

**Diptford**C of E Primary **Harbertonford**C of E Primary **Landscope**C of E Primary **Stoke Gabriel** Primary

SENT VIA EMAIL through the School Administrators to Parents, Carers and Staff of Totnes Federation of Village Schools.

15<sup>th</sup> December 2015

Dear Parents, Carers and Staff,

The Governors of the Totnes Federation of Village Schools have been investigating whether the 4 schools in the Federation should become an academy, forming a Multi Academy Trust, along with two similar sized schools in the Newton and Teign Federation. During this process, the Governors have:

- Been in regular discussion with the Department for Education
- Visited other academy schools to see the benefits, gaining first-hand accounts of the costs and benefits of becoming an academy
- Worked closely with the Diocese to seek their views and ensure any proposed changes would protect those schools in our Federation which are Church schools
- Worked with an independent education consultant to ensure impartial advice was received
- Sought advice from the Local Education Authority, including their Finance and HR teams
- Consulted with Trade Union representatives
- Gathered and considered views of parents during the group and individual school consultation meetings
- Considered the views of parents who have emailed their thoughts and opinions via the specific consultation email account as well as those sent in to the school or the Clerk to Governors
- Listened to and considered the views of staff and Trade Unions, conducting staff consultation meetings
- Attended training that informed Governors about school academies
- Sought legal advice on becoming an academy
- Sought independent financial advice on the costs and benefits to schools on becoming an academy

Over the past 9 months, the Governors have dedicated a considerable amount of time, looking in detail into the pros and cons of converting into an Academy including holding a specific meeting with all interested parties including Governors from the two federations, the Diocese of Exeter, legal and finance representatives, and an independent Education consultant.

Taking into consideration all the views of the people and organisations above and having reviewed all the documents and information made available to them, the Governors of the Totnes Federation of Village Schools have unanimously agreed that each of the four schools convert to become Academy schools.

The decision has been taken by the Governors to ensure the sustainability of our village schools and to enable our ethos, values and unique school identities to be maintained.

This decision was taken at an extra ordinary Totnes Federation Governors meeting, held on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2015 specifically held to review the findings of the consultation.

The Governors of the Newton and Teign Federation also unanimously agreed during their Governors meeting on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2015 that their two schools convert to become academies and join us in forming a Multi-Academy Trust.

The Governors have still to receive a written letter giving final consent from the Exeter Diocese Standards, Organisation and Governance Group. This letter is required before the Department for Education will issue our Academy Orders.

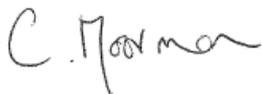
Subject to the Academy Orders being granted, from January 2016, there will be further consultation with Trade Union Representatives to discuss the transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) with reference to the staff employment being transferred from the Local Authority to the Multi Academy Trust.

Should the Academy Orders be granted, the conversion will take place during the Spring term, before the end of the financial year.

The Academy will ensure the quality of education in our small schools continues to be developed for the benefit of our children, those currently in our schools and those attending in the future.

I look forward to reporting further in the New Year.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'C. Moorman'.

Claire Moorman

Cc The Governing body of Newton and Teign Federation

The Parish Councils of Harbertonford, Harberton, Diptford, Stoke Gabriel and Landscope.