

Sowerby Community Primary School

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Headteacher: Mrs K Ungerechts B.A. (Hons) P.G.C.E NPQH

23rd May 2017

Sowerby Community Primary School **Converting to Academy**

Dear Parents,

As you may be aware there have been major changes to education over the last couple of years as a result of new policies from the Government. Over the last few months, the School Governors and I have been looking at what is the best way to secure and improve the education of the children who attend Sowerby Community Primary School now and in the future.

The major change for schools in North Yorkshire is that over the next few years, money will be directed away from the Local Authority and into Teaching Schools which will reduce the Local Authority's ability to support us as a school and help us develop further. We have therefore been speaking to a number of Academy Trusts, the Local Authority and local schools to assess the best way to access support in the future.

The Governors have decided that becoming part of an Academy Trust will be the best way to continue improving teaching and learning and will provide more opportunities for our children in the future and that we should now put a plan in place to begin the journey of becoming an Academy. This direction has not been forced upon us and is an informed decision to progress and develop the school.

After considerable deliberation of the options available to us the Board of Governors have decided to pursue joining the Elevate Multi Academy Trust, which is based in Knaresborough. There are a number of reasons for this decision;

- Our school will keep its distinct ethos and our Governing Body will still make many of the decisions that affect our school
- Elevate is a local trust made up of, and led by, primary school headteachers
- Other local schools intend joining this trust so that we can continue our collaboration with schools in the Thirsk area
- The Trust provides excellent opportunities to develop the skills of our teaching staff
- There are lots of opportunities for Sowerby Community Primary School to shape the direction of the Trust
- Elevate have been awarded the opening of the new Free School on Sowerby Gateway

The Governors feel that in the changing world of education, where the Local Authority has less influence and resources, this will be a very positive move for our school. Over the next few months, we will be holding consultations about the proposed change where we will provide a lot more information on how this will affect our school.

We have prepared a Q&A sheet with this letter to help you understand the information and process – we know that this sheet won't address all of your questions and we look forward to answering any other queries during the consultation process. If any of you have further questions at this point please don't hesitate to contact me through the school office.

Kind Regards

Ewan McIntosh
Chair of Governing Body