

4<sup>th</sup> March, 2016

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to notify you that New York Primary School has been approached by the Department of Education to form a Multi-Academy Trust with our neighbouring Primary Schools: *Waterville, Collingwood, Percy Main and Riverside*.

The Governing Bodies of all of the 5 Primary Schools agreed to submit an Expression of Interest and, subsequently, an 'Application to Convert to Academy Status' has been submitted to the DfE.

New York Primary School feels that conversion to a Multi Academy Trust will formalise our partnership further to strengthen and increase the capacity of all our schools. We will remain as New York Primary School and keep our uniform and own identity but the 5 schools will work together to achieve our vision. Our aim is to protect the current provision that is available to our children and the collaborative working between the 5 schools.

Previously academies have tended to replace schools which have poor results or otherwise needed to improve. Under the Academies Act 2010, all schools are able to become academies. As New York Primary School is an 'Outstanding' school (OFSTED May 2013) we can apply without a sponsor.

All our staff will remain with us and we will continue to work closely with all our families and children.

#### **What are the benefits?**

- ✓ Academies are independent of the Local Authority Control. This means that academies have more freedom about how they conduct themselves
- ✓ Academies receive their funding directly from the Department of Education. This means that Academies receive more funding because none is retained by the Local Authority for the provision of central services
- ✓ Academies have more freedom over the curriculum taught – this means that academies do not need to teach parts of the National Curriculum which they do not consider is appropriate for their pupils
- ✓ Academies are companies and so have more freedom to undertake innovative projects, such as setting up and utilising trading subsidiaries

#### **Are there any disadvantages of becoming an academy?**

- Academies would be directly liable for matters such as insurance, employment liabilities, pensions, health and safety, and, property maintenance. However, as mentioned above, academies receive more funding from central government to help them meet these additional costs.

In summary, our proposal to set up a Multi-Academy Trust is to maintain and strengthen our partnerships and continue making a difference to our families. We are not proposing to develop or

deliver anything new therefore there will be no impact on any other primary school in North Tyneside.

Our aim is to protect the current provision that is available to our children and the collaborative working between the five successful schools. We want to continue to be an Outstanding school. We therefore do not intend to change current aspects significantly, except in ways which we think will improve the school even more. For our pupils, it is unlikely that they will see much, if any, change in their day to day school lives. Academies do have the power to vary their curriculums and vary the length of the school day, however, we do not intend to take any such steps at this stage and would engage with parents/carers, staff and pupils if we did ever intend to make such changes in the future.

We will keep you informed of progress and school will undertake a Consultation Process with parents in due course. However, if you have any immediate questions, please do not hesitate to contact myself or the Chair of Governors.

There is also more information about academies on the DfE website:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/academies>

Yours sincerely,

**Mrs J Shaw**

Acting Headteacher