



Friesland School

19/3/18

ACADEMISATION UPDATE

Dear Parent / Carer

I am writing further to the text message sent home last Friday evening confirming that school is open to all year groups on **Tuesday 20th March, Wednesday 21st March and Thursday 22nd March 2018** this week as the strike action has been lifted. This follows a meeting with representatives of the NAS/UWT union on Thursday 15th March through ACAS where it was agreed that the school will re-open the academisation consultation for a six week period commencing **Monday 19 March 2018**, with a closing date of **Friday 11 May 2018**. It was agreed that the NASUWT can make a presentation to the Governors during that period.

In return, the NASUWT will lift all strike action and action short of strike action during the consultation period. The Governors would be happy to receive any new information from parents further to everything that was sent in during the original consultation period which ran from Friday 20th October 2017 until Wednesday 29th November 2017. The e-mail address for correspondence to be sent remains the same as it was originally: consultation@friesland.derbyshire.sch.uk

I appreciate that this has been a difficult and unsettling time for all and, as a result, there are a number of points of clarification that I want to make.

- Firstly, in reaching agreement through ACAS our overwhelming priority as a Governing Body and Leadership Group was the students at the school. Five days of teaching have already been lost this term to strike action. For our Year 11 and 13 students, in particular, it is vitally important that they have uninterrupted teaching in the run up to their crucially important examinations in May and June. This has now been achieved as a direct result of the compromise that was reached between the parties last week.
- Secondly, it is important to state that the agreement does not mean that the Governing Body has changed its mind about continuing to consider academisation. As the Chair of Governors stated in his letter last week an Academy Order for the school to join The Two Counties Trust has been issued. We will not now, however, have a target date of 1st May 2018. Instead we are allowing extra time for further consultation before a final decision is taken by the Governing Body as to whether or not to academise. Until such time as the funding agreement is signed by the Secretary of State for Education the school remains a Foundation School. That decision whether or not to pursue this course will not now be taken until after Friday 11th May 2018 and once the extended period of consultation has concluded.
- Thirdly, although the consultation period has been extended, I want to be absolutely clear that in our view the original consultation period was a robust one which met all legal requirements. The feedback document that Governors considered before voting to pursue an Academy order was 53 pages long – a summary version of what was considered is on the

Nursery Avenue, Sandiacre, Nottingham, NG10 5AF. Tel: 0115 939 7326 Fax: 0115 949 1730
www.frieslandschool.com Email: enquiries@friesland.derbyshire.sch.uk
Headteacher: Mr P Monk BA(Hons), MA, NPQH





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school website. A meeting for parents/carers took place at the school on Tuesday 7th October 2017 – a summary of questions asked is on the school website. I presented and met with the staff and the Chief Executive Officer of the Two Counties Trust presented and met with the staff. At the request of staff, a group of senior Governors met with the staff, listened to views and took questions.

- Fourthly, I became aware on Thursday 8th March 2018 that the NAS/UWT were handing out an information sheet which they had produced on the teacher strikes outside one of our feeder primary schools. I was also aware that the information sheet was subsequently posted through some letterboxes in some of our catchment areas. The extended consultation period will provide the Governing Body with an opportunity to address some of the issues raised in the information sheet including some information provided which we consider to be inaccurate. Please feel free to contact the school directly if you have any specific concerns about its content so that we can clarify the situation and respond directly to you.

I am aware that there are parents/carers who have concerns about the school academising just as there are parents/carers who are fully supportive of it. Similarly, there are members of staff in school who are opposed to it but others who are fully supportive. Ultimately, as I have said several times in previous letters, it is the school's Governing Body that is charged with taking the decision on what is best for the future of the school.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the school during what has been a very difficult term in many different ways. I hope that you all have a good holiday period over Easter and that all students in all year groups can return to school refreshed and focussed on their learning in what will be a very important term for them all.

Yours sincerely

Mr P Monk - Headteacher

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