



18<sup>th</sup> January 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

**Conversion to academy status through joining with other Edmonton schools to form an Academy Trust**

Raynham Primary School is currently a Local Authority maintained school. Almost two years ago the Governing Body started to think about the benefits of conversion to academy status and there were meetings with parents back in Autumn 2017 to informally consult with them which were well received. Since this time the Chairs of Governors of each of the schools involved have met regularly as a Steering Group to consider the best future for their schools. Following further discussion our application was made to the Department for Education, along with the four other schools who are creating the Trust with us. Our Academy Orders were received from the DfE in December 2018 giving the go ahead for the conversion.

We now believe that not only is this the right time to convert the school's status, it is indeed necessary in order to safeguard the identity and ethos of the school. Due to the political agenda that all schools will become academies, we feel that we need to take action now in order to allow us to be in control of the future of our school.

**Background**

The academies programme commenced in 2002 and since 2010 has been widely available for all schools. The purpose of the academies programme is to give every school the opportunity to decide if it wants to continue under the umbrella of the Local Authority or to become an independent state school.

Over recent years there have been on-going financial constraints and cuts faced by local government and many services traditionally provided by local authority have either been reduced or have been completely phased out.

As you will know, many schools in Enfield are already academies and most of the secondary schools our children move on to from Raynham are academies.

As a school we have to consider whether to convert to an Academy and we are mindful of the Government's view that all schools should become academies over time. In considering the various possibilities open to our school, the leadership and governors have kept the following matters at the forefront of our thinking:

1. What is in the best interests of the children in our school, both now and looking ahead to those who will attend in the years to come?
2. How can we best preserve the school's values and ethos and continue to adhere to our vision statement?
3. Whether we will retain a significant role in running our school at a local level?



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The Governors and leaders have spent a long time considering the options open to us. This is not a decision they have made lightly and is not a knee-jerk reaction to the Academy agenda. There are many multi-academy trusts which we could join in Enfield and beyond but that is not what this decision is about. In forming our own multi-academy trust with other local Edmonton schools (Wilbury, Raynham, Brettenham, Fleecefield and Galliard) we can ensure the focus remains on improving standards and providing great opportunities for Edmonton children. This opportunity may not always be available to us as we look forward and therefore we wish to take advantage of this now.

### **What is an Academy?**

An academy is a government funded school that is independent to the Local Authority. Whilst academy status gives schools additional responsibilities and greater freedoms, in terms of the day to day functioning, an academy school will not be noticeably different for parents/the community compared to a Local Authority maintained school.

Responsibility for funding an academy school, monitoring performance and any capital projects will fall to central government rather to local government, although in reality this will be locally via the Academy Trust.

If the decision is made to transfer to become an academy, the school and governing body will join an academy trust, which is a charitable company. The academy company is a charitable company limited by guarantee. It does not pay dividends and makes no profit.

Part of the Academy conversion process is for us to consult with you as parents. We want to hear your suggestions and opinions. Please visit the school's website at

[www.raynhamprimaryschool.co.uk](http://www.raynhamprimaryschool.co.uk) where you will find this letter and a Frequently Asked Questions document. Please can I ask you to read these and, if you want to comment, write to the school marked Academy Consultation or email

[academyquestions@raynham.enfield.sch.uk](mailto:academyquestions@raynham.enfield.sch.uk) as soon as possible. Consultation closes at 12pm on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019. If you'd like a hard copy of these two documents please call in at the school office and copies will be printed for you.

Thank you for your continued support,

Yours faithfully

Mrs Marva Rollins OBE and Mrs Anna Trott  
Co-Headteachers  
Raynham Primary School