

# CANON POPHAM CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VA) PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Church Balk, Edenthorpe, Doncaster. DN3 2PP

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Headteacher: Mrs A. Navas

Chair of Governors: Mr D. Milnes



Wednesday 24th January 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

## **Proposed conversion of Canon Popham C E Primary and Nursery School to Academy Status**

As you may have heard in the press, over recent times there have been announcements from HM Government and the Department for Education that they desire all schools in England to convert to academy status.

The Canon Popham Governing Body has been thinking about becoming an academy for a number of years, and has decided that now is the right time to begin the journey towards academy status. This will be a significant development in the life of our school community, but the opinion of the Governors is that with all the changes in the world of education, becoming an academy will secure the best future for our school. We think that teaching and learning will improve; with the school being able to benefit from additional training and support provided through the academy trust and that will mean that the children will be able to access the very best education that they can and achieve all that they are capable of. If we choose to become an academy now it also means that we will be able to keep our strong Christian ethos, which we know means a great deal to our families and community.

At a recent governors meeting the Governing Body passed a resolution to convert to academy status and has made an application to do so with the Department for Education. The Governing Body is proposing to join the Diocese of Sheffield Academies Trust (DSAT), an academy trust with 10 other schools, set up by the Diocese of Sheffield. Governors have met with DSAT Directors and the DSAT Board were pleased to talk about Canon Popham joining the trust.

The Governing Body discussed many positive benefits in approaching DSAT as an academy partner, including:

- DSAT's proven track record of school improvement, with many of the existing trust schools already achieving secure 'good' or 'outstanding' OFSTED judgements.
- Plenty of capacity and experience within the DSAT Board and partner schools to encourage and support the drive towards educational excellence.
- The 'light touch' approach of DSAT Directors, leaving many important powers and decisions within the Canon Popham Governing Body.
- A lower than average 'Central Contribution' through the funding agreement leaving more money in the school's budget.
- The uncompromising commitment of the DSAT Board to shape the Trust's activities around distinctive Christian values, whilst seeking to retain and encourage the Christian ethos within its Church of England schools.
- The commitment of the DSAT Board to continuing to support each school's unique character and to encourage it to continue to work effectively with other schools within its own locality, as well as with other DSAT schools.



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Life as an academy will not look or feel very different day to day. For example, the Governing body are not planning to change the dates of school holidays or the timings of the school day. We will not be changing the school uniform either, at least for the time being. If and when we change the school name to reflect academy status then we might have a slightly altered school badge but this would be phased in over a long period of time. No families would be required to buy new school uniform before the old uniform needed to be replaced. In addition, we would continue to work with the other schools in our area, including Hungerhill, in the same way as we have always done, for the benefit of all the children in our local community.

We would like to invite parents, guardians and others who have an interest in the school to a special meeting to be held at the school at 6pm on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February. We will discuss our plans for academy conversion and there will be the opportunity for anyone present to comment on the Governing Body's proposals. We will also have the opportunity to meet with and hear from Andrew Waldron, the CEO of DSAT.

I look forward to seeing you at the meeting on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February at 6pm.

Yours faithfully,

Alison Navas  
Head teacher

