suite (English, maths, sciences, humanities, languages)?	The curriculum will meet the requirements of the National Curriculum as set out in the 2025 Curriculum Review. All pupils will study a full breadth of subjects in KS3 before specialising in their GCSE option. EBacc will not exist in 2027 but the options blocking will ensure all pupils meet the new requirements of the revised Progress 8 specification.
20	What is the sixth form strategy — will AWCA have one, and if not, what post-16 pathways are being planned for students?	As discussed at the s10 consultation evening, AWCA will not be opening with a sixth form. Land is available in the future to build a sixth form block but this is not on the agenda in the short or medium term. Post 16 pathways from 2032 will align with legislation and all local providers will be invited to talk to the year 11s about potential direction of study.
21	How will you ensure subject specialist teachers (e.g. modern languages, sciences, arts) can be recruited in a new school in a new development, before the school has a reputation?	This is a great career opportunity for teachers and leaders. We are confident in the opportunity and in the Trust's reputation to attract a field for each position.
22	What trips are planned in year one?	We cannot answer this question over 18 months ahead of opening. It is a decision for the Headteacher and their team as they build the curriculum and consider what trips are relevant and add value.
23	What extracurricular activity will be available from day one?	It is unlikely that any extra curricular clubs will run on the first day of the new school. We do aim to have wrap-around provision in place for those that need it from day 1. In most secondary schools extra curricular provision begins in week 2. The exact clubs cannot be determined now, it is for the Headteacher and their team to determine in their planning.
24	Are all facilities due to open at the same time, or will there be ongoing building works to complete the school and surrounding environment? How will we be updated?	As discussed at the s10 consultation evening, all facilities are due to be completed in March 2027. Regular updates are posted on the DEMAT website, Urban & Civic's website, and Morgan Sindall's website.

25	The school opens at 4 forms of entry (600 pupils) and is designed to expand to 8 forms (1,200) Alconbury Weald — in Year 1 you'll have roughly 120 Year 7s. How will you provide a full and enriching secondary experience — clubs, sports, arts, pastoral depth — with a very small initial cohort and a smaller staff base?	There will be smaller staff group and total cohort than in a full secondary school with all year groups however, the staff numbers will be in proportion to the number of pupils, probably more generous in the initial few years ensuring that all subjects can be taught and that the secondary experience is possible.
26	What is the contingency if recruitment is slower than expected and the school is financially unviable in its early years?	As the school grows to capacity, if any deficit is recorded then this is planned to be absorbed by the free reserves held at Trust level
27	What feeder schools will be included within the AWCA catchment?	As documented in the Admissions Policy, Ermine Street Church Academy extending to other schools on the development as and when they open in future years.
28	What happens to enrolled students if AWCA struggles and needs to be taken over or merged?	In the extremely unlikely event that AWCA is rebrokered to another Trust then the pupils will remain on roll. In the even unlikelier event of a merger then pupils of both schools would be taught on a single site. This response would be the same for any school currently open.
29	Ofsted's 2017 review found that DEMAT's rapid growth from one school to 18 led to "weaknesses in the diligence process" and "a lack of central capacity" Schools Week — what structural changes have been made to ensure that doesn't recur as you take on a different phase of education?	In the 9 years since 2017 the Trust has undergone significant changes with KS2 outcomes increasing from 42% to 66%, RWM combined, ofsted judgements increasing from 48% good or better to 98% good or better, and the Trust was awarded MAT of the Year at the National Schools Awards in 2024. The biggest difference between 2017 and 2026 is that the Trust now has a complete central team provided a full range of educational and business support in a scalable model, the impact of which can be seen in the Trust wide improvements in both educational outcomes and financial sustainability. The integration of AWCA has been planned in to our growth strategy across each separate function.
30	How will DEMAT ensure this secondary school isn't under-resourced by the demands of managing 39 primaries simultaneously?	See above
31	What specific transition support will pupils from Ermine Street receive — given many will have had all their primary years in a school that itself was still developing?	Transition support for all pupils will be focussed on preparing pupils for starting at a secondary school where many of the routines will differ from those in a primary school setting. This will include but is not limited to social preparation to ready the pupils for joining with others who did not attend the same primary setting, introductory lessons, reviewing primary curriculum studied to understand what content has been covered, and engagement with families.
32	Will Year 6 attainment data from DEMAT primaries be used to diagnose and address learning gaps before Year 7?	Year 6 data from all primaries, not just DEMAT primaries, will be used to diagnose and address learning gaps.
33	Will AWCA be the only secondary option for Alconbury Weald residents,	All secondary schools in the country are available for parents to choose. AWCA is the only secondary school with a catchment area of Alconbury Weald.
34	Will transport to other schools remain in place for children with siblings at current catchment schools like Sawtry?	This is a question for the local authority. We are not the decision makers for home to school transport
35	Who is the local governing body and what secondary education expertise do they bring?	The governance structure for the school will be determined and appointed during 2027 ready for September 2027 and will include the necessary skills and experience to support the school.
36	How will parents be able to hold the trust accountable — is there a parent board representative, and what escalation routes exist beyond school level to DEMAT central?	The Trust and the school are the same organisation, however through the Community Council run parent forums specific feedback is seen directly by Trustees through the governance pathways. If there is a specific concern then the Complaint Policy should be followed.
37	How will updates be provided between now and October application so parents can take an informed view of whether mitigation will be required (e.g. house moves)?	As discussed at the consultation evening, regular updates will be made available on the AWCA pages of the DEMAT website and through the mailing lists which interested parties have signed up to. As previously highlighted, events to meet the Headteacher and hear about specific plans for the school will take place after their appointment in the second half of the 2026 Summer term.