

The March Church of England Primary School



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Dear Parents/Carers,

Outcome Of The Consultation On The Multi Academy Trust Proposal

On behalf of the March governors, I would like to thank all the parents and carers that took part in the recent academy consultation. The consultation process was a very valuable one during which we were able to gather a rich body of opinion regarding the proposal and were also able to answer specific questions raised by parents, staff and unions. We would like to thank everyone for engaging in the process and for giving us the opportunity to be able to really reflect on the unique character of our school.

We are grateful to all those who responded - whether online or on paper and the Governors had the opportunity to review all 41 individual responses. A response rate of 20% of pupil numbers is high compared to some academy consultations. 44% of those who responded supported the proposal to convert; 22% were not sure and their responses raised questions; 34% of respondents did not support the proposal. It was also good to see parents at the consultation meeting. The presentations made then, a note of the discussion and answers to the questions remain on the school website.

The governors of the March Primary are very proud of the school, its pupils and staff. We are keen to see the school continue to develop and grow stronger and that the individual identity, character and ethos of the school is maintained. But schools cannot operate in isolation and both governors and staff are clear that we need further support for continued improvement of the school and for the pupils. In common with all local authorities, West Sussex County Council has seen a significant reduction in funding from the Government and a consequence of that is in a reduction in the support it can provide for schools and increases in the costs to schools of buying that support. In WSCC latest strategy paper "School Effectiveness Strategy 2018-2022" it states good schools like ours can expect 2 - 3 link adviser visits per year. Conversion to academy status provides the school with the opportunity to seek a greater level of support.



A University of Chichester
ITT Partner School



As a voluntary aided school, with a majority of governors appointed by local churches and the Diocese of Chichester, we can consider only Trusts with the same governance. The Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust (DCAT) has been established by the Diocese for Church schools. So other locally based academy trusts are not an option for our school.

The Governing Board met on Wednesday to consider the outcome of the consultation. After rigorous due diligence they unanimously decided to proceed with converting to academy status and join the Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust. Working in partnership is vital to continuing our school development and improvement and we believe joining DCAT will help us to achieve this.

A report on the consultation is available on the school website.

Thank you for your continued support and your comments during the consultation.

John Proctor

Chair of Governors