

Deansfield Primary School

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Chair of Governors Hugh Lewis



23rd May 2016

Dear parents and carers

We are writing to update you on the academy process at Deansfield Primary School along with the other schools in the Compass Partnership. As reported in the Compass Newsletter, all schools have received their academy orders and are therefore in the process of ensuring the proposal to convert is both viable and right for each school. The Academy Order is just the start of the process that can take up to five months to complete before a decision to sign a final agreement is taken. This is a very important stage and will ensure any future organisation is built upon shared principles and aspirations.

We are sure that you will be aware of the announcement made by the Secretary of State, Nicky Morgan, that the proposal to force all schools to convert to academies has now been removed from the White Paper and that this would no longer feature in future plans. Governors at Deansfield met recently to consider whether this announcement would have any bearing on their previous decision to apply for conversion and to ensure that any decision was based on a clearly agreed rationale that was best for children and their school. Having reviewed the announcement and the new White Paper, Governors concluded that very little has changed. **Please see an extract from the DFE press release.**

'Since launching our proposals in the [education white paper](#), the government has listened to feedback from MPs, teachers, school leaders and parents.

It is clear from those conversations that the impact academies have in transforming young people's life chances is widely accepted and that more and more schools are keen to embrace academy status.

As a result of these conversations, the government has decided, **while reaffirming our continued determination to see all schools to become academies in the next 6 years**, that it is not necessary to bring legislation to bring about blanket conversion of all schools to achieve this goal.

The government will continue to require underperforming schools to convert to academy status where they can benefit from the support of a strong sponsor. One hundred and four directive academy orders have already been issued to underperforming schools in the last month since the new legislation came into force.

We will also continue to support 'good' schools to convert and to take the lead in supporting other schools as part of [multi-academy trusts](#). In the last monthly figures 227 schools put in applications to convert, the highest monthly figure since the programme began, and we expect this rate to increase.' **taken from DFE press release.**

The Government remains firmly committed to all schools becoming academies in England and this was emphasised in the Queen's Speech on 18th May 2016. With the direction of travel remaining unchanged, all schools in London will face real term cuts in the budgets of approximately 16% over the next four years coupled with a cut to the Educational Services Grant that is paid directly to councils for certain central services. The government is also committed to removing responsibility for school improvement away from Local Authorities and placing this with schools. There is absolutely no doubt that schools will struggle significantly to survive unless they work closely to make savings.

We fully understand that, for some, this is a very difficult decision to grapple with. However, we know that our schools have benefitted hugely from partnership working and have been able to provide the very



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best for children and teachers.

Governors have met to consider recent announcements and the impact they may have for our school. We have concluded that for Deansfield the key changes in the educational landscape that led us to take the decision to consult on conversion remain the same and therefore Governors have voted unanimously to continue to proceed with this.

Governors and school leaders have not taken the decision lightly. They are absolutely certain however, that they are best placed to shape the future of the School and to create an organisation and structure that preserves its independence. They have not been influenced by political dogma but have been solely concerned to take the necessary immediate steps however difficult to maintain the high standards achieved over recent years and to ensure the continued wellbeing of the children who attend Deansfield.

If you wish to have further questions clarified, please contact the school or return the tear-off slip at the foot of this letter.

We will of course keep you updated as plans progress and we seek further feedback on key proposal documents.

Yours sincerely

Hugh Lewis
Chair of Governors
On behalf of the Governing Body

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Please complete and return to the school office if you have any questions requiring clarification

Name: _____

Child's Name: _____ Class: _____

My question is: _____



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