



LETTER TO PARENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS – ACADEMISATION

3rd March 2017

Dear Parents and Stakeholders,

As some of you may be aware from the governor newsletters, over the past year St Stephen's School has been reviewing its future status with regard to whether it should become an academy, and if so which multi-academy trust (MAT) it should join. I am now writing to advise you of the proposals that were agreed at the meeting of the Governing Body on 27 February 2017.

During the past year, the governing body has been reviewing the various academy models available in our geographic area to determine the benefits and risks of these and what they would mean for our school. There is a set of FAQs attached to this letter. I hope these will provide greater clarity for you in terms of the kind of issues we have been considering.

The first question the governing body considered was whether the time was right for us to make a decision on becoming an academy. The overwhelming conclusion was that we should apply to convert to academy status this academic year, for the following reasons:

- We are already seeing a reduction in local authority services as other schools convert to academies and the local authority consequently receives reduced funding. This situation is not sustainable for much longer for us going forwards.
- By becoming part of a Multi-Academy Trust, which would be a requirement as an academy, we would be part of a larger organisation which potentially offers a range of benefits including shared services, economies of scale, more formal partnership opportunities with other schools for our children and for staff development. These are important considerations for us as revenues decline and costs continue to rise.

The second question was which Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) we should join. The two options selected for consideration, as they meet most of our criteria, were the Diocesan Bath and Wells MAT and the Sulis Minerva Trust, which is currently in the process of being established in Bath. The overwhelming proposal agreed was to apply to the Bath and Wells MAT for the following reasons:

- As a church school, this MAT is the one that we naturally align with.
- The MAT is already established, with a sound infrastructure and financial structure, and it is starting to build a solid track record of school improvement.
- In terms of value for money this MAT provides a greater range of services than we currently receive from the local authority and those that the Sulis Minerva Trust proposes to provide.

As you will appreciate, such huge decisions are a challenge for the governing body and we can assure



Richmond Place, Lansdown, Bath, BA1 5PZ
Telephone: 01225 311665
Email: ststephens_pri@bathnes.gov.uk
www.st-stephens.bathnes.sch.uk

you that we have spent a tremendous amount of time attending meetings and presentations, and researching and analysing data, prior to deciding our proposals. We feel confident that these decisions will enable our school to retain its identity and distinctiveness and continue its traditions of providing a high quality of rounded education for our children in a family environment. However, in joining a Multi-Academy Trust we also anticipate the benefits of being part of a larger organisation.

We hope that you will support the governing body in these decisions. If you require any further clarification, wish to ask any questions or to register your concerns about these proposals, please do send an email to: Kate_Seeley@st-stephens.bathnes.sch.uk by 31st March 2017.

With kind regards,

Kate Seeley

Chair of Governors

St Stephen's CEVA Primary School

Richmond Place

Bath BA1 5PZ

Andy Bowman

Head Teacher

St Stephen's CEVA Primary School

Richmond Place

Bath BA1 5PZ

