

ST MARYLEBONE CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

CONSULTATION ON CONVERSION TO ACADEMY STATUS

Note of a meeting with Parents/Carers held on Tuesday 5th April 2011 at 7.00pm

Present: 8 governors
18 parents/carers

The Clerk to the Governing Body

1. The Chairman of Governors welcomed the parents/carers to the meeting and thanked those who had emailed/written in questions beforehand. She ran through the main reasons why the governors believed it was in the best interests of the school to convert to academy status. She pointed out that if it went ahead, the school would become a new-style academy, an option open to outstanding schools, rather than the old-style academies which had come out of failing schools. She summarised the key points as follows:
 - There would be no private sector partner
 - The premises would still be owned by St Marylebone Church
 - There would be no change to the Admissions Policy
 - The school would remain a fully comprehensive state school
 - The school would no longer be controlled by the local authority
 - There would be more freedoms regarding the curriculum
 - More funding would be available to be spent on teaching and support

2. The following questions/comments were put by the parents/carers and were responded to in full by the governors:
 - Whether the school had plans to take over a primary school
 - What the school's relationship would be with central government
 - What the impact of conversion would be on other schools and organisations in the community, especially if the expertise of the local authority was disappearing
 - How links with local authority departments, such as social services, SEN provision, would be maintained
 - Whether the School was confident that it could manage demands of other schools if it pursued the proposal to sell its services (such as ASTs)
 - Whether the Governors saw any disadvantages to converting to academy status
 - Whether conversion would affect the School's status
 - What the freedoms regarding the curriculum would mean in practice

- Whether the future of the National Curriculum would be under threat if more and more schools converted to academy status
 - Whether the School's strength in relation to the creative curriculum would continue
 - Whether there would be any change to the sixth form admissions policy
 - When a decision would be taken on whether or not to convert to academy status
 - Whether the Governors had liaised with any others schools that had gone down the academy route
3. The Governors asked the parents/carers whether their daughters/sons had expressed any views on conversion to academy status. Parents/carers responded as follows:
- Their daughter had confused old and new academies and had thought that conversion meant that St Marylebone had/would become a failing school
 - Their daughter had been told that the school would become a mixed school
 - Their daughter was concerned that art provision at the school might not continue

Reassurance was given that none of these fears would come about. It was noted that the main pre-occupation amongst the pupils related to the changes being brought about by the introduction of the English Baccalaureate.

4. In conclusion, the Governors thanked the parents/carers for their useful contributions to the discussion. The general feeling of the meeting was that there were no objections to the School going ahead with conversion to academy status and that it should proceed with its application.

The meeting ended at 8.05pm