

**St. Philip's CE VC Primary School**  
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Headteacher: Andy Joy



Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2016

Dear Parents/Carers,

### **Conversion to academy status**

As communicated in a newsletter at the end of January, the governing body have been investigating the possibilities and opportunities afforded by converting to an academy status.

On Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> April, the Governing Body felt that the time was right to take the next step towards becoming an academy and voted to commence the process and begin consultation on becoming a founder member of the Palladian Academy Trust (PAT). This new Multi Academy Trust will be cross phase and is being set up by Ralph Allen School. St Philip's CEVC Primary School will be a founder member of the Trust along with Ralph Allen School, Combe Down CEVC Primary School, Widcombe Infants School, Widcombe CEVA Junior School, St. Martin's Garden Primary School, Oldfield Park Junior School and Oldfield Park Infant School.

This is a decision that has been taken after much research, discussion and fact finding by the Governors as well as consideration of the many issues facing education today. Being a member of the Trust and working in a formal partnership with these other local schools will bring a number of key benefits for our children and school which are detailed below:

- Shared teaching and learning expertise across all schools in the Trust
- Genuine collaboration enabling more focussed and structured support to be given where needed
- Opportunities to access specialist facilities and teaching in areas such as science, technology and sport
- Improved transition for Year 6 pupils (whether or not they move on to Ralph Allen)
- Opportunities for effective staff professional development
- Creation of economies of scale to release funding to be focussed on educational needs as well as capital investment in our site
- Support in procuring services such as site management, school meals, finance, health & safety etc; many of these services are no longer being provided by the Local Authority or will disappear in the near future.

The board of governors want to take responsibility in shaping our future to ensure that any change for St Philip's CEVC Primary School, is a change that will be beneficial to our entire school community and the recent government announcement that they require every school to become an academy by 2022 adds weight to this. Whilst there are many different academy models, there are an increasing number of schools working together with local secondary schools. We feel that this local mix of, like-minded, infant, junior, primary, secondary, church and non-church schools, provides a rich resource for mutual challenge and support and collaborative working that will facilitate St Philip's, and indeed all the schools, moving from strength to strength. The Diocese of Bath & Wells is fully supportive of this change and the school will remain a Church of England School. Whilst there will be some changes these will

primarily be 'behind the scenes' and you will probably notice very little change. The unique feel and ethos of which Ofsted and SIAMS spoke so highly, will remain. In addition, the Headteacher remains responsible for the day-to-day running of the school. The school will retain the board of governors including parent governors who we feel bring an invaluable dimension to our decision making process. St Philip's will continue to collaborate and work with other schools and partnerships with whom we already have strong links - even if they are not part of the Palladian Academy Trust. We believe that working closely with local schools will enable us to continue to offer the best possible experience of primary education for the children.

Please find attached a Consultation document which includes some Frequently Asked Questions that outlines the school's proposals. Should you wish to make any comment please email [matconsultation@stphilips-school.org](mailto:matconsultation@stphilips-school.org) or complete and return the form on the consultation document. There is a FAQ tab on the school website to which we will add any other questions raised.

The consultation period lasts three weeks from today Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> April until noon on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

We will be holding a consultation session on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30pm where the board of governors will endeavour to answer questions you may have and listen to issues you may wish to raise for consideration. In addition, we will be circulating a consultation document to all parents/carers to enable you to respond by email or response form.

With thanks for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Clive Hall  
Chair of Governors

Andy Joy  
Headteacher